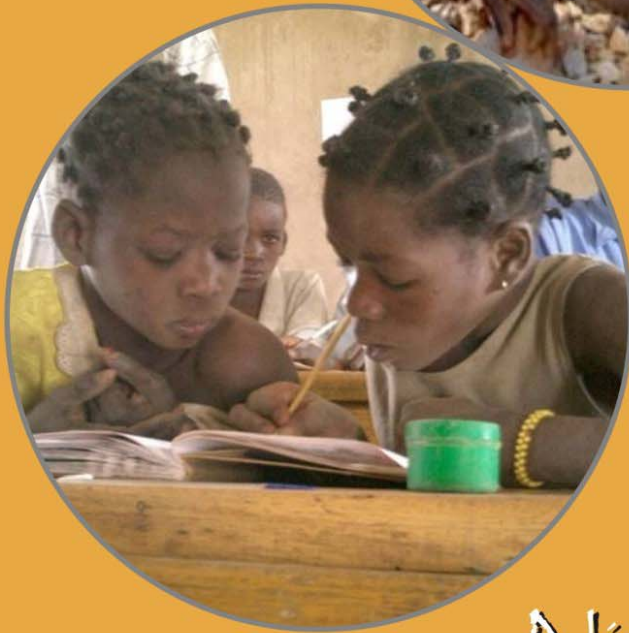
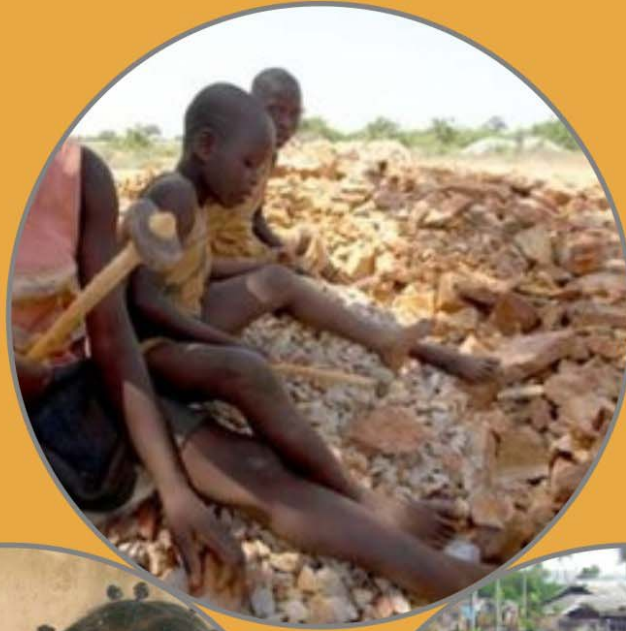


Review of Child Labour, Education and Poverty Agenda



Niger Country Report 2006

In collaboration with:

Population Media Center (PMC) and
Action for Abolition of Child Labour in Niger (AFETEN)

EXIST

Consultation Office , Expertise and socio economic and technical Actions
Tel : (00227) 96 50 00 06. Mail :souley.adji@caramail.com

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List of abbreviations

- AFVP** : (Association Française des Volontaires de Progrès)- French Association of volunteers for Progress
- AFTEN** : (Action en Faveur de l'Elimination du Travail des Enfants au Niger)-Action for Abolition of Child Labour in Niger
- ANASI** : (Association Nigérienne pour l'Appel et la Solidarité Islamique)- Nigerien Association for Islamic Help and Solidarity
- AIN** : (Association Islamique du Niger)-Nigerien Islamic Association
- ANBEF** : (Association Nigérienne pour le Bien Etre Familial)- Nigerien Association for the Well- Being of the Family
- ALTEN** : (Association de Lutte contre le Travail des Enfants au Niger)- Association to Fight Against the Child Labour in Niger
- BIT** : (Bureau International du Travail)-International Labour Office
- CCOG** : (Centre Culturel Oumarou Ganda)-Cultural Centre Oumarou Ganda
- CDS** : (Communicateur du District Sanitaire) --District Health Communicator
- CNSS** : (Caisse Nationale de Sécurité Sociale)- National Social Security
- CSI** : (Centre de Santé Intégré)- Centre of Integrated Health
- CUN** :(Communauté Urbaine de Niamey)- Urban Community of Niamey
- CPEN** : (Comité pour la Protection de l'Enfance au Niger)-Committee for the Protection of Child in Niger
- CEG** :(Collège d'Enseignement Général)- College for General Education
- CONIPRAT** : (Comité Nigérien contre les Pratiques Traditionnelles)-Nigerien Committee Against Traditional Practices
- CAP** : (Connaissance Attitude et Pratique)-Knowledge , Attitudes and Practices
- CHD** :(Centre Hospitalier Départemental)- Departmental Medical Centre
- DDS** : (Direction Départementale de la Santé)- Departmental Management of Health
- DP** : (Direction de la Population)- Management of Population
- DSRP** : (Document de stratégie pour la réduction de la pauvreté)- Strategic Document for the Elimination of Poverty
- ILO** : International Labour Organization

IPEC : (Programme International pour l'Abolition du Travail des Enfants)- International Programme for Abolition of Child Labour

IEC : Information Education Communication

HNL :(Hôpital National de Lamordé)- National Hospital of Lamordé

MF/T : (Ministère de la Fonction publique et du travail)- Ministry of Civil services and Work

MPE : (Ministère de la Promotion de la Femme et de la Protection de l'Enfant)- Ministry for the Empowerment of Women and Child protection

MIPJ : (Ministère de l'Insertion Professionnelle des Jeunes)- Ministry for professional rehabilitation of the Young people

MJAJF : (Direction de la jeunesse et des Jeux de la Francophonie)- Management for the Youth and Francophonie Games

MARP :(Méthode Active de Recherche Participative)- Active Method of Participatory Research

MP : (Ministère du Plan)- Ministry of Planning

ONG : (Organisation Non Gouvernementale)-Non- Government Organisation

ONPE :(Office National de la Poste et de l'Epargne)-National Office of Posts and Savings

PARFD-CARITAS : (Projet d'Appui à la Réinsertion des Filles en Difficultés)- Project to Support Rehabilitation of Girls in Difficulties

PMC : Population Media Centre

PNLS:(Programme National de Lutte contre le Sida)- National Programme Against Aids)

PAC : (Programme d'Actions Communautaires)- Programme for Community Actions

RAIL/SIDA : (Réseau des Acteurs Intervenant dans le cadre du SIDA & IST) – Network of Actors Working for Aids and Sexually Transmitted Diseases

RGP : (Recensement Général de la Population)- General Population Census

SNIS : (Système National d'Information Sanitaire)- National System of Health Information

UNICEF : (Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'Enfance)- United Nation's Children's Fund

UNIVERSITE AM : (Université Abdou Moumouni de Niamey)- Abdou Moumouni University of Niamey

INTRODUCTION

Situated in the middle of Western Africa, Niger is considered as one of poorest countries of the world. It has a surface area of 1 267 000 sq. km., which is mostly deserted and inhabited. In 2001, it had an estimated population of 10 790 352 inhabitants, of which almost one half was aged less than 15 years. According to a World Bank Report published in 2004, the country will exceed 53 million inhabitants by 2050 and it will be the second most populated country of West Africa after Nigeria. According to Synthetic Fertility Index (ISF), at present, there are, on an average, eight children per woman, where as the families have increasing problems in providing for their basic needs (health, education, food, etc.)

Since the early eighties, State of Niger has considerably reduced its social expenditure in the Programmes of Structural Adjustment (PAS) . This step has deteriorated the overall social situation in the country where the biggest challenge for the families is to ensure their survival with an income which is constantly decreasing.. In this regard, the Report on the Human Development 2005 of PNUD has revealed that 61.4% of population of Niger survives on just one (1) US Dollar per Day. This means, the people have enormous problems in getting access to basic social services, especially in rural areas where 85%of the total population of the country lives. Of course, in this context, the children are the first victims.

Even though one does not have exact figures, yet one knows that several organizations, including BIT consider that the child labour is an important problem in agriculture and (cattle) breeding . In the framework of the present study, it is important to locate the type of activities linked to these two traditional sectors of Niger, as well as those which appear new. This would enable to identify the internal factors which favour child labour as well as the obstacles and hindrances which oppose its abolition and application of legal norms. There will be an attempt to understand and determine the factors responsible for child labour by analyzing the context of the concerned sectors..

Despite the fact that it is well known that child labour depends largely on the social condition of the families, very often, we know very little about the psychological, sociological and cultural aspects which play an important part when the parents decide to engage their children into work. Therefore, in the course of the Study, information will be elicited from the characteristics of the families which send their children to work. The information should be analyzed keeping in view the level of education and the income of the parents, size of the families, their beliefs and cultural practices.

Keeping in view the increasing menace of Child labour, The Nigerian State defined and adopted a National Plan of Action (PNA) to fight against it in February 2000. In the same framework, it signed in March 2000, a Protocol of Understanding with IPEC. In the country, several Non Government organizations (ONG) supported by development partners and special organizations have launched multiple forms of actions like sensitization, advocacy, rehabilitation and research projects -to check if not stop the problem --and to collect qualitative and quantitative information on each form of child labour prevalent in different sectors of national economy.

In this study, there will be an attempt to establish a correlation between poverty, child labour and illiteracy. We will try to study their impact on the individual and the society in order to sensitize the decision makers and the actors of the civil society to tackle in a comprehensive manner, the three problems with a view to achieving best long lasting results.

1 - Nomenclature of the main documentation

We are enclosing an inventory of documents which have been listed according to the nature of problem discussed within. We have considered only those works which seemed most important, excluding those which do not primarily deal with one of the elements of Triangular paradigm or which do not throw sufficient light in the understanding of Child labour

1-1- List of documents

- 1-Child Labour in West and Central Africa: Magnitude of the phenomenon and typology, Doc. BIT/Unicef, Abidjan, juillet 1996
- Child Labour in Niger, Daouda A., BIT/OIT (Niamey, Niger),Final report, November 1997.
- 2- Child Labour in West and Central Africa : Sociocultural Analysis BIT, Abidjan, 1996
- 3- Problems of Child Labour and illegal trafficking of child servants in West and Central Africa, Unicef, Backround Document, Cotonou, juillet 1998
- 4- Right to Work and Protection of Woman and Child in, Lobit. A. Irène, Dissertation of *Maîtrise* ; F.E.S.J/University of Niamey, 1998-1999.
- 5- The limitations of the Nigerien legislative texts on Slavery , Amina B Kalto, O. Boubacar, Dambako M.S., Study done by l'Association Timidria, sur Financement de ANTISLAVERY International, Niamey NIGER, January, 2000.
- 6- Proslavery Practices in Niger in 2000 – Document – Chaix Chouinard, Y., Niamey, 2000

7-*Second provisional report on the situation of rights of child in Niger*, PAN/SPDE, (B.E.A.S.D.), Niamey ; NIGER 2004-2010.

8- The Situation of child labour in Niger, BIT/IPEC, 1998

9- Sub –regional Consultation : Development of Strategies to fight against the trafficking of children for sexual exploitation in West and Central Africa , Unicef, Libreville, Gabon from 22nd to 24th February 2000.

10-*Slavery in Niger : History and Survival*, Hamani D., Ronéo, 16 pages, Working Document, BIT 2001, Niamey

11- Study on the living conditions and working of child domestic servants in Niger , Anti Slavery, WAO Afrique, 2001

12- Identification of obstacles for implementing principles and fundamental rights to work and proposals for solutions (in Niger), Oumarou M, BIT, August 2001, Geneva, Working Documents, BIT, 2001

13- Domestic child labour in Maradi and Niamey, August 2001, BEST, Niamey

14- Proslavery Practices in Africa . What are their implications in social development ? Dissertation, UED, Geneva, 2002

15- Study on bonded labour in Niger, S. Adj, A. Sékou, BIT, Pamodec, Niamey, Niger, 2002

16- Child Labour and Action of *I'O.I.T./I.P.E.C in Niger*, P. et B. Ibrahim, National Forum on bonded labour , , Niamey.

17- Study on the implementation of programme of prevention and reduction of economic vulnerability of sex workers migrated from Shari'a to the border areas of Nigeria, Care, 2002, Niamey

18- Slavery in Niger, Background Document , Timidria & Anti-Slavery
Galy K. Abdelkader, 2004, Niamey

19- Plan of Action Project to fight against the sexual exploitation of children, , MPE-
Unicef, S. Adj, 65p. July 2006, Niamey

20-Exploratory Study on the working conditions of the girls in the gold bearing places of
Komabangou and Mbanga, S. Adj, Ipec-BIT, 2006

21- Survey on Household budget and consumption in Niger, 1994

22- Assessment of poverty in Niger: Resistance of people in a hostile environment,
World Bank, 1996

23- Study on Street Children at Niamey, 1996, ORSTOM, Niamey

24- Study on Children living in severe difficult situation in CUN and territory of Zinder,
DPE, 1996, Niamey

25- Study on socio demographic indicators, Management of population, 1997, MDS,
Niamey

26- Study on the living conditions of minors living in civil prison Niamey, DPE, 1998,
Niamey

27- Study on the phenomenon of club footed children in Niamey, DPE, 1998, Niamey

28- National Report on trafficking of persons in Niger, mars 2005, UNICEF, Niamey

29- Study on the living conditions and security of the Families , Department of Tillabéry
(Niger) for CARE INTERNATIONAL Niger, Niamey - Niger, December 1998 –
January,1999

30- Final Regional Reports of 2nd Study on Demography and Health in Niger (EDSN II)
from 1998 for Macro International - Washington DC - USA - Mai 1999

- 31- Assessment by the beneficiaries of the poverty programme , regional agencies working in special programmes against poverty (Mayahi et Bankilaré), 2001
- 32- Strategy of eliminating poverty , Prime Minister's office, permanent secretariat of DRSP, November 2001
- 33-Foundational Study : Knowledge, Attitudes and Habits (CAP) on Health, environment, hygiene and cleaning and the IST/AIDS in 35 cooperative villages in the health districts of Loga and Mirriah for United Nations' Fund for population (FNUAP) Niger, Niamey, Niger, November et December 2001
- 34- Setting up of a reference of three zones of interventions of the specific Programme to combat poverty, C. Maina, 2001, Niamey
- 35- Mendicity by Women at Zinder, Dissertation , Djida M., Collège Coop., Aix-in Provence/ Niamey, 2002
- 36- Setting up of the socioeconomic database of Ministry of Social Development, Population and Empowerment of Women and Protection of Children, distributed gender-wise to promote women's empowerment, Niamey – Niger, Avril-juin 2002
- 37- Children's Courts in Niger : What Future ? Moussa M. Sadissou, Dissertation , F.E.S.J/ Niamey University, 2001-2002.
- 38-Study for the Assessment of the Project : « Long lasting improvement in food security, nutrition and survival of child and woman » in the districts of e Doutchi, Illéla, Konni, Tanout, Diffa, Mainé-Soroa et N'Guigmi, Helen Keller International, January – February, 2003, Niamey
- 39- Perspectives on setting -up of millennium objectives for the development of Niger,Permanent Secretariat of DSRP,Prime Minister's Bureau, July 2003
- 40- Study on Synergy Poverty Environment in the zones of intervention of the special Programme to combat poverty, A. Abdou, B. Dan Magaria, Programme to Combat poverty, 2001, Niamey

- 41- Education Development, National Commission UNESCO, 1995, Niamey
- 42- Analysis of socio-cultural characteristics , Management of Population, Niamey, 1996
- 43- Study on : Knowledge , Attitudes and Practices (CAP) on issues regarding reproductive and sexual health of young teenagers of the Urban Community of Niamey for l'ANBEF-Niger, Niamey, Niger, December 1997- January 1998
- 44- Study on Demography and Health, EDSN,MDS, Niamey, 1998
- 45-Analysis of the Situation- Sector-based Report. Children/Women, Gender and Development, Mindaoudou A., Niamey, UNICEF, 1998,
- 46-Nigerien Contribution to the Workshop on the deciding domestic factors leading of schooling in Africa (Abidjan), 1998, Niamey
- 47- Collection of laws and rules of National Ministry of Education, edition MEN Niamey (NIGER), 1998, Fasc. 60-01-VI.
- 48- Second Study of Multiple Indicators (MICS2), Macro International-Washington and UNICEF-Niger, Niamey, Niger, January to November 2000
- 49- "Primary education for all" (*EPT*) until 2015
- 50- CAP Study on Sexual and Reproductive Health in rural areas (Tillaberi Region), Dr Faria, . provisional Repost, 2000
- 51- Education for All : Assesment in 2000, H. Oumarou, MEBA, Unicef, 2000
- 52- Study on Knowledgs and Perceptions of Nigerien population on the rights of a child, I. Maga Hamidou, Ministry of social development , population, empowerment of women and protection of children, 2000
- 53- - Foundational Study of Multiple Indicators on 12 SBI departments , Macro International, UNICEF / MP, 2000, Niamey

- 54- Girls' Schooling in Agadez region, Regional branch UNICEF, 2001, Niamey
- 55- Attitudes of the decision makers of school regarding girls' education in Cameroon, Mali, Niger, Senegal. A. Ammassari, J. Coulibaly, IEFA, 2001, Unicef
- 56- Harmonization of national texts with the Convention on the rights of children , D. Abarchi, MC, 2002
- 57- Study on the Impact of sensitization campaigns for promoting the schooling of girls , (Agadez region), A. Namata, R. Saminou, MEBA, 2002
- 58- Study on the academic acquisition of the 8th standard students in Mathematics and Sciences with regard to daily life activities, MEBA, 2002, Niamey
- 59- Children in difficult conditions and HIV/AIDS, ONUSIDA, Workshop Report, Prime Minister's Office , Niamey, November 2003
- 60-Education in SBI (Integrated Basic Services) zone: Study of the Evolution of indicators in education in and outside SBI zones, CNESS- Bozari, MEBA, 2003
- 61- Mid- term Assessment of IEFA programme (2001-2002-2003) in the concerned departments of Abalak and Tchintabaraden, A. Mohamed, MEBA, UNICEF, 2003
- 62-Deciding factors for the employment of children in sexual and reproductive health services in CUN, Faria I., CNESS, 2003, Unicef
- 63- Assessment of the availability of products and essential services, locally based in Niger, A. A. Djimrao, Unicef, 2003, Niamey
- 64- Foundational Study on Knowledge, attitudes and practices of the population of Diffa and Zinder region on IST/HIV for Lux-Développement, November 2002 - January 2003, Niamey

65- Study on the genital mutilation of women in Diffa region, Coniprat, MDS, 2004, Niamey

66- Sensitization campaigns on bonded labour, launched in Tahoua by the traditional Nigerien chefs, Tillabéry and Agadez, M. Kadi, Pamodec, BIT, 2004

67- Role of children in management strategies for tackling risks in families, CNESS-Bozari, MDS, 2004

68-Journal on studies and assessment undertaken from 2000 to 2004 with the help of UNICEF , 2005, Niamey

69- Formative Research: Promotion of children's rights and sexual health, PMC/USAID, S. Adji, Niamey, 2005

1-2 –Longitudinal Analysis of the Document

The important observations of the study are :

1-In every four(4) out of five(5) cases, the initiatives are taken by bilateral and international institutions. The State remains a poor provider for funding studies .

2- The studies on the problems of children actually began from the year 2000 . This can be explained, on one hand, by the fact that during the last decade 1990-2000, the concerned institutions (Unicef, BIT, FNUAF.) gave special importance to problems concerning gender and reproductive health ; on the other, the political scenario in Niger, during the same period , was marked by major political instability especially due to two coups d'état and one armed revolt . The political context not only discouraged the development partners -- of which the majority stopped their support after the 1996 coup d'état -- but also restricted researchers' freedom of action, insecurity being a constant factor .

3- Most of the documents have given more importance to the rural world and not much to the urban centers, since the villages and the communities are still attached to certain customs which are risky and even dangerous for the health of the population and especially of the children. In fact , this implies giving more importance to concrete action

plans of projects and programmes rather than passing a mere rational gaze. Therefore, sometimes, an action involves diagnosis when it deals with a new project, sometimes it concerns assessment of activities when it deals with organizations conceived long ago.

4- Fourthly, it must be brought to notice that certain regions of the country remain unexplored even though the persons living there are in a morbid state. In fact, compared to regions like Tahoua or Tillabéry, regions of Agadez and Diffa are prominently missing from the researchers' notebook. One must say that these are not the preferred zones of the development partners. One will have to wait for the normal situation to prevail to carry out effectively the investigations in these zones.

5- The reflection on the condition of the children, especially on their exploitation of all kinds, began, as mentioned earlier, from the year 2000. In the first place, bonded labour, in particular, was studied in several field studies and seminars at national or regional level. The documents cover, as it is reflected in the nomenclature, sometimes institutionalized slavery, at times beggary, sometimes domestic work or trafficking of children. However, it is evident from the study that in the coming years, problems of children will be given more importance than those concerning reproductive health and gender.

2 - Summary of the results

The results obtained will be given according to the specific area of paradigm. We have retained only those results which we considered important to understand the problem of child labour. The numbers which are given in brackets and in the highlighted form refer to the documentation. However, each time, we did not refer back since for one single point mentioned at times there were several sources and references.

2- 1- General characteristics of the context of study

The phenomenon of child labour is visible in many African countries due to their bad economic situation. In this context, children are considered as proof of riches since they contribute to the income of the family by doing different jobs. To escape from a miserable life, children are engaged into active life and they do all kinds of odd jobs.

The child labour manifests itself differently depending upon whether it is undertaken in urban or rural zone.

In the urban zone, children work to raise the family income by doing different jobs, by helping their parents in their domestic and rustic work. Generally, they are employed in the activities of the informal sector that exploits their cheap labour and employs them as trainees, hawkers or domestic servants

- In the rural zone, child labour starts from the family as the child is made to participate in the socio economic and cultural life of the elders. The child is given all sorts of jobs (blacksmith, fields, artisanal work etc.). The burden of overwork has a negative impact on the physical and psychological growth of the child (69).
- This kind of job does not exploit child, rather it teaches him the management of family inheritance - This economic conception is reinforced by the cultural aspect of the child labour (2) which is inscribed in the sphere of transmission of knowledge. Thus a social dimension is added to educative values to enable the integration of the child in the social milieu. Therefore, any legislative measure aiming to abolish employment of children in certain kinds of sectors will be a failure. (7).
- In Niger, the young people aged between 15 to 24 years represent 2 158 653 persons, i.e. 40.73% of the total population ; among these who live in urban milieu represent 29.69% of the total population. Hence among this young urban population , 22.67% live in the Urban Community of Niamey.
- In Niger, according to RGP/H 2001, those aged less than 15 years, represent 48.4% of the total population and 70% of Nigeriens are less than 25 years of age out of a total population of 11 060 291 inhabitants. The rapid growth of population in Niger can be explained by high fecundity rate which is due to early marriage and maternity and the demographic indicators are given below:
 - Estimated birth rate is 52‰ ;
 - Annual growth rate : 3,3%
 - Age at 1st marriage : 15 years for girls 17 years for boys

- Teenagers from 15-19 years : 14% of the total fecundity in case of women
 - Rate of illiteracy in women : 82%
 - Usage of contraceptive: 4,2%
 - ISF : 7,5 children per woman
- In 2004, World Bank report has revealed that only 47% of population has access to health services, majority of the Nigeriens live at a distance of about 5 Km from the health centre. In the whole population, the average ratio of doctors is-- 1 doctor for 47 531 inhabitants, whereas according to the WHO recommendation it should be 1 doctor for not more than 10 000 inhabitants.

2 – 2 – Child Labour and exploitation of children

- According to a study conducted in 1995, 45.2% of children aged between 10 to 14 years are obliged to work. (3).
- The report of the study MICS2 (48) has revealed that 70% of the children aged between 5 to 14 years of age were doing all sorts of odd jobs when the study was conducted. Among these children,42% had worked for people outside their families but this work was remunerated in only 3% of cases. The regions of Maradi, Zinder and Tahoua are the worst hit . It is in these regions that child labour is not remunerated.
- According to a study conducted in 1998, by IPEC , on a sample of 600 child workers, 31% of the children are between the age of 10 to 12 years whereas 54% among them are between 13 to 14 years. The study also revealed that only one fourth among them went to schools . (8).

2-2-1- Different kinds of child labour

Child labour is especially seen in rural sectors (agriculture and farming), gold washing , employment in craft industries and factories and in the service sector. Child labour in its insidious forms exist such as ‘family helper’, paid employee, apprentice in urban centers and even abroad , collector of funds , guide for handicapped and aged people, etc.

In fact child labour is multidimensional. It is of two kinds:

- One kind is present in urban zone and the other extreme kind extremely non visible is present in rural zone .

In the extreme kind , one can notice the following activities :

2-2-1-1- Agriculture work

Agriculture : Along the river, mostly children are employed in the paddy fields (Tillabéry, Niamey) ;

-Breeding : Children are asked to conduct the cattle to far off pastures for which they have to cover long distances (Bankilaré, Filingué, Tahoua, Agadez, Zinder, Diffa) ;

2-2-1-2- Child labour in mines

- A number of recent studies (20 ; 16 ; 69) explain reasons behind gold rush (Gold extracting sites of Niger river) .First , it is due to bad crops resulting from unusual climatic conditions. Second , it is due to depressed socioeconomic national context marked by drastic economic policies. These factors have rendered the families very poor especially those living in rural areas .

- Industry of extraction : gold extracting site : Komabangou (gold), Madaoua, Malbaza (gypsum), Boboye, Douchi, Gaya (natron); small quarries for fabricating bricks at Maradi et Zinder ;

- Manufacturing industries : : tanneries, slaughter houses (Niamey)

3-2-1-3- bonded labour

If the term ‘bonded labour’ can be interpreted in different ways and it can signify a number of exploitative situations, then we can retain today the definition proposed by IWB in convention 29 which has been accepted by a number of states. It is defined *as any work or service extracted from a person under threat of punishment of any kind and for which the person concerned has not given his accord*. In this regard, the plight of certain children can be interpreted as that of slaves. Beggary, in particular is considered by the UNICEF as a new form of child slavery .

- Traditional slavery in its worst form of child labour is seen in particular in North, mid North , mid East and East of the country, as well as in the western pockets: Touarègue, Arab, Toubous communities (12).

- Rural Work : During the winter season , a good number of former slaves and /or their children are transported to cultivate their masters' soil. No salary is expected and no terms and conditions are applied (15).

- According to 80% respondents of the study (15) on bonded labour, in comparison with 16.7%, the precariousness of the plight of the children is due to the fact that the legislation to combat child labour does not adequately protect the child. 88.2 % believe that it is not implemented in an effective manner and it not at all known. (88.9%) Children are used in beggary as club footed persons by the marabouts (Niamey, Maradi Zinder) . Some studies have revealed beggary done by women, especially by young girls and minor healthy girls in big urban centers . Generally, there are families where all members practice beggary (35).

- According to a foundational study with multiple indicators (53), on 12 SBI departments , it is especially in the region of Maradi that the children aged between 5 to 14 years work the most (varying from 67% in the area of Tessaoua to 88% in Aguié and Mayahi) , and to a small extent in the region of Tahoua ((varying from 75% at Abalack to 79% at Tchintabaraden.

- Exploitation of the girls employed in commercial activities: (Maradi, Tessaoua, Aguië). Young girls are obliged to work to fill their purses. This means early marriage, divorce and prostitution.

2-2-1-4- Domestic labour

As regards domestic labour, MICS2 study quoted earlier has revealed that 71% of children aged between 5 to 14 years were employed to do domestic labour for less than 4 hours, whereas 17% did less than 4 hours of work. The girls are more employed than the boys to do these kinds of jobs(cooking, shopping, washing utensils, washing clothes, fetching water , baby sitting , etc.) This situation is mostly seen in the region of Zinder , where the proportion of girls doing domestic labour for more than 4 hours is 24%as, compared to 20% in other regions and 7% à Niamey.

- As regards domestic labour in particular , let us discuss the results of a study (13) which was undertaken on a sample of 100 children , (including 75 from Niamey) in August 2001 in Niamey and Maradi. More than the half are aged between 10 to 15 years, 40%

are orphans and a vast majority does not go to school and 4 children are less than 10 years

-These child workers have been engaged into domestic work right from the age of 4 as a kind of education in a family. But this kind of socialization is not always rational because treated as domestic servant, the young worker is labeled as professional worker at the tender age of 9, outside his family : The burden of work increases considerably : 75% of children get up at 6 o'clock in the morning and sleep at 11 o'clock at night, 44% suffer from migraines, more than 40% from malaria, where as 36% are engaged to look after the health problems of other children (15).

- As regards remuneration, (13), they are underpaid (2500 to 5000 CFA per month) and sometimes they are not even paid (9%). However 66.6% parents in Niamey and 60% in Maradi confessed that this kind of remuneration was acceptable to them because they had no other source of income except this scanty salary and the majority (16,7% in Niamey and 60% in Maradi) revealed also that they had never heard of the rights of a child .

2-2-1-6- Illegal trade and exploitation of children

Special attention is given to the problem of trafficking of persons, since this phenomenon is increasing rapidly. Niger is considered as a centre of this particular trade of men and women. According to a study done by Unicef (20), the main culprits (persons responsible for trafficking children) are marabouts living in villages (40.9%) and outside (17.3%).

- The subjects of the study (20) responded that the main victims were males (97.5%) and the favorite destinations were Nigeria (57.4%) and the regions of Niger (17.5%). It was from Maradi and Zinder, in particular, that the children were traded to Nigeria, their percentage being respectively represented as (87.8%) and (86.8%). The Niger regions where the victims of child labour are sent are- Dosso (38.7%), Tillabéry (29.9%) and Tahoua (15%).

- Most of the child workers responded during the study that it was mainly their biological parents (68.6%) and their close relations (10.3%) who initiated them into this kind of work. .

- Generally, aged between seven (7) to twelve (12) years, the main vocation of these children is to work as guides for old people and blind beggars , or as means of transport for young disabled beggars whom they carry on their shoulders , or as pushers for beggars in rolling carts. Some disabled or twin children are shamelessly exposed by their parents or their relations on crossroads or other public places to obtain sympathy and charity from the passers by (13).

. –The child trafficking takes place in Ader and Azaouak. These children, generally girls, are sold to rich and famous Nigerians as “ Sadakka” at Hausa, since they cannot be treated as the wives of these Nigerians who according to Islam cannot marry more than four (4) times . In fact it has become a tradition in Niger and Nigeria to circumvent this Islamic prohibition by allowing an illicit relationship with a slave woman in one’s own house (19).

2-2-1-7- Prostitution

- Prostitution of young girls : Maradi, CUN- Here the child prostitution is extremely dangerous. It is undertaken in a professional manner but the girl lives with her family and the small allowances are used to nourish the family. She indulges in prostitution with the consent of her parents. In the areas of Maradi, Konni, Dashi, Firgi and Maimoujia in particular, a real sex industry has been created due to the proclamation of Islamic law (sharia) in several states of North Nigeria. Several Nigerian sex workers, of which the majority is of minors , have decided to settle on the border zones to offer their services . This has resulted in an influx of clients.

- Once engaged in this work , it is rare that these girls manage to escape from this trap or they rehabilitate themselves in other normal activities. This becomes their second family : socially marginalised , they find difficult to get a job and a husband and generally they end up becoming « old girls » which is also badly viewed. They can,

in turn initiate new victims into the market. Hence there is a need for rehabilitation and extraction of young prostitutes who are willing to put an end to their activities.

2-3- Family background of the child workers

Ill treatment of the child workers : employment in prostitution, sale of illegal products , etc. This phenomenon is rather urban but it can be seen in small villages across the country

- The child workers responded (20) in big majority that it was their “ biologic parents” (68.6%) and «close relations » (10.3%) who indulged them into such activities .

2- 4 – Schooling of Children: Aspects and dimensions

- At present, only one third of children of school going age have access to education. Hence, nearly 70% of children of school going age do not go to school owing to big resistance put up by their parents who oppose schooling of children, especially of young girls. The average rate of schooling was only 37.3% in 2000, with big variation between towns and country side and between girls (21%) and boys (26%).

- The gross rate of schooling (TBS) has improved over the years and literacy rate has shown a positive trend. As regards the gross rate of admission in first year , it went from 24.2% en 1989/90, to 36,2% en 1998/99, almost 50% increase (12 points) in 10 years. However, the disparities in gender exist: the rate of admission in first year for girls (29,9%) is largely in decline as compared to boys (42,2%).

- A study on family factors responsible for schooling in Niger has revealed that in urban areas at least one out of two children goes to school irrespective of his sex and background. The rate of schooling varies between 50% for girls coming from very poor families belonging to urban areas, to 68% for those belonging to rich families..

- The drop out rate is more than 54% during the early years of school.

- The rate of repeating has decreased during the last decade 1990-2000. The rate of repeating , all sexes included, has gone from 14.8%to 13.4, thus there is a marked difference of 1.4 points.

2-4-1- Schooling of girls

The studies show in general, that the main factors impeding the schooling of the children, of the girl child in particular are: economic , material and socio-cultural factors as well as those closely linked with knowledge, attitudes and behavior patterns of the population.. In particular, a number of studies show a very strong correlation between poverty and illiteracy of children since parents prefer engaging their children in other kinds of activities-- especially manual labour .

- The parents of girls consider it less important to educate their children in comparison to parents of boys : the proportion of -NO to schooling being 28.9% as compared to 24.7% respectively .

- Socio cultural reasons (such as ‘marriage’ and ‘religion’) are more frequently quoted reasons by parents to express their stand as compared to just economic reasons (such as inflation rate, distance etc.)

- Girls are badly represented at all levels of education: in 2003, there are 36.1% girls at the elementary level , 29.6% at the secondary level, 8.7% at the technical level and 8.9% at the higher level.

- The success rate is 42.5% in case of girls as compared to 57.5% in boys. (MEN 2003).

Schooling and Poverty

- 61.4% of the population of Niger survives on one dollar per day . This means it faces enormous difficulties in procuring basic social amenities, especially in rural areas where more than 85% of population lives . .

- The rate of schooling varies from 21% (for very poor) to 33% (for rich) .The rate of schooling is particularly low in case of girls belonging to poor (14% for exceptionally

poor and 17% for poor)whereas it is equal to national rate in case of girls belonging to rich families .

- More than half of the children belonging to very poor families in urban areas go to schools whereas less than 1/6 of families belonging to the same category go to schools in rural areas..

- In areas outside SBI (integrated basic services), due to the support of different partners, the results are comparatively better. However, the gap between the schooling of girls and boys is very high, rather it is alarming .

- At the level of education, the education laws recommending the participation of parents in the expenditure on the education of their children, tend to show a decline in schooling between the sedentary and nomadic zones, in particular in Toubou, Touareg and Arabe where the people seem, at present, extremely hostile to modern school.

In brief, due to the non implementation of a positive discrimination in the application of policies of structural adjustment in zones having high rate of PTF, the situation of victims may worsen despite the guidance given by the ratification of the conventions..

3- Psychosocial effect on the child

The inhuman conditions of work have harmful effect on the health and overall development of child .In fact, premature induction to work, physical and emotional isolation , violence, corporal punishment , trafficking and sexual exploitation are the worse forms of risks to which the working children are exposed .

- In the rural sector and in the sector of services , besides executing dangerous forms of work, tiring jobs and carrying heavy loads , children are subjected to long hours of work which is often more than 14 hours per day.

- A study on demography and health (EDSN) (44) which was undertaken in Niger in 1998 shows that 47% of women from Niger, aged between 29 to 49 years were already married at the age of 15. This practice is mostly seen in the regions of Maradi, Zinder and Diffa. In the first region in particular, only four per cent (4%) of women are unmarried on a population which comprises of very young people.. The ratio between married girl and boy (of an average age of 15 and 19 years respectively) is of 4 boys for 70 girls, because at a tender age of 10 years, a girl is considered eligible for marriage. Moreover her parents can at any time, take her out from her school to get her forcibly married.

- In fact, the parents dread pregnancies without marriage which bring shame and dishonor for the family. Married very young, often with adults, some times even with a father of a family, many minors see their future in a bleak situation due to fistulas: rejected because of their fistula, overthrown by the society, including their family, they end up their solitary life in the dingy wards of a hospital in the best of cases or they are put in quarantines in the villages and are obliged to live as marginal of the society.

- Out of 259 women subjects suffering from fistula in the hospital of Zinder, 122 were between the age group of 14 to 19 years, and in 1998, 88% of women subjects having fistulas in Niger, were between the age group of 10 to 15 years. At the same time, it must be mentioned that 83.3% of the total number of divorces registered in 1998 are due to vesico-vaginal fistula. Early sexuality and marriage expose the minors to different kinds of traumatic experiences and they are socially excluded for life (19). In the public opinion, it is not a case of child prostitution, since an early marriage is a traditional matrimonial practice, largely practiced on national territory. In fact the fundamentalists say that the prophet himself had married Aicha when she was hardly nine (9) years old, forgetting to add that the Saint waited till she was mature enough to become his wife

- In 2000, in Niger, 44% of women aged 20 to 49 years have been married before they are 15. It has already been shown that the early marriage has harmful effects on physical and mental health of the child. In fact, 80% of the cases of obstetrical fistulas found in girls aged between 13 to 17 years, are due to early marriage. It has also been shown that

there is a close link between this practice and high mortality rate of mothers and children found in Niger

- Wide spread early marriages have also increased the risk of HIV/AIDS in young girls who are obliged to have early sex with partners likely to be infected with the disease. According to a study undertaken in 1999 by the National Programme to Combat AIDS in Niger, 53.08% of the infected subjects were women and children.

- In the same context, one can mention certain socio-cultural practices largely widespread, which violate the fundamental rights of a child . These practices involve genital mutilations (excision), scarifications and force-feeding, etc.

- Early marriage puts an end to the possibility of further education. For example 30% of drop out cases of girls in schools are due to early marriage. Keeping in view the frequent practice, the Association of traditional leaders of Niger , in collaboration with UNICEF organized from 18th to 20th January at Maradi, a National Forum on Early marriages.

4 – Main Recommendations

Keeping in view , the scourge defined by triangular paradigm , several recommendations have been made. Without being exhaustive, this list appears very important because it shows the concerns of actors combating child labour.

- To support the implementation of the declarations and initiate a programme of abolition of different kinds of child labour in Niger to improve preventive and repressive institutional environment and to make effective abolition policies on usage and exploitation of child labour. ;
- To support and accompany the major players of society (organizations of civil society, professional unions, political parties, State, projects and programmes) to shoulder the responsibility in an autonomous manner to combat against all kinds of forced labour in Niger and to improve the existing conditions of marginalized groups;

- To strive for the implementation of specific actions to support victimized boys and girls with a view to reducing their vulnerability;
- To contribute to the emergence of a citizen culture which socially discourages practices related to child labour.

At the level of advocacy programme, it is important to :

- Launch campaigns of national awareness and information with a view to activate and create a movement for eliminating different kinds of child labour;
- Support an advocacy plan and national institutions (parliament, government, justice, national commission for rights of man, ministry of labour, etc.) for adopting legal and regulatory dispositions for the prevention and repression of these practices. ;
- Facilitate an advocacy plan so that the political players include the programme against child labour in their community programmes and projects.
- Inform and sensitize national public opinion;
- Encourage advocacy programmes for victims and practitioners.

5 –Legislation

- In 1990, Niger ratified the Convention relating to the rights of the child (CRC). Article 32 of this text specifies that “the member States recognize the right of the child to be protected against economic exploitation and any kind of labour involving risks or compromising his education or destroying his health or his physical, mental, spiritual moral or social development.”

- At the regional level, in 1999, Niger ratified the African Charter for the rights and welfare of the child. Article 15 of this Charter asserts that “*the child be protected from all forms of economic exploitation and potentially dangerous work which may disrupt the child’s education or compromise his health or his physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.*”

- Besides banning dangerous child labour, all these international and regional legal instruments ask member States to:

- Interpret the enacted principles into their national legislations, especially those concerning minimum age and working hours for children.
- Adopt penal provisions of the law to punish people or institutions exposing children to dangerous work.

- However, the inclusion and fitting into of these principles into the Nigerien legislation poses a problem. At the national level, the Labor Code instituted by Order N° 96-039 dated June 29, 1996 regulates child labor and takes into account provisions of international texts on the subject. Section III of this order is particularly devoted to child labor. This in fact proves the legislator's interest in fighting against this plague.

- Thus Article 99 of the Code states: "Children below 14 years cannot be employed in an undertaking even as apprentices, except by a waiver of law enacted through an order-in-council and on the advice of the Consultative Work Committee, after taking into account the local circumstances and jobs which they can be asked to do. An order-in council determines the type of activities and categories of undertakings banned to youth and the minimum age to which this ban applies."

- Article 100 specifies that "the Work Inspector can call for a medical examination of the children by a certified doctor, in order to check whether the work they are asked to do does not overtax their physical capacity. This requisition is legitimate and made at the request of the concerned."

In view of these enacting clauses in the Nigerien Labor Code, it can be asserted that Niger has integrated the requirements of international texts in its internal juridical organization. However, major loopholes (gaps) remain.

Regarding education, it is acknowledged that the country's Constitution as well as the numerous treaties, conventions and charters ratified by Niger offer suitable structures to promote quality education. Implementing the clauses of international conventions, the

Nigerien Constitution recognizes the right to education and training for everyone under the conditions laid down by the law. The order-in- council dated 7th February 1962 modified by the 1998 education system orientation law makes school compulsory for every child between 7 to 16 years of age. It is the parents' duty to educate and raise their children, the State supports them in this task. In this respect the problem of harmonizing the minimum age of work and compulsory education arises. Article 2 of order 276/MEN/DAF/2445/IV dated 21st October 1996 bears on the creation of school canteens in rural and transhumant areas, J.O.R.N. n° 22 dated 15th November 1996,

6- Problem of implementation of texts.

As regards child labor in particular, the major problem lies in the lack of a definition of the worst forms of child labor. The Labor Code in fact clarifies that an order -in -council must specify the nature of activities and categories of undertakings banned to youth.

- The legislation does not clearly establish this and it is rather the NGOs and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), through IPEC, which consider certain jobs to be hazardous and take action in the concerned sectors to withdraw children from hazardous or tiring jobs to improve their working conditions. In Niger, amongst jobs regarded as arising from the worst forms of child labor, one must remember in order of risk involved mining and slaughterhouse activities.

- According to the Nigerien legislation, the minimum age of entering into the labor force is 18 years as far as mines and quarries are concerned. In practice, as certain studies prove it, this age limit is scarcely ever respected and one even comes across children below 14 working in these mines in certain mining quarries in the country (salt, natron, gypsum). The kind of set-up is not well defined and the difficulty resides in the fact that mining, as in the case of Komabangou where gold is extracted, is controlled by the unorganized sector.

- There is really a problem of legal harmonizing between international legislation and the Nigerien texts. In fact article 99 of the Nigerien Labor Code specifies that an order-in-council determines the type of activities and the categories of undertakings banned to youth. But, it does not specify the details of working-out of the order-in-council, in particular, the tripartite nature (State, employers, employees) which must direct such an approach, which is out of step with Article 4 of the Convention concerning the banning of the worst forms of child labor and immediate action in view of eliminating them. This article states that activities arising from this category “must be decided upon by the national legislation or competent authority, after consultation with the employer organizations and the concerned workers, taking into account the relevant international standards.” Nonetheless, certain clauses largely make up for the lack of precision in the abovementioned text.

- Besides the lack of harmonization between the international and national legislations at this level, it must be noted that individuals who employ children on these hazardous sites or who engage them in activities beyond their physical capacity are not punished. However, that is indeed possible from the viewpoint of certain clauses in the Labor Code and the Mine code on which we will not elaborate upon here.

- Order n° 96-039 dated 29th June 1996, bearing on the Nigerien Labor Code devotes article 96 to the implementation of conventions n° 6 on night work by children and n° 138 on the minimum employment age adopted in 1973 and ratified by Niger in 1978.

This fact has seen to it that corrective actions rather than judicial actions are preferred, all the more since in the Nigerien context, it is difficult to conceive applying of punitive sanctions against those who « render service » by employing children.

Until now for NGOs and IPEC corrective actions have consisted of removing children from the mines, by schooling them or by changing their job on the same site, following the example of Komabangou, where youth have been redeployed to carry water in carts, instead of going down into the mines.

7 – National consensus on the question

Moreover, in the face of this scourge which wears down Nigerien youth, Nigerien parliamentarians are unanimous on initiating and getting down to working on appropriate measures. The fight against the phenomenon of minor girls working on sites has not divided the political class. There seems to be a broad consensus within the society, especially political, regarding the objectives of education. In the democratic context which characterizes Niger, the government has the overwhelming majority to get adopted in parliament any law which it judges appropriate for promoting education all the more so since the Opposition is cooperating on this point. As a result of the existence of consultation mechanisms between the government and actors of the civil society, especially school partners, on subjects of national interest, one can also add that the enforcement of the laws is done in a flexible and supple manner which guarantees its effectiveness.

8 – Emergence of an unorganized sector: analysis of the paradigm

Higher up, one saw that it was only at the dawn of the year 2000 that the problem of child labor really entered onto the agenda of international organizations and States. It is because the economic policies initiated twenty years ago ended in yielding results.

In fact, in order to understand the reasons for the huge presence of children on the labor market and also in the streets it is important to go back to the beginning of the 80s, period corresponding to the starting off of Structural Adjustment Programs in a number of African countries. One would then detect the significant correlation that child labor maintains with poverty and illiteracy. One must remember that these programs originated from shock measures, on the one hand:

- Withdrawal of subsidies to essential goods and services (bread, milk, rice, sugar, fuel, etc.);
- A drastic reduction in public expenditure, especially through drastic cuts in « non productive » social budgets (education, health, lodging, infrastructures), freezing of wages and lay-offs in the civil service.

Structural measures on the other, especially growth in exports, complete opening of the markets by removal of customs barriers, large scale privatization of undertakings.

In Niger, this austerity policy decreed by international financial institutions not only sounded the death knell of the basic public sectors such as education and health, hydraulics free of cost until then (especially free medical care, closure of canteens and boarding schools) but also that of a number of public undertakings considered till then as the jewels and spurs (stimulus) of the modern economy, contrary to the unorganized or informal sector, one said, doomed to disappear. The very opposite happened. Whilst the organized sector collapsed, numerous units producing goods and services set up in urban areas developed rapidly. In fact, the dismantling of public services brought about a reduction in the working population and tended to exponentially increase the ranks of the unemployed and candidates for the unorganized sector.

8 – 1 – Poverty and survival strategies

Henceforth, the unorganized sector with its tens of thousands of workers often living in very precarious conditions becomes the lung of the national economy and will attract more and more job seekers; employers thus have elbow room to get good value at a lesser cost while a number of left outs develop survival strategies. Some as well as the others will significantly turn towards the children, the first to lower the wage bill to the maximum, the second comprising even of parents or near ones to directly exploit them in various types of activities: prostitution, sale of narcotics, trafficking, etc. Those children who will have escaped from these nets will go to live in the street through lack of caring parents if they are not already orphans.

Thus in Niger, besides the harmful effects of the applied economic policies and the growth of the unorganized sector, a wave of droughts followed, especially the one of 1987, which saw the exodus of hundreds of thousand of villagers, cattle raisers and nomads, towards the urban areas. The political instability of the 90s marked in particular by two coups (d'Etat) ended by plunging the inhabitants into an abyss, the State becoming conspicuous by its inability to meet both its national and international commitments. The country's isolation renders even more difficult the fate endured by ten (10) million inhabitants.

An appreciable fall in the purchasing power of households follows, economically sustained by the devaluation of the CFA franc in 1994. The rural zones, affected headlong, suffer more the effects of this financial steamroller. The village economy finds itself turned upside down, offering no prospect to the inhabitants who don't take long to return to the outskirts of towns like Niamey, Maradi, Zinder or Agadez. By that even employers and middlemen have cheap and blind labor for the only preoccupation of these new arrivals is survival. At the same time begging grows extensively.

8 - 2 –Decline in the child's status

Until then reserved for clubfooted, physically challenged and old people, begging becomes an almost permanent occupation of every individual and of young girls from migrant families. This sudden onset of uncertainty also tends to affect the family unit, and one witnesses frequent renouncements (break-ups) and divorces in both urban and rural areas. This also has an influence on the life and fate of children. Slackening of the private sector combined with failure to adjust to the school system does not help either in opening eventual job prospects to youth. In the final analysis, the combination of all these factors has in a large number of citizens tended to subdue or take away formerly honored sentiments of shame, pity, honor, pride ; conversely, one cultivated notions of individualism, profit, illegal wealth, indifference. This changing of values had serious repercussions on the status of the child: formerly a source of joy and heir apparent of future support to his retired parents, henceforth the child is considered rather as one more mouth to feed, especially if it is a girl. Since one must pay for admission to school whose dropout rate is high, and the expensive medical care, obliges parents who are destitute and without social support to give priority to the fight for daily subsistence. If need be, certain households prefer to send boys to school and keep the girls at home to help in the house work. Thus gender wise division of labor could make schooling of girls seem a waste. The little girls workloads are often much higher than those given to boys of the same age. According to the cultural schema, the best role that a girl can take up is to be a good wife, a good mother and a good housekeeper. Also as the code of honor demands that girls be virgins at the time of marriage, in order to reduce risks, parents often marry off their

daughters on their reaching puberty, i.e. at the age of twelve or thirteen; for schools is considered to be a foreign element where the risks of pregnancy and drinking alcohol are high.

This established fact persists as school appears to be less and less a job provider considering the slack in the private sector and the lack of openings in the civil service. The main reasons for it are the poor performance of the school system, the uncertainty of marriage; unfavorable prejudices towards school (for example, school a place of debauchery).

8- 3 –A martyred youth: without education or jobs

The decline in already rare social services ended up in convincing families with humble backgrounds to depend only themselves; one said it, considering that a number of children did not have the opportunity to go to school which was no longer free of cost. The primary school fees vary between forty to seventy thousand francs per year, that during the first four years. The following two years of primary school require a slightly higher investment. In so far as nearly 70% of Nigeriens live with less than one (1) dollar per day, it is obvious that the majority of households cannot financially provide for their children's formal education. In order to receive informal education, a large number of them are entrusted to witch doctors (marabouts) who we have seen earlier are the main children traffickers. More generally, it appears that a large part of the children find themselves pushed into the unorganized sector, a world without rights, especially for children.

Abandoned or deserted by their parents because of lack of resources, excluded from school, when they had the chance to be enrolled, or raised in the local *madrasas*, children from the underprivileged environment (milieu) are thus structurally without any real future. Certain amongst them then end up in delinquency (consumption of drugs, narcotics, prostitution, thefts, etc) or form part of the « small business » school (shoe cleaners, window cleaners etc) while others, less destabilized, will go and join the contingent of the unemployed or organized crime. Impatient to quickly get out of this business to a better fate, a number of them, illiterate from the outset, follow anybody in the hope of a better future. Thereby, opening the way for their exploitation. It is not any less for their parents, for whom certain job offers from sorcerers for their children spontaneously signify savings, one less

responsibility and a good investment (cash inflow). The first step towards bonded labor rather than that towards life is taken in this way.

Consequently, the main cause for children engaged in work under all its forms of exploitation, appears above all to be economic in a context where the unorganized sector dominates. The uncertainty under which the majority of Nigerien households live sometimes leads to the destruction of the family fabric, to the loss of the father's authority in the face of his children especially girls. No longer having the means to take care of them, parents find themselves out, moreover since sometimes they themselves are looked after by the children's small business. The children having received no or insufficient formal or informal education, seem from then on seem destined to depend on no one but themselves, or worse to be attracted by brokers (dealers). This is what is also proved by the documentary review described above

9- Review of tools and instruments

Three (3) documents will be subjected to appraisal: Strategic document for alleviation poverty (DSRP), Education for all (EPT) and ILO programs.

9-1- Strategic document for elimination of poverty

In the face of more and more severe criticism by social movements all over the world, since 1996, Bretton Woods Institutions, the IMF and the World Bank have changed their plans, henceforth concentrating their action on the fight against poverty, through the poor highly indebted countries (PPTE) initiative. This initiative, launched with a bang, but in favor of only 42 out of 165 “developing countries”, officially leads to the easing of a part of the debt and consultation with the concerned populations through the drawing up of a Strategic document for elimination of poverty (DSRP). Henceforth, this document represents the macro-economic framework in which all sector wise policies and strategies will be included. It will also be the only frame of reference which will govern the States relations with its development partners. What is in it for Niger with its child labor and its eventual relations with poverty and education?

At the outset, it must be said that this framework document does not mention labor, child labor: no chapter, nor section nor subsection is devoted to it. The problem is totally ignored since it appears nowhere. If, on the contrary the set of themes on education appears, one does not detect anywhere its link with child labor considered one of the priority axes for the alleviation of poverty, education is conceived as contributing to an increase in productivity and sources of income and ensuring a better distribution of these incomes between different social strata;

- reduce female fertility and consequently reduce mother and child mortality;
- protect populations from HIV/AIDS;
- assure best practices for management of environmental resources;
- strengthen democratic participation of citizens, education creating conditions for transparency, accountability and good governance;

Therefore it is important to also establish a correlation between alleviation or eradication in the long term of child labor through education. This desire has been formulated since a long time by the Nigerien Childhood Network

9-2- Action Plan for education for all

While counting on its own efforts to qualitatively and quantitatively improve its education system, Niger takes largely into account a partnership constituent of the Universal Declaration of education for all in Jomtien and its action framework. In Niger, the indexes regarding education are indeed very alarming. It is thus, that one has prepared a national action Plan with a multiple-sector optic for achieving education objectives in 2000. In fact it is a question of permitting a significant reduction in the illiteracy rate, especially that of women, and improving the schooling rate through the development of knowledge, know-how and savoir-être within all social groups.

In this regard it is important to emphasize that if EPT in its essential facets has taken into account, training of young children, formal and informal primary education, education of underprivileged groups in particular, one detects no direct or explicit correlation with child labor. Like the SRP, EPT also skips over this problematic.

9-3 –ILO Programs

In 1978, Niger ratified Convention n°138 relating to the minimum age of entry into the labor force. This text fixes the minimum entry age at 14 years. In 2002 it also ratified Convention n° 182 on the worst forms of child labor. According to Article 3 of this convention, the worst forms of child labor are those concerning (1)all forms of slavery or similar practices, such as child trafficking, servitude against debt and bondage as well as bonded labor, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children with the idea of using them in armed conflicts ; (2) use, recruitment or offering a child for the purpose of prostitution, production of pornographic material or shows ; (3) use, recruitment or offering a child for the purpose of illegal activities , especially for narcotic production and trafficking, as they are defined in the relevant international conventions; (4) activities which by their nature or conditions in which they are exercised are harmful to the child's health, security or morality.

- Hazardous job includes any activity which exposes the child to physical, psychological or sexual services. Essentially it refers to (1) activities carried out underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces; (2) activities carried out with dangerous machines, material or tools or which involve manipulating or carrying heavy loads; (3) activities carried out in an unhealthy environment, capable for example, of exposing children to dangerous substances, agents or processes, or to temperature, sound and vibratory conditions injurious to their health.;(4) activities carried out under very difficult conditions, for example, for long hours, at night or for which the child is held back in the employers premises without any justified reason.

- Besides these two notions, one also speaks of light child labor when it refers to any type of activity which is not harmful to their health and their development or which does not prevent them from going to school. This notion has been introduced especially by UNICEF, to take into account the fact that children's participation in an economic activity can also be an enriching experience for them. Thus light labor is the opposite of the worst forms of child labor and hazardous work, which are considered as degrading for children and as obstacles to enjoy rights which are given to them.

In view of the above, it must be said that programs aiming to eliminate the worst forms of child labor significantly take into account Education eventually for all, but especially for children; In this regard, the international Program for the abolition of Child Labor (IPEC)

underlines that “the socio-economic determinants and the extent of child labor in the whole world are such that no simple and quick solution exists. It follows that one attacks the problem with all sorts of initiatives; the most promising being to emphasize schooling. Free and compulsory but also of quality and relevant universal primary education is necessary for the reduction of poverty as well as for recognizing the rights of a child.” In this perspective, education must therefore play the principal role in the struggle against child labor; that, through their withdrawal from the sometimes dangerous activities that they engage in, with their schooling in mind. Thus on the gold mine site of Komabangou, an ILO organisation IPEC has founded a school so as to educate children withdrawn from the mines.”

10-Inventory of service providers

This inventory report includes the following points:

1 – A description of current and future activities and perspectives of major institutional players, associations and NGO especially. It allows to see the specific preoccupations of each structure and eventually to create harmony or a synergy of actions between them. Before that it is important to know the internal dynamic of these structures.

10-1- Prevalence of a coordinating mechanism between different departments

Departments committed to fight against child labor have a formal coordination structure, created by a ministerial order. It refers to a tripartite structure regrouping United Nations Organizations (ILO, UNICEF), the government representatives of employers and employees. The tripartite structure meets periodically, each trimester in this case, in order to report progress on activities and to take stock of current constraints. However it happens that certain amongst them because of an excess workload cannot participate effectively in meetings; which limits the level of information to one and other. These institutions also work in partnership with major relevant NGOs (ALTEN, CPEN, AFETEN).

10-2- Criteria for Allocation of Funds

They vary according to the institution. But on the whole, these institutions take into consideration the reliability of the NGO applicant, its experience in the field, its dynamism and its capacity to carry out the concerned activity. The entire sum of the subsidy awarded is not transferred into the bank account. One third of the total amount is generally given at the beginning of the activity. Afterwards, the structure must justify each time the effective carrying out of the task in order to be able benefit from the release of the next installment. For the departments in question, it is a matter of precaution so that the funds are properly used. The associations and the NGOs in question complain about the administrative delay in the allocation of funds “the procedure is long. There is a lot of running around. One would say that they do not trust us” a representative states. Certain civil society players question the specific interest in certain NGOs more than in others, almost always the same, as if one detected in it friendly contacts or favoritism. To this, the concerned parties reply that the criteria for choosing are known and that there is transparency at all stages of the file selection. In reality, a number of structures exist in name only: certain amongst them have neither premises, sometimes not even staff, one or two individuals by themselves make up the association or NGO; from where the necessity arises, of having recourse to the same structures to carry out an activity. As for the children, consultation does not take place directly but through the channel of their structures. Thus, for example, UNICEF works through the Youth Parliament which this institution helped to set up.

For all that, notwithstanding the large number of structures existing in this field, we were careful to approach only those that are directly concerned with child labor in correlation to poverty and illiteracy. One will observe that the selected structures, whose range of activities is given down below, are absolutely representative of Nigerien associations and NGOs in the concerned field. Rather than target only individual structures, we have also taken into consideration the networking dimension, for a number of actions are carried out in synergy and networks are the moving force. A network capable of regrouping thirty or forty members, there is reason to say that the presence in this enquiry of

networks such as ReNe (Nigerien network or poles) signifies that tens of associations and NGOs are indirectly represented here and can be mobilized for creating awareness and for making appeals.

First of all we present institutions helping and supporting the young child sector, next the civil society structures.

11- MAIN PROVIDERS

1 - IPEC

Name : IPEC (Programme International pour l'Abolition du Travail des Enfants)-
International Programme for Abolition of Child Labour, founded in 2001

Nature of the organisation : Technical Support Programme for the players of ILO
(employers, employees, government)

Primary task: To eradicate child labour especially the worst forms of child labour

Related Tasks : To support NGOs working in this field

Priority areas for action : National Plan

Nature of relations with public services: In the framework of Memorandum of Understanding signed by the government, IPEC works in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Services and Work

Methodology of action

- Types of actions related to the field : sensitization , training

- Eradicating child labour by finding its main causes
- Rescuing and socio-professionally rehabilitating the children
- Improving the living conditions of the parents and their knowledge on effects of child labour through Activities Generating Money (AGR) and campaigns of sensitization

Target groups : Children aged 18 years as per Convention 182 of O.I.T

Résultats obtained:

- Satisfactory results with little means : Parents and children followed the objectives of the programme. For example : Setting up of a Komabangou school -informal gold bearing site
- Children employed as gold washers were rescued in order to educate them in schools
- Dynamic partnership with players -especially NGOs , other related agencies of United Nations and the players of ILO.

2 - L'ANBEF

Founded in February 1992, Nigerien Association for the welfare of the family (l'A.N.B.E.F) looks after the health of the mother and child by counseling the parents and children on issues regarding health , education and making them aware especially of the advantages of the Family Planning,(gap between pregnancies) and modern contraceptives.

Name : Nigerien Association for the welfare of the family

Nature of the Organization : ONG (since September 2000)

Main Task : To improve reproductive health in a community

Related Tasks

- To improve women's status and to ensure that the population especially men and young people have a favorable attitude towards reproductive health ;
- To spread and improve SR (Reproductive Health) services especially in rural zones ;

Priority zones of action : CUN, Tillabery, Maradi, Dosso, Tahoua

Regional branches : Tillabery, Maradi, Dosso, Tahoua, Niamey

Methodology of action :-- sensitization campaigns -- vaccination- entertaining activities on distribution of contraceptives followed by those on pregnancies and infants - promoting women's groups through Activities Generating Salaries

- Training the young people for a job (embroidery, stitching, campaigns on Sexually Transmitted Infections /AIDS)

Target Groups: young people, mothers, children and men

Results obtained :

Satisfactory , keeping in view the fact that a number of people from the target groups have been benefited

Zones or regions to be closely studied with respect to this question :

CUN, Tahoua, Agadez

3 - CARITAS

Name : Caritas

Nature of Organisation : ONG

Main task : to combat marginalization, based on the principles of non discrimination .

Related Tasks : To tackle the problems of street children , boys and girls aged between 5 and 18 years through Project Amin,. The project aims at helping the children to quit streets and return to their families by engaging them in a social activity or by readmitting them in schools. The actions undertaken aim at rehabilitating the children .

Sectors of Action : There are three main priority sectors in rural areas

- Rural development,
- Socio-medical follow-ups and emergency help.
- Starting integrated development projects for young people and communities (families, local groups, social services) and providing them technical and financial help in important fields like water, environment , agriculture, breeding, health , training and education. This sector aims at providing financial help to economically backward sick and disabled people especially polio victims. Its socio-professional action deals with reeducation and granting help to disabled.

Results obtained : 1- *The project AMIN has three parts . i. « Minors in conflict with law » ii. « Girls in difficulties » iii. « Children and young workers ».* The project has shown encouraging results despite facing a few problems : For example in the case of young boys , out of 1.550 children registered , 58 have been rehabilitated in their families, 143 have been engaged in professional training centres, 253 have benefited from medical help and 81 have been provided with registration documents.

2. –The Project for the Rehabilitation of Young Girls in Difficulties (PARFD-CARITAS). This project aims at achieving the following objectives:

- Rescuing and empowering the young girls
- Immediate actions: For example: Finding patrons and grants
- Administrative and legal help (making identity cards, registration forms etc.)
- Rehabilitation of young girls who left their families for work

- Socio- professional rehabilitation: It is done as per the training requirements of the girls. For example, 6 girls got admission in Ecole Normale (teachers' training college). Having successfully completed their studies, they are now working as volunteers in the field of education; others have decided to opt for the tailoring profession.

- Credit grant for girls who have received training

- Help for parents: It is out of necessity that girls work in streets. At times they procure meals for their family by indulging in prostitution. Their withdrawal from prostitution causes great loss for their parents, hence there is a need to provide help to the parents

- Provide health care for young mothers and their children : Reimbursing expenditure incurred on medical consultation , hospitalization and medicines For young mothers having children aged less than 2 years, special sessions on balanced diet are organized.

- Providing nutrition to mal nourished children by giving grants , food and meals till they are completely recovered.

- Awareness sessions on better living in communities

- *Emergency help* : To provide grants to girls belonging to very poor families.

The main aim of Caritative Organisation « ONG CARITAS NIGER » is to furnish locomotives to the disabled, provide schooling and professional training to the disabled. In brief, the main beneficiaries are children who are supported by different action plans aiming to promote their full growth..

4 - Population Media CENTER – PMC

Name : POPULATION MEDIA CENTER

Nature of the organisation : Non commercial international NGO

Main Target ::To promote the rights of women and children and to protect the environment

Related target : to promote reproductive health , combat against exploitation , child labour and trafficking of children and provide help to organizations for young people.

Zones of action : Whole world

Methodology : PMC uses specific methodology of communication developed by Miguel Sabido of Mexico, based on behavior change of key people in sentimental serials (soaps) on radio and television ,who become role models in the field of public health and social behavior . It has been scientifically proved that this methodology has brought tremendous behavior changes in people in several countries where it was used

Target groups: children, young persons , teenagers, mothers and families

Résultats found in Niger : Production of thematic and stage programmes transmitted through radio in the whole country in collaboration with private and local community radio stations . Partnership with 72 community and rural radio stations for transmitting a serial called « GOBE DA HASKE »

5- SONGES - Niger

Name: Songes

Nature of the organization : national ONG (since 2006)

Main Target :Reinforcing the capacities of associations and NGO.

Related Targets : Technical and financial help for actors taking care of young girls , children in conflict with law and disabled children.

Priority zones of action : Urban centers : Niamey, Maradi, Zinder, Agadez

Areas of action : Children in difficulty , AIDS

Results obtained : Different kinds of help rendered to about forty associations (ex: grants , training , field study , advocacy, etc.).

6 – Plan Niger

Name : Niger-Plan

Nature of the organization: International Humanitarian Organization

Main Target: To bring long lasting development in the quality of life of the backward children from developing countries, through a process which unites people of different cultures and brings meaning and value to their life.

Foundation date : The International Plan was founded in 1937 , but it implemented its actions from 1998 in Niger .

Zones of action : Dosso (since 1998) and Tillabery since 2000

Fields of action : Health , education in particular of the young girls

- Village Hydraulics
- Behavior change which can be studied on a transversal axis.

Results obtained :

- Health : construction of Health cabins and Integrated Health Centers (CSI) to provide health care to populations , especially to women .To improve the health condition of women , Niger Plan a launched a scheme of community gardens where women cultivate vegetables to compensate for their food intake..
- Campaigns of vaccination stalls , distribution of mosquito nets to fight against malaria and training of community health agents to look after all the diseases of children at the village level. .
- Education : In this field , a strategy called « Plan for Improving School (PAE) » has been developed. This strategy takes into account education as a whole: Maintaining good quality of education and school environment through training of staff (teachers , pedagogical consultants and inspectors), grants for school stationery, construction of classrooms, latrines and fire hydrants . The main purpose is to finally create a healthy school environment for good education of children.

7 - ALTEN

Name : Association to Combat Child Labour in Niger

Nature of the organization : National NGO, 1997

Main target : To fight against child labour

Related Targets : Provide schooling , empowering children , Forming associations of trade union officials and children – Programme 2003-2005-2006

Priority zones of action : Niamey

Results obtained :

- Rescuing children from worst kinds of child labour: (Ex : slaughter houses in Niamey, tanneries of Gamkalé)
- Awareness (slaughter houses , Komabangou mines)
- Improvement in the working conditions of children (slaughter houses , children trainees)

Target groups – Children of less than 18 years of age , parents, authorities , organizations of civil society

Limitations: It is difficult to get funds at any time : Out of 10 proposed projects only 1 gets funded

Priority zones of action: Zinder, Maradi & Konni :In these regions a number of children have no access to school . They are employed in beggary, fuel refineries and are illegally deported to Nigeria and Mecca to get married..

8 - AFTEN

Name: Action for Elimination of Child Labour in Niger

Nature of the organization: NGO; founded on 26th June 2001

Main Task: Fight against the worst form of child labour.

Priority Zones of action :Urban Community of Niamey, Agadez

Number of regional branches:

Only 1 Single branch is functional in Agadez ; The other 2 (two) are being set up in Maradi & Zinder

Forms of Action :

- Preventive actions through awareness programmes for the key actors (parents, employers, children, administrative and concerned authorities)
- Direct actions for children employed in dangerous forms of work or engaged in situations of exploitation : This is done through socio-professional rehabilitation

Target Groups

- Children employed as workers (especially in worst forms of labour)
- Children's parents
- Children's employers
- Administrative and concerned authorities
- Locally elected members

Results obtained :

- children exposed to dangerous and exploitative forms of work were rescued so that they could get adequate professional training (70 children have been withdrawn from their work in Niamey including 12 girls)
- Setting up of campaigns to promote, sensitize and to give information on the rights of young girls employed as domestic servants and victims of human trafficking (cases of children from Togo and Benin who had been handed over to employment agents in Niger by their own parents).

9 – CPEN

Name : Committee for Protection of the Child

Nature of the organization: NGO , founded in November 1995 (2000-2001 beginning of fiscal year)

Main Target: To combat exploitation of children on streets.

Related Tasks: To promote child's welfare

Prioty Zones action : Konni (Tahoua region)

Number of regional branches : One (1) in Konni

Types of relations with public services: Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Protection of Children; Ministry for Basic Education; M.S.P (National Committee for the Follow-Ups, Development and Protection of Child (Inter ministerial Committee which coordinates between NGOs and Associations working for children)

Methodology of action

-: To rescue children working on streets on the basis of a field study, To organize workshop on professional training and classes on literacy and management

Target Groups: Children on streets (aged between 6 to 17 years)

Efficiency level of methodology: Very efficient because it involves support from the people , traditional leaders , State controlled services and use of participatory approaches.

Results obtained: 100 children working on streets have been extracted from their work . They have been trained professionally so that they can handle their own professional activities.

10- RENE

Nature of the organization: Network of Associations and

Name: : Nigerien Network for the Children

Founded on: July 2001

Main Target: To establish proper coordination and harmony in the actions undertaken by the NGOs and Associations working for children in Niger.

Related Targets : To establish a framework for exchange of ideas and experiences among all the actors concerned with children.

- To popularize actions related to advocacy and lobbying to protect the rights of a child.
- To reject any practice and /or actions endangering the survival and growth of a child.
- To encourage participation of its members in campaigns, international meetings etc.
- *Methodology of action* : Sensitization, advocacy, training, lobbying, different kinds of exchange programmes

Results obtained : Completion of different projects with development partners , including European Union and Songes Bruxelle Institutional and organizational capacities of almost 10 NGOs and associations were reinforced at individual and collective level.

Limitations : In the face of widespread problem , there are very few means of action.

12- Existing Projects and organizations

This is an important list of the most prominent partners committed to fight against the problems of child labour.

- *IPEC (BIT)* -International Programme for Abolition of Child Labour (ILO)
- *Population Media Center*
- *PAMODEC : Projet d'Appui à la Mise en œuvre de la Déclaration*- Project to Promote Implementation of Declaration
- *Programme Cadre de lutte contre la pauvreté*- Major Programme to Fight against Poverty
- *Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté*- Strategies to Eliminate Poverty
- *Plan de Développement Social (PDS)*- Social Development Plan
- *Programme d'appui aux initiatives privées et à la création d'emplois jeunes*- Programme to support private initiatives and creation of jobs for young people
- *Programme Scolarisation de la petite fille*- Programme for the schooling of young girls
- *Unicef*

13 – Study in a Community :

Women as heads of families in Koiratégui

We had to identify a community that had fought against the prevalence of scourge so that we could organize a group discussion (focus group)

13-1 Background Study

The region of Koura-tégui foullan-Kouara is situated about ten kilometers at the North of Niamey .This region comes in the extreme periphery and can be considered as a suburb . Even though it is well off, it still has typical characteristics of a village. Most of its houses are extremely simple and have no electricity. This area can neither be termed as an urban place nor a village.

Koira Tegui has the following infrastructure

- Two Primary schools,
- A social -activity centre
- A recently established college (2005),
- A dispensary,
- A centre for professional training
- A market
- A Workshop for training young girls in tailoring (ADRA)

It is important to remember that it was in 1983 that the people had been displaced from the present site where one can see today ‘Palais de sports’ (Sports place) and ‘ Stade Général Seyni Kountché’ (Seyni Kountché General Stadium) .

As its name reveals, at Foullan-Kouara, initially there was a strong presence of peuhles population , who were cattle breeders.

In 2005, it was estimated that Koira Tégui had a population of (21,367) inhabitants including (10,812) men and (10,555) women , comprising (3640) families. .

Mostly one sees here people without any resources , giving glimpse of an area inhabited by disabled people : Especially blind and crippled people , lepers and deaf and dumb ..

Like in a village, agriculture, breeding , small trade, artisan work are the main activities of the people. A few salaried people can be found working in the cities but they are mostly working as unskilled workers and orderlies . We were interested particularly in the women as heads of the families because they are legion in this community. They constitute a social group typical of a triangular paradigm. Since these women have to look after themselves they have to always develop strategies for their survival. UNICEF considers this social category as the most vulnerable group of the society. We have constituted in a random manner a sample of about thirty women in order to study their socio-demographic characteristics, their obligations and restrictions.

- 13-2- Opinion of the community

The information gathered tally with the responses of the subjects interrogated as focus group. Out of seven (7) women who have been interrogated to answer questions linked with triangular paradigm , five (5) of them admitted that the child labour is closely related to poverty : “ No parent would like to see his child suffering . If we were not poor , all my children would have gone to school . They would never sit idle or steal. »

; « If at least one of my children could study , he could take care of his brothers and sisters in future ». “At Koira Tégui, I do not know of any child who has really succeeded in school . The only one who went to study ended up becoming a mechanic. But at least he can try to come out of his bondage”. These women clearly prove the importance of education to attain better social status, which also depends on the economic status of the family. Without resources, a child is obliged to opt for other choices, which are surely tougher. Four (4) women respondents feel that the institutions are not doing much to help them , whereas the other two (2) respondents with a fatalist attitude attribute their lot to their fate : God wanted this to happen . He has already pronounced that neither we, nor our children would ever get social and economic happiness. However, the last respondent has encouraged them and asked them not to bend their knees because « Poverty is not determined by fate ».

Hence, it is evident from these results that the backward classes are aware of the issues regarding education of their children. However, this is not enough because the education

is very expensive and very often the State gives no help to the economically backward classes.

14 -Combined proposals for Advocacy – communication

- To set up (or strengthen) a national structure that aims at promoting and protecting vulnerable groups and families;
- To reinforce institutional capacities (amenities with sufficient equipments, human resources for the concerned organization);
- To set up communicative programmes of awareness which will be written, broadcasted on radio and shown on television for giving information on vulnerable groups through the themes of literacy , education and child labour ;
- Launching awareness programmes of members of vulnerable groups through schools, media, dialogues and debates , video projections and plays in order to make one aware of the problems and dangers to which are exposed children if they remain illiterate ;
- Consolidating advocacy programmes with State and its different parts, districts and communities, actors of the civil society and development partners ;
- involving the people and victims to find solutions and preventive measures for the problem of child labour

ANNEXE

List of people

- Moussa Barma Aichatou NGO Songes
- Mahamane Aoual Hamballi, NGO ALTEN
- Harouna Issa, NGO AFETEN
- Moussa Yahaya, NGO RENE
- Hassane Mai Moussa, NGO AER
- Amadou Kandé NGO AFETEN
- Issaka Sani, Caritas, Niger
- Ali Sékou, NGO D 2000
- Hamsatou Ibrahim, Population Media Center
- Mme Salmeye Bébert, UNICEF
- Bala Souley Ibrahim, IPEC/ILO
- Kochi Maina, Pamodec
- Abdou Mayaki, Prog Good Gouvernance
- Moumouni Gida, MPE,
- Salissou Abdou, MF/T
- Gagéré Illia, MF/T
- Hachimou Boukari, MP
- Ari Koura, MEBA
- Maazou Garba, MEBA
- Hachimou Zara, ANBF
- Adamou Barké, Department of Psychology , AM University
- Hamit Abdoulhadi, Department of sociology, AM University
- Iro Moustapha Amina, Parliament of the young people