



Child Labour in the Urban Sectors of Peru

The IREWOC Research Project on the
Worst Forms of Child Labour in Latin America



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2008

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Web-ISBN: 978-90-79078-11-0

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Research on the worst forms

In 1973, the ILO adopted its Minimum Age Convention (No. 138), which requires states to design and apply national policies to ensure the effective abolition of all forms of child labour and to set the minimum age of employment at 14. Despite widespread ratification and international attention the effective abolition of all child labour proved to be a difficult task. Two major considerations became apparent after ratification. First, research illustrated the extent of the child labour problem, which led to the realistic understanding that not all forms of child labour could be done away with instantaneously. Secondly, there was a growing understanding that not all forms of child labour are equally harmful. As stated in the 1997 UNICEF report on The State of the World's Children:

In reality, children do a variety of work in widely divergent conditions. The work takes place along a continuum. At one end of the continuum, the work is beneficial, promoting or enhancing a child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development without interfering with schooling, recreation and rest. On the other end, it is palpably destructive or exploitative. There are vast areas of activity between these two poles, including work that need not impact negatively on the child's development. ... But to treat all work by children as equally unacceptable is to confuse and trivialize the issue and to make it more difficult to end abuses. This is why it is important to distinguish between beneficial and intolerable work and to recognize that much child labour falls in the grey area between these two extremes. [UNICEF 1997:24]

These two realisations resulted in the decision to concentrate on the worst forms of child labour (as morally abhorrent situations under any circumstance or development condition), while continuing to pursue the wider goal of reducing child labour in all its forms and adhering to the age limits.

On 17 June 1999, a global consensus was reached to tackle and eliminate the worst forms of child labour. A new international human rights instrument, the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182, was adopted by the ILO in Geneva. Convention 182 defines 2 categories of worst forms of child labour:

- The unconditional worst forms include slave labour, prostitution and pornography, participants in armed conflicts and illicit traders.
- The hazardous worst forms, which are all sorts of work that expose children to danger and jeopardise their physical and moral health, and all forms of work conducted by any child under 18 years of age that equals or exceeds 43 hours a week.

The Convention explicitly calls for immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of these worst forms as a matter of urgency. Because of their harmful nature both categories of work are prohibited for children under the age of 18.

In spite of the breakthrough of Convention 182, an overview of child-centred NGOs suggests that the majority of NGOs are working with children who perform light tasks for only a few hours a day, and who are involved in activities which seem to have no lasting negative consequences on the mental and physical development of these children and which are actually tolerated under the norms of the ILO Conventions. At the same time there seem to be significantly fewer NGO activities for children who find themselves in the worst forms of child labour as defined by ILO Convention 182 [IREWOC 2005]. This leads to the conclusion that for those children whose needs are most pressing, pro-active policies are substantially lacking.

This relative absence of action is paralleled by a lack of information. While most countries have ratified ILO Convention 182, they have not (yet) all complied with their obligation of identifying the worst forms sectors and activities in their country, let alone produce statistical estimates on the number of children working in them. For a number of countries there is no information available at all¹; in countries where studies have been carried out, the numbers and estimates vary greatly². This appears to be due to a lack of a universal definition of child labour and the different methodologies of collecting data. Furthermore, official (governmental) surveys and other current methods, do not particularly lend themselves to finding the children in the informal or illegal labour sectors. Despite the unmistakable progress in enumeration, vast sectors are therefore structurally overlooked and understudied.³ Finally, the *qualitative* material in all studies is very poor. The perspectives of the child labourers and their parents themselves are excluded, thereby underestimating their capacity to analyse and voice their own needs and to propose solutions.

To bridge this lack of information and stimulate policy interventions the IREWOC Foundation proposed to undertake action-based research in the field of the worst forms of child labour.

We specifically decided to focus on the “hazardous worst forms” (the second category within the worst forms as defined by the convention). The activities included in the “unconditional worst forms” are universally accepted as detrimental to children’s moral and physical health, and are not under discussion here. The group of “hazardous worst forms” is, however, still in need of further specification. For example, the exact definition states that hazardous forms of child labour are those types of work that “by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried, is likely to harm the health, safety or morale of children” (ILO Convention 182, article 3d). However, the specific physical, psychological or social indicators, that should be used to determine whether or not a

¹ For Latin America country specific studies on worst forms of child labour have been carried out by the ILO in Guatemala (garbage dumps), El Salvador (sugar cane, garbage dumps), Venezuela (flowers horticulture) and Bolivia (mining, sugarcane).

² For example, when comparing results of UNICEF and World Bank surveys on child labour in Bolivia in the same year, it appears that World Bank statistics are one third higher across all age and gender based categories [Guarcello & Lyon 2004]

³ Children in domestic service, prostitution and armed conflict are particularly hidden from these common methods of data collection [U.S. Department of Labor 2006]

certain activity is hazardous, are not clear. By conducting a detailed research project in certain worst forms sectors, giving special attention to the physical and emotional consequences of the activities, we aim to add several insights to this specific discussion.

Specific research objectives and research countries

One of the central objectives of this IREWOC research was to map the working and living conditions of children who are working in specific economic sectors and what the consequences of this work are for their physical and emotional well-being. As a result of this analysis we hoped to identify several activities and/or sectors that fall within the group “hazardous forms of child labour”.

The second focus of the study was to investigate the reasons why children are working in these particular worst forms sectors. The research results were expected to give relevant insights into the currently polarised debate between those who state child labour is above all related to cultural considerations and those who state that economical reasons are fundamental to the phenomena of child labour.

The third objective, to accommodate policy making in the field of the worst forms, was to map the different policy initiatives for child labourers in the worst forms and to identify the best practices. In the face of challenges imposed by achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) set by the United Nations, specific attention was paid to educational initiatives. Is education a useful tool to combat child labour, and vice versa, is child labour a significant obstacle to achieving universal primary education?

These research objectives have been translated to the following research questions:

- What are the living and working conditions of the working children?
- What consequences does child labour have for the working children?
- What are the main reasons for the children to work?
- Which strategies to combat child labour have been used by GOs and NGOs in the research communities and what are their successes and shortcomings?

The region chosen for this study was Latin America. In its latest global report on child labour the ILO states that child labour is diminishing, and even more so the children engaged in the worst forms of child labour: “The global picture that emerges is highly encouraging: Child work is declining, and the more harmful the work and the more vulnerable the children involved, the faster the decline” [ILO 2006]. This is even more so the case in the Latin-American context, which is mentioned as one of the continents where the decline has been the fastest: from 17.4 million children working in 2000 to 5.7 children working in 2004 [ILO 2006:8]. This decline even puts Latin America on a par with some developed and transitional economies.

Taking this promising picture into account, IREWOC decided to investigate some of the sectors in Latin-America where the worst forms do still prevail and find an answer to the question why children are still working there. Additionally, it was considered important to identify some of the initiatives that have been successful (and less successful) in getting children out of labour activities.

Research phases and methodology

Three countries were selected: Guatemala, Bolivia and Peru. These specific countries were chosen based on a combination of factors, of which the most important was the estimated incidence of child labour, as the numbers of working children in the selected countries appear to be on the rise⁴. Another selection criterion was the presence of initiatives to eradicate the worst forms of child labour.

To get a better overview of the specific sectors in which children are working and of existing child labour projects, a specific background mapping period was conducted in each research country. In the period October-December 2006, a total of 62 key-resource persons working for child-centred NGOs, UN organisations, research institutes and various ministries were interviewed. In addition, three fieldwork trips were carried out to mining and quarrying areas in different regions in the three countries. Based on this research period the following sectors were selected for this study: coffee plantations and stone quarries in Guatemala; tin/silver mines and sugar cane plantations in Bolivia; gold mines, waste disposal/recycling and fruit/vegetable markets in Peru.

The following research phase was a thorough anthropological study of all selected sectors. Most existing studies are from a macro-perspective, based on statistical and quantitative methodology. Although these methods are useful in getting an overall view of the problem, they are not particularly conducive for an in-depth understanding of local situations and of (cultural) views and motivations of local actors. Precisely this specific information is useful for policy making in a local context. Therefore, in our research project, we collected insights directly from the source, by doing detailed anthropological fieldwork in the communities and “on the work floor”, and by documenting the views and opinions of the children, their caretakers, as well as development workers.

Using participant observation to study the worst forms of child labour often meant enduring extreme situations: conducting fieldwork in icy mining shafts, on a glacier at an altitude of 5.400 meters in the Andean Cordillera, living with migrant labourers in desolate shacks on a sugar cane plantation in the lowlands of Bolivia, lacking all hygiene and privacy, or picking coffee for hours under the burning sun on coffee plantations in the Guatemalan highlands. Although they demanded the best from our researchers these experiences certainly brought us closer to our “informants”, obtaining their trust and confidence and allowing us to observe more than just the socially accepted answers and behaviour.

The study also involved more formal methods, such as structured interviews, and alternative methods, such as taking photographs with the children and filling in questionnaires in a playful

⁴ In Peru, according to the data of OIT and INEI, between 1993 and 2001, the amount of working children in the age category 6-11 increased from 2.5% to 21.7% and was expected to increase to 32% in 2005 [CPETI & MTPE 2005]. In 2008 a new census on child labour was carried out and although there is still no official publication, ILO personnel in Lima told us that statistics again show an increase reaching an estimate of over 2 million child labourers. In Bolivia, according to ILO, in the year 2000 there were 248,236 children between 10 and 14 years economically active [ILO 2001], while the national census of 2001 shows that 354,742 children between 10 and 14 years were economically active [INE 2003]. UCW also estimates that in Guatemala the amount of child labourers is on the rise, from 14% in 1999 to 20% in 2000 to 23% in 2003 [UCW 2003:2]

manner. The research revealed that these alternative methods in particular can lead to interesting additional information on how children perceive their living and working conditions.

Collaboration

To gain access to the different sectors, and to the children and their caretakers, we were thankfully helped by several local NGOs. They not only offered us their kind collaboration in making initial contacts, but were also willing to have their initiatives related to child labour scrutinised. We are greatly indebted to them. We would also like to express our gratitude to the working children and their families for their time and sharing of ideas. Their voices are at the core of this project. The recommendations that resulted from our research were discussed at several workshops in the research countries: at local presentations with the working children and their families, at national seminars with policy makers from governmental and non-governmental organisations, and at public meetings. A special thanks goes to the local NGOs that helped us prepare these meetings: Childhope in Guatemala, Terre des Hommes Netherlands in Bolivia and GIN in Peru. These workshops enabled us to evaluate our conclusions and recommendations and gave us the very special opportunity to discuss the policy implications of our research results with the most important actors in the field. We are also grateful to the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs in The Hague, Terre des Hommes Netherlands, Kerk in Actie, ICCO, Stichting Kinderpostzegels, Edukans and Plan Netherlands for financing this research, and for their ongoing support and advice. By realising this research project in close collaboration with the funding agencies as well as with the local NGOs, we hope to bridge the gap somewhat that often exists between scientific research and policy implementation. Hopefully the results of our research project will have a direct impact at the local level for our “informants”.

August 2008

Marten van den Berge

Project coordinator

Chapter 2

Background

The findings of this research on child labour in the urban sector of Peru should be seen within the general context of child labour in Peru. This chapter presents the official data on child labour, national and international legislation that applies to child labour, and an introduction to the urban sector in Peru. Finally, the communities which were involved in this study are described.

2.1 Child labour in Peru

Peru has a relatively young population. Among the 27 million inhabitants in 2002, 10.5 million were below 18 years old (39%). The recent UNICEF report “The State of Peruvian Children” considers the situation in which children are growing up in Peru critical and relates it directly to poverty, which affects children more than adults [UNICEF 2002:10]. 2001 statistics from the National Institute for Information and Statistics (INEI) show that 6.5 million children (65%) live below the poverty line [INEI & OIT 2002]. UNICEF states that “two out of every ten children live in circumstances that can be labelled as extreme poverty” [UNICEF 2002:10]. The consequences of children’s poverty can be found in several areas; child mortality is higher in Peru than in most other Latin-American countries, and only Haiti and Bolivia have a higher child mortality rate. Only five out of every ten children from poor families in Peru attend a doctor [UNICEF 2002:11,34]. Children’s education is also affected by poverty; although some progress has been made in the last years, there are still huge inequalities in school attendance between poor and rich children. 41% of the children between 6 and 17 years old don’t attend school due to economic reasons [INEI & OIT 2002].

There is a clear relationship between poverty and working children. According to UNICEF 39% of working children in Peru come from extremely poor families, whilst 22% come from poor families. There is, however, a lack of recent data on the magnitude and with details of the working children in Peru. In 2001 the National Inquiry about Living Conditions and Poverty (ENAHO) registered almost two million children, between 6 and 14 years old, who were involved in economic activities; this amounts to 29% of all children in this age group. Considering that the same inquiry registered 16% of these children working in 1996, we can conclude that child labour has increased significantly in a short period of 5 years. In fact, between 1993 and 2001, child labour in Peru tripled. According to INEI estimates, the rate of working children between 6 and 17 years old would be 32% in 2005. The economic activities of children between 6 and 11 years old has specifically increased, while working adolescents have increased relatively little [CPETI & MTPE 2005, referring to INEI & OIT 2002].

70% of the working children in Peru are found in rural areas, with a clear overrepresentation of children between 6 and 13 years. Child labour is particularly present in the *sierra*⁵ regions of Peru and the majority of working children and adolescents are involved with farming or herding. In absolute terms, the regions of Peru with the highest numbers of working children are Cajamarca, Puno and Lima province; together they host a total of almost 750.000 working children. The regions Puno, Huancavelica and Apurimac have the relatively highest rates of child labour; 60% of children between 6 and 17 work. Finally, the most working children under the legal working age of 14 are found in Cajamarca, Puno and Cuzco regions.

The work of children and adolescents is generally categorised as “non-remunerated family work”. This means that many children (especially the youngest working children) work with and for their parents, and are often exposed to the same risks as their adult parents. There is little gender difference in the numbers of child workers; 54% are boys and 46% are girls. There is, however, a gender difference among the types of activities; more will be said about this below when discussing the specific sectors [CPETI & MTPE 2005].

2.2 Worst forms of child labour in Peru

Not all forms of work are per definition harmful for children. International conventions, such as the ILO Conventions on Child Labour and the Declaration on the Rights of the Child, state that millions of children and adolescents perform legitimate work in accordance with their age. Work is acceptable if it does not harm the child’s education, or his/her physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. Harmless activities can in fact offer children useful experiences and teach them responsibility. The distinction between harmful and harmless work for children is therefore important. Peru has no official register to document the magnitude or types of activities that fall within the category of “worst forms of child labour”, but several studies reveal the existence of a relevant problem in this area.

Although several regions of the country encounter commercial sexual exploitation of children (involving child trafficking, where children from rural areas are brought to the cities to work in the commercial sex industry, or child and adolescent pornography), in terms of volume, most cases of worst forms of child labour in Peru involve dangerous jobs other than those related to sexual commerce or forced work.

Work can be dangerous either due to the nature of the activity or due to the conditions in which it is performed. Most risks of child labour in Peru are related to the nature of the activity and the age of the child or adolescent involved. Some examples include bar work, waste sorting, artisanal mining, domestic services, bricklaying, and carrying heavy weights. However, even activities that are seemingly innocuous, like selling in the streets, can be dangerous when performed in a particular context [CPETI & MTPE 2005]. The statistics will be further discussed below, when exploring the specific labour sectors.

⁵ The *sierra* regions, or highlands, are those that lie in the Andes Mountains; they comprise high plateaus known as the Altiplano, and high peaks.

The consequences of the worst forms of child labour can be found at the personal, familial and social levels, and express themselves in the long-, medium- and short-run. Many worst forms of child labour, for example, affect a child's health; specific consequences depend on the activity, but most registered complaints refer to physical health. When work affects a child's school attendance or school results it is in effect harmful to the child's development. INEI statistics show that 5.4% of children between 6 and 17 years old don't attend school due to work. This seems low, but it should be a serious concern that 20% of all working children in Peru are excluded from education. In addition, 4.1% of all Peruvian children within this age group don't go to school, but don't work either (these children mainly live in the *selva*⁶ of Peru, and rarely in urban areas). It is also relevant that 21.1% of the children between 6 and 17 combine school and work, and are likely to be performing below their ability. The remaining children go to school without working on the side [INEI & OIT 2002:22]. Dropout from school is highest for the group of adolescents between 14 and 17. While 41% of the working adolescents don't attend school, this percentage decreases to 13% for the adolescents who don't work. A working adolescent thus has three times more chance to leave school than an adolescent who doesn't work. According to the ENAHO of 1999, half of the working adolescents had an educational delay, while the percentage lowered to 32% for not working adolescents [CPETI & MTPE 2005:19].

2.3 Legislation on child labour in Peru

Peru is governed by several national and international laws, rules and conventions, which relate to child labour. The most important international agreements are based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC; a component of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights [UN 1989]) and the International Labour Organisation Conventions 138 and 182 [ILO 1973, 1999]. Peru signed the CRC in 1990, in which article 32 deals specifically with child labour: "States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development." Member States also commit themselves to:

- (a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;
- (b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;
- (c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article" [UN 1989].

In 2002, Peru signed Convention 138⁷, which obligates member states to "pursue a national policy designed to ensure the effective abolition of child labour and to raise progressively the minimum age for admission to employment or work to a level consistent with the fullest physical and mental

⁶ *Selva*, or jungle, is a wide expanse of flat terrain covered by the Amazon rainforest. Almost 60% of Peru's area is located within this region.

⁷ The Peruvian parliament approved C138 in 2001 and ratified on November 13th 2002; <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/ratifcs.pl?Perú>

development of young persons”. Of particular relevance to Peru is that “The minimum age specified in pursuance of paragraph 1 of this Article shall not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling and, in any case, shall not be less than 15 years” and “a member whose economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed may, after consultation with the organisations of employers and workers concerned, where such exist, initially specify a minimum age of 14 years” [ILO 1973]. The Peruvian state initially established a minimum age of 12, but in the modification of the Children and Adolescents Code in 2001 the new minimum age for legal work was raised to 14 years old.

ILO Convention 182 focuses on the worst forms of child labour and was signed by Peru in 2002⁸. This convention obliges its members to “take immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency”. Worst forms of child labour are understood as [ILO 1999]:

- All forms of slavery or similar practices;
- The use of children for prostitution or pornography;
- The use of children for illicit activities;
- Work that is by its nature or its circumstances likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

The present study is concerned with the work mentioned last on the list. More specifically, Recommendation 190 of the C182 defines hazardous forms of child labour as work that exposes children to all forms of abuses, work carried out in dangerous locations, in an unhealthy environment, and with the use of dangerous machinery and tools.

In practice, all child centred NGOs and other institutions that work in the field of child labour in Peru are somehow involved in the polarisation between the *erradicacionistas* and *regulacionistas*. These two schools of thought oppose each other on two main issues: child labour and child participation. The *erradicacionistas* argue in favour of the eradication of all forms of child labour, with the worst forms as the priority, and are supported in their position by international institutions such as the ILO and UNICEF. The *regulacionistas*, however, advocate the right to work for children, as long as this is considered to be dignified work. This movement sees child labour as a necessary evil, which has become inescapable with the advance of neo-liberal policies. Work strengthens people’s characters and confidence as long as conditions are good; the *regulacionistas* find that this applies to children as well. Therefore, they prioritise the improvement of children’s working conditions. In addition, the *regulacionistas* emphasise children’s participation or *protagonismo*, while the *erradicacionistas* take a more protectionist stance. *Regulacionistas* consider the dominance of adults in programme design and implementation as a violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which gives children the right to fully participate in issues that concern them [Van den Berge 2007]. In practice, however, the differences between the two camps are less well defined than in theory; even the *erradicacionista* organisations employ *protagonismo* and work

⁸ The Peruvian parliament approved the convention in 2001 and ratified on January 2nd 2002; <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/ratifcs.pl?Perú>

on the improvement of labour conditions, and the *regulacionistas* admit to also desiring a world without child labour.

The Peruvian state supports the *erradicacionista* point of view and has designed different legal agreements to protect children from illegal or dangerous forms of child labour. There are basically three forms of national legislation that regulate the work of minors. The Political Constitution of Peru declares in article 23 that “the state protects especially children, mothers and handicapped persons that work” [CPETI & MTPE 2005:22]. The Code of Children and Adolescents specifies that children who work for another person, may do so at 15 years old if the work concerns non industrial agricultural work; at 16 years old in cases of industrial, commercial or mining work; and from 17 years old onwards in the fishing industry. For all other forms of work children must be at least 14 years old. A judge, however, has the authority to make exceptions and allow a child to work at 12 years of age, but only when the activities involved don’t harm the child’s health or development, don’t interfere with his or her school attendance and do allow his or her participation in formation or orientation programmes” [‘Nuevo Código de los Niños y Adolescentes’ 2000 Art. 51].

Young workers of 12 years old are only allowed to work when it concerns “light activities”, which are unfortunately not specified in the Code. Because the legal minimum age was 12 years old up until 2001, this grey area in legislation leads to some confusion in practice.

The Code establishes a set of norms to ensure the wellbeing of working children. Children between 12 and 14 are allowed to work for only 4 hours a day, during the daytime, with a maximum of 24 hours a week. The work of youngsters between 15 and 16 may not exceed 6 hours a day and 36 hours a week. Work during night, i.e. between 19:00 and 7:00, is only allowed if authorised by a judge and for boys and girls between 15 and 18 years old, for a maximum of 4 hours a day. Economic activities that take place under ground, that involve toxic substances, that require carrying heavy weights, that are in any way harmful to a child’s health and moral being, are prohibited for all children below 18 years old. It must be mentioned here that the Code of Peru is the only one in Latin America that legally recognises the adolescent’s right to work. The officially employed adolescent has the right to receive social security, such as health care, and the same salary as older workers who perform similar activities, from his or her employer [‘Nuevo Código de los Niños y Adolescentes’ 2000 Art. 56-64].

The Code also specifies several civil rights, such as the right to freedom, the right to an identity, the right to birth registration, the right to live in a healthy environment, the right to grow up in an adequate familial environment, and so forth [‘Nuevo Código de los Niños y Adolescentes’ 2000 Art. 1-13]. The Code also defines social economic and cultural rights such as the right to education, culture, sports and recreation or the right to health care. A very significant article within the Code states that children have the right to special hours of education that allow working children to attend school [‘Nuevo Código de los Niños y Adolescentes’ 2000 Art. 14-22]. (The Code is currently being revised to raise the legal minimum age for mining to 18; the Ministry of Energy and Mining have already raised the minimum age to 18 for artisanal and small-scale mining).

The third legal instrument at a national level that regulates child labour is the 1991 Penal Code, which states in article 128:

[T]he person who exposes the life of a person that is placed under his or her authority, (...) such as to submit this person to excessive or inadequate work (...), will be sanctioned with one to four years in prison. In case the agent has a parental link with the victim, or the victim is younger than twelve years old, the sanction will be two to five years” [CPETI & MTPE 2005:30-31].

In 2003 the Peruvian government created the National Directive Committee for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labour (CPETI), with the intention to coordinate, evaluate and follow up the efforts made towards the progressive eradication of child labour. Its most important task is to enhance the National Plan of Prevention and Eradication of Child Labour with detailed plans of action [CPETI & MTPE 2005].

There are a number of ministries and governmental institutions that are in charge of supervising the population below 18 years old. The Direction of Children and Adolescents (DINNA), which falls within the Ministry of Women and Social Development (MIMDES), is in charge of the programmes for the wellbeing of children and youths and participates in the CPETI. The DINNA coordinates the Defensorías Municipales de Niños y Adolescentes (DEMUNA), or Ombudsman, a public service that defends children’s rights and denounces crimes committed against children. “Street Educators” also falls within MIMDES, and is a programme that was formerly coordinated by the INABIF⁹. The goal of the programme is to assist working- and street children at the national level and to mediate between them and institutions. In the same way, the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MININTER) coordinates “Colibri”, another programme focussed on working children on a national scale. The Ministry of Employment presides over the CPETI and has two main programmes for youths. Through the Direction for the Protection of the Minor and Security at Work it authorises work for adolescents and it implements awareness raising campaigns concerning the child labour problem. Through the programme “Projoven” the ministry facilitates adolescents with limited possibilities with their entrance into the labour market. Working children and adolescents are given the opportunity by the Ministry of Education to attend school with an alternative schedule (Programme EBA¹⁰). Finally, the Ministry of Public Affairs is responsible for the protection of CPETI; for example, it must implement inspections on the work floor to check if the norms are respected. Unfortunately, there is a strong focus, by national institutes, on the young population in Lima, while those in rural areas are relatively ignored.

2.4 The urban sector in Peru: markets and waste material

This research concerned child labour in waste material processing and at wholesale markets in Lima. Although the types of work are completely different, they are related to each other, especially because of their high incidence in cities. Both sectors provide work for children in the informal commercial and service sector in urban areas. Although under completely different circumstances, consequences of both are related to the dangers and negative consequences of

⁹ Programa Integral Nacional para el Bienestar Familiar

¹⁰ Educación Básica Alternativa

massive urban areas. Below the situation of employment in urban areas is explained, concluding with the two specific sectors that were studied.

In the second half of the twentieth century the urban area of Peru grew enormously in population due to a massive migration from the countryside. The principal cities that received the migrant population were Lima, Callao, Arequipa, Trujillo and Chiclayo. While in 1961 only 47% of the Peruvian population lived in cities, this percentage increased because of the rapid urbanisation and resulted in 75% in 1993. The quickest growing city was the capital Lima, housing in 2003 one of every three Peruvians in the country. Since the infrastructure of Lima in the 1950s and 1960s was not adapted for the growing population, a large amount of the migrants was not able to find a formal house. This situation resulted in vagrancy and the rise of slums. Most slums arose on the outskirts of the Lima Metropolitan Area - Cono Norte, Cono Sur, and Cono Este and to a lesser extent in Central Lima.¹¹ Between 1961 and 1993 the percentage of the population living in the slums grew from 17% to 34% [Valenzuela et al. 2007:35-38]. There is a clear relation between migrants from the countryside and the poor sections of the population in Lima that lack the basic facilities including formal employment.

In the last decades, informal employment has become a predominant characteristic of the Peruvian economy, especially in its capital city Lima. Approximately 60% of the economically active population in the Lima Metropolitan Area is involved in the informal sector. This group of informal workers consists of persons who were not able to find a job on the labour market and consequently opted for creating their own positions or accepting any job outside of the formal sector. The informal economy has in the last few years generated a high level of low quality jobs in the low productive sector. The majority of employment relationships and self employment are developed beyond the reach of any regulations, which implies a lack of protection for the informal workers. In Peru, only labourers in the formal economy have a claim on social services such as a right to health insurance or retirement pay. Informal workers are also more exposed to risks such as a low salary, an unsafe work environment or the possibility of losing the job. Not protected by social security, their informality becomes an extension to their social exclusion from society. There exists a clear relation between poor workers and informal workers. By being vulnerable, the informal workers generate a vicious circle of exclusion and poverty [Espinoza & Rios 2006].

Poor people and women form a large group of the population in the informal sector. The majority of the economically active women are involved in informal employment. In the last years the informal sector has been formed predominantly by independent workers. According to a study in 2004, 40% of the informal workers in Peru work in services and 30% in commerce. The total size of the informal sector has, however, not increased substantially since 1995 [Espinoza & Rios 2006].

The informal sector absorbs also the majority of working children in Peru, since children below 14 are not allowed to work formally and adolescents between 14 and 18 only for a short number of

¹¹ Peru is divided into 25 regions; they in turn are divided into provinces. Lima province is the only province not belonging to a larger region. The Lima Metropolitan Area is a conurbation comprising Lima Province and the Callao region. The Area has 49 districts which are sorted into 6 sub-regions: Cono Norte, Cono Sud, Cono Este, Residential Lima, Central Lima and Callao.

hours. It is estimated that approximately 30% of the children work in cities [Cesip 2007]; most children and adolescents are involved in commercial activities. The INEI states that 43.1% of the working children in urban areas between 6 and 13 years old contribute to the family business, 6.8% sells products and 5.9% helps in preparing products to sell. The working adolescents in urban areas work as sellers at a market or a stall (19.3%), as street sellers (6.8%), or as porters (1.7%) [INEI & OIT 2002:38]. According to the ENAHO 2001-IV, 11% of the working children in Peru are involved in family businesses or selling at markets. Men, women, children and adolescents from poor and extreme poor families work at Lima's markets in different activities. Men and boys tend to work a lot as porters, women and girls are found more often in selling products, either at a fixed location or ambulatory [Cesip 2006a:10].

There are several markets in Lima; some are retail markets and others are wholesale markets, which function as distribution centres. The two principal wholesale markets in Lima are the Mercado Mayorista N° 1 for vegetables and the Mercado Mayorista N° 2 for fruit. Both markets are located in the La Victoria district, in Central Lima, and receive their products directly from the countryside. Other important markets are the Mercado Cooperativo Túpac Amaru, the Mercado Modelo de Frutas, the Mercado de Caquetá, the Mercado Angélica Gamarra and the Mercado Puente Piedra. In addition, streets around the two wholesale markets have been transformed into important commercial areas. The markets are the principal providers of the main supermarket chains in Lima and other venues such as restaurants and hospitals. Some products are also transported to other parts of the countryside [Empresa Municipal de Mercados S.A.].

The growing population in the Peruvian capital also produces a growing amount of waste material. According to the National Environment Board the 8 million inhabitants of Lima generate approximately 6750 tonnes of waste material per day [Consejo Nacional de Ambiente 2006]. Due to a lack of a well developed central and formal plan for waste management, combined with the high rates of unemployment in the capital, the waste material business has grown since the 1980s. The inhabitants of the central districts in Lima are mainly involved in the collection and reselling of waste materials. The garbage dumps are located in the border districts of Lima; this is where a substantial portion of the population sorts and cleans the waste material for further processing.

There are no statistics about how many people are involved in the processing of waste material, but the business is a significant provider of employment, especially in the border districts where there are few other employment opportunities. In the district involved in this research, the collection and sorting of waste materials represents 27.6% of the labour provision [Cesip 2006b]. According to the NGO Centro Proceso Social, the activity has, however, diminished since 2003 [Centro Proceso Social 2005].

2.5 The research communities

In this research, child labour at markets was studied at the two wholesale markets and their surrounding areas. Child labour in waste material processing was investigated in a community called Las Lomas de Carabayllo, on the periphery of Lima. Both forms of child labour are performed in the capital city, but the living and working conditions of the people involved differ. These two realities portray the extremes of the capital city in which families and abandoned children try to survive by means of informal activities.

2.5.1 Markets

The two wholesale markets included in this study are located in the poorest parts of the district La Victoria, in Central Lima. La Victoria is a highly populated district where the original working class of the Peruvian capital used to live. It is a district with lots of commerce and relatively high incidence of criminality. The area in which the two markets are located is called La Parada, which includes the wholesale market Mercado Mayorista de Verduras No 1, the wholesale market Mercado Mayorista de Frutas No 2, the Minor Market and the informal Market known as Tacora. The main products are fruit, vegetables, tubers and spices. There is also commerce around these markets which makes La Parada an area in which almost every kind of product can be found, such as food and drinks, spare parts of every kind of artefacts and car parts. It neighbours the most important textile area of the country, known as Gamarra. Finally, due to the strong presence of commerce and high amounts of visitors, the market and surrounding areas attract people offering diverse services, such as shoe shiners or street artists [Valenzuela et al. 2007:58-61].

The history of La Parada started at the end of the 1940s. Because of the scarce labour opportunities in the countryside of Peru, rural dwellers increasingly decided to take their products, especially fruits and vegetables, directly to Lima to sell them at higher prices and omit the middlemen. The sellers delivered their products to La Parada, which is located at the end of the main road into the countryside. To hasten the process they exhibited their products on the ground and sold them informally to the inhabitants of Lima, after which they returned to the countryside. The name “La Parada” (the stop) comes from its origin as a stop for the vehicles that arrived from the countryside and left soon after [Valenzuela et al. 2007:58-61]. Nowadays, however, La Parada refers to the area around Mercado Mayorista No 1, instead of the entire area.

The Mercado Mayorista No 1 has been functioning since 1945 and has, according to the managing municipal company, 774 formal vendors; the Mercado Mayorista No 2 has functioned since 1971 and counted 715 formal vendors in 2000 [Empresa Municipal de Mercados S.A. 2007]. In addition to this formal figure, a large number of informal vendors should be added to, especially, the vegetable market count. The infrastructure and the position of the vegetable market is certainly not adequate for the amount of visitors each day; for which reason the company plans to transfer it entirely to another part of Lima in the near future.

Since the district of La Victoria is situated in the centre of Lima, it is supplied with sufficient social services such as primary and secondary schools, health posts and hospitals. There is a multitude of public and private institutions, and opportunities for potential support and interventions are present. What it lacks, however, are other important services such as hygiene and safety. The areas of and around the wholesale markets are places with lots of visitors due to the strong commercial activity, which is partly ambulatory. This situation creates chaos for vehicles and other visitors, and high levels of environmental pollution. Due to the poor system of garbage disposal and collection, putrefied vegetables and fruit lie in the streets, especially around the wholesale market for vegetables. The area is also characterised by the presence of delinquency, sale and consumption of drugs, clandestine prostitution, and youth violence [Cesip 2007]. The authorities in La Victoria, including the mayor and the police, are corrupt and have kept their distance for many years, which has created a sense of distrust and rejection towards authorities among the population.

There are some important differences in the organisation of the two wholesale markets that are relevant to mention. The Mercado No 1 for vegetables is administered by the municipality of Lima, by means of the Municipal Company of Markets (EMMSA). Formal vegetable purchasers and sellers pay their contribution to the company. In exchange, EMMSA provides the vegetable market with security guards at the main entrances and a cleaning service. These services are deficient though and the security guards are extremely corrupt. The Mercado No 2 falls under the responsibility of a private company comprised of the formal purchasers and sellers themselves, which took power over the municipality administration some years before. At the fruit market, purchasers and sellers pay their contribution to this private company, which in the same way provides them security and cleaning services. In addition, five unions of organised market workers are united in *el frente de las 5 bases*¹², which also takes part in some of the organisational facets. This has contributed to a much stricter and more elaborated organisation. On the other hand, the relation between the municipality of Lima and the administration of the market is, due to the conflicts during the takeover of power, not ideal. This forms an obstacle for the development of concerted actions in or around the market [Cesip 2007]. In the next chapters it will become clear how these differences in organisation affect the situation of child labour in the two markets.

2.5.2 Waste material

Las Lomas de Carabayllo is located in the Carabayllo district, one of the poorest and most remote districts in Cono Norte. The first people started to inhabit Las Lomas de Carabayllo in the 1960s. However, in the 1980s the population started to grow massively due to the urbanisation of nearby agricultural land. In 2004, the Carabayllo counted approximately 149,154 inhabitants; Las Lomas accounted for about 30.000 [Cesip 2004, 2006b]. The population keeps growing because of the continuous migration from the countryside and people from central parts of Lima in search of their own house. Carabayllo is an extensive district and is organised at different levels. The central authority is the mayor. His presence is low in Las Lomas, but a representative of the municipality is based here and is in charge of municipal issues. Furthermore, Las Lomas counts 52 neighbourhoods, which all have their local group of leaders. Like in most of the poor districts in Lima, these neighbourhoods have social organisations such as “vaso de leche” and communal kitchens. The local organisation is, however, relatively weak.

The families in Las Lomas de Carabayllo live in poverty or even extreme poverty. Many of them lack the elemental services of water, sewerage, and electricity. Water arrives in trucks, and is sold per vat. Some houses are constructed with bricks, but others are made of corrugated iron, mats and cardboard, which don't protect the inhabitants well enough from the damp and cold in the winter. Although migrants were in most cases driven to Lima in search for work, the population suffers very high rates of unemployment, resulting in a growing informal sector.

Las Lomas de Carabayllo has, since the 1960s, been an end station for waste materials collected throughout the entire Lima area. In the 1980s the garbage dump *El Zapallal* was established in Las

¹² This front consists of five groups of workers: two syndicates for adult porters (SUTMA and ATMGS), two associations for young porters (Warma Tarinakuy and Colibri) and one cycle taxi group (ASOTRAN).

Lomas de Carabayllo, administered by the municipal company RELIMA. The presence of the garbage dump promoted the proliferation of several activities related to the recycling of waste materials. In the 1990s garbage sorting activities were regulated¹³, resulting in formal garbage classification cooperatives and companies. In 2003, with the application of the General Law for Waste Material¹⁴, the sorting of waste material was prohibited in garbage dumps [Centro Proceso Social 2005]. Nevertheless, recycling related activities turned out to be one of the most important sources of income for the inhabitants of Las Lomas de Carabayllo. Not only men, but also women and children are involved in this informal business.

The enormous amounts of waste materials in the area also cause serious contamination problems. Since there is no formal system to collect and pick up the garbage in Las Lomas, decomposing organic waste lies in the streets and people burn waste in the open air. Moreover, the abundance of waste has incited people to illegally collect and recycle materials, and to raise pigs informally, which they let feed on the garbage. The waste problem is aggravated by the lack of a sewer system, which results in soil contamination; illegal lead smelting factories in the surrounding area, which pollute the air; nearby mining; and the presence of a brick making factory that contributes to the levels of dust in the air. The environment and people suffer severely from this contamination, which has been recognised by the General Direction of Environmental Health (DIGESA) [Cesip 2004].

Las Lomas de Carabayllo has only one official health post, which is insufficient given the number of inhabitants and their health problems. It has five public schools as well as five private schools, among them kindergartens, primary schools and secondary schools. Las Lomas also has nine child care centres or *wawawasis*. Although this may seem a lot, the majority of the 30.000 inhabitants in Carabayllo are of school-going age.

¹³ Through the application of the Regulation for the Reuse of Waste Material or *Reglamento de Recuperación de Desechos Sólidos* (D.S: 013-77-SA-1 977)

¹⁴ Ley General de Residuos Sólidos 27314. Article 16 of this law prohibits sorting activities at dumpsites and only allows recycling at collection points, which is, however, not clearly regulated [Centro Proceso Social 2005].

Chapter 3

Working and Living Conditions of Working Children

In this chapter both the living and working conditions of working children are discussed. Living conditions are relevant when determining the worst forms of child labour, since they reflect the potential denial of child rights. Various aspects of the work will be presented here, and then related to the national and international laws that apply to children.

3.1 Living conditions in Lima

The living conditions will be discussed according to the family situation, the educational situation and the situation with regard to health. It is important to realise that many of the living conditions also apply to non-working children living in the same area.

3.1.1 Family life

The working children in Carabayllo and the working children at the wholesale markets in La Victoria come from poor families. Most parents are first or second generation migrants from the countryside. In some cases, the working children themselves are first generation migrants. This is more often the case with the working children at the markets in La Victoria, but also occurs in Carabayllo. The children, with or without their families, migrated from all parts of the countryside, but especially from the poorest parts of the sierra, such as Cuzco, Huancavelica, Ayacucho and Huancayo. In the 1980s and 1990s the main reasons for these families to migrate was the political violence in the countryside. The present reason for the migration to Lima is, with very few exceptions, the lack of work in rural areas. The families hope to find better employment opportunities in the capital and usually seek out areas where they can find a job. The markets are situated in a highly commercial area which offers a variety of informal employment opportunities. Since the collection and recycling of waste material developed into a growing economic sector, Carabayllo is currently also a place where migrants can relatively easily find employment. Relatives who may perhaps already be living in Lima often determine the choice of resettlement.

All the children working with waste materials involved in this research live in Las Lomas de Carabayllo. This area is extremely poor and lacking in basic facilities. It used to be quite a treacherous place to live during the politically violent times in Peru, but is now relatively safe. The working children found at the markets live in La Victoria or in other nearby districts such as El Agustino, San Luis or Lima Cercado. These central districts are all densely populated, poor and relatively unsafe. Others live in districts further away such as San Juan de Lurigancho or Villa El Salvador; these children travel more than one hour to arrive at their workplace. Many working children in La Victoria and El Agustino live in the hills around the market area: Cerro San Cosme, Cerro El Pino and Cerro El Agustino. These hills were the last parts of the city centre to be occupied, and are now inhabited by the poorest, and often most recently migrated. The hills are

known to be dangerous because of the presence of delinquents and a lack of control, especially at night. The houses are constructed in an unorganised manner and are vulnerable to the extreme weather conditions.

The families of the working children in Lima are generally large. According to a CESIP¹⁵ study, half of the households in Las Lomas de Carabayllo have between five and seven members [Cesip 2006b]. Also at the markets, most children come from families with a relatively large amount of children. Especially the market areas exhibit an extremely high level of divorce and broken families, but in Carabayllo it is also common to find working children living with single mothers. Several boys and girls working at and around the markets made it clear that stepparents are generally considered as negative factors in the family. They seem to “prefer children from their own blood above someone else’s children”. This leads to confrontations within the family, jealousy, and abuse or exploitation of the “new” children. Children who live with stepparents are more likely to work, as will be further explained in the chapter about the reasons for child labour.

There is a high incidence of domestic violence in poor households in Lima, which is often related to machismo and alcohol abuse. Carabayllo’s remote location and lack of available institutions makes control and protective measures difficult. On the other hand the remote location of the community protects people from the typical dangers of the big city; Las Lomas de Carabayllo has the characteristics of a small village and violence and alcohol consumption is low compared to the city centre.

The Ombudsman for Children and Adolescents (DEMUNA), close to the market areas, reports extreme levels of violence in the neighbourhood. Violence occurs at home among family members, but also on the streets. Children who work at or around the markets are used to this type of aggression, but several recently-migrated children mentioned how the aggressive atmosphere is the main difference with their formerly tranquil lives in the countryside. The neighbourhoods where children live and work are full of bars, gambling halls and brothels, which increase the likelihood of violence in the streets and at home.

The high incidences of disease and death are another reason for broken and dysfunctional families. The working children often mentioned mothers in hospitals or fathers who had died. Most health problems are caused by harsh and unhealthy living standards, a lack of adequate healthcare or because of accidents. Children often are unclear about their parents’ health problems or the reasons for them. When a parent is ill or dies, the household income becomes even more limited.

In Carabayllo, but even more so at the markets, there are also many children and adolescents without parents. In Carabayllo, these children normally live with adult relatives who care for at least their most basic needs. At the markets several children live only with their siblings, or even alone. There are also girls who live with a family for whom they work as a maid; this is known as *cama dentro* (“bed inside”). The children without parents in Lima are either orphans or their parents live in the countryside. The children may have migrated alone or with their siblings to the capital city, mainly because their parents were not able to take care of them or because they

¹⁵ Centro de Estudios Sociales y Publicaciones

wanted to study or work and possibilities were lacking in their village. The following statements illustrate some reasons for migration to Lima.

Patricia (12) Works as a maid *cama dentro* in La Victoria:

I was born in Huancavelica. My parents died a long time ago. I came to Lima with my sister who earned some money and took care of me. Since I was 11 years old I started to work as a maid *cama dentro*. I live with the family I work for. I didn't know the family before I started to live with them, but they are very friendly and pay me my clothes, school and food.

Melinda (17) works in recycling in Carabayllo:

I am from Cerro de Pasco. My parents divorced and both started a new family. I am the only child of my two parents and lived with my mother and stepbrothers. My mother can't work much because of the baby. Therefore, when I was 14 I migrated to Lima to work and now I live with my aunt and uncle. They don't pay anything for me because they have children themselves.

Living without their parents is difficult for the children. The relationship with the new caretaker is not always positive, but because the children are dependent on them, they accept it.

Flor (10), working at the vegetable market:

I am from the countryside of Huancayo. We were with 10 children and my parents, my father worked on his land. I didn't go to school because my parents didn't have enough money to buy school supplies for me. Last year I decided to go to Lima, although my parents didn't want it. Now I live with my brother and his wife. His wife beats me a lot. I regret having migrated because I realise that I like the countryside much more than Lima, but I don't have money to travel back.

Valentina (14), working around the market:

My parents sent me to my aunt in Lima when I was 11 years old; the rest of my family stayed in Cuzco. My relationship with my aunt is not so good, she screams a lot at me. I think that she does so because she was also brought to Lima as a child and exploited. Now she wants me to feel the same. In a few months my aunt is going to migrate to Argentina, looking for work. I don't have other relatives here, so I will start to work as a maid *cama dentro*, to earn my own living.

3.1.2 Education

Las Lomas de Carabayllo has 10 educational institutes: two main public schools for primary and secondary students and some smaller schools, mostly private. The first public institute was established in 1990, by the current principal. The first students studied in someone's house, after which the parents' association (APAFA) collected funds for the construction of a school building. The public schools received support from the municipality of Lima and the municipality of Carabayllo. The private schools don't receive any support from public structures, which is why

enrolment fees are more expensive. Most of the schools have the necessary furniture, but the quality is low.

The student body keeps increasing due to the growing, relatively young population. Children are never denied a place in the school, even if it means that they must share furniture or other resources. State support for the schools in Las Lomas de Carabayllo is limited; most input comes from the parent association (APAFa) and some enterprising principals, complemented by NGOs. The public institution PRONAA provides breakfast for the students of the public primary school, which consists of bread and milk.

The centre of Lima houses many schools, both private and public and including all levels. The José Antonio Encinas school, which is at walking distance from the vegetable market, is a public primary school with more than 750 students. The majority of the students live in the neighbourhood and a significant number work, at least part time, at or around the markets. This school, like others, has the most necessary infrastructure, but nothing else. The state provides for books, but these are often in such a poor shape, that teachers ask children to buy new ones. This is obviously a problem for most children. The school is not within the Ministry of Education's area of authority, and so it misses out on services such as breakfasts for children.

The school has an open enrolment policy; contrary to most schools in Lima, even children with an extremely low educational level or mental handicap are accepted. All classes comprise of a variety of ages, and include children with special needs. Although the policy offers a solution for many families, it demands extra effort from teachers, who have to deal with children with many specific problems in already large classrooms, and are not always prepared for this. Consequently, the level of education inevitably declines, disadvantaging many of the more promising students.

In Carabayllo most primary schools have classes in the mornings and secondary schools in the afternoons. At one private school the principal offers longer school days, thereby more classroom time, and child care for working parents. This does entail, however, more time and energy from teachers. At the school in La Victoria, children can choose between morning or afternoon classes. Working children are found throughout the day, but mostly during afternoon sessions so that they can work the entire morning. Enrolment and attendance is free at all public schools, although students are required to pay a parent association fee (if they are able), and cover costs for school supplies and a uniform; in some cases they must also pay exam fees.

According to the teachers in La Victoria, the parents show very little interest in their children's education. Most parents only show up for enrolment and at the end of the year to know if their child passed to the next grade. They don't check their children's homework, and don't respond to invitations to talk with the teachers about the child's performance, as was also confirmed by most of the children. As a result, the parent association is not active at the Encinas school. The parents justified their lack of invested time on their need to work. Many children also blamed their parents' work for the lack of support they receive, whilst others claimed that parents are irresponsible and not interested in education: "some parents only think about money and work" (focus group, September 2007).

It was observed that parents allow their children to skip school. According to the teachers, excuses vary from "having an uncle's birthday" to "we went to travel". Adolescents living without parents decide themselves whether they go to school or not, often resulting in minimal attendance. A 16-

year-old boy in the fifth grade of primary school argued that he couldn't come to school because of work obligations; the teacher's records showed that he only appeared for sport events. There are parents who don't speak Spanish very well. Few of them finished primary, let alone secondary school. This is also an understandable reason for them to not attend teacher-parent discussions, or help their children with homework.

Attendance rates are better in Las Lomas de Carabayllo, although children who live with adults other than their parents tend to miss school more frequently. Aunts or uncles feel less responsible towards the child and are more prepared to let the child decide for him or herself. Besides these exceptions, children in Las Lomas live in a more protected and controlled area in which there are fewer incentives for young people to spend time outside of school.

Teachers are not paid well anywhere in Peru, and their performances are therefore often lacking. Some teachers in Las Lomas de Carabayllo work at another school in the evenings to complement their salaries, which has its consequences for their energy levels. In La Victoria, teachers don't have the time or money to give special attention to children with problems. In July 2007 the Peruvian teachers' union organised a national strike; their absence had consequences for the students. The strike lasted just two days at the José Antonio Encinas primary school, but in Carabayllo, students didn't receive classes for almost a month, provoking negative reactions from parents.

In Carabayllo, contrary to La Victoria, many parents complain about the general quality of education in their neighbourhood. They argue that teachers are lazy and the quality of education is poor. A mother claimed that her son had not been accepted at another school in Lima because of his low educational level. They mainly blame the remoteness of the area, in which control of education is scarce.

Notwithstanding all complaints and problems, children are generally very satisfied with their education and time at school. The majority of the children in Carabayllo prefer to be at school than at home. Particularly girls feel more freedom at school. Several focus group discussions at the primary school in La Victoria school made it clear that school is children's favourite place to spend their time. Reasons for them to go to school are: learning, meeting friends, and to become a professional instead of a thief. They prefer school to home, where many of them have to help with chores, their mothers give them orders and their brothers and sisters bother them. Children generally like the atmosphere at school, their teachers and the other students. Possible reasons for leaving school were given: not liking it, a lack of love and interest from parents, family problems, being obliged to work, or getting pregnant. Working children and adolescents, who were not attending school, claimed to miss it in general and hoped to get back soon.

A form of education that is used by some child labourers in Lima is the Alternative Basic Education or EBA¹⁶. This system offers primary and secondary education at alternative times, including the weekends and evenings. It is presented as an alternative to regular basic education for men, women and children from 9 years old that "haven't enrolled in regular education; couldn't culminate their

¹⁶ Educación Básica Alternativa; consisting of a Programme for Children and Adolescents (PEBANA), a Programme for Youth and Adults (PEBAJA), and a Literacy Programme.

basic education; or need to make work and school compatible” [Peru Ministerio de Educación 2004]. Just like regular education, enrolment is free, but school supplies are for the pupil’s own account.

Officially, EBA has the same objectives and the same quality as regular basic education. In practice, however, EBA appears to have less on offer and provides lower quality education. It offers fewer hours of education, and people of all ages attend the EBA classes (9-year-olds study together with adults). Although they may perhaps be at the same educational level, these persons have different learning processes and need different levels of attention. Teachers are often not prepared for this. Finally, EBA teachers appear to be poorly motivated. It is common for them to work during the day at another institute, which leaves little energy in the evenings. Several children even mentioned that teachers often don’t show up. Apart from its questionable quality, EBA is criticised as a potential incentive for children to work. Even though the minimum age for children to work is 14 years old, EBA accepts children from 9 years old and indirectly helps them to work the entire day. At the Ministry of Work and Employment people argued that EBA should therefore only be accessible to adolescents from 14 years old.

3.1.3 Health

The living conditions of working children in these two parts of Lima differ a lot, resulting in different health conditions and problems. Basically, Carabayllo has the problems of a remote and isolated area and the market area results in health problems related to its central location.

The children living in Las Lomas de Carabayllo suffer from health problems related to poverty, the cold, and environmental pollution combined with a lack of water. Problems related to poverty apply to all children. Health problems caused by pollution are especially common among children whose parents manage a waste recycling business and who therefore store large quantities of garbage at home. In addition, these businesses often include the presence of multiple pigs and dogs in the residential area, therefore increasing the likelihood of pests and disease. However, also other children are affected by the lack of hygiene in their living space. According to the local doctor, 80% of the consults at the health post are for children. Their health problems vary from diarrhoea and malnutrition due to poor diet, to respiratory problems because of the weather, and allergies, parasites and skin problems because of the abundant filth, dust and lack of hygiene. Children’s relatives also suffer health problems. According to a study by CESIP, the main problems are respiratory infections, kidney problems, stomach problems and backaches [Cesip 2004].

A specific problem in Las Lomas de Carabayllo is the air pollution due to illegal smelting of lead, rotting garbage and burning garbage. According to a CIDAP study¹⁷, the level of lead in the blood of children living in the area exceeded the permitted level two to five times [CIDAP 2006]. Lead is highly dangerous if inhaled, which is precisely what happens as a consequence of the smelting in Las Lomas. Absorption is furthermore greater in children than in adults. The presence of rotting garbage in the area causes the release of methane gas, which ends up in the atmosphere. Burning garbage also contributes to the pollution in the air and affects especially children.

¹⁷ Centro de Investigación, Documentación y Asesoría Poblacional

This remote part of the capital has only one formal health post for the problems of 30.000 inhabitants, which was established 7 years ago; paid for by the NGO Properu and maintained by the Ministry of Health. According to Ministry of Health norms, there should be one health post for every 5000 residents. There is a daytime doctor and an evening doctor, but there is no one attending during the night. The health post also has an obstetrician, a dentist, a nurse and three assistants. The doctors live in neighbouring districts and are not immediately present in case of emergency. The post has no ambulance, no delivery room or an emergency room. There are plans for a mother and child centre in the near future. People must use private transport to get to the closest hospital, which takes approximately 15 minutes. There are existing initiatives for new local health posts in Las Lomas and training of local people in basic healthcare, to offer basic attention in other parts of the community. Las Lomas also has a DEMUNA, which is open one day a week.

Children and adolescents working at and around the markets encounter similar problems related to poverty and weather conditions. They are not living close to a garbage dump, but the conditions in which they live often lack hygiene nevertheless. Moreover many people live together in small spaces. The nearest health post lists tuberculosis, respiratory problems, skin infection, diarrhoea and lice as the most frequent health problems for children in the neighbourhood. In addition, the area experiences many adolescent pregnancies, psychological problems and problems such as alcoholism and drug addiction. Local psychologists consider the violence in the neighbourhood as a principal cause for many problems, and recognise a vicious circle of violence within most families. Other reasons for psychological problems would be the fact that parents have many children and no time to spend with them, the generational conflict between parents from the sierra and children accustomed to Lima, and the overall discrimination of people from the sierra living in Lima. Finally, the presence of illegal brothels would, according to the local doctor, lead to high incidences of sexual diseases, also among adolescents.

The nearest health centres to the market area are Centre San Cosme and Centre El Pino. For emergencies there is a public hospital very nearby called Dos de Mayo. Both healthcare centres have an attending psychologist. In addition, there is a DEMUNA close to the markets. Although psychologist consultations are not covered by the SIS, exceptions are made for adolescents with urgent problems. The DEMUNA services are provided for free. In general, it is uncommon to visit the health centre, especially since medicine can be acquired at the pharmacy. Adolescents are not accustomed to visiting a psychologist, but their problems come to the foreground when they visit the doctor for other reasons. In extreme cases, children with psychological problems are referred by their school. Psychologists complained especially about the lack of space and privacy at the health centre. The DEMUNA suffers from a small budget, which complicates follow-up to identified problems.

Almost the entire population of Las Lomas de Carabayllo and all the families of the working children in the market area have the right to register with the Integrated Health Service or SIS because of their low economical status. The problem, however, is that not all people have legal identity documents or residence, two requirements for registration. Other reasons for not registering with the service are the lack of knowledge and information about the SIS, and adolescents who don't

register their newborn children out of shame.¹⁸ Unfortunately, the neediest persons are often the least informed, for example about contraception, and the ones without legal identification. Children whose parents never registered them cannot claim their right to free healthcare. The Ministry of Health, however, provides minimal support to health posts to attend to poor people without SIS. A CESIP study revealed that 72% of the persons in Las Lomas with health problems don't seek medical attention because of economical reasons [Cesip 2004]. There are also families without free healthcare who diagnose and treat themselves with natural or other alternative medicines, which are usually cheaper.

The situation of the teachers applies also to the doctors. In public healthcare centres and public hospitals the medical personnel is poorly paid¹⁹, which can influence their performance, without putting in doubt their good intentions. One final problem to be mentioned is the circulation of illegal medicines in the poor areas of Lima. Several people in Carabayllo recalled their experiences with illegal medicines, with obvious negative results. People nevertheless remain tempted to buy medicines from informal places because of the low costs.

3.2 Participation of children at markets

This research investigated working children at markets who are involved in only a few activities of the fruit and vegetable trade. The cultivation of the products and the transport to Lima were not included. The focus was on the wholesale markets and surrounding areas, where children are principally involved in the sale and transport of fruit and vegetables to the customer. The working children in and around the wholesale markets are involved in a number of activities, but can mainly be divided into groups of either porters, or informal sellers of produce, food and drinks.

3.2.1 Porters

The process starts when trucks full of fruits or vegetables from the countryside arrive between 2 a.m. and 10 a.m. at respectively the fruit and vegetable market in La Victoria. Formal market traders with a permanent stall receive their goods according to previously arranged deals with the supplier. Consequently, the market traders start their days by selling relatively large quantities to purchasers such as restaurants, local market traders, grocery shops or private individuals interested in large quantities and cheap prices. The buyers have to load their newly acquired goods onto either private or public transport outside the market walls, and so porters are paid to help. The porter carries the load with a two-wheel trolley or in exceptional cases manually²⁰. The price is prearranged with the client.

¹⁸ Within six months after birth, registration is free. The SIS covers acute diseases, but no chronic illnesses such as cancer; it does not cover psychological consults or problems that are self-inflicted.

¹⁹ For example, the salary of a specialised doctor working in the hospital Dos de Mayo is only 1500 sol (ca. 375 euro) a month.

²⁰ This occurs only at the fruit market when there is not enough space to enter with a two-wheel trolley or when the porter is not given permission to enter the market with a trolley.



Photo 1: A young porter belonging to a formal syndicate at the fruit market

The porters are organised and formalised in associations at the fruit market; at the vegetable market the young porters work individually and informally. Porters are always boys and work at both markets. At the fruit market the young porters are organised into two adolescent associations. Adolescents can join at 14 years old²¹, and only if they attend school. Porters belonging to an association wear a special shirt and carry an identity card which allows them to enter the market with a two-wheel trolley (see photo 1). Informal porters are not permitted to enter. According to the young porters there are some informal porters working outside the market in the summer period. At the vegetable market there are only porter associations for adults. These groups try to prevent young informal porters from entering since they are competition. Control is, however, not that strict and the youngsters normally manage to get in, either by entering with a client, by sneaking past the guard or by paying the guard. Once they are inside, the unspoken rule demands they not be thrown out. Boys start to work as a porter at the vegetable market around 10 years old, but the majority is between 14 and 17 years old. There are no requirements to hire a trolley, so unlike the boys in an association, these informal and unorganised porters are not compelled to attend school.

The porters offer visitors at the markets the service of carrying their goods to their vehicle. Young porters at the fruit market carry weights between 200 and 400 kilogram on their trolley. At the

²¹ One of the syndicates, Warma Taranakuy, is very strict with adhering to the legal minimum age in their organisation. Colibri, the other adolescent syndicate has a lower minimum age of 12. This is a good reason for younger boys to join Colibri instead of Warma Taranakuy. The difference in minimum age probably results from the confusion in legislation concerning the minimum age in Peru and differing opinions regarding definitions of work.

vegetable market children carry much lower weights. To help against back problems, most porters at the fruit market and some at the vegetable market use a protective belt. The price for the porter service is verbally discussed and agreed upon with the customer, but children usually ask less than adults. A porter earns between 10 and 20 sol a day (2.50 to 5 euro); a bad day can result in an even lower income. One problem mentioned by several porters, especially at the vegetable market, is that clients occasionally refuse to pay. Another problem is that the trolley can be stolen.

Daniel (12), porter at vegetable market:

Sometimes they steal your two-wheel trolley at the market. You look the other way and then it is gone. We rent the trolley for one sol a day. If it gets stolen you have to pay it back, it costs around 60 sol. It happened twice to me. Then I rented another trolley to earn the money for the stolen trolley back.

This doesn't happen at the fruit market because all trolleys are marked with the name of the syndicate and the number of the porter. Porters at the fruit market also know each other and protect each others trolleys. A porter does his work alone, but at both markets the young porters stay together in groups when they are waiting for clients (see photo 2).



Photo 2: Young porters at the vegetable market waiting for a client

Working children at the vegetable market have to face competition and opposition from adults. This negative relation with adults is a factor that makes work more difficult and less pleasant:

Omar (12), porter at the vegetable market:

The adult colleagues are sometimes kind to me, then they help you, but sometimes they are not, then they want you to leave and start to scream at you. Among most of the young porters there is a friendly atmosphere, although there can also be arguments because of competition.

Leonel (14), porter at the vegetable market:

The guards really irritate me. They don't let us enter and like this we can't work. Sometimes they become violent, if you try to enter anyway. The boys that work here as porters are friendly to each other. We know each other; we speak to each other and get along well.

The adult porters at the vegetable market see the children as competition and are afraid that their presence will result in a lower income; therefore they try to keep them out of the market. Also for the formal seller, the children form competition. Some don't mind and argue that these children "just have to survive", whilst others refuse to cooperate.

3.2.2 Informal sellers and other working children



Photo 3: Children as informal sellers of 'second hand' vegetables

The markets generate a commercial area in which a variety of informal activities take place, involving both adults and children. At the vegetable market people make a business from vegetables

that fall from the carts, are thrown away or are given away. These are sold informally for a lower price. It occurs only at the vegetable market since it is not permitted at the fruit market.



Photo 4: Girls selling ice creams at the vegetable market

Discarded vegetables are sold by younger children, both boys and girls. It is common to see children working together with their mother, but there are also children working alone or with other children. Children of about 7 years old and up are found walking along the stalls in search of discarded vegetables and then sell these from mats on the ground at a lower price (see photo 3). Their presence is not always appreciated, and can result in negative reactions including even physical violence. An average child earns, with the informal sale of vegetables, between 5 and 10 sol during a working day. There are also smaller children that join their mothers, but they only sit and play instead of work. The company EMMSA doesn't allow informal sellers at the market and contracted a private security firm to control their activities. These guards take away the sellers' products during their regular rounds. However, just as with the informal porters, the sellers do their work anyway since the guards don't work very efficiently and are highly corrupt.

Another popular activity for children at the markets is the sale of readymade food and drinks. Children, who sell food and drinks, are usually those who are helping their parents' small business. This job is more common for girls as they are less accustomed to working alone. The children's tasks consist of preparing, selling and distributing the product to the client (see photo 4). Besides these three types of activities for children, which are the most common, there are a variety of other activities at the markets, such as shoe shining for boys, sewing or other textile-related activities for girls, working in restaurants with parents, or waste collection. Besides shoe shining, which is done alone or in a group of friends, most activities are conducted in the company of adult relatives. They are all more likely to take place at the vegetable market, since informal workers are not officially allowed at the fruit market. Sellers must buy a ticket to enter the fruit market, which children consider a deterrent. Most of these activities are not considered to be difficult or harming by nature, but the working conditions determined by the market environment are highly undesirable.

3.2.3 General labour conditions at the markets

There are some significant conditions that apply to all children at the markets, including those who only join their mothers without actually working. As mentioned earlier, the markets belong to the most unsafe areas of the city of Lima. Children find the neighbourhood in which they work dangerous, although they have become accustomed to it. The following quote shows how children experience the market on their first visit and how they familiarise themselves with it:

Leonel (14), porter at the vegetable market:

I knew the market because my mother used to sell products in this neighbourhood. When I was looking for a job I came here alone, went to the place where they rent the trolleys and started to work. The first time I was a bit afraid. There were many drunken men who bothered me. Sometimes they get aggressive; they push you or pull your hair. Now I am not afraid anymore. I just don't pay attention to the drunken men and they don't bother me so much anymore.

The fruit market is considered to be safer than the vegetable market. The working adolescents feel that the strict organisation and control at the fruit market and the complete lack of it at the vegetable market is to account for this. Although there are guards and private police, these don't take much action against the delinquents in the area. Working children at the vegetable market seriously lack personal security.

Julio (10), informal seller at the vegetable market:

This work is not so difficult, but some adults are bad. Sometimes we take onions and potatoes and then they get angry, they start to scream at you. Others just give it to you.

Luisa (14) told me that "adult sellers are sometimes bad; you are looking for potatoes to sell, and they grab your breast in a corner where nobody sees it." Her experience shows that girls, but also boys, can suffer sexual intimidation and even sexual assaults during work.

Another negative characteristic of the work that children perform at the markets is the early hours at which they start to work. The trucks with vegetables arrive as from 2 a.m. and this is also when

the working day starts for many children. The porters at the fruit market usually start around 5 or 6 in the morning, but at the vegetable market many children begin to work even earlier. Also informal sellers and children who offer other services arrive when the commerce is at its peak, which is very early.

Camila (8):

I work every day at the market and collect potatoes, my mothers sells them. Usually I arrive together with my mother at 3 am and sometimes I go later myself. A friend of mine always arrives here at 1 a.m. She says that she is not tired. At night it is dangerous here, but my friend says she is not afraid.

Jhon (13):

I work here sometimes with my mother. Today I started at 3 am. I live in San Juan de Miraflores, around one hour in bus from here, so I woke up at 2 am.

Most children finish their work by the morning. Porters at the fruit market normally work until 9 o'clock in the morning; a porter in La Parada will work until 10 or 11 o'clock. Many children start school at 8, and work until 7.30. During the weekends, a working day is normally a bit longer. Children who stay throughout the afternoon are exceptions, but exist; they are usually informal sellers and not porters. Children who collect garbage are busy in the late afternoons and at night.

Obviously, the market is less safe during the night, and starting to work at early hours has its risks. Some young people even stay the night at the market to be as early as possible and save the money of their trip home, as is explained in the following quote:

Benjamin (18):

I have worked as a porter at La Parada since I was 11 years old. I arrive every morning between 5 and 6 in the morning. Once I spent the night here, a few years ago. I wanted to start working early, at 2. I slept on a bag of potatoes in a permanent stall and covered myself with potato bags. It is dangerous because there are people who want to assault and rob you at night, but if you cover yourself well with bags, it is fine. It is usually persons with a permanent stall here that spend the night, because they have to start early.

But afternoons at the vegetable market are also notoriously dangerous. Adult labourers mostly drink after work, often resulting in drunkenness and aggression. Working children at the markets are exposed to the risks of the street, especially when they arrive before sunrise and after sunset, and especially at the vegetable market.

Children working at the markets don't have fixed working schedules. The markets are open seven days a week and don't close on holidays. Children's schedules depend on themselves or occasionally the people they work for. Many children in fact work every day, and have no free days.

3.3 The participation of children in waste collection and recycling

The production chain of waste materials, or “recycling” as the locals refer to it, has several parts in which children participate and which were included in this research. The chain is more extended than at the markets. It basically consists of collecting garbage, either manually or by truck; sorting through waste materials, either at a small informal dumpsite or at the big formal garbage dump; and finally transporting, processing and selling the waste materials.

Children and adolescents are involved in many parts of the production chain; their activities can be grouped as follows:

- collect waste materials
- work on a garbage truck
- work at a formal garbage dump
- work at an informal dumpsite

3.3.1 Collecting waste material

Almost all types of waste are reused in the recycling process in Carabayllo. The first way in which materials reach the dumpsites in Las Lomas de Carabayllo is by private individuals that collect garbage by hand. In many parts of Lima, and especially the poor and densely populated ones, people collect from the streets or from their own households. They either sell this to local buyers of waste material who transport it to Carabayllo, or they transport it themselves. In Las Lomas de Carabayllo, many families sell their own garbage to the closest dumpsite. There are also people who buy from other houses and subsequently sell it at a dumpsite for a better price. Children are involved in this activity in Las Lomas de Carabayllo, but also in other districts in Lima, such as in La Victoria, where lots of garbage is produced and no proper collection system functions.

Since waste material is easy to sell in Las Lomas de Carabayllo, the collection of it is a logical activity. Children collect waste material usually during their “free” hours in the neighbourhood, often together with friends. It is an activity that involves both boys as girls, but the former are more common given that boys generally have more free time and girls are expected to help more at home. Children walk around with friends and collect any type of waste they consider to be useful, i.e. that can be sold. They do not work according to particular hours and often combine their work with play. The collected material is either sold directly to a local buyer, or stored at home to save up and sell in bulk.

Mario (10):

Last year I often went to collect bottles with a friend. We knew the place where the drunken men would fight. The next day we always found lots of broken bottles. We sold the glass to a garbage dealer.

Children become creative and recognise many possibilities to make money from waste materials.

Samuel (12):

With my brother of 8 years old we always find something useful! Once we were at school and the teacher wanted to throw away a big pile of papers. I asked if I was allowed to take it and I could. My bag was not big enough so I called my brother.

Together we took it home. We also collect bottles, plastic or carton. My mother goes often to Comas to find materials. Once we have collected a lot, we find someone who pays well and sell it.

Most children collect waste materials with one of their caretakers. The children as well as the adults complain about how local buyers tend to pay the children less than adults, because children are less informed about appropriate prices.

3.3.2 Working on the garbage truck

In all districts of Lima inhabitants put their garbage out on the streets, contained in plastic bags. Garbage trucks collect the bags and bring them to one of the garbage dumps on the border of Lima. There are generally three types of collection trucks: formally contracted trucks by the municipality, informal trucks belonging to private individuals, and semi-informal garbage trucks. The last category consists of people with a truck who are subsidised to collect garbage from particular areas, but who are not on the payroll. Each city district arranges its own garbage collection; not every truck is given permission to collect in all districts, at any time.

Many trucks, whether formal or not, sell at least a part of their garbage to private garbage buyers in and around Carabayllo. Waste materials have normally been sorted in the trucks, by informal employees, so that specific types of garbage can be offered and sold. The extra income that is obtained by the sale of waste material is shared among the informal and formal personnel.

The persons who informally separate the waste materials on the trucks are often young adults and adolescents. Women are rarely found doing this. Some of those informal employees live in Las Lomas de Carabayllo. Their task is to stand in the truck while it is doing its rounds and sort the different types of waste materials, such as plastic, paper, and glass. The working schedule of these adolescents depends on the district in which they work. The working days are long, and the activities are tiring:

Juan (20):

I worked in a garbage truck when I was 18 years old. I worked from 8 at night to 6 in the morning, because in that district they didn't want garbage trucks during the days. Sometimes it became later than 6. I worked there only for a few months. The job was heavy because you have to bend down all the time to put things in the right place.

The adolescents doing this work wear thin gloves, which are not sufficiently protective. They wear their own clothes, and are not provided with any uniform or other protective clothing. One of the boys explained how they become accustomed to the garbage:

Diego (25):

My working day was from 6 in the morning to 6 in the afternoon. Often we didn't have time to have a proper lunch. Sometimes we ate and drank things that we found among the waste material. People throw away entire cakes! We always looked if it was still in its wrapper, otherwise we wouldn't eat it.

The adolescents on the trucks sell the useful materials and share the income among everyone on the truck. During an average shift, each of the adolescents will earn between 20 and 30 sol (between 5 and 7.50 euro). The boys mentioned that lately it has become more difficult for adolescents to join the crew on a truck, even for informal employees in general, because nowadays there is much more control on the trucks.

3.3.3 Working at the formal garbage dump

When the waste material arrives in Las Lomas de Carabayllo, it goes either directly to the formal garbage dump, which is not accessible for informal garbage trucks, or first to a private dumpsite, and later possibly to the formal garbage dump. At the formal garbage dump, all materials are mixed. Here the waste material is not necessarily at its final destination. It is common that a trader organises a group of people to collect different sorts of garbage from the dump. These collectors then sell their materials to the trader for a relatively low price. Although access to the dump is strongly prohibited, it is possible for a trader to bribe the guard on duty. The collected waste material ends up at the trader's dumpsite, where it can be further processed. The trader eventually transports his clean and sorted material to companies or industries outside of Carabayllo, where they are mechanically processed and recycled. In exceptional cases, materials are illegally recycled and sold on the black market.

The formal garbage dump is another place where adolescents are found as informal workers, although not in large numbers. Children were more commonly found at the dump when entrance was still allowed, but since the restricted access came into place, only adults and older adolescents dare enter. The adolescents collect different types of waste materials at the dumps. They work in a group of around 10 persons for one trader, but each person collects for himself. The trader doesn't provide protective clothing or other measures. The collectors are brought to the dump in the afternoons and walk through the dump at night, collecting and sorting garbage. Their loads by the end of their shift can weigh up to 150 kg. They work for about 12 hours non-stop, even though they are allowed to rest. They prefer to keep working because more material means more income. The mood within the groups is considered to be good; people protect or help each other when necessary.

The waste has to be sold to the trader, who pays less than an average private trader, but who was the one to help them into the dump. In addition, each worker must pay 40 sol (10 euro) as an entrance fee. According to a young worker, the average income for one day of work, after paying the fee, comes to 80 sol (20 euro), which is a relatively high amount in Las Lomas de Carabayllo. Hence, the workers can afford to work only a few days a week.

3.3.4 Working at an informal dumpsite

Due to the presence of garbage, several small sized and informal dumpsites arose in the area, in which garbage materials are sorted for recycling. These small informal dumpsites are managed by private owners living in the area. They receive their materials mostly from trucks or from larger dumpsites. Some trucks also sell their materials first to a relatively small and informal garbage dump outside the area, which subsequently resells it to private dumpsites in Las Lomas. Small dumpsites can buy materials from bigger dumpsites when they don't have the direct contacts with trucks or collectors. A small dumpsite owner or trader works with one or more specific types of

material, depending on the size of his business. In his dumpsite all material must be cleaned and made ready for resale. When it involves small quantities of material, the trader can do this himself with the help of his family. In most cases however, personnel is contracted to work in this part of the process. The exact activities depend on the type of waste material that is worked with.

Children in this business are most commonly found in small private dumpsites, which are walled areas, usually adjacent to the house of the trader. The types of waste materials in a dumpsite can differ, and depend on the choice of the trader; most common materials include soft plastic, hard plastic, plastic bottles, glass, paper, rubber and hospital waste. The trader must sort and clean the materials before he is able to sell them; he hires personnel for these tasks. Each worker is in charge of one type of waste material. The exact tasks involved depend on the material. Relatively innocent activities include separating different types of paper, or different colours of plastic (see photo 5). But sorting glass by colour is a potentially more harmful task. The most noxious exposure comes from heating rubber soles off shoes, or dismantling and sorting through clinical waste (see photo 6). However, all tasks are potentially dangerous because even bags with “innocent” materials can contain hazards such as sharp objects, toxic liquids or human waste.



Photo 5: Boy working with his mother sorting out paper in a deposit

Children from eight years old can be found working at the small private dumpsites. They normally work with one of their parents, during the weekends, after or before school and during holidays. Children of about 14 years old also start to work alone or with relatives of their own age. Those older children are more likely to work fulltime, something that is uncommon among the youngest.

Samuel (12):

Sometimes I go with my mother and little brother to work at a dumpsite. We are usually involved in “peeling bottles”. We have to take the labels off the plastic bottle and cut the plastic ring from the neck. To get the labels off properly, we use a flame to melt the glue. My brother only uses his hands, because the flame can be dangerous. If it is a school day, I work a half day.

Victor (15):

I am the oldest son of a family with 5 children. I work fulltime here and don’t go to school this year. At the moment I work together with my cousin in clinical waste. We have to cut intravenous tubes with a scissors. My other cousin also works here at the moment and dismantles syringes. Next year I start to work on a garbage truck. I have done that before, with my uncle.



Photo 6: Boys working with clinical waste

As becomes clear from the examples, working children or their parents are responsible for their choice of activity, working hours and so forth; traders are neither involved in controlling who does what at their sites, nor are any protective measures in place or special clothing provided. All workers, including the children, work in their regular clothes and rarely use any form of protection. Working children at a dumpsite sit on the ground in the open air, which can be cold and wet during winter months. The environment is not suitable for long hours; besides the poor weather conditions, the area is full of fumes and vapours from burning waste material (see photo 7).



Photo 7: An unhealthy environment for working children

People who work at a dumpsite can either receive a daily salary or be paid per weight. The former is more convenient for beginner labourers, but those who have more experience prefer the latter. In reality though, most people are paid by weight; especially children are never paid on a daily basis. The price per kilogram differs per material; paper, plastic and plastic bottles pay 15 sol cents per kilogram; clinical waste 30 sol cents per kilogram. An average worker can earn between 6 and 14 sol a day (between 1.50 and 3.50 euro), depending on the level of experience. A fixed day salary generally comes to 10 sol a day (2.50 euro). Children who work with their parents do not receive a salary; their work increases their parents' production and they are paid as a whole. Some traders offer lunch at the dumpsite, which is generally appreciated. Since all labour is informal, workers are not registered and there are no contracts, insurance or social benefits. The dumpsites are open from Monday to Saturday and usual working hours are between 8 in the morning and 6 in the afternoon. People who work without a fixed salary can arrive and leave whenever they like, but usually stick to this schedule. The working hours allow children to combine work with school.

The traders themselves normally also have children. These children are always surrounded by waste material, and although their parents are relatively wealthy, they are likely to work during their free hours. These children are usually not sorting through different types of waste material for many hours, like the labourers, but occasionally assist, or help their fathers with transport, sales and purchases of more materials. Especially boys are interested in helping their fathers, since there is the hope of taking over the business in the future (see photo 8).



Photo 8: Boy helps his father, who is a trader, with the transport of waste materials

3.4 Legislation concerning working children in Lima

The conditions under which children in both parts of Lima live and work conflict with national and international child protection laws on several levels. The general minimum age at which children are allowed to work is 14 years. However, at the markets as well as in the production chain of waste recycling, children below 14 years old are found to be working, opposing the national Code of Adolescents and the ILO Convention 138. Children from 12 years old are by law only allowed to work in light activities with special permission from a judge, but some activities can appear be light by their nature, whilst the conditions, such as the lack of safety and hygiene, make most activities unacceptable for children. Children younger than 12 can also be found working, which is under no circumstances legally permitted.

The conditions of working adolescents are subject to regulations; these are, however, not respected. Children between 12 and 14 years old are allowed to work a maximum of four hours a day; during the research, children from 8 years old were observed exceeding this time at the vegetable market or at a dumpsite. Adolescents between 15 and 16 years old may not work more than six hours a day and 36 hours a week; many young workers exceed this number of hours at the dumpsites in Carabayllo and at the vegetable market. Working at night is prohibited by law for children, but work at the formal garbage dump is always at night and youngsters working at the markets usually start before sunrise.

The formally organised porters at the fruit market generally respect the amount of permitted working hours established for their age, since they usually work between 5 and 9 in the morning.

Their activities, however, conflict with the law in other ways. Work that involves carrying heavy loads is prohibited by the Code of Children and Adolescents for anyone younger than 18, and CPETI has put porter activities on the list of dangerous jobs for children. In practice, however, the minimum age for porters is considered to be 14 years old, just like non-harmful jobs. Recently a new law was proposed and would set the legal minimum age for porters at 16 years old, but this has not yet been implemented.²² The porters at the fruit market carry heavy loads that even exceed the maximum permitted weight for adults. The weights at the vegetable market are much lower, but here younger children work for longer hours. According to Convention 182, all children at the vegetable market are involved in a hazardous form of child labour, since they work at a dangerous location.

In the same way, working with waste materials is considered by CPETI to be a dangerous job for children. This is because of the consequences of this work for children, which will be discussed in the following chapter, and the definitions of hazardous forms. In fact, all activities concerning garbage are carried out in unhealthy and often dangerous locations. Social security for young labourers is not available in any of the jobs, as all belong to the informal sector.

Important civil rights are denied the working children as well. Many of the children observed during this research lack a healthy living environment and an adequate family environment. The former is especially the case in Las Lomas de Carabaylo and the latter in the centre of Lima; both are important problems and certainly affect children's wellbeing. Especially at the markets it is very common for children to work many hours in addition to school attendance. This seriously reduces their recreation time, which is another basic right for children. Finally, health and education are important civil rights. These services are commonly on offer, but often because of their work not available to the children. And even where education is available for working children, it doesn't always imply qualitative education, for example, in the case of EBA.

The local population is generally not familiar with the relevant laws and conventions. As in most areas of Peru, 14-year-olds are not considered to be children and working adolescents are a normal phenomenon. Little distinction is made between different types of work, although working with garbage is considered to be bad for children by most people. Locals do recognise the need for legal interference in extreme cases, such as where young children work alone for many hours, or children without any support from parents, or children that have to leave school because of work.

²² The minimum age of 14 years old for work, including for porters, is used by NGOs among others. Since the possible future changes of the legal minimum age became known, organisations such as the porter associations have started to think about alternatives in case the law is put into practice. The law would exclude a significant number of porters from membership.

Chapter 4

Consequences of Labour for Children

Working with waste materials or at markets has its consequences for the children's lives. This chapter discusses health, educational, familial and other possible consequences. The chapter concludes by relating the findings to local perspectives and determines whether the sectors or activities should be considered as worst forms of child labour or not.

4.1 Consequences for health

It is relevant to determine whether or not a particular activity has a negative effect on a child's health or not, because Convention 182 finds health-related consequences a determinant for worst forms of child labour.

4.1.1 Health consequences for children working at markets

Working at the wholesale markets in Lima involves many different activities; it is therefore not possible to describe the general health consequence as a result of the work at the markets, but some complaints related to jobs can be identified. Nearby health posts in La Victoria receive very few children with problems that were caused or related to their work at or around the markets. From the conversations with the working children it appeared, however, that they do have some physical complaints that are directly related to their labour activities; most of these complaints concern back problems. Backaches are caused by lifting and carrying heavy loads, and are normally mentioned by porters as a result of their work, but sometimes also by informal sellers. Especially the youngest porters and the beginners get muscle problems due to carrying. More experienced workers say that a lack of experience and knowledge about how to lift and carry the goods will cause problems. Most children, however, consider their aches and pains as a natural and logical consequence of their work and, although bothersome, not worthy of a visit to a doctor.

The Inter-federal Coordinator of Health presented a report in 2003 in which they called the activities of porters "extremely dangerous for children and adolescents due to the damage it causes to their health" [CIS 2003]. Besides the obvious physical problems caused by the work - joint and muscle aches - the children also run the risk of being injured in workplace accidents involving the goods or vehicles, or being affected by verbal or physical abuse on the work floor, or developing respiratory illnesses. The institute, moreover, complains of a lack of information about the consequences of the work [CIS 2003].

Accidents occasionally happen at the market, but are not very frequent. Some children did mention the risk of an accident as one of the negative aspects of their work.

Bryan (10):

I used to work as a porter during the weekends. Once I collided with another trolley, my hand got stuck in between and turned double. It hurt very much and I had to go to the hospital. That's why now I don't do that anymore. When I work, I sell vegetables.

The porters' organisation at the fruit market, Warma Taranakuy, who have a first aid kit at their disposal when in need, argue that accidents and serious injuries are very rare. This is probably because of the relatively strict organisation at the fruit market. But, working children and adolescents also have the tendency to play down potential dangers. According to a porter at the vegetable market, a young boy once died after being crushed by heavy loads. Recollections were also made of a hand crushed between trolleys or crates or bad falls when carrying heavy loads. Adult porters complained about problems with their backs, their kidneys and their waists; these problems most likely become more pronounced in the long-run.

A very common physical effect of the work is exhaustion and tiredness, caused by the early starting hours, long working days and high levels of exertion. Especially porters must put in a lot of physical effort, but all tasks at the markets involve early hours and long days. It is common for the children to complain about being tired; especially when it is warm, and even more so if they attend school in the afternoons and have no rest during the day. Some children wished for another job "that would be less tiring".

Opinions of working children about their work differ. In general, boys prefer a job in which they feel free to move around, like a job as a porter.

Omar (12):

I like the job I have. I used to work with my brother at his vegetable stand. I didn't like that, because I was enclosed, people tell you what you should do; I couldn't do anything. As a porter you are free. You can do whatever you like, you walk around. It is fun.

There are children who prefer to work rather than stay at home, because they get bored and feel enclosed at home. Girls prefer to have a job in which they feel free, but also protected. Children who work for their own money argued often that they would like to have a job that pays more. Many children who help one or both of their parents, especially girls, mentioned that they like helping, and also often enjoy the activity.

Paula (12); helps her mother selling juice at the vegetable market:

I began to work when I was 4 or 5 years old. We were selling *chicharrones* on the street. I liked it because I got to know many people. I also liked it because after work my mother bought me something, and because we worked together to achieve something, together we stand strong.

Despite the satisfaction with their jobs or preferences for other jobs, most working children prefer not to work at all, especially when it concerns long hours. Once the novelty wears off they quickly realise that working is not as enjoyable as they expected it to be. They consider their work to be too heavy and not suitable for children their age. Another feeling that dominates the children's

working day is boredom. There are not always enough clients to keep all the porters and sellers busy, which results in a lot of waiting and doing nothing. During a focus group discussion with children who work and attend school, negative aspects of work for children were discussed. Most of the issues were related to dangers on the streets, such as the presence of drunken men, physical violence, thieves, kidnappings, traffic and drugs. The children consider themselves too young to effectively defend themselves. Although the working children think they are capable of working, they have other opinions when it concerns their own future children.

Valentina (14); helps her aunt selling around the market:

If I had children I wouldn't send them to work. I think that parents should fulfil their responsibilities; the problems are not the child's fault. I would like my children to get on in life, so I would send them to school.

Omar (12):

If I would have children I would let them work when they are professionals, when they are 18 or 20. Then they can do something easy, like being a lawyer or a policeman. I wouldn't want them to work themselves to death. If they start to work here at such a young age they fail school, and they won't go studying anymore.

On the other hand, many working children in La Victoria argued that they would tell their children to help them in light activities to prevent them from becoming lazy. The following chapter discusses the differences made between work and help.

Working children at the market miss out on what is for many an essential aspect of childhood: free time and recreation. Many children work every day, even on Sundays and holidays, in addition to attending school. Although most of the boys mentioned having some free time for football or TV, most girls spend their free time on domestic tasks, and have very little recreation.

Child labour is not fully accepted, illustrated by the fact that many working children at the markets are ashamed to tell other children about their work. This is only really true for those who work for their own money, rather than those who work with their parents. Helping a parent is highly acceptable and no cause for shame. Many porters hide their working lives from others:

Leonel (14):

At my school I am the only one who works. The other children don't know that I work, I never told them. I feel a bit ashamed about it. I know it is good to be honest, but I will tell them in a while. At the end it is nothing bad what I am doing. I least I study and work; I never steal or anything like that.

The shame and reluctance to talk about their work indicates a certain level of discomfort with the fact that they have to work and a negative perspective of the specific activities they are involved in.

4.1.2 Health consequences for children working with waste materials

The waste materials that arrive in Las Lomas de Carabayllo can include anything thrown away by the residents of Lima. The children and adolescents who work with the materials do this without

effective protection, which results in hygiene-related health problems. Specific consequences depend on the type of activity.

Children who gather waste from the streets, or who sort through waste at private dumpsites, come into direct contact with hazardous materials. They mostly fail to see the risks themselves, as they are only concerned with finding useful materials that they can sell. When Christian (8) saw sweets wrapped in plastic among the garbage he was happy to pick them up. He argued: “my cousins taught me to always check the expiry date; when this is fine, you can eat them”. Christian also gathers materials with his brother on the streets from time to time, and sometimes joins his mother at a dumpsite. His mother discovered that he and his brother (12) were suffering from a yeast infection in their necks. She was familiar with the problem because she had suffered from it recently too. To avoid any medical costs she self-medicated and cured the infection with ash; eventually it went away. Yeast infections are relatively innocent, but persistent if left untreated.

Workers are exposed to all sorts of garbage at a dumpsite. Adults mentioned sustaining injuries such as burns from acids when working with bottles, needle pricks when working with clinical waste, or cuts from any kind of sharp object. Children mentioned little cuts or blisters on their fingers. Working with clinical waste is highly dangerous because of the risk of infection. The waste materials also result in the presence of flies and other insects that are able to transmit disease.

The owner of a dumpsite usually won't take any form of action for relatively small injuries. Workers are responsible for themselves, but since they ordinarily are reluctant to admit mistakes made and injuries sustained, they rarely seek medical attention, thus increasing their risk of infection. Most children find themselves capable of performing the tasks without harm, but admit that the work can be dangerous for children.

Esmee (8):

I worked from my 5th to my 7th year together with my family at a dumpsite. We lived in the jungle and when we came to Lima the owner of a dumpsite offered us a house at his dumpsite. My parents worked every day and me and the other children helped them after school. We were dedicated to peeling bottles. With a little knife we cut the ring from the bottle. Sometimes I cut myself but never seriously. My father used a fire to cut the ring but he didn't let us do that because of the harmful smoke. Now we moved to another house and don't work there anymore. The work was heavy but also nice. I wouldn't let my own children do this work though; it can be dangerous. For example around the house there were always nails on the ground and when I went to wash myself I could step in them. Children can also easily get ill, and that would give extra costs. Fortunately I never got ill.

When children work with their parents, they are better protected; parents usually take on the more harmful activities. However, it is clear that living and working at a dumpsite exposes children to health risks, although consequences are often not immediate.

Other activities in this sector have similar health consequences for children and adolescents. Work in a garbage truck puts workers into direct contact with garbage and the lack of protective measures leads to hygiene and physical problems. In addition, youngsters are tempted to consume food and drinks they find among the garbage, which can lead to serious health risks. Working in a

truck is considered to be heavy work because of the long working hours and the fact that one has to bend over all the time.

Working at the official large garbage dump seems to be one of the most damaging locations for children. The workers are not only likely to suffer from the lack of hygiene, but in addition suffer from back problems because of having to consistently bend over and having to carry heavy loads. The fumes of the garbage, combined with the long working hours, cause headaches.

Juan (20):

I went already to the garbage dump when I was 12 years old. At that time it was open for everybody. Now I work a few nights a week in a group of 6 people, all young like me. This work is the heaviest I did in my life. You can rest because nobody tells you what to do, but at the end you are always very tired. Especially your waist suffers from the work, because of carrying the bags and bending over all the time. The first times I worked I got a strong headache, probably because of the gases from the garbage, but after a few times it goes away; you get used to it. I think that this work would be too heavy for a child. But if a child is used to work at the dump from a young age, like me, he can do it.

The work at the big dumps is carried out at night, which increases the likelihood of accidents but also limits and disrupts the hours of sleep for all involved.

In addition to these specific complaints caused by the work, there are some general health risks that many children endure. These complaints are related to the lack of hygiene and the high levels of pollution in the neighbourhood caused by the presence of the garbage, the pig breeding and, more seriously, the illegal lead smelting. The collection of garbage produces methane, which is harmful for people's health. Breathing in methane gases causes headaches, drowsiness and can in extreme cases lead to unconsciousness [U.S. Department of Labor]. The low learning capacity of children is, according to the local doctor, explained by lead poisoning. Lead can seriously affect the neurological system, and cause learning disabilities, decreased IQ, mental retardation, loss of hearing, among others [Learning Radiology]. Fumes from burning garbage are dangerous when inhaled, and may cause immediate irritation or asthmatic attacks. Exposure can lead to reproductive, developmental, and immunological problems in humans and animals. Children are more susceptible to all these risks; because of their body size, they inhale more air per kilogram of body mass than adults do, and can absorb a proportionately larger dose of toxins [Zender Environmental 2007].

Collecting garbage in the streets can be recreational in children's eyes, but working at a private dumpsite, a truck or the formal large garbage dump is certainly labour. The work is also generally not something that children enjoy. However, some children feel satisfied when helping their parents, especially when they are in an economically poor situation. Although most children work with materials that they consider "easy" and "not dangerous", the presence of clinical waste can be daunting.

Christian (8):

The dangerous part of the work is when you can get infected with some disease. My mother once told me that someone died because she pricked herself with a syringe while working. I know that you should always be careful with liquids that come with the clinical waste. That's why you should always take a piece of cloth. Although I work only with easy material like plastic bottles, I always take a cloth.

Christian also mentioned that some children make fun of him and his brother because of their work: "Some children laugh about the fact me and my brother peel bottles. They say: 'ha-ha-ha, you work and you earn very little money'." Obviously, he feels uncomfortable about his work, but also feels the need to help his mother.

4.2 Consequences for education

4.2.1 Consequences for the education of working children at the markets

The Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children should be protected from work that interferes with a child's education. Most of the children that work at and around the markets attend school, but a significant number do not. Although their work is not always the only reason for them to stop going to school, it is almost without exception the most important reason. These children lack either the time or the financial means to go to school. Instead they work fulltime. Often, working children plan to skip school for one year and then return. However, it often results in permanent dropout.

Omar (12):

I don't go to school this year. My father told me that I wouldn't go this year. I have 5 brothers and sisters. I live with my brother in Lima and the rest of the family lives in Huancayo. The money that I earn is for me; I use it to buy food and clothes. Sometimes I also send something to my mother. I also try to save money to go to school again next year. I haven't saved anything yet so I am not sure I will make it, it is quite difficult. Then I would only work in weekends and holidays.

Some children do manage to continue school after one or two years of fulltime work. At the primary school José Antonio Encinas, every class has some students that are older than average. These students either come from the countryside, where they didn't go to school for several reasons, or they have been working fulltime in Lima.

Particularly children who live without parents are prone to quit school. These children lack the economic support of their parents and have more need to work fulltime. They also lack a psychological support from their parents to continue studying, either because there is no contact with parents, or because their parents still living in the countryside see education as a matter of minor concern.

Valentina (14):

I like school very much, but I don't think I can continue next year. My parents live in Cuzco and my aunt is planning to move to Argentina next year; I will be left alone in

Lima. I don't have other relatives here, so I will start to work as a maid *cama dentro* to earn my own living. Then it won't be possible anymore to go to school.

Although education is available, working children don't always have the opportunity to attend. In a few cases the child decides to stop studying and work instead. This is usually the case with adolescents who prefer to earn money and lack a supportive relationship with their parents. Several children explained that getting used to earning your own money is a negative consequence of work and affects education. These adolescents often regret their decision afterwards. In general, children prefer school over work.

The risk of dropout doesn't apply to the porters at the fruit market because the association they belong to requires them to continue their studies; unfortunately though, their work does interfere with their performance at school. There are also many children in and around the market, such as shoe shiners and children who help sell food and drinks, who are not in any associations and who are not motivated to stay in school.

For many of the working children who attend school, their work at the markets negatively influences their school performance. Most children start work very early in the mornings, and get to school late and exhausted. The work reduces the number of hours at school and is likely to affect their performance. Since the working children have worked up to 4 hours before coming to school, they often feel tired; some of them even fall asleep during class. At the primary school José Antonio Encinas teachers are used to this and let these children sleep "because they need their sleep, and wouldn't pay attention anyway." Other children plan a short nap after work and attend school in the afternoons, but often end up sleeping the entire afternoon. Work requires children to be active at certain hours, resulting in a lack of time or energy for anything else including attending school and completing homework.

Kathy (13); collects garbage around the vegetable market:

I help my aunt and cousin collect plastic bags in a mall in La Victoria. We usually work from 9 p.m. to midnight or sometimes until 2 a.m.; I wake up every day at 7 a.m. Sometimes I sleep in the afternoon after school, but that's also the time I should be doing my homework because after work it is too late.

Jessica (13):

I help my mother to sell clothes at Gamarra. We work every day from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m.; in the morning I go to school. I do my homework until 11 p.m. or midnight, but sometimes I don't finish it and go to bed.

So some children do their homework whilst they should be sleeping, and others do it during their work. Neither option is favourable to a child's educational development. Work-related worries, such as levels of income, also negatively influence a child's ability to perform optimally at school or when doing homework.

The children who attend EBA are normally those who have more demanding working hours, and thus they choose an educational system that caters to their situation. However, these children work fulltime and try to study; their schedules are extremely loaded. For example, ten-year-old Flor has

been working as an informal seller of vegetables at La Parada for 1.5 years. She always comes alone, and lives with her brother and sister-in-law in the centre of Lima. She works every day from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. or sometimes later, depending on her earnings. She goes to school from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., and then does her homework before or after school. She commented that she is tired most of the time, and prefers to work than go to school because of the money she earns. Moreover, the children's work schedule forces them to study according to the PEBA, a form of primary education that is of relatively low quality. Work is in this way an indirect cause of low quality education.

Teachers are generally unsatisfied with working children's achievements. The majority of them blame the poor attendance and performance on their late arrivals, poor attention in class, problems at home and lack of sleep. One teacher commented:

Working children are often from low educated families; these families don't care much about education. The children get very little attention from their parents because they work the entire day. Many working children also live with relatives like uncles instead of their parents, often resulting in abuse at home. They don't have an organised life with discipline; they are used to life on the streets.

On the other hand, another teacher was convinced that working children perform better at school since "they are more responsible, disciplined and not lazy." The children with the lowest results are, according to her, the children that are abandoned or mistreated by their parents.

For teachers it is difficult to convince children or their parents to attend school. Parents often don't show up for arranged meetings and the layout of the neighbourhood makes it difficult for teachers to track their students; several teachers mentioned bad experiences with delinquents and even with the children's parents when they went in search of them. A teacher explained that, "a few times I went to look for the children in the neighbourhood, and found them in a gambling hall. I have also been badly assaulted in the hills where these children live, so I don't go anymore. Now I just send messages with their classmates." Although these are not work-related problems, it does reflect the environment in which these children live.

4.2.2 Consequences for the education of children working with waste materials

Whether work has consequences for children's education depends highly on the type of activity and the amount of hours it entails. Most activities, however, do result in poor performances and attendance rates.

Children up to 14 years old go, almost without exception, to school. Children in this age category usually do not work, or do so only on a part-time basis. Many of the activities can be done at any time of day, and are therefore easily combined with school. Primary school children attend classes in the mornings and are able to work in the afternoons and weekends. Although these children are not missing school days, they are likely to spend less time and effort on their homework.

Esmee (8):

I helped my parents after school sorting waste materials at the dumpsite where we used to live. We worked until 5 or 6 p.m., and then my father told me to do my

homework. Sometimes I was tired after the entire day of school and work, but I always did my homework and I never failed class.

Mario (10):

Last year I used to collect bottles with my friend. I went almost every day and I forgot to do my homework. I got bad grades and almost failed class. Therefore, my mother doesn't allow me anymore; I have to focus on school now.

Teachers commented that various children have requested permission to arrive late or leave early, so that they can help their parents at work. Permission is usually granted because "it is a matter of need". Consequently, these children miss significant hours of school.

A CESIP study revealed that among school children, work is the main reason for non-attendance. Other reasons are economic problems and diseases [Cesip 2004]. A number of the working children explained that they had failed the year, but it was unclear whether it was because of their work, or because of other circumstances such as familial problems or inadequate living conditions, which often go hand in hand. As in other poor areas of Lima, working children often come from families in which the general educational level is low. Their parents are unlikely to attribute much value to education and are less able to support their children in their educational progress.

According to a CESIP study in 2003, only 89% of the adolescents involved were at school, compared to 95% of the children [Cesip 2004]. The adolescents are usually the oldest son or daughter of a large family and fulfil the role of breadwinner within the family. Some adolescents don't want to go to school anymore for other reasons and decide to work. During the research, adolescents were found who had stopped school at 14. Boys are more likely to stop school than girls. They start to work fulltime in informal private dumpsites, on garbage trucks or at the official garbage dump. Since these jobs are rarely permanent, adolescents alternate or combine activities with waste materials and other jobs. Many adolescents that stop studying have the intention to continue after a certain time; however, only a small number really do so. Schooling is normally fully abandoned, negatively affecting possibilities of further education and prospects.

4.3 Consequences for family relations

Working children often coming from families in difficult situations and many working children also suffer from family problems. Whether these problems are a consequence of their work, or vice versa, is not always clear, but there is certainly a relationship between the two.

4.3.1 Consequences for family relations of children working at the markets

Many of the working children at the markets are first or second generation migrants. Some children migrate from the countryside to Lima to work and end up living alone or with other relatives that are not their parents. These children usually work but are dependent on their relatives for their living. In the countryside, they wouldn't have the opportunities to go to school or to work, which makes them decide to stay, especially if conditions at home are not good. Other children migrate with their entire families because their families are looking for better job opportunities. These families end up living in the least favourable places of Lima, but stay because it is near to their work at the market. Moreover, generational conflicts between parents who grew up in a traditional

rural community and the city children are quite common; this leads to misunderstandings within the family [Valenzuela et al. 2007]. In short, the migration of entire families or children migrating alone to Lima is likely to cause problems within the family. It is important to note that work, either for children or for their parents, is one of the main reasons for migration.

A large number of working children work with (one of) their parents or other relatives, while others work alone. In a focus group discussion with school-going and working children it was mentioned that working with adult relatives improves the child's safety, especially in the case of girls, and is therefore considered preferable to working alone. Most of the girls in fact also prefer working accompanied; exceptions are girls who work with relatives with which they have a bad relationship. Girls who help their mothers often argue that it gives them a sense of satisfaction, which increases when their mothers reward them for their help. Contributing to the family income can make a child feel worthwhile and the mother satisfied about her daughter. The working girl Paula (12) explained this feeling by saying that she liked working because "together we stand strong".

Economic pressures can cause a multitude of problems within a family, especially if a child is expected to relieve these needs. Many working children are at least partly responsible for contributing to the family income; in some cases children are the only breadwinners. In the latter case, which mostly applies to boys, children feel pressed to earn enough money and parents can react aggressively when their sons or daughters don't fulfil their expectations.

Daniel (10); porter at the vegetable market:

We are 7 children at home; I am the youngest. My father and brother are also porters. My mother has been ill, already for a few years. I don't know exactly what she has but she has to stay home and can't work. So the money that I earn is all for her. I started today at 6 a.m. but I haven't earned anything yet. When I come home without money my mother gets upset, sometimes she slaps me. I'll stay until 11 a.m. and then I'll go home. What else can I do?

A social worker that used to work with the children at the vegetable market explained that this is often the beginning for children to start living on the streets. Children, who can't fulfil the expectations of their parents or other relatives they live with, and who lack a supportive family, prefer to stay away from home. Generally, putting the financial responsibility of the family on the shoulders of a child will complicate family relations.

4.3.2 Consequences for family relations in waste material

Most children in Las Lomas de Carabayllo live with their parents. There are very few children or adolescents who live without any relatives or caretakers. Most of the young children also work with one of their parents; exceptions are children who collect waste material on the streets, which is normally done alone or with friends. Working with parents at a dumpsite is seen as a positive, since parents can protect children from exploitation and from possible risks on the work floor. On the other hand, children enjoy collecting waste materials because they can hang around with friends and be free from parental observation.

Children often feel good when they are helping their parents, especially when the need for more income is high. Children are aware of the financial pressures and want to contribute; parents

appreciate that. This leads in some cases to a close relationship between children and parents. On the other hand, family situations can become tense when children have the (partial) responsibility to provide for the family income.

4.4 Lifestyle consequences

Another consequence of work for children, as mentioned often by especially adults working at and around the markets, is that the activities and the work environment increase the risk of children getting on the wrong track. Again, this applies especially to the vegetable market, since the fruit market has a better reputation for its control on children and adolescents.

Teodoro (50), adult porter:

I have a wife and 4 children, the oldest is 17 years old. My children have never worked here; I could maintain them with my work. I think it's not good for young people to work at the market, they go rotten. Here they learn to swear and to steal. Besides, the work is heavy. They'd rather stay home and study.

Indeed there are numbers of children and adolescents who obtain their income by robbing people at the market; they are called *pirañas*. This choice of livelihood often goes hand in hand with the use of drugs. These children often start as workers, but eventually cross over onto the criminal path.

José (15), porter at the vegetable market:

Several friends of mine went on the wrong track. They live in my neighbourhood. They steal and do things like that. I have stolen twice in my life, when I was 13 years old. It was with friends, we stole from a parked car. The police captured us and brought us to the police station. Now I don't do it anymore. Most boys follow their friends in their behaviour. But if you want to go on in life, you have to do it yourself.

Many working children mentioned friends who had strayed. However, most porters and other working children clearly distinguish between the *pirañas* and themselves. Working is associated with honesty and they firmly reject the *pirañas*. However, it is important to note that working children, especially when working alone, are exposed to the risks of criminality and withstanding it requires a strong personality.

Also in Las Lomas de Carabayllo the risk of going off track because of work is acknowledged. Parents and other adults agree that the private dumpsite is a place where "all kinds of people" work, thereby suggesting the presence of indecent people. In the words of a mother:

Children shouldn't be too much at a dumpsite. They miss school, don't learn a decent job, there is lots of delinquency and drugs around, there is "bad company", people with low education and without morals. I wouldn't take my children there, they would learn to speak like those people and take over their habits.

Other mothers emphasised the need to protect their children at the dumpsite since "there are people with a bad lifestyle". They spoke of rapes and other dangers, and people who work in the informal sector because their delinquent pasts exclude them from the formal labour market. These

comments may be exaggerated, but the dumpsites are indeed unsafe places. Children who use drugs or are involved in other illegal activities do this in the areas where the dumpsites are located, since there is less control. However, working children seldom complained about a sense of danger due to the company of others, or about dangerous incidents that happened to them while working at the dumpsite. Furthermore, it is also often argued that those children who simply hang around in the streets run a higher risk of following the wrong, if not criminal, path.

4.5 Consequences and the worst forms of child labour

Almost all children working at markets or with waste materials work in sectors that are considered to be worst forms of child labour by the CPETI. Exceptions are the children at the markets who are not porters, since their activities are not mentioned by name in the CPETI National Plan.

All activities that have harmful consequences for the health, safety, or morals of children fall within the category of hazardous labour. The various activities that children carry out in the waste materials sector and at the markets have been shown to have very negative consequences for children's health. In addition, most children would prefer not to work and feel tired, bored or ashamed, which indicates a negative consequence for children's emotional health. Safety is certainly a problem in the children's working environment. Although accidents are not often mentioned, children working at the vegetable market experience robberies and assaults, and all children are prone to be a victim of delinquency. Both sectors expose children to an immoral, indecent and corrupting environment, and increase the risk that the children will go off track and even possibly turn to crime. The fact that the work in both sectors also often has negative consequences for children's familial lives and educational development implies that the activities should be defined as worst forms.

The main difference between the two sectors is that the entire waste materials sector could be considered a worst form as it subjects its workers, including adults, to not only hazardous working conditions, but also unhealthy living conditions. Testimonies and observations have shown that the activities require care and precision because of the presence of harmful materials. Children are all the more vulnerable to the hazards, especially chemicals and fumes, because of their particular physical build-up.

The work at the markets presents another specific set of hazards; at the fruit market, young workers, protected by the porter association, experience significantly fewer negative consequences from their work than at the vegetable market. They work fewer hours, attend school and have more protection. The association also enforces an age limit of 14, which prevents younger children from being exposed to the perils of the market place. Working as a porter is defined as a worst form by CPETI principally because of the heavy weight these boys carry, and the current research supports this. However, not all porters carry such heavy weights and policy changes with regards to weights would make the job much more acceptable. Other activities are not necessarily harmful when carried out for only a few hours a day at a market that offers security. It would in fact be fair to say that the work in itself is not necessarily harmful, but when working and living conditions are taken into account the situation changes, and it becomes apparent how conditions can vary within one sector. The sector "markets" should therefore not be labelled as a worst form as such, but should be considered in terms of its individual activities and conditions. Working children at the vegetable

market certainly find themselves in a worst form of child labour, as well as some youngsters at the fruit market, but this is not to be generalised. The focus should be on improving general working conditions at all markets, strictly regulating adolescents' work and keeping the youngest children out of the labour force.

In conclusion, working with waste materials is clearly hazardous labour. It would need many rigorous changes to be acceptable for adults, and this would still not make it acceptable work for children. Waste materials as a sector can certainly be categorised as a worst form of child labour. Work at wholesale markets appears to have conditions that are harmful for children, but with strict regulations on age and working conditions, children could work at wholesale markets without major risks.

Chapter 5

Why Do Children Work?

Despite existing regulations and legislation to reduce child labour, many children are still found working in a variety of activities that are hazardous forms of child labour. Their involvement can be explained by several factors, including economic, cultural, educational, safety, and organisational factors.

5.1 Economic reasons

The first and most obvious reason for children below 18 to be working is money. Financial pressures are best understood in the familial context, and it is therefore relevant to explore what exactly the child's income and contribution to a household is spent on. A distinction can be made between an income which is used to help support a family in its basic requirements, or money earned to spend on personal and possibly luxury items.

Most of the working children below 14, either working with parents, or caretakers or alone, contribute directly to the household; they rarely receive a salary themselves. Their contribution in money or in kind helps to support the entire family, and their basic needs are satisfied in return. The children help with the work because the family is not able, for a number of reasons, to sustain its members with only the parental income. This can be because of a lack of (well paid) employment for the parent(s), single parent families as a result of divorce or death, a large number of children per household, high costs for basic services such as healthcare or education, and poor management of family money due to alcoholism or other problems. Especially in La Victoria, but also in Las Lomas de Carabayllo, families are large, divorces are common as too are familial problems.

Whereas in Carabayllo the unemployment rate is high because of a lack of work, in La Victoria the competition is so enormous that only informal and lowly paid jobs are left for the uneducated adults. High costs for basic services are also a reason for children to contribute, especially costs for healthcare.

Danny (12):

I live with my parents and 8 brothers and sisters. My mother is in the hospital because she has a complicated pregnancy of the 9th child. My father works in construction. In the mornings I work in my mother's business and after school I sometimes collect waste material. I use a part of the money for my personal things, but the biggest part is for my mother.

The father is unable to maintain his nine children and pay healthcare for his wife. Since there is no external support, sending his children to work is his way to increase the family income. The main problem here is financial, but it is clear that social and cultural factors influence the economic situation and choices of the family. However, it is vital to know that many working children argue that they were the ones who decided to start working. Their personal reasons are often based on feelings of solidarity with their parents, and the desire to “relieve their parents from suffering”, or the insight that helping is necessary for their own wellbeing.

Lidia (11), La Victoria:

I live with my mother and 4 other brothers and sisters. I help my mother every weekday from 13:00 to 20:00 in a communal kitchen in San Cosme. I wanted to help her because my mother told me about her suffering. When she was five years old she was given to other people to work. She was without parents and she was beaten. I feel pity for her, that’s why I want to help her now.

Christian (8), Las Lomas de Carabaylo:

I wanted to go working with my mother because we didn’t have anything to eat! If I and my brother help my mother in the work, she earns more and is able to buy food.

Those children are aware of the economic needs that the family faces and want to help. Generally, the older the child the more likely he or she will be to decide to work; the sense of responsibility increases with age.

Unfortunately, there are also cases in which parents or caretakers oblige a child to work, even if the child doesn’t agree. This stems from economic as well as cultural factors, which will be elaborated on in the next paragraph. There are also social factors that play a role in children being obliged to work, such as the position of a child in his or her family. Children living with an aunt or uncle, or children living with the new family of their father, are often given a subordinate place in the family compared to the other children. Cases of exploitation are not uncommon. Sometimes children undergo physical force, like Flor (10), who works at the vegetable market because “if I don’t go to work my sister-in-law gets upset. She beats me with a stick and kicks me out of the house.” These children are dependent on their caretakers and have very few options of surviving without them. Although these cases sound extreme, they are relatively common in La Victoria and other populous sectors in the centre of Lima. Often it is structural problems within families, rather than true economic need that are to blame.

Adolescents between 14 and 18 years old work to either support their family, to sustain their own needs, or a combination of both. Generally, girls are more likely to support the family, whilst boys are more independent; the older the adolescent, the more he or she works for personal expenses. Working children who have migrated and whose parents still live in the countryside often send some of their earnings to the family.

Jesús (17):

I earn around 15 sol (3.75 euro) a day. Every week I pay 2.50 sol (0.80 euro) as a fee to my porters syndicate. Every day I pay around 1 sol (0.25 euro) for my two-wheel trolley

and 1 sol (0.25 euro) for my breakfast. Around 3 sol (0.75 euro) of the day earnings are for myself. I save it and use it mainly for clothes and school supplies. The rest is for my mother; she has four children and my father left her 10 years ago. I have lunch and dinner at home so I don't pay for that.

Most adolescents at the markets and in Carabayllo work to pay for personal needs and desires, such as clothes, school supplies and sometimes food. Some of them live without parents, and working is their only way to survive. Caretakers other than parents are less likely to support the child in his or her basic needs. The relationship between a lacking family support system and having to work is twofold. Children without parents receive very little encouragement for education or other personal development, in addition to having to earn their own money to cover their living expenses. The children or adolescents who migrated alone to Lima, like Flor (10), have little protection or support: "Now I live with my brother and his wife. His wife beats me a lot. I regret having migrated because I realise that I like the countryside much more than Lima, but I don't have money to travel back." These children will do any kind of work and are aware of the need to fend for themselves. At the vegetable market, children of 10 and older earn their own income. Children arrive at the market without having had breakfast and buy food using their first daily earnings.

Other working children live with their parents, but are expected to pay for certain personal expenses. This is in Las Lomas de Carabayllo the case for working boys from 15 years on, but in La Victoria also younger children work because of this reason.

Bryan (10) and Luis (9):

We came today for the first time. We work now because we have an excursion with our class to Chosica. We have never been in Chosica and would really like to go, but it costs 10 sol. Our parents said that they are not going to pay it, they don't have it. We knew this market because it is close to our house and we saw other children doing this. We asked permission to work today and my mother agreed.

Finally, there are children and adolescents in Lima who work to pay for personal non-necessities. These children work occasionally in the weekends and during holidays. However, according to children's experiences, occasional jobs commonly lapse into permanent jobs once the young workers enjoy earning personal money.

5.2 Local perceptions on child labour

Local perceptions on child labour are often used to justify child labour. NGOs and better-off Peruvians argue that some parts of the population value child labour in accordance with their traditions and culture. This is based on the fact that in the countryside of Peru, children work with the rest of the family in the fields, as part of a cultural tradition. Also people in urban settings, especially if they are migrants, use this as a way to explain why children work. It is important to determine to what extent those local perceptions about culture and traditions effectively play a role, especially at markets and in the waste materials sector. Future interventions and regulations on child labour could take this into account.

Local perceptions, norms and values are most definitely involved in the complex combination of causes that lead to child labour, but a difference in understanding exists about the significance of work in the first place and the significance of children in the second place. Local populations, on the one hand, and international organisations and NGO's on the other hand, maintain different definitions. As a result, activities that the ILO defines as child labour or as worst forms of child labour may, by local inhabitants, be considered differently. The ILO states that particular activities can be called child labour depending on the child's age, the tasks involved, the conditions under which it is performed and the criteria set by individual countries. These seemingly straightforward criteria can nevertheless lead to disagreement among local communities of a country due to traditional ideas and perceptions. In the research communities, people make a distinction between "work" and "help".

"Work" is usually considered as fulltime employment, whereas "help" includes all sorts of activities which contribute to the work of others and are not performed on a fulltime basis. "Helping" parents is possible in a wide range of activities and it applies to all children and adolescents who live at home and take on tasks that their parents would otherwise do. These activities vary from cooking and cleaning to selling juice at the market. People often don't distinguish household tasks from tasks related to their parents' job. Children are supposed to "help" at home to alleviate their parents' load and to play an active social role in the household. Activities that are considered to be "work" according to the ILO, are often considered to be "help" according to both the adult as well as the juvenile local population. In a focus group discussion, involving 10-year-old school children in La Victoria, the majority defended the opinion that children shouldn't work; this was considered as negative for their educational career. At the same time, most of these school-going children "helped" their parents with selling, cooking or sewing for commercial purposes. These activities were considered to be a normal task for children and even part of children's responsibility. In Las Lomas de Carabayllo, "helping" rarely includes any tasks at the private dumpsite, formal garbage dump or on the trucks. Exceptions to the rule are some children who live at a dumpsite; when they help out with daily tasks it does include working with waste materials. The household and the working area are very much entwined.

Besides the differing definitions given to "work", people also disagree on the concept "children". Whereas the ILO Conventions and the CRC define children as persons below 18 years old, this is different in the local communities. Adolescents from 14 years and older are usually not considered to be children and are therefore not included when speaking about child labour. Especially after finishing school, which takes place around 16 years old, most people agree that the youngsters should work to provide for their living expenses or those of the family. In some families this is even expected from younger children.

Benjamin (18); porter at the vegetable market:

I have worked since I was 9 years old and since my 11th I have been financially independent. My parents always bought food for me, and they still do, but the rest I buy myself. We are 8 children at home, and at 11 years old all sons were told by my father to earn their own income through working. This depends on the family, some families buy always everything for their children, but my father sees the children a bit like a millstone around his neck.

Considering the local understandings of “work” and “children”, child labour has a different meaning for local people. Child labour may be denied; working adolescents and “helping” children are to a great extent valued in the poor communities of Lima. Most of the children’s parents worked when they were children themselves and a frequently made comment is that this helped them to become mature. Working is generally perceived as positive; it is associated with honesty and an antidote to delinquency. This goes hand in hand with the general opinion that leisure is unfavourable to a child’s development. Many people, especially in La Victoria, claim that a child with lots of free time is prone to becoming lazy and getting on the wrong track. This applies especially in La Victoria where youth delinquency is abundant. Instead, children that help their parents learn responsibilities and how to be honest workers. Especially adolescents are in adults’ point of view likely to become lazy and spoiled if they don’t work. Children who “help” their parents often don’t contribute significantly to their parents’ earnings, which indicates that reasons for their help are not only economic.

Not all children and adults share the same opinion. In a focus group discussion of school going children between 11 and 14 years old, the large majority argued that children have the duty to help in the household. Some added that this could be in the form of earning money, whereas others limited help to necessary tasks in and around the house. One of the positive sides of working is, according to this group, to learn how to be responsible and productive. One boy, who claimed that the only responsibility of a child is to study, was called lazy by the others. The majority was sure that their future children should never be obliged to work, but should help to avoid becoming apathetic.

Paula (12):

Children have their rights and parents should not mistreat them. But children should also realise that they have duties. Some children don’t want to help their parents, even though their parents are poor. They are selfish. They don’t value the support their parents gave them.

In Las Lomas de Carabayllo almost all children were sure about not sending their future children to work, because of the dangers working often has and the right of the child to attend school. An exception was Christian (8) who argued that, “children should learn that not everything comes for granted.”

Parents who don’t let their children work often blame child labour on the people from the countryside, especially from the sierra, where work for children is apparently more common. The migrants supposedly brought their costumes to the urban areas. The real weight of “the Andean culture” in the explanation of child labour is hard to determine, since people from the Andean areas also belong to the poorest segments of society, have had fewer educational possibilities and suffer from discrimination in urban areas. What is clear, however, is that the perceptions on child labour and childhood are to a great extent determined by the parents own experiences. A mother in Carabayllo explained:

I started to work when I was very young. I had to work very hard and suffered a lot. I married to finally be able to rest a bit. I have never really known what adolescence is

because I had to grow up so fast. When I got children I just thought that they had to work as well. I found it normal.

Many mothers in Carabayllo confirmed that the tradition of child labour is passed from one generation to the next because of the parents' own lack of childhood.

Most parents and children make a distinction between the types of work that are suitable for children and the ones that are not. In both communities, selling is normally considered to be relatively harmless. Working at the markets is by nature often not dangerous. However, most people consider being a porter or working with waste materials as rather damaging for children. One could state that a certain segment of the Peruvian population, and especially the people from the Andes, values children's help and work, but worst forms of child labour are generally not accepted. Reasons in the form of local perceptions do therefore not suffice in the full explanation of child labour in recycling and at the markets. They do, however, explain the involvement of many children in particular activities, which are likely to lead children to more damaging work. It also explains why many adolescents are working. The sectors involved in this study are for them often the most accessible. The paragraph on the specific sector characteristics will discuss this further.

5.3 Educational reasons

Hazardous forms of child labour and education have been proven to not exclude one another, and easily go hand in hand. It is, however, still relevant to explore to what extent accessibility and quality of education has an influence on child labour.

Before assessing the situation of schooling in Lima, it is necessary to have a look at the provision of education in the countryside, where many of the working children in Lima come from. In the countryside of Peru, primary and secondary schools are not always accessible due to distances from children's houses. It is the cultural pattern and tradition that makes some parents decide not to send their daughters to school. For families with many children, the costs for the school supplies can be a reason to withhold some of the children from education. The combination of those and possibly other factors contributes to the fact that a number of children in the countryside, mainly girls, miss a substantial part of their primary or secondary education. Children with a strong desire to study often migrate to Lima, where they find enough schools within reach, work to pay for their own education and living expenses, and have no parents around telling them what to do. Children who migrate normally move in with relatives already in the city, but who have no intention to support them financially. Rarely do the parents still in the countryside send financial aid either. Working is the only way these children can go to school.

The desire of children to study, combined with poor educational facilities in the countryside, is a strong motivational factor for migration to Lima.

Valentina (14); working around the market:

I was born in a village in Cuzco and lived with my parents and 6 brothers and sisters. I didn't go to school because it was very far away and my father didn't want me to go. I wanted to study and learn Spanish, because I knew only Quechua, so I cried and insisted on that. Finally my parents sent me to an aunt in Lima. I help her selling around the market.

These children mostly end up in the centre of Lima; they are rarely found in Las Lomas de Carabayllo. Having arrived in Lima, however, the children face several difficulties, as discussed in Chapter 3. The children are practically forced to work just to survive, thereby reducing the time and energy they can spend on schooling. Since the lack of quality education in the countryside has already put them behind others of their age, they often end up in a class with much younger students, and unfortunately, many children stop studying because they do not feel that they fit in. In short, the lack of a well-functioning educational system in rural Peru results in the presence of many vulnerable children in Lima. Unless they have a very strong desire to study, these children are liable to end up working fulltime. Improvements in rural education could result in more children staying at home with their parents, obtaining quality education, and a decrease in the likelihood that they have to work.

Also for children who haven't migrated from the countryside, but who were born in Lima and live with their parents, the costs of education, i.e. of school supplies, are often a reason to work. School supplies are often the first thing that children and adolescents need to buy when they earn some money. However, a lack of financial means is combined with a lack of educational motivation; many families do not prioritise educational needs.

Teacher in La Victoria:

Many of the children in my class used to come without books, pencils and notebooks. When I speak to their parents they tell me that they are poor and don't have the money to buy the school supplies. Most of the families have a television though, so I tell them: if you find your child's education important let's sell some stuff in your house and see if you can buy the supplies. Then they get ashamed and start to buy school supplies for their children. Many parents don't really care about education and it is thus often more a matter of setting priorities than of economic deficits.

Some children live with both parents, who are able to pay for educational costs, but who consider them as a responsibility of the children themselves. Even though education is a basic right of all children, not all children are supported in this right by their parents. Without an internal desire to study they are likely to drop out early on; those with a wish to go to school, but no supporting parents, have little choice but to work to cover their expenses. Educational costs thus indirectly increase the number of working children. Lower educational costs or no costs at all would at least reduce children's reasons to work.

In the same way, costs for higher education oblige adolescents to work. Contrary to primary and secondary education, access to universities and technical institutes is expensive. Secondary school in Peru is normally completed at 16 years old, but adolescents from poorer parts of Lima certainly have to save money first before being able to continue studying. For many adolescents who completed secondary school, their desire to continue their studies is the main reason to work. With lots of effort, it is sometimes possible to pay for a course such as clothes making with the earnings from a job at the market or in waste materials. However, this is difficult and most youngsters don't manage. They keep on working and have very few ways of obtaining a better paid job. In Las Lomas de Carabayllo, several mothers mentioned that scholarships for further education would be one of

the best incentives to keep their sons from working; access to affordable courses would decrease the need for them to work after secondary school.

The low quality of primary and secondary education on the outskirts and in poor neighbourhoods of Lima is also perceived as a significant problem. Graduates have little chance of being accepted to a university due to the low levels obtained. Jerson (17), a porter at the fruit market, told of his experiences:

Sometimes scholarships are provided for short courses, and that is good. But often you are not accepted if you studied at a school such as where we study. The quality is low and already by the name of the school you are excluded. So they should also improve the quality of all education.

Without further education, adolescents will have to accept lowly paid and informal jobs, such as in waste materials. Only free and high quality education would be able to break this vicious circle.

Low quality education also implies that curricula are not adjusted to children's needs and interests. An 8-year-old girl argued: "Working can be good for children who don't like school; they are bored and prefer to work." She was supported in her statement by several mothers, who claimed that some children are just not interested in the education they receive. Most working children, however, are positive about education; they like school and are aware of the importance for their prospects. Especially young children have high expectations of future jobs, but also adolescents are ambitious regarding their plans. On the other hand, the usefulness of their work experience is also recognised.

Paula (12); helps her mother to sell juice at the market in the weekends:

In the future I would like to study languages, because I would like to travel. I also would like to be a lawyer, to protect people from injustice. Regarding my study I think I will manage because I study well and obtain high grades. The financial part is more difficult. My brother says he will support me, and also my parents want me to study. On the other hand I think that my work also taught me something useful for the future. I know now how to manage a business. Nobody will be able to cheat me because of my work experience. That will be convenient.

Work experience is seen as an alternative or additional form of education. Due to the high unemployment rates in Peru and the high degree of competition among the population, work experience is considered vital to obtain a job. In addition, it is a survival strategy to fall back on in case of need. Although few children are in a job they aspire to, they recognise the importance of having learned a skill to earn money with. In a focus group discussion with children between 11 and 14, they argued that the positive side of work is "to be able to support yourself in case your parents die and you have to take care of yourself". Working is thus a short term survival strategy, not a means to a long term end. Because social security barely exists, maintaining survival strategies may be justified. Education is, on the other hand, a long term survival strategy because it doesn't provide pupils with practical skills or immediate gratification. To rectify this, curricula should be adjusted to better fit children's needs and interests.

In general, almost all youngsters prefer school to work, but circumstances sometimes make this unrealistic. Education is recognised as a long term strategy against child labour, but the practical implications of education indirectly push young people to work. Costs should be limited and covered by state and/or parents, rather than children.

5.4 Reasons related to safety, organisation and childcare



Photo 9: Children play surrounded by garbage

Child labour is more likely to occur in neighbourhoods with a lack of child care, social organisation, social cohesion and safety, than in neighbourhoods where these characteristics are present. At the vegetable market in La Victoria many adult female informal sellers of vegetables bring their young children to the workplace. The children are either not in school yet, or attend classes for only half-days. Also at the dumpsites in Las Lomas de Carabayllo there are working mothers who bring their children to the workplace, although to a lesser extent. Although child care remains a woman's task in Peru, they are also increasingly responsible for contributions to the household income. Single mothers have to provide for the entire family income and have no option but to work. Working women can choose to leave their children at home, with relatives, bring them to a childcare centre or take them to the workplace. The fact that many of them opt for the workplace demonstrates a lack of good alternatives.

Childcare centres or *wawawasis*²³ are designed for children between birth and 4 years old. These centres are subsidised and often organised by the state. Not all neighbourhoods have a sufficient number of *wawawasis*, but the availability in urban areas is generally much better than in rural areas. Las Lomas de Carabayllo has a total of 9 *wawawasis*, which are generally accessible, but the residents living on the periphery of the neighbourhood, where most of the dumpsites are located, consider them to be too far away. The children who are kept with the mother during work are at risk because exposure to the work from an early age increases the chances that the child too will start performing the same tasks. If the family runs a garbage business, the children are surrounded by garbage at all times and become accustomed to it, and even play among it. This is also true for the children accompanying their mothers to private dumpsites. Although the children are not necessarily working, they are exposed to the environment. Moreover, many children become familiar with the materials and become involved in the work (see photo 9).

Leonel, a young porter explained: “I knew the market and I knew where to rent the two-wheel trolleys, so when I needed a job I came immediately to this place.” The quote shows how familiarity with the workplace is a gateway to future work.

There are few alternatives for older children too. Some mothers in Las Lomas de Carabayllo don't want to leave their children alone while they are at work because of safety reasons. Elena, a single mother who works at a dumpsite, explained:

I prefer to take my sons to work on the weekends. I don't trust the neighbours; they have done harm to my son in the past and I don't want it to happen again. If my sons are with me I can keep an eye on them. I earn around 5 sol a day, and my sons provide for one sol extra a day. The money is of course welcome but it doesn't make so much difference. I find it more important to be together.

Bringing children to work, who are actually capable of helping, is not only motivated by financial factors, but also by the desire to keep them close and safe. Also for mothers working at the vegetable market this is an important reason. La Victoria and surrounding areas are known to be dangerous and even houses are not considered to be completely safe.

Paula (12):

My parents separated some years ago. My mother worked at the market, selling orange juice. We are 8 children at home, the three youngest are girls. My mother didn't want to leave us home alone. She doesn't trust the neighbour and something could happen for example with the gas stove when we are home alone. We had better all to go with her. Now my parents got back together again, so if one of my parents is home we can also stay home.

Safety during travel to and from school is also an issue. Most children go to school in the same area in which their parents work, and so children and parents can travel to and from home together.

²³ Literally “house of children” in Quechua

However, ordinarily parents' working time is longer than the school day, and so children stay with their parents at the workplace before or after school. The children tend to then help their parents with work, since they have nothing better to do. Rather than a financial incentive, children help because they happen to be there, and are able. And the reason they are there is a lack of general safety and childcare. This is not so much an issue in Las Lomas de Carabayllo, where houses, schools and workplaces are relatively close to each other. However, a recently established centre in which children can play and do their homework has been positively received. Children can stay here until their parents get back from work.

Finally, the lack of recreational opportunities for children and adolescents also contributes to the existence of child labour in the urban sector. Especially girls suffer from a lack of freedom and possibilities to play. Rosy (11) in Las Lomas de Carabayllo said:

I sometimes go to look for recyclable material, alone or with friends. The money that I earn is for my mother. The nice thing is that we can walk around together. Sitting at home is sometimes boring. My mother gives me tasks to do in the household. Boys go on the internet or play football outside, but girls stay more at home. I like to search for materials because it is less boring.

The opinion is shared by several girls in Carabayllo; also in La Victoria both boys and girls consider working as a positive distraction from their daily schedule, especially when they have just started or work only infrequently. It is a way in which children can escape from their houses in which they often feel enclosed. Children, however, who work more frequently, no longer consider work as a form of recreation or distraction, but a lack of safety and freedom motivates them to work more nevertheless.

5.4 Sector specific characteristics

There are some factors related to the type of work, the workplace and the employers, that make child labour more likely to occur in particular sectors, such as those included in this research. It is mainly the informal nature of the sectors, and thus a lack of control and implementation of existing legislation, that make them vulnerable to child labour.

In Las Lomas de Carabayllo basically all activities related to garbage are informal. Collecting materials in the streets is an independent activity that isn't controlled by anybody. The dumpsites are informal private enterprises that don't have official permission to exist and don't pay taxes, and the larger garbage dumps, under official control, suffers from several forms of corruption allowing informal workers to enter and work. Although child labour has, according to the municipal administrator in charge, a priority over other illegal acts, the reality shows that laws don't have much influence in this remote and marginalised part of Lima. The administrator explained this as such:

I know that almost all dumpsites in Las Lomas don't have a permission to work with garbage. But what am I supposed to do? Working with garbage is the most important employment provision in this part of town. If I would close all the informal enterprises, the entire population would be unemployed! So I don't close the dumpsites, but I do set

boundaries. I don't allow children to work there and I don't allow working with clinical waste. When I, or an inspection team, see one of these phenomena, we immediately give the owner of the dumpsite a fine or we close down his enterprise.

Notwithstanding the priority on combating child labour, it still occurs, as does working with clinical waste. Even at the formal garbage dump, young garbage collectors are illegally admitted; guards are bribed and willingly cooperate. Also truck drivers that transport waste materials play a role; they decide, because of their low salary, to sell their materials to illegal dumpsites and to occasionally burn a part of it. They also allow young workers to help separate the materials inside the truck. Authorities either don't have the means to effectively inspect the informal dumpsites, the trucks and the official garbage dumps, or the authorities themselves are subject to corruption.

In addition, the operational system at the dumpsites serves as an incentive to parents to bring their children along, because most of the labourers earn per unit. The children increase production and thus income; a fixed salary would remedy many problems by giving adults a steady income, and reducing the need for child helpers.

Organisational differences in workplaces have varying consequences for working children. The fruit market admits only porters of 14 years and older, and who belong to the porters association; it doesn't allow informal sellers inside the marketplace. The labour associations contract security guards and so control functions reasonably well; corruption or other misbehaviour among the guards is not tolerated by the workers as it costs them money, and so perpetrators are quickly fired. The unified associations, or *el base de los 5 frentes*, have regular meetings in which they agree upon relevant issues concerning the organisation of the market place.

Conversely, at the vegetable market the municipal company provides most security measures. Since the workers don't pay for the guards, and the company seems to not care much for rules, there is little true control and much corruption. There are some guards whose job it is to keep informal underage porters out of the marketplace, but these tasks are often assigned to other official porters, who tend to follow their own rules. A formal porter commented: "I let these young porters enter. I know what it is like since I was also an informal porter myself for many years, and I know many of them." In practice, young porters have a tough time getting inside the market, but eventually succeed. This informal system without sanctions appears to disadvantage both formal adult workers as well as the children who slip by unnoticed.

Many people turn a blind eye to children working because they feel that they must only be doing it out of pure necessity. Elena, a working mother in Carabayllo, explained: "the owner of this dumpsite is a good man. When I come with my sons he tells me to not bring them so often, because it can cause him problems due to inspections, but when I insist he always admits them." This happens at the markets as well. Some formal sellers at the vegetable market reject the children that sell informally, others argue: "those children have to survive; I support them by giving them a few potatoes to sell." Also clients tend to take age and necessity into considerations. The youngest porters at the vegetable market sometimes earn more than the slightly older ones. Leonel, a 14 year old porter argued: "clients like to contract the youngest, probably because they think they charge less, and because they prefer to support such a young boy." Employers and clients thus often seem convinced that providing children with work is a form of social support.

Chapter 6

Strategies to Combat Child Labour

In Las Lomas de Carabayllo and at both markets several interventions have been put into place to combat child labour. Existing programmes generally differ according to the *erradicacionista* and *regulacionistas* debate. This chapter discusses the most significant interventions in the studied communities, and considers to what extent the interventions have been successful or not.

6.1 Interventions related to child labour

6.1.1 Interventions for children working with waste materials

In Las Lomas de Carabayllo the NGOs CESIP and Centro Proceso Social have been active in the neighbourhood for a long time; their focus is on eradicating child labour. The NGO Plan Peru designs and realises interventions for children in general, but has only been working in the zone since 2006. The NGOs form, together with other NGOs working in Las Lomas de Carabayllo, neighbourhood committees and the municipality, the “Driving Group for the Development of Las Lomas de Carabayllo”²⁴. This group, representing the formal and informal leaders of the community, meet every week to discuss the development of the area and plan necessary actions.

CESIP arrived in Las Lomas de Carabayllo in 1999. Until 2002 the interventions were directed at working adolescents, but not necessarily related to waste materials. The adolescents were supported in their change from harmful labour to a more acceptable job, by means of workshops and scholarships. Between 2002 and 2006 the institution worked on the project “Rights and opportunities for children and adolescents working in garbage dumps”. CESIP considers child labour to “impede the full exercise of fundamental child rights, form an obstacle to personal development and contribute to a continuing poverty” [Cesip 2006b]. Subsequently, the purpose of the intervention was “to retire the children from the dangerous work, to diminish their working hours or to retire them from the most dangerous activities, after which they would be able to fully exercise their rights to health, education, recreation and participation” [Cesip 2006b].

To achieve their goal, CESIP worked on several components. In terms of the right to education, one of the more concrete actions was handing over packages of school supplies to children with lacking financial means. Parents were motivated to support their children in their education and take them out of the labour process. In the field of health, events offering free healthcare were organised and enrolment in the SIS was promoted. For working adolescents there was a strong focus on access to technical education and development of economic initiatives. By means of training and scholarships,

²⁴ Asociación Impulsor de Plan de Desarrollo de Las Lomas de Carabayllo

they would be able to study and subsequently earn their living expenses under less harmful conditions. Children and adolescents were educated about values, personal skills, and the risks of child labour. Parents were approached about personal skills, education, child rights, organisation and mobilisation to become responsible parents. Specific workshops for parents were reserved for training in economic skills, combined with the provision of micro-credit from a rotary fund. Especially women participated in the workshops [Cesip 2006b].

The other principal NGO, Centro Proceso Social, started a five year project in 2004 that focussed on child labour in the sector of garbage processing. In the preceding years, the NGO had already been present in the region working with children and youths. Their projects, like those of CESIP, follow an *erradicacionista* point of view. The most recent project aims at “improving the lives of working children, so that the children will dedicate themselves to educational activities and progressively or definitely abandon child labour” [Centro Proceso Social 2007]. In practice, the project focuses on access to education, strengthening neighbourhood organisations, the promotion of child rights, and increasing family income. In Las Lomas de Carabylo, working children were invited to participate in yearly workshops. During the workshop attention is given to the dangers of work, the importance of education and other important values; there is homework support and children are kept out of work through recreational activities. Another part of the project consists of workshops for parents, especially mothers. After the training, the most active mothers start working as promoters in the neighbourhood and make other people aware of the risks of child labour, and important issues concerning the family. Finally there is a component that offers business education and micro-credit in a rotary fund through which parents are enabled to set up their own business and leave the work in waste materials.

In fact, Centro Proceso Social and CESIP implement quite similar projects. Plan Peru, on the other hand, works with “child sponsoring”. The money that people from other countries send to support a child is invested in community works rather than directly handed over to the child or the family. The focus of their developing projects is on children and their environment. Child labour is a relatively new area for the organisation and is in this case not a specific point of attention. Few actions have been concretised yet, but Plan Peru, like all NGOs in Las Lomas, participates in the Driving Group.

6.1.2 Interventions for children working at the markets

In 2001 CESIP started to familiarise itself with the situation at the markets and provided scholarships for the young workers at the fruit market. This occurred in cooperation with Warma Taranakuy, an NGO that has been active with youths in La Victoria since 1986. Warma Taranakuy established and supervises, since 1991, the Association of Working Minors and Adolescents²⁵, to which most porters at the fruit market belong. After an initial investigation among working children and youths at the markets, CESIP decided to start its intervention at the vegetable market, where needs were most urgent and no NGOs were present yet. Their first project was called “Training,

²⁵ Asociación de Menores y Adolescentes que Trabajan Warma Taranakuy

Risk Prevention and Protection for Working Adolescents”.²⁶ The project’s main objective was to offer the adolescents workshops with attention given to personal development, and technical education including scholarships. Since it was considered to be difficult and unlikely for working adolescents to abandon their work, the workshops were meant to reduce work related risks and change their future perspectives in a positive way.

In 2002 the youth group NUGAT, New Generation of Working Adolescents²⁷, was established. The group represents adolescents between 12 and 18 years old who work at and around the market. NUGAT is organised for and by adolescents; its president and board consist of adolescent members and adult social workers, who function as supporters only. NUGAT’s members usually meet every Saturday for workshops, to organise events or to participate in recreational activities. The period of this IREWOC research unfortunately fell between two NUGAT projects²⁸, which meant that they were less active than normal and no campaigns or activities could be observed.

From 2004 onwards, CESIP also worked directly with working children below 13 years old at the vegetable market. These children received a different “treatment” than adolescents. The main goal was to reintegrate them into school and maintain their attendance. To achieve this, an agreement with the nearby primary school José Antonio Encinas was established, libraries were created, children were given educational support and when necessary a package of school supplies. During this research the CESIP project was the only one of its kind. In October 2007, CESIP started an additional project in which working children and adolescents participate.

CESIP organised children and adolescents based on their age, whilst Warma Taranakuy established a youth group based on occupation (porters). The association was born from necessity when the new administration of the fruit market decided that only formally organised workers were allowed to enter the market to work. The association’s main goal is to improve labour conditions in the here and now, whilst simultaneously working to improve the prospects of working adolescents and to break the circle of poverty and child labour, focussing on “professional and personal development”.²⁹ Warma Taranakuy belongs to *el frente de las 5 bases* and has a maximum membership of 100 young porters aged between 14 and 18 years old. This organisation is based on youth participation; its members form thematic committees and vote for their president and board. Adults are “facilitators” and adult ex-members function as supporters. The young members have a number of requirements they must fulfil, including a weekly fee of 2.5 sol (0.80 euro) to the association, attending formal education during the day, participating in weekly meetings, and eating at least three lunches in the association’s kitchen. Their rights as members include the right to enter the market with a trolley, to rent a relatively cheap trolley, to receive educational

²⁶ Capacitación, Prevención de Riesgos y Protección para Adolescentes que Trabajan.

²⁷ Nueva Generación de Adolescentes que Trabajan

²⁸ The former project was concluded in December 2006; the next project started in October 2007.

²⁹ Warma Taranakuy’s mission states that “we form an organisation comprised of adolescents who wish to study and improve; supporting all members by protecting their rights as working adolescents. Moreover, we want to contribute to personal development, physical, moral and mental, of all participants by activities, discussion and solution seeking of the main problems that adolescents face.”

support, first aid if needed, a relatively cheap lunch, and occasional recreational events, technical workshops and scholarships. The association has four committees: kitchen, health, education and work.

Colibri is another youth organisation belonging to *el frente de las 5 bases* at the fruit market and also has a maximum of 100 members. Its structure and rules are similar to Warma Taranakuy's. Colibri was established by the National Police in 1991. The founder of the organisation claims that Colibri aims "to eradicate and reorient the worst forms of child labour and at the same time to protect the working child in his right to work".

All three interventions focus on youth participation, but do so with slightly varying approaches. CESIP supports the youth group NUGAT which has an *erradicacionista* viewpoint, Colibri tends to be more *regulacionistas*, and Warma Taranakuy theoretically supports the *erradicacionistas*, but in practice is in some aspects more *regulacionista*. The objectives and operations appear quite similar, but the philosophies behind the organisations differ. Colibri, for example, decided to support working adolescents because it is their right to work; by being organised they would be able to obtain better working conditions and suffer less form exploitation. The founder explains: "the ILO wants to eradicate child labour, but this is not possible in our society. The economy forces children to work. We don't want to promote that, but we do want to protect them." Warma Taranakuy takes a slightly different approach: "adolescent workers have often no other chance than to work. But the vicious circle of poverty and child labour can be broken by means of education; that is what we believe in and use as a strategy." Warma Taranakuy works towards the goals of the CPETI, as does Colibri. Both chose to organise young workers, which is not seen as a suitable strategy by CESIP. Programme director Ruiz commented:

We preferred to organise the youngsters as such, and not as being workers, because eventually we want them not to work. We focus on improving their personal development instead of their labour conditions. If we would improve their labour conditions, we would indirectly strengthen their permanence at this work. Instead, personal development gives the adolescents new perspectives and new options in their lives.

However, it is also important to mention that the organisation of young workers at the fruit market was necessary for the porters to keep on working; this was not the case at the vegetable market. Still, the differences between organisations are remarkable. All work to improve the working children's situations, but the way to achieve this is different.

At the vegetable market the state also intervenes on behalf of working children. The Integrated National Programme for Family Wellbeing (Inabif)³⁰ is a programme of the Ministry of Women and Social Development (MIMDES) that focuses on social programmes, protection and development of children, youths and adults in risk situations. The Inabif project that supports working children is "Street Educators"³¹, initiated in 1994 with support from the Inter American Development Bank

³⁰ Programa Integral Nacional para el Bienestar Familiar

³¹ Educadores de Calle

(IDB) and UNICEF. The idea is that social workers function as “channels” to provide working children with the necessary support. In the words of a social worker: “we support the children with the necessary educational supplies, look for institutes that could offer them scholarships, we convince parents to support their children, to not send them to work and have them sign an agreement.” The project’s objective is for children below 14 to go to school, and to stop working or at least diminish their working hours. Currently, the project falls under the responsibility of MIMDES, but has very few resources; IDB and UNICEF stopped financial support in 1997 and the government has also drastically been reducing the budget for the programme since 2001. The new government of Garcia plans to transfer responsibility and the budget for the project to local governments by the second half of 2008. At the moment of research, however, there were only four social workers available for entire Lima, resulting in hardly any interventions for working children.

6.2 Results and sustainability

6.2.1 Results and sustainability of projects concerning waste materials

In Las Lomas de Carabayllo the interventions of CESIP and Centro Proceso Social have had similar results in terms of efficiency and sustainability.

The workshops for parents that were organised to make parents aware of child rights and related issues were efficient to a certain extent. Several women argued that it really influenced their personal life.

Yvonne, single mother who used to work in waste material processing:

We had to get used to this new approach towards child rights and education. It was a change in our personal life and many of us were hard to convince to change our style of living. I for example never really talked with my children before. I was hard with them, ordered them about their tasks and never asked how they felt. I found it very difficult to tell them that I loved them and to talk in a personal way with them. The workshops helped me to come closer to them.

Besides personal relationships, women were taught about their own rights and child labour. Since most children work in the waste material sector with their mother, the removal of those women out of the sector is a part of the process.

Yvonne:

Working with waste materials is the easiest choice you have when you are poor. It costs lots of efforts to start something else; you have to be strong to do so. During the workshops we learned how we would be able to go on and make a better life for ourselves and our children.

Also information on direct consequences of child labour affected women’s attitudes. A mother explained: “I never knew that it was so bad for children to work with waste materials; we were used to it. I only heard this during the workshops.” Information provision and psychological support thus is important for many women. It can change their attitude towards child labour and their ability to deal with it.

The CESIP-educated women formed an organisation called Cabilca³² (Support Committee for the Wellbeing of Las Lomas de Carabayllo) and the women who were trained by Centro Proceso Social formed the Defenders of Children and Women's Rights in Las Lomas de Carabayllo.³³ These groups continued the transference of information by either visiting homes (Cabilca) or neighbourhood organisations (Defenders). The Defenders are still doing this; Cabilca was inactive during the research period, due to a lack of leadership. The women share their newly obtained knowledge with the rest of the community, and thus help the project to spread its message and reach a larger population. The women are part of the community and are better at reaching the appropriate people. The workshops result in all sorts of reactions, varying from pleasant surprise and enthusiasm to heated arguments. The women, however, are generally well received because they are from the neighbourhood and understand the local context.

Despite the positive influence these workshops have on women and their attitude towards child labour, awareness raising alone has appeared to be insufficient in eradicating child labour. The women who are most able to prevent their children from working are those with a reliable partner, few children and whose children who perform relatively insignificant activities, such as collecting waste materials on the streets. Single mothers mostly have fewer options. As single mother Yvonne argued: "I was only able to stop the work in waste materials with my children when my oldest children found a good job and helped me in the household." Economic factors thus remain relevant.

To improve the economic situation of a family, both CESIP and Centro Proceso Social worked with micro-credits. Persons that participated in CESIP's programme were very positive about their experience because it presented them with less harmful and better earning possibilities. Children don't accompany their mothers anymore to a dumpsite because there is less financial need and most mothers opted for a job at home so they can care for their children³⁴. To receive financial support, an agreement is signed to abandon child labour. The fund is available for a selected group of people; 36 of the 60 participants in CESIP's project received a microcredit to start a business, but only a number of them were able to set up a successful business. Centro Proceso Social's numbers were even less successful:

Martin Yaranga, project leader Proceso Social:

To really set up a successful business, more money is needed. It takes a long time before people with very little knowledge about business can start their own business and succeed. One year, as our project proposed, is too short. Machines could make a real difference but cost a lot; our funds are small. Besides, there are many unexpected problems that require money, such as healthcare. Many people have also a short term vision. This way, the fund is often spent on other things and the business fails.

³² Comité de Apoyo para el Bienestar de Las Lomas de Carabayllo

³³ Promotoras de la Defensa de los Derechos del Niño, Niña y la Mujer de Las Lomas de Carabayllo

³⁴ Women who were able to set up their own business started, for example, a business providing school supplies, or ornaments, in breeding animals or a bakery. One woman was given support to manage a responsible dumpsite for waste materials. Most of the businesses are located at home.

So the numbers who participated in the initial workshops and who could eventually successfully improve their living standards were in this case low. CESIP's numbers were slightly higher, but still only a small portion of the population in Las Lomas de Carabayllo. The problem with both projects is that it only effectively reaches women with perseverance. The more vulnerable people, such as those with lots of problems and living in extreme poverty, are very unlikely to set up a successful business and hence have few possibilities to improve their situation. Single mother Elena is such an example:

I went to the workshops to learn how to make adornments but now I have very little time to spend in using my obtained skills. I work every day at a dumpsite or in construction, and have to care for my children alone. At night we don't have light so I can't make adornments. I heard about the micro-credit and I would like to know more about it, but until now I didn't have time to go for information. I rent a place at the market where I can sell vegetables, but I have no goods to sell. I should buy the vegetables but I still lack a capital to make the investment. Now I am also making debts because of the rent though I don't use it.

Both NGOs recognise the problem that children continue to work because their parents are unable to improve the family's economic situation; CESIP is considering temporary subsidies to help family's improve their situations.

The workshops for children and adolescents are also received positively, but face similar problems. Young participants are especially positive about the recreational activities that are offered and, in the case of adolescents, the provision of scholarships. Awareness raising about education, self-esteem and harmful work seem to be valued by the participants, but changes are less likely to occur without accompanying economic support. The scholarships make a real difference for adolescents' futures. The support helped Ronald (22) to get a dignified job:

Ronald (22):

I participated in CESIP's workshops for adolescents for a few years. I liked it and because I participated consistently I eventually received a scholarship to study computer skills. I always liked business and now I have my own business in the centre of Lima to sell computer parts.

Juan, on the contrary, did not receive a scholarship and is still working with waste materials.

Juan (20):

I participated in CESIP's workshops and now I sometimes support the children's workshops on Saturday. I liked it and learned about the dangers of the work. I still work at the garbage dump, a few nights a week, because I am saving money to study and I use it for my living costs. I know how to take care of myself and am careful with the dangerous materials. I didn't get damaged by the work. Do I look damaged? [...] If a child is used to work at the dump from a young age, like me, he can do it.

Some youngsters participated in the workshops but didn't achieve fundamental changes in their lives. This might be explained by the lack of other options. According to an evaluation of CESIP, the principal reason for children to be unable to abandon their work is the critical poverty, often related to family problems [Cesip 2006b]. The fact that children and adolescents have a place to gather, however, is already a contribution to reducing child labour; children are "usefully occupied" and parents see less need to take them to work.

Centro Proceso Social claims that the short duration of the workshops forms an obstacle: "youngsters react positively to our workshops, you see them changing, but since the workshops last only one year, they often fall back to former activities after they leave us."³⁵ The period in which CESIP works with children and adolescents is longer; this increases the likelihood that the process has the desired outcome. Youngsters, however, solve the problem of short-term workshops by jumping from one to the next.

Julian (14)

I worked at the garbage dump from when I was 7 years old, with my friends. Centro Proceso Social invited me and my friends to participate in the workshops. We talked and got educational support. I liked it because I like to talk. I stopped my work at the garbage dump because I didn't want to get so dirty anymore. Now I work in a small bus with my father during the weekends; during the week I go to school. The workshops with Centro Proceso Social ended, so I would like to participate in CESIP's workshops now.

The programmes focus on adolescents and have a long-term view; although they don't directly intervene for younger working children, changing perspectives and opportunities for adolescents makes it more likely that they will break the vicious circle of poverty and child labour.

As with adults, the most vulnerable children and adolescents are the most difficult to reach, and are least likely to attend workshops. They will have to work or help at home, and in some cases parents don't allow children to attend. Initial selection for the workshops occurs by invitation, which is based on need, but then a "natural selection" kicks in and the strongest and most interested youths persevere. As Martin Yaranga (Centro Proceso Social) commented: "the families with resilience manage to improve their situation." CESIP's project evaluation also revealed that the most vulnerable children, in terms of economics and family support, are most likely to stop prematurely quit the workshops [Cesip 2006b]. So the children who need the support the most, are the most difficult to reach and retain in the workshops.

Medical campaigns are popular; many families take the opportunity to visit the clinic during the free campaign. 70 children were registered with SIS during the first campaign in 2002 [Cesip 2006b]. Unfortunately, there are still children who go without medical insurance or care, and the campaigns offering free care are only occasional. The attention for healthcare doesn't directly reduce child labour but is certainly a support for many families. In the same way, educational support has,

³⁵ The reason for Centro Proceso Social to work with relatively short term workshops and small funds for micro-credits for a relatively large number of people is due to the targets set by their financiers.

according to CESIP, provided successful educational development for the majority of the participants [Cesip 2006b]. The results of medical and educational support cannot be proven to directly decrease incidences of child labour in the short-term, but prospects are improved and numbers of children choosing work over school because of poor school results are reduced. Projects that provide school supplies come with the condition that the recipients do not work; however, conditions are not always verified and many children receive the supplies whilst continuing to combine school with work.

In conclusion, the workshops focussing on personal development were considered as a great support, but families still need economic support to effectively reduce child labour. It also appears that the most vulnerable and the most needy are the most difficult to reach. According to a CESIP project evaluation, 72.6% of the children and adolescents who participated in the project between 2002 and 2006 abandoned their work in waste material processing or other dangerous activities. Most of them participated in the project activities for four years. However, more importantly, 71% of the children who stopped working belonged to families with a mother and a father; their parents played an active role in the development of the intervention [Cesip 2006b].

6.2.2 Results and sustainability of interventions concerning markets

At the markets, a clear distinction can be observed between the interventions with an *erradicacionista* viewpoint and those that tend more towards a *regulacionista* position. Whereas CESIP focuses especially on personal development, Warma Taranakuy and Colibri highlight the importance of improving working conditions for adolescents. Interesting is to see how these interventions have different impacts on working children.

Children who are members of NUGAT indeed emphasise the positive influence their participation had on their personal development, as explained by the president of the organisation, 12-year-old Paula:

I became a member of NUGAT in 2004. I liked everything we did: the talks, dancing, sport. Once a woman came to tell us about drugs and alcohol; another time about sexual education or domestic violence. In NUGAT we received orientation about our rights, about life without mistreatment. I agreed with it, I wanted to value myself. At that moment I was working every day from 4 to 7 in the morning, selling juice with my mother. The difficult thing is that there are many bad people around. In NUGAT I learned to say no, to be strong because I have my rights.

The girl argues that the workshops made her feel better, because of the recreational activities and because she was taught how to value herself. Children also learn skills such as public speaking and self-expression. CESIP tries to improve living conditions through personal development; the children's ability to defend themselves is strengthened. However, although a child may feel stronger, dangers, aggression and tiredness during work are practical problems and cannot be solved through personal skills alone.

Generally, the most active participants commented on the personal development element, whilst others, including younger children, are especially enthusiastic about the recreational activities that are offered by the organisation. The activities appear to be a successful way to attract children.

Working children at the markets have little time and opportunity to play. At home many of them are bored, or feel enclosed. Since most recreational activities are open to all children, it is often the first introduction to NUGAT and CESIP. Another component that children like is that NUGAT offers a place to study or just to pass time. The 14-year-old Luisa works as an informal potato seller at the vegetable market:

I got to know NUGAT because I always went to the free lunch that is offered on Saturdays; people from NUGAT meet in the same place. I particularly liked the fact that I could do my homework there. I can also do it at home, but there is nobody to help me when I have questions. I live only with my mother; I don't know my father and my brother and sister are living at a boarding school. I started to join my mother at the market when I was 4 years old. At home I am often alone and we don't have a television, so I like it much more to come here. We do nice things and meet other people.

In short, NUGAT is for the children a place that offers safety, recreation, educational support, and personal support; essential components of a child's life that many of the working children miss due to their work, poverty and family problems. It functions as a very inclusive childcare centre for youngsters.

Still, however, many of the participants continue to work at the market. A CESIP social worker explained: "we try to improve adolescents' working conditions, because most of them need a job. We try to convince the parents of young children to make them stop working, but this is difficult; they are used to it and see it as a need and a way of educating their children." On the other hand, many of the adolescents who participate actively with CESIP are potential recipients of a scholarship, through which they are able to improve their living conditions. Instead of continuing to work at the market, and continuing the circle of poverty, they are able to work in a more qualified job, with better working conditions and a better salary. In the long term, this strategy may be effective; it results in young adults with knowledge about the dangers of child labour and practical options and abilities to avoid it. Such results have, however, not yet been observed because the first project has only just been completed.

Unfortunately, the most vulnerable and in need children are difficult to reach. As in Las Lomas de Carabayllo, these are the children who don't have the time or who are not allowed to participate due to work or other commitments.

Valentina (14):

I heard about NUGAT and I would like to get to know it. I feel exploited at my work, and I like to participate in groups. Maybe it would help me in some way. But the meetings are always on Saturdays and my aunt wouldn't allow me to go. I have to work, or stay home. She doesn't allow me to go around by myself. Going without her permission would mean trouble.

Most of the NUGAT members enjoy their parents' approval and cooperation; some were even encouraged to attend by their parents. Girls are especially dependent on their parents' permission; boys are more independent. Most of the members are children who work on weekends, but also a

number of adolescents who stopped working and who are studying. Children who work every day to maintain their living costs are enthusiastic about the activities on offer, but feel compelled to work or go home immediately after work.

Warma Taranakuy and Colibri also require attendance and participation, but this is less an obstacle to join the group for the porters at the fruit market. In the first place because there is only work for the porters until 10 in the morning; the meetings on Saturday start afterwards. Secondly, being part of one of the groups is necessary to be able to work inside the market. Considerations about whether to spend time on group activities or to work play thus less of a role. Parents are easily convinced of the need to participate, because membership is after all a requirement for their work. Nevertheless, the boys who have to work the entire day, for example, as shoe-shiners or informal sellers, and who also go to school in the evenings, aren't able to become members and thus formal porters. Warma Taranakuy's or Colibri's requirements are ultimately positive for the boys' development, but it also excludes the most vulnerable and needy boys from work at the fruit market.

Most of Warma Taranakuy's³⁶ members are positive about the way their membership improved their working conditions, as illustrates the following quote.

Jerson (17):

I started to work at the fruit market as an informal porter. I was allowed to enter the market, but without a trolley. This means that you have to carry the load on your shoulders and walk several times. Now that I am part of Warma I can put it all on my trolley. It is physically less heavy and you earn more because it goes quicker.

Still, the boys carry extremely heavy loads. The boys argue that they would lose clients if they carried less weight.³⁷ Being part of the association seems to contribute to one's standing within the market, which is positive for attracting clients. A porter mentioned that "as an informal porter the adults treat you badly. They tell the clients: 'don't go with that porter, he is going to rob you!'" Security is relatively good at the fruit market; trolleys, for example, can be left alone without being stolen, something that is impossible at the vegetable market. Also on a personal level, the boys feel safer.

Alfredo (30)

³⁶ The following fieldwork material referring to youth organisations at the fruit market is based on the experience of Warma Taranakuy, since most of the time was dedicated to this organisation. Apart from the general characteristics, the findings should not be generalised to Colibri or other youth organisations that are not mentioned.

³⁷ At September 18 of 2007 the Law Nr 29088 of Safety and Health in the work of Porters was proposed stating that porters can carry a maximum weight of 50 kilo on the shoulders, and 100 kilo with a trolley. It prohibits the activity for persons below 16 years old. The law still has to be approved.

The adults of Warma Taranakuy protect you when adults at the market don't respect you. Once I was beaten by a guard. Moises³⁸ criticised the guy and he got caught. I was amazed, but felt very good about it.

The relative safety can be explained by the fact that the market is in a generally safer area than the vegetable market, the administration at the fruit market is stricter and porters belong to an organisation. Porters' organisations thus offer their members protection, more income and ways to make the work less heavy. In short, working conditions are better compared to the informal workers and all the porters at the vegetable market.

The porters' organisations improve working conditions, but also to a certain extent living conditions. In the first place, members are obliged to attend formal day-education and improve their prospects. Further education is also stimulated; members older than 18 are still accepted as members as long as they keep on studying. This is convenient because Warma Taranakuy asks much lower entrance fees than adult associations do. The boys are supported with homework assistance and technical training. A few members have received scholarships for courses³⁹, whilst others have had to save the money themselves. Although to a lesser extent than NUGAT, Warma Taranakuy also focuses on personal skills. At regular meetings, boys are invited to participate and express themselves. An older member explained: "I used to be shy and didn't speak Spanish so well. Through my participation in Warma I learned to talk, now I am a real talker. I also improved my contact with other people." Finally, the association is a place where many of the members make friends and feel comfortable; it has a social purpose.

When comparing NUGAT and Warma Taranakuy, a few conclusions can be drawn with respect to child labour and best practices. Youth organisations like Warma Taranakuy are able to improve young workers' working and living conditions. Through the services that are offered, and the rules that are set, conditions that make the work as a porter at the fruit market a worst form of child labour have significantly improved. Given the fact that only boys of 14 years and older are allowed to work, there are barely any aspects that contradict with the child labour laws. The most important characteristic that still makes the work detrimental to youths are the heavy weights that the porters carry. The interventions of Warma Taranakuy, in combination with the strict administration of the fruit market, have to a certain extent converted a worst form of child labour into a legal form of adolescent work. In addition, it contributes to a solution of poverty and child labour on the long-term. Concerning this, the interventions could be considered as successful practices to combat the worst forms of child labour. It indirectly stimulates young people to do dangerous work, but conditions are much better than most and they generally comply with legislation. Most NGOs agree that young workers need to work and restraining them wouldn't be a solution. In short, by making membership compulsory, and by setting requirements for membership, the aspects that make the work a worst form of child labour are mostly eliminated.

³⁸ Moises Siguas is one of the founders of Warma Taranakuy. He is the principal contact person for the boys, also in case of problems.

³⁹ Courses, such as clothes making, through which the students obtain useful practical skills.

CESIP and its youth group NUGAT accomplish important results on a personal and educational level; several children expressed improvements to their self esteem, and choice to return to school. Adolescents receive support in moving to a less dangerous job, but dangerous conditions at the market, which the children face during their work, have not been improved. The intervention also improves crucial elements of children's living conditions, by offering services that most working children lack. Equally important, the intervention provides a form of child care, although for limited time, which is an important means to prevent children from joining their mothers during work. Unfortunately, the lack of recognition and the voluntary character of the service still leave many children at work with their parents. CESIP's intervention is successful only for a very limited percentage of the working children at the vegetable market. It should include more children, oblige working parents at the market to leave their children at NUGAT and improve working conditions for all children who have to work. The market administration plays an important role in enforcing age limits and other rules, and so it is crucial to include these private or municipal actors. Besides, to organise the adolescent and adult labourers and give them a say in the organisation will facilitate the establishment of rules supported by the labourers, and local solutions for child labour.

This research was unable to observe outcomes of the state programme Inabif. Without putting in doubt its professionalism and willingness, it can be concluded that the programme seriously lacks a budget and personnel to successfully work on its mission.

Chapter 7

Conclusions and Recommendations

The research on the worst forms of child labour in Peru focussed on child labour in the mining sector and in an urban setting. Specifically, this report discussed the situation of children working at wholesale markets and in waste materials processing in urban Lima. This chapter will conclude the findings and, based on the conclusion, will formulate policy recommendations for NGOs and GOs working in the field of child labour.

7.1 Research questions

This research had the following research questions:

- What are the living and working conditions of the working children in urban sectors?
- What consequences does child labour in urban sectors have for the working children?
- What are the main reasons for children to work in urban sectors?
- Which strategies to combat child labour have been used by GOs and NGOs in the research communities and what are their successes and shortcomings?

Two urban-based sectors were selected in Lima: economic activities at wholesale markets and the processing of waste materials. The sectors involve very different activities and are carried out in distinct parts of Lima: respectively the centre and the periphery. Conclusions are drawn about each sector, rather than the urban sector as a whole. However, similarities between the sectors indicate characteristics that apply to child labour in urban settings in general.

Peru has ratified ILO Conventions 138 concerning the minimum working age and 182 referring to the worst forms of child labour. According to these conventions, children are allowed to work at 14 years and older; at 12 years old children can work in “light activities” for a maximum of 14 hours a week. Work for adolescents, i.e. children between 14 and 18 years old, is subject to regulations. Activities that are likely to harm a person’s health, safety or morals are not allowed for persons below 18 (see 2.3). Peru’s National Directive Committee for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labour has labelled the work as porter and work with waste materials as dangerous and harmful for children (see 2.4). This research aimed to identify actual tasks involved in the sectors and to determine whether existing legislation corresponds.

Working children at markets are found at the two wholesale markets of Lima: Mercado Mayorista no 1 for vegetables and Mercado Mayorista no 2 for fruit. Both are located in the district La Victoria, in the central part of Lima. The processing of waste materials was studied in the district Carabayllo, in the neighbourhood Las Lomas de Carabayllo (see 2.5). The latter district forms part of the peripheral zone of the capital city of Lima. The living and working conditions of the children vary a

lot, but there are also similarities to be found. In both parts of Lima a sizeable portion of the population, including the working children, consists of migrants from the countryside. The migrants arrive in the poorest parts of the city; in the periphery, where they lack important basic services, or in the centre of Lima, where there is a serious safety problem. Working children come mostly from large families, but many families are broken, resulting in single parent households. There are also many working children without parents; they live with relatives or in some cases alone. Most working children in Lima lack a healthy and safe living environment (see 3.1).

Children perform a wide variety of activities starting when they are about 7 years old. In Las Lomas de Carabayllo boys and girls are involved in collecting waste materials in the streets or they sort out different types of materials at a small dumpsite. Male adolescents from around 15 years old are also found collecting and sorting out materials at formal garbage dumps or on garbage trucks (see 3.3). At the markets, most children work as porters or informal sellers of vegetables, food and drinks. A remaining group is involved in shoe-shining, the clothing industry, restaurant work, or collecting garbage (see 3.2).

Consequences of the work with waste materials are mostly health-related, because the children are continuously in contact with garbage and work without protective measures (see 4.1.2). In addition, adolescents are more likely to stop school if they are also working (see 4.2.2). In La Victoria, there are some health problems as a result of the heavy weights, and children are tired due to their early working hours (see 4.1.1). Several children miss school for at least a year and the ones who do continue to attend fall asleep in class and obtain poor results due to their lack of concentration (see 4.2.1).

Migrant children experience additional familial problems; they are either separated from their families who stay behind in their rural homes, or the whole family is faced with the new challenges of city life (see 4.3). Many children feel either bored or unsafe during work (see 4.1); in both neighbourhoods it was mentioned that children are exposed to the dangers inherent to the working areas (see 4.4). Adolescents working at the fruit market are exceptions; their working conditions are slightly better, since they enjoy more protection, start somewhat later and go to school. These conditions are a result of the well-organised market. On the other hand, they are obliged to carry heavier weights. The consequences of children's work in both sectors are generally negative for the workers, even though they are not always perceived as such. Moreover, the presence of many of the working children contradicts with the national and international laws on child labour (see 3.4).

A distinction between the two sectors needs to be made. The entire sector "waste material" should be considered a worst form of child labour because of its harmful working conditions for all children involved. Markets as a sector need not be labelled a worst form of child labour though. There are huge differences between working conditions at various markets. Hence, the harmfulness of work at markets can not be generalised and can only be determined when looking at the specific market, activities and working conditions. However, the research shows that the majority of the working children at the vegetable market, as well as the young porters that carry extreme heavy weights at the fruit market, find themselves in a worst form of child labour. Work at markets should thus be strictly regulated.

The reasons for most children to work are a combination of financial reasons, reasons related to childcare and safety, poor educational services and existing traditional norms. A lack of safety and

sufficient childcare drives mothers to take their children to the workplace (see 5.4). Children who work for economic reasons do this mostly to contribute to their family's income or to be able to provide for their own basic needs. Economic needs correlate with the size of the family, social familial problems, the separation of relatives and adult unemployment. Existing norms play a part as well. According to Andean rural tradition, children are accustomed to helping their parents and adolescents are expected to cover their own expenses. Working and helping is generally perceived as positive for children (see 5.2). Educational services do not suffice in the countryside, resulting in children's migration to and work in urban areas. Another explanation for children's work is the low quality of education in poor areas and high costs for further education. Adolescents are indirectly forced to work in unskilled and hazardous jobs since they are not able to proceed with higher education and learn a skill (see 5.3).

Sector specific characteristics influence the presence of child labour since informal activities are more accessible to children. In Carabayllo, authorities are not able or willing to inspect the informal sector for the presence of child labour. Employers who pay their employees according to production unit, rather than a fixed salary, also facilitate the participation of children; parents can increase their income by occasionally bringing their children along. The difference between the strictly administrated fruit market and the chaotic and corrupt vegetable market is interesting to observe; child labour is much more present in the latter. The fruit market is managed by the labour associations, including the young porters. When the labourers are organised and involved in the management and rules of the market, they are more likely to comply with rules, including those concerning child labour. The associations at the fruit market prohibit the entrance of children below 14 and regulate the older porters' work. Finally, the fact that working and living areas are in the case of both sectors close to each other, facilitates children to work. In Carabayllo, children's working space is often even the same as their living space (see 5.5).

Interventions of NGOs in Peru can be roughly divided into the ones supporting an *erradicacionista* point of view and the ones that support a *regulacionista* point of view. In Las Lomas de Carabayllo there are many NGOs, of which the most important ones are CESIP and Proceso Social (see 6.1.1). Important components of their interventions have been the workshops for children, adolescents and parents focussed on personal development; they worked on parent-child relations, self-esteem and important values. It appeared that accompanying financial support is necessary in order to reduce child labour. A selected group of adolescents received this support in the form of scholarships and a group of parents in the form of micro-credits to start a business. The strategies appeared successful in reducing child labour. Parents, after successfully establishing a business, recognised the importance of leaving their children at home and became able to do so. Adolescents who were working to save money to study could stop working. However, only a relatively small part of the population was reached. The most vulnerable and needy working children are the most difficult to reach. They lack the support of their parents or their parents aren't able to bring about significant change (see 6.2.1).

The interventions at the vegetable market take on a mostly *erradicacionista* approach, whilst those at the fruit market are generally *regulacionista* in nature. At both markets youth groups are established in which working children and adolescents participate. At the vegetable market the intervention offers personal development workshops focussing on recreation, self-esteem and

educational support; at the fruit market the focus is on improving working conditions (see 6.1.2). It appears that youth organisations like Warma Taranakuy at the fruit market, although indirectly facilitating dangerous work, are able to improve young workers' working and living conditions by offering educational support and protection and setting an age limit. Due to the interventions and the strict management of the market, working adolescents operate according to acceptable standards. Only because of the heavy weights they carry, does the activity still represent a worst form of child labour. At the vegetable market, CESIP and its youth group NUGAT obtain important results on a personal level and in the field of education; several children recognised feeling empowered and happy due to the workshops and some adolescents got a chance to continue their higher education studies without having to work. However, practical conditions that the children face during their work, such as dangers and working hours are not improved. The intervention also in effect provides a form of childcare, which keeps children away from the labour location. The lack of publicity and the voluntary character of the youth group are, however, reasons for the relatively small number of participants (see 6.2.2).

7.2 Recommendations for policies on child labour

These recommendations are based on the reasons that children work and the experiences of former and current interventions in the studied communities. Some recommendations apply to both economic sectors; others should only be applied to specific sectors. Considering the diversity of working children and the combination of causes that lead to child labour, the solution to child labour entails a combination of strategies. None of the recommendations mentioned below are by themselves able to offer a complete solution to the problem of child labour in the neighbourhoods; they are, however, able to make necessary changes.

Both sectors need to see improvements in adult wages; the production chains need to become less accessible to children, and less harmful to the general environment. This would require better organisation, formalisation and regulation.

Waste collection and recycling is very important in huge urban areas like Lima, but often not recognised as such by the authorities. The sector should be reorganised as a new formal economic sector providing employment with decent conditions for adults. Regulations should be set referring to safety, the environment and child labour. Effective waste management would provide benefits for the authorities and labourers. In formalised companies, persons under 18 years old should not be permitted. Furthermore, safety measures such as the use of protective clothing, a ventilation system and the prohibition of burning toxic substances in the open air, among others, would drastically improve adults' working conditions and diminish pollution of the environment. Companies should also respect conditions such as fixed working hours and fixed salaries; the latter would additionally reduce the need or temptation to bring children to work. Considering the general pollution and lack of hygiene involved with waste materials, working and living areas should be separated. This would protect children from living in highly unhygienic conditions and reduce the likelihood that they will be involved in work.

Formalisation of the sector would create difficulties for poor people who are unable to make big investments and comply with all the necessary requirements. Authorities should be stimulated to invest in small waste management companies, considering the general benefits they have for Lima.

NGOs could intermediate. Cooperatives would give the labourers involved more options to make investments. Micro-credits should be provided under conditions. Strict rules and inspections are important to reduce the existence of informal and harmful business practices in the waste materials sector. NGOs could help unemployed adults to find jobs in a formal company or they can support new entrepreneurs.⁴⁰

The wholesale markets are already formal enterprises. The fruit market is also already regulated, but the vegetable market lacks regulations and the compliance of rules. The fruit market could provide an example of a market where the youngest children are not allowed to work, and regulations for adolescents and adults are implemented and enforced. It is important to give the adult and young labourers at the market a say in the organisation in order to establish rules that are supported by the labourers and will allow the system to work. Labourers will be more likely to respect rules if these also imply benefits for them. Organisation of the adult labourers would be an important start. Whereas a number of the workers at the vegetable market are organised in an association, others are not. In addition, the workers all suffer from poor management at the market. As with the waste material sector, the organisation and formalisation of all labourers and better regulation of the market would oblige the administration to take responsibilities towards its employees and improve working conditions, and would enable effective inspections. Costs incurred by inspections should be passed on to the administration. Adolescents should respect age-related rules, including compulsory school attendance. The recommendations should improve the situation for adult and adolescent workers, but exclude children from work. For these children then, it is necessary to provide other services and alternatives.

A service that offers mothers the possibility to work and that would reduce child labour is quality childcare for children of working parents. It applies to both sectors. Many children join their mothers to work due to lacking alternatives. Formalisation and stricter inspection would only increase parents' need for reliable and affordable childcare, and is thus vital to include. Ideally, the centre should be near the workplace so that transport is not a problem; however, it should be distanced from the dangers related to work. It could also be close to the school. One could think of public childcare centres, but also of childcare services organised by the employer. This would make it less of an option for employers to allow children onto the work floor and less necessary for the working parents to bring their children along. When children are excluded from the labour environment, they are given fewer incentives to start working.

A distinction should be made between children and adolescents who work to contribute to the family income and the ones who work to maintain their own living costs. When children contribute to the family income because the parents are not able to provide enough money, recommendations involve increasing the family income. Possibilities are to provide employment opportunities for parents, such as in the formalised waste sector, or improving the parents' current activity, by offering micro-credits and business management training. Considering that children of large families are more likely to work, interventions should also include family planning. This would help the

⁴⁰ Gradual steps in the direction of formalised waste management have already been taken by CESIP. The process is very recent and in development and one cannot speak of results yet.

parents to maintain their family without sending their children to work. Also, decreasing the costs of necessary social services would raise the family income and reduce the need for children to work. Especially costs for healthcare, but also education, should be lowered and would make a difference for families' income. Many familial problems could be helped by interventions aimed at improving financial management within the household, including gender equality, since men often control the money, even though women hold most of the responsibilities. When mothers are left alone with children after a divorce, alimony payments from the children's father should be fully assured.

Different interventions are needed for children who work to afford their own basic needs. Many of these children migrated to Lima by themselves, often because they wanted to study. The solution for them is twofold; rural-urban migration should be slowed down and discouraged through investments in rural education, and support for children who migrated alone to Lima should be improved. It is important that these children receive financial support as well as personal support and orientation. Without this support they have few other options than to work.

Also in the urban setting, attention should be given to achieving free, compulsory and improved quality of primary and secondary education, and affordable access to higher education. Considering the lack of practical use that many children experience in education, education should keep life realities of children in mind. EBA makes it easier for working children to study, but it also facilitates the continuance of work. Only in very exceptional cases should children be allowed to attend.

Besides directly intervening in the field of child labour, institutions could opt for improving the general living conditions in the neighbourhoods. Obviously, improved living conditions in La Victoria and Las Lomas de Carabayllo would improve children's lives. NGOs or state organisations could focus on increasing safety, recreation, satisfactory and free healthcare, and regulations against child abuse. Conditions in migrant origin towns should also be similarly improved to discourage migration.

The conclusions here confirm the need for long-term interventions and the increased likelihood for children with a stable background to be able to improve their situation. A point of discussion may be whether high investments in long-term interventions focussed on individuals are the right strategy; would it perhaps be more advisable to invest in a model that encompasses the entire population, rather than one that reaches only those who have a safe basis, who are resilient, who have familial support etc. We have seen that the most vulnerable and in need are the most difficult to reach. The strategy should be one that includes also those people unwilling or with difficulties to change. Via strict rules and offering alternatives, adults will be forced and enabled to accept their responsibilities towards their children.

Traditional beliefs and norms take a long time to change; NGOs must persevere and continue to inform families about the risks of child labour and the importance of education, whilst respecting local beliefs, so as to avoid conflict. Interventions that are carried out too quickly or without taking local feelings into consideration can have converse effects. Significant structural changes, such as formalisation of a sector, should thus be applied urgently yet cautiously.

Most importantly, any strategy should be multi-faceted if it strives for success. The CPETI set up a National Plan of Prevention and Eradication of Child Labour, which is a centralised and integrated programme, designed to coordinate various actors in the field. However, the Plan is still young and still lacks a strategy for concrete action and a budget. All participant organisations operate independently within their available budget. International organisations could play a role in

supporting the CPETI as a whole, and to jointly set national targets. Inspectorates need to be professionalised and fully equipped. Policy decisions and actions would be made by a variety of actors including state institutions, making use of the available experience and knowledge, which will increase the consensus and sustainability.

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