

Working children – a family issue?

Internal and external factors influencing children's work in Nepal

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1. Introduction and Conceptual Framework

Children's work in Nepal has a long history of serving as a regular income source for poor families across the country (Sainju 2005:10). Today globalization has brought about a certain homogenization of adult perceptions of what a proper childhood should be.

We live in a world of intensifying motion and complex interconnections. According to Jonathan Xavier Inda and Renato Rosaldo (2008:6), these facts are descriptive of a world of *globalization*, in which a myriad of processes, operating on a global scale, continually cut across national borders. Cultures and communities are getting increasingly interconnected through new space-time combinations (Hall 1996 in Inda and Rosaldo 2008: 6). However, while the world is experientially shrinking, Inda and Rosaldo argue that it is not necessarily the case that the world is shrinking for everyone or in all places, as globalization is "a rather awkward and uneven process" (Inda and Rosaldo 2008: 6). In Nepal adaptation to global markets informed an economic liberalization that were not adapted to the ground reality of the country. This caused deductions in social expenditures and hardships for poor families (Action Aid 2004:39, Horst 1999:57). As poverty is claimed to be the fundamental cause of child labour in the South (Muscroft 1999:74), it is likely to believe that such global influences affect working children.

Children's rights are 'globalized' through the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The establishment of the CRC in 1989 created a common international legal framework for children. The speed of ratification was remarkable compared to other human right treaties, and according to Save the Children this confirms that the convention is universally accepted and hence, it cannot easily be referred to as a "Western" view of children's rights (Muscroft 1999:22). However, arguments against this claim that the convention takes on an idealized Western norm of childhood where the family unit is the basic protector of children. It ignores extended and joint families common elsewhere, and promotes a version of the western family which is subject to discussion (Seabrook 2001:51).

The critic against the convention is interesting when looking at various reasons why children work. An OECD review of policies to combat child labour investigated child economic activities in 17 countries. One of the main findings was that children engage in economic activities as a result of family circumstances and pressures (OECD 2003:21).

My research questions are as follows:

What internal family factors determine Nepalese children's work? What external factors may influence children's work opportunities and duties? Are international conventions regulating children's work compatible with internal family factors?

I have in this thesis interviewed 80 parents about their perspectives on children's work. 40 interviews were carried out in an urban area, and 40 interviews in a rural area, to see if parents' perspectives were different according to where they live. In addition, I conducted 11 in-depth interviews with parents and 5 focus groups with children, as well as some interviews with relevant stakeholders. I will describe this in detail in chapter 3.

When looking at how international conventions correspond with family situations I will look at the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), ILO Convention No 182 on harmful work and ILO Convention No 138 on Minimum Age. My main focus will be the UNCRC. I will also briefly review the main legislations on children's work in Nepal to see how it is informed by the international conventions referred above.

1.1. Rationale of the study

The research material in this study was collected during my internship with Save the Children Norway in Nepal from August till December 2008. The choice of interviewing parents was determined by a lack of research on Nepalese parents' perspectives on children's work. Most of the previous studies that I was able to identify are old does not go in depth, besides stating that the family situation of working children is essential. I did not find any studies that had systematically interviewed parents in this regard. At the same time Save the Children expressed that they were interested in my study, as they had limited knowledge about this issue. They would to facilitate collaboration with their partner organizations that have contact with working children and their families.

There are many organizations focusing on working children in Nepal. However, only three out of 45 organizations listed in Nepal's National Master Plan on Child Labour target parents and/or families specifically (Ministry of Labour and Transport Management 2004:11 and annex VI-X). Most of the organizations I was able to identify in Nepal focus on working children mainly in isolation from their parents and families, some include awareness-raising for parents, but few capture the socio-economic aspect of the family situation. I have been in touch with organizations mentioned in the National Master Plan, as well as some organiza-

tions not mentioned in the plan. They all state that their programmes with including parents were very successful, and they encouraged me to go on with my study as they recognize the research gap; none of them knew about any similar studies.

I am aware that according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, children's views are important. I conducted 5 focus group discussions with children to crosscheck information received by the parents. I truly believe that it is important to listen to children, but if the power structure and reasons for engaging in work lies within the family, I consider it important to examine the household unit. Boyden (et al. 1998: 139) argue that policy makers and programme-planners should make use of existing studies that address how important family decisions are in determining children's work. The base of good research analyzing children's work and schooling from the household perspective is increasing, but it has been surprisingly under-utilized to inform national and international discussion of children's work issues (Boyden et al. 1998:139). Boyden et al. wrote the statement referred to in the previous in 1998, still, my impression is that this observation corresponds with the present situation in Nepal. I was not able to locate many programmes focusing on the family situation.

When looking at the family situation I aim to capture the socio-economic aspect that informs child work and look at both the positive and negative impacts of children's involvement in work. My objectives are:

- *To analyse my field data from Nepal in order to give a balanced picture of why and how children work.*
- *To address external factors affecting children's work in Nepal through relevant literature and examples from my own study and experience.*
- *To consider what effects implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and ILO Convention No 138 and 128 may have on the families covered in my study.*

1.2.Previous studies from Nepal

I have not been able to identify any studies from Nepal that specifically interview parents about their children's work, although I did find community studies that acknowledge families detrimental influence in informing children's work. In preparation of my fieldwork I spent about two weeks searching the Internet, as well as reviewing the library of Save the Children in Nepal, in search of relevant studies. I did not find any published reports on the Internet that specifically outline studies about working children – that is conducted on the household level. Most relevant studies that I found references to, were too old to be published on the Internet

and only exist in the libraries of organizations, whom, when I contacted them often did not know how to find it due to disorganized libraries. This is to explain why several of the surveys referred to in the following derive from the same source.

The report *Situational Analysis of Child Labour in Nepal*, written by Centre for Women/Children and Community Development (1997) states that:

“Besides the poverty as the global reason of working, many children reported the second major reason of working is because of their parent’s interest/enforcement and few children work for money to meet the educational expenses (CW/CCD 1997:36).”

The study also states that more females than males work because they are compelled by their parents to work (CW/CCD 1997:36-37). Most parents look for a job for their children so they can support their families’ economic burden. If they do not find a job they cannot go to school because they have to look after their siblings while their parents work. At the same time many poor parents believe that their purchasing power will increase proportionally with the number of children employed (CW/CCD 1997:60). Illiteracy among parents, and particularly among mothers, are also thought to be one of the main reasons behind child labour as uneducated parents often do not see the value in education (CW/CCD 1997:19).

A study carried out by ILO/IPEC (International Labour Organization/International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour) in 1995 called *Report on Child Labour in Baglung* analyzes the causes of child labour through detailed village studies. Two of the main causes were poor economic situation and low literacy level of families. Other reasons found were parental attitudes to child work and marginalisation of the communities due to low caste and lack of facilities/schools (CW/CCD 1997:23-24).

”Listening to Smaller Voices – children in an environment of change” written by Johnson et al in 1995 for Action Aid, is a study conducted to understand children’s role in the household. Two suggested steps of action were to create and provide alternatives for poor people so that they do not have to send their children to work, and to raise awareness among adults (CW/CCD 1997:28).

”Interventions to Abolish Child Labour. Programs for Kavre Palanchowk and Nuwakot” (1996) INSEC written by Thakurathu M. Khadka A and Sharma S. is an analysis of the socio-economic conditions of households. It concludes that there are three major causes of child labour in the two communities studied a) Poverty within the household b) Lack of school attendance is caused by poverty and lack of facilities c) The cultural and economic phenomenon of male priority in education results in fewer girls enrolled in education (CW/CCD 1997:28).

A report carried out by CWISH on the status of domestic workers in Kathmandu Valley interviewed 379 children, 61,48 percent mentioned educational support at home as a pre condition to leave work and go back home. 46,17 percent asked for economic strengthening of their family (CWISH 2007:7).

ILO/IPEC recommended in 1995 in the report *Child Labour in Nepal Volume II* that action at the family and community level should be facilitated:

“Productive employment opportunities for the low income households need to be expanded so that the able adults within the household can be gainfully employed, and the income earning burden on the child removed (ILO/IPEC 1995:51).”

All of these studies and examples above state that parents’ perspectives and the family situation play a significant part in informing children’s work in Nepal. Children’s work is part of a broader picture. In the report *Situational Analysis of Child Labour in Nepal*, the recommendations conclude that child labour can not be seen in isolation, and neither must any of the approaches they recommend as solutions (CW/CCD 1997:21, 87-88).

1.3.“Child” contextualized

This study defines child in line with the UN Conventions on the Rights of the Child as *every human being below the age of eighteen*. However, it is important to underline that children in South Asia are exposed to a system of different social values, ethos and cultural patterns that are substantially different from Western values. South Asian family values are much more community centred rather than in the interest of individuals. The Western individualism tend to collide with the communitarian vision of South Asian countries (Goonsekere, 1997 cited in Behera 2007:1). In Nepal the Children’s Act 2048 of 1992 defines a child as every human being below the age of 16 (Childrens Act 1992: 1.2).

There is no universal consensus of what a child is, and the dividing line between adulthood and childhood varies greatly between different societies and cultures. In most industrial countries the dividing line is usually based on chronological divide, whereas in many other societies it is based on social responsibilities (OECD 2003:15). During one of my interviews in Nepal my translator occasionally asked a group of working children aged about 12-15 what they define as a child. One of the respondents answered that maybe it is a person below the age of 5 years old. These children had already been working a couple of years, and it appears to have affected their concept of childhood.

Redda Barnan (Save the Children Sweden) carried out an international study among child organizations and individuals with relevant experience working on issues concerning children’s work. The results showed that an overwhelming 80 percent of the respondents

thought of childhood as a time that should be dedicated to play and school, not work. The results of this survey raise an interesting question. Can the substantial penetration of an originally European ideal of childhood, justify that this model should be universal (Boyden et al 1998:15,16,29)?

Implementing this European ideal of childhood might be problematic in other contexts; one example of a totally different view of childhood is the Shona people from Zimbabwe. A child does not stand as an individual but as a member of the family, the family serves the child and the child serves the family. The best interest of the child, and the concept ‘caring for’ a child often involves providing the child with work (Boyden et al 1998:72).

Childhood studies make a distinction between traditional childhood where children perform a working role on the family farm, and modern childhoods where children are considered to be in need of protection. In Nepal the imported modern childhood model has mixed with the traditional model. Conversations with parents demonstrate that they embrace elements of modern childhood, such as education, while they at the same time advocate values of traditional childhood, which they grew up in. Work is considered to be a part of the maturation process that children participate in work along with peers and older relatives (Baker and Hinton 2001:190). This corresponds with my findings. Parents are very much aware of the importance of education and they realize the coherence between their own poor situation and their lack of education. At the same time I sensed that parents consider children’s work as a natural part of growing up. When asked about the benefits of children’s work one parent answered like this; “The children are born in a poor family so we have expectations that they do some small work.”

1.4. Conceptualizing children’s work

There is no universal consensus regarding the basic definitions of children’s work. This complicates statistical coverage of child labour as different researchers and organizations operate with different definitions of work (Liebel 2004: 43-45). According to UNICEF “*The state of the world’s children 2008 Child survival*”, 31 percent of Nepalese children between 5-14 years were involved in labour between 1999 and 2006 (UNICEF 2008:146)¹. However, these numbers might vary according to what researchers perceive as labour or work.

¹ According to UNICEF: “A child is considered to be involved in child labour under the following conditions: (a) children 5-11 years old who, during the week preceding the survey, did at least one hour of economic activity or at least 28 hours of domestic work, or (b) children 12-14 years old who, during the week preceding the survey, did at least 14 hours of economic activity or at least 28 hours of domestic work (UNICEF 2008:147).”

ILO distinguish between child labour and child work. Child labour is stated to be: *“exploitative by nature and determinant to the child’s growing process, depriving the child of the rights to survival, development, protection and participation.”* Whereas child work is referred to as a: *“potential learning experience or apprenticeship for the child, and therefore not harmful”* (IPEC/LO, 1995). This distinction has been criticised as being too coarse and theoretically implausible. Instead an attempt has been made to cover the spectrum of activities that children perform both positively and negatively (Liebel 2004:46). Ben White recommends that instead of forcing children’s complex realities of work into the simple dichotomy of child labour and child work, it should instead be considered on a scale from worst to best. It could begin in the one end with the intolerable forms of child work – those that cannot be tolerated. Next comes work which in their present form are hazardous, but that can potentially be made less harmful and safer, and that may be combined with school. Then come neutral kinds of work that are not particularly harmful, nor particularly beneficial to children; and finally a category of positive or beneficial forms of children’s work (Boyden et al 1998:77).

This thesis defines work as both formal and informal sector activities, including unpaid work, as it is common to help out with household work in Nepal. I chose this approach because I was not always in a position to judge the content of the work, as the workload were sometimes fluctuating and in the borderland between what ILO defines as child labour and child work. Save the Children use the term “child work” to cover all aspects of work, and further specifies different levels of harm where it is necessary. My concept of work is in line with Save the Children’s approach, and this is the definition that informs my study:

“Save the Children views child work in its broader sense, as activities children undertake to contribute to their own or family economy. This means that we include time spent on home-maintenance chores, as well as on income-generating activities inside or outside the home. Thus, the unpaid agricultural work of many girls and boys on family-run farms, and the domestic tasks done by many children in their own homes, are included in this definition. Work can be full or part-time (Save the Children 2003:2).”

The definition is what I relate to when I describe my own findings. However, there is a jungle of mixing between the concepts of child labour and child work in the literature, often times without proper definitions of what is meant by the concept. Therefore, when referring to literature, I will use both the concept of child labour and child work where these concepts are referred to by the author.

1.5. Outline of the study

This thesis consists of seven chapters. After this chapter, follows a chapter on background and previous research and then a chapter on methods of data collection and analysis. The remaining chapters are structured in accordance with my research question. Two separate chapters discuss first internal, and then external factors affecting children's work, followed by a chapter that discusses my third research question: whether international conventions are compatible with internal family factors. Finally, I answer the research question and summarize my findings in the conclusion.

In the second chapter I outline a theoretical framework to inform my study. I present previous research and international theories about children's work, and further connect it to my own findings.

In the third chapter I outline and specify methods of data collection and analysis, as well as an analytical framework. I further consider research ethics, and discuss the validity and reliability of the study. The areas of Kavre and Balaju are also described in this chapter in order to contextualize respondents' in relation to their place of residence.

The "internal factors" chapter discusses and analyzes findings in line with the analytical framework outlined in the method chapter. The following themes are discussed in relation to children's work: family situations, family values, and parental skill and education level.

The chapter about "external factors" discusses various influences outside the family structure, which may affect children's work in one way or another. As my data are internally focused, this chapter is mainly based on theory, thus supported by my own findings. The themes covered are as follows: International Conventions regulating children's work, national laws and enforcement, lack of enforcement, national economic policies, expanding informal markets, urbanization, and socio-economic status.

In the end I proceed to discuss if an international approach is appropriate for Nepal. This discussion is informed by findings presented in the chapter about "internal" factors, as well as international conventions and national approaches presented in the "external" chapter.

This thesis shows, among others, that family situations determine children's work, and that working children and their families are vulnerable to various external influences. International approaches may also affect working children negatively, if such initiatives are not adapted to the ground reality in Nepal.

2. Background, theory and previous research

Political, cultural, or ideological interests particularly influence research on children's work (Liebel 2004:42-43). Research into children's work is generally marked in two different and contradicting paradigms. One of these research poles considers the work of children as a relic of past times and thus it should be abolished. Working children are thought of as 'legal subjects' but they are not taken seriously as subjects with their own views and abilities. This research direction is above all interested in documentation that can confirm the harmful effects work may have on children's health and development. The other research pole does not necessarily consider children's work in a negative manner, but as an open relationship that should be examined through the eyes of working children (Liebel 2004:50).

Some of this research pinpoint that international policies to abolish children's work makes it even harder for working children, as they are denied socially and legally accepted work. A study by Riccardo Lucchini from Montevideo, Uruguay, state that children's working conditions are usually characterized by great instability. Children rapidly change their occupations, employers and activities, and they are often self-employed. "The absence of an employer is no accident but the result of international practice" (Liebel 2004:54,56). Ennew, Myers and Plateau claim that the dominant research pole today ignore children's views;

"Although many children regard their work as an unpleasant burden, many others defend it as intrinsically rewarding and claim a right to engage in it if they wish. However, the currently dominant international discourse on children's work virtually ignores both children's views about and research results about the benefits of work, focusing instead almost exclusively on the dangers and costs. Both are real and important, and both need to be taken into account...(Ennew et al. in Weston 2005:34)."

The quote above addresses the first paradigm that considers the attempts to abolish children's work, as the dominant one within international research. I find myself closer positioned to the second paradigm, but I differ from the approach in the sense that my main source of information is the parents. In Nepal, it appears to have been a shift in thinking from the first to the second paradigm. The focus has changed from striving to eliminate child labour to rather focus on appropriate actions to safeguard the well-being of working children in the short and long term (Baker and Hinton 2001:181).

I will in the following present various theories and research about working children in general, and connect it to some of my findings from Nepal. The purpose is to outline a background framework to inform my analysis.

2.1.Sectors in which children work

There are broadly speaking three contexts in which children work; within the family, the informal sector, or the formal sector (Ansell 2006:161). The formal sector accounts for the smallest number of child workers; only about five percent are considered to work in production entering international trade (Ansell 2006:169, Boyden 1998:25).

When working for the family children either work at home or in a family run business. Nieuwenhuys (1996 cited in Ansell 2006:161) argues that children's involvement in low-productivity and domestic tasks defines the way children are exploited, rather than children's involvement in factory work. Work for the family may include high levels of responsibility and the time commitment may be considerable (Ansell 2006:163).

The informal sector includes employment of children in households other than their own. Activities among others are newspaper selling, shoe shining, porters, and rag pickers, collecting minibus fares, fishing and making handicrafts. A lot of this work is considered hazardous and includes substantial risks of health injury or even deaths (Ansell 2006:166).

Most jobs have advantages and disadvantages. However, research from Bangladesh found that many children consider their work in a positive manner, compared to other jobs (Woodhead 1999:33-36). A study from Jakarta, Indonesia found that most low-income workers work in the informal sector either as their first income source; because of difficulties finding jobs elsewhere, or to complement low income from the formal sector. Due to reasons such as easy entry and exit, low initial capital, no requirement for high-level skills, no tax and flexible adjusting to changes in the market, the informal sector has become the only and easiest employment for poor urban families (Tambunan in Guha-Khasnobis and Kanbur 2006:206-207).

Formal sector work in export oriented farms and factories has dominated the Western concern about child labour. The conditions in factories can be exploitative, and terms of employment may be strict. Yet in many cases the formal sector offer better conditions and payment than the informal sector (Ansell 2006:169). In Nepal research from a village that sent Tamang and Thamai girls to work in a carpet factory found that the girls considered the work in the factory easier than working at home. However, another village that supplied a different factory reported the opposite and said that the factory demanded unanimously amounts of work and left them with little time to play, hence they would rather like to stay at home (Johnsen et al 1995 cited in Ansell 2006:169).

2.1.1. Working sectors in Nepal

In my study I found that almost all the children are employed in the informal sector², but the sectors children are engaged in vary between the regions of rural Kavre and urban Balaju.

These two areas of study are specifically presented in chapter 3.

Table 1: Working sectors in Kavre

Farming	57 children
Household work and take care of siblings	49 children
Brick kiln	26 children

Several children were involved in two or three of the mentioned sections above. Other answers were as following, with only one child in each of these jobs: porter, rice millet factory, welder, tailoring, retail shop and sometimes collector in bus, work in a food factory, working in a hostel by washing dishes and blacksmith. Two children worked as domestic workers and two parents answered that they do not know what their children are doing, but they left the house.

The children employed in brick kiln usually work along with their whole families. They travel to the brick kiln areas where they work half a year, before they return to the village and work in farming the rest of the year. Many parents who bring their children to the brick kiln area said that it is difficult for them to keep up with schoolwork when they miss out half a year, although some children do get education in the brick kiln area.

Table 2: Working sectors in Balaju

Household work and take care of siblings	21 children
Stone quarry	14 children
Domestic worker	12 children
Street shop	12 children
Porter	11 children
Restaurant	10 children
Farming	8 children
Spinning	5 children

In addition to the listed findings: 2 children work with painting and 1 child work with electronic work. Some children have more than one job; especially the ones that work with housework and take care of siblings, in these cases all of their jobs were counted, hence the number of jobs specified in the table are larger than the number of working children. The number of children employed in street shops is especially high because one family with two wives have 7 children working in their street shop. Three of the children that work with spinning said that they are spinning for a carpet factory.

² According to definitions of the informal sector made by Upadhyaya 2003:3. The sectors defined as informal are: farm and farm related workers, trading, craft workers, construction, transport, micro enterprises, small scale and cottage industry workers, traditional occupational services. Each of these categories are further specified and corresponds to a large degree with my findings.

In Balaju the children are employed in a wider range of sectors, which reflect the demand for child work in an urban area, as pointed out in the introduction.

The sectors listed above corresponds, broadly speaking, with the definitions of harmful work listed in Nepal's National Master Plan on Child Labour (NMP 2004:ANNEX 2.7) brick kiln, stone quarries, domestic work, portering, restaurant and spinning (mentioned under carpet factories) are all defined as harmful work for children. In addition, work in farming often includes portering and I saw several children carry heavy baskets of grass. ILO states that there are many potential hazards connected to farm work, such as exposure to pesticides, cuts from tools and snakebites. Injuries from heavy lifting or repetitive strains may permanently damage growing spines or limbs (ILO 2002:8). Farming in Nepal is to a great extent non-commercialized, and it is characterized by small farms where family labour is the norm (Mathema 2008:2). I will also argue that working in street shops, even though it is not termed as harmful in the NMP, involves health hazards as Kathmandu is heavily polluted. I frequently found it hard to breath along the road.

2.2.Reasons for working

The reasons why children work vary between societies, but generally they relate to cultural and structural factors and the agency of children and their families. In many societies children have always worked, and the families survival depends upon tasks performed by children. Most working children derive from poor households and live in poor countries (Ansell 2006:170). In a study from a suburb in Harare in Zimbabwe, young girls were found to help their mothers in informal business. In rural areas children spent hours before and after school in family entrepreneurial businesses. Such children recognize the importance of their work, while at the same time they realize the negative impact it has on their schooling. Although most children take on work to help their families, some children also mention other reasons. Of children involved in stitching footballs in Pakistan, 81 percent stated that they work to help their families meet the basic household needs, 11 percent mentioned skills and 25 percent mentioned personal expenditure (Bourdillon in Weston 2005:148). Jo Boyden and Pat Holden (1991 cited in Burr 2006:99) support the notion that children work out of necessity;

“In the south, the only way the urban poor can survive is by putting as many members of the household as possible to work. Where there are no State welfare payments, and where self-employment and low, unstable incomes are widespread, the labour of children is crucial (Burr 2006:99).”

My findings confirm that poverty is the main reason why children work in both Balaju and Kavre. The biggest category of answers relate to poverty in the families.

Table 3: Reasons why children are working

Why is your child/ren working?	Kavre	Balaju
The children work to help their families' difficult situation, to provide food and basic needs for themselves and their family members	50% (20 answers)	50% (20 answers)
Children are working to provide one or more of the following for themselves; food, education, stationary things and clothes	17,5% (7 answers)	35% (14 answers)
Children are working because the parents do not have enough time to do all the work and/or household work	22,5% (9 answers)	7,5% (3 answers)
The children have to work due to sickness, death or old age of the parents or caretakers	25% (10 answers)	7,5% (3 answers)
Other various answers in Kavre and Balaju:	<p>12,5% (5 parents) said that Lack of land is a reason why the children have to work</p> <p>3 parents said that their children are working because they were unable to pay the school fees.</p> <p>1 parent said that one reason why the daughter is working is to gain knowledge about working in the field.</p> <p>One other parent said that: - My son is not speaking as normal children and he's not that clever so he had a hard time concentrating in school that's why he was taken by relatives to work in a hostel.</p>	<p>10% (4 parents) said that the children understand the family problems so they chose to work themselves</p> <p>2 parents stated that the fathers alcoholism is a reason why the children have to work</p> <p>2 answers were that the children chose to leave school to work out of free will, because they wanted to escape from school.</p> <p>2 answers were related to make a good future.</p> <p>1 mother said that it is better if the son is hired in the family business so he can earn money, instead of hiring and paying someone else.</p>

Often times several reasons were listed in one answer, especially the answers collected in Kavre, in these cases the same answers are listed in different categories; hence the total numbers are higher than 100%. In the cases where old age were a reason why the children had to work, it was usually when grandparents were in charge of the children for some reason.

The category where children work to cover their own requirements is also connected to poverty, as the parents cannot afford to support for their children's needs. In Kavre several children work because of their parent's lack of time. Poverty and lack of time are often connected with lack of land because parents have less time for household work when they work on others land.

One of the corresponding findings in research from all over the world is that children's work is closely connected to national income per capita. First, countries with low national income per capita are likely to have more households living in extreme poverty. Secondly, it is likely to display social and economic patterns that may result in higher incidents of working children. One of these patterns is lack of opportunities for children with higher education. Hence, parents consider it as most reasonable and productive to make children work. Another pattern is that countries with low income have a low productivity per head, and low productivity systems are considered suitable work for children. A third pattern is low quality or challenged access to education (ILO/IPEC 2004:84-86).

ILO/IPEC state, contrary to studies referred to in the previous, that analyses usually find no overall tendency for the household income to be linked with the household's supply of child labour. Many reasons have been suggested to explain this. If there is not high enough demand, children of low-income families may not be working even though their families want them to. Children are often put to work in their own homes, and a farming household with more animals and land may be in higher demand of child labour than those with less assets (ILO/IPEC 2004:84-86). I do believe some families in Kavre may correspond with the description above, judging from an acceptable welfare standard in a few of the homes I visited.

Children are sometimes regarded as belonging to, or even the property of the family and their interests are subordinated to those of the family (Bourdillon in Weston 2005:160). In some places child labour occurs because children are expected to work and miss out of school. Sometimes a child is sent to work because families and communities does not recognize the importance of education, and parents might be illiterate themselves. Perception of childhood and what responsibilities children have towards their siblings, elders and parents also inform children's work; and this especially affects girls. At the same time there are also social problems connected to caste (Behera 2007:8 and Alex in Behera 2007:120).

2.3. Considering the ethical grounds of children's work

Many trade unions such as the ILO oppose the employment of children. Others defend children's rights to work and do not consider employment of children as a problem. Arguments supporting children's work reject the Eurocentric notion that work is not an appropriate part of childhood. They argue that in most societies it has always been considered normal for children to work and protagonists assert children's right to work by citing Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the right to express an opinion. Ansell (2006: 170, 172-173) argues that most working children emphasise that they want to continue working, even

though someone argue that they would like higher salaries and better work conditions. Ennew, Myers and Plateau (2005:38-39) on the other hand, claim that most children state that they do not want to work, but it is necessary due to the economic situation of their parents.

Research that has given working children the opportunity to freely express themselves, conclude that children judge their work in a discriminating manner. They criticize working conditions that is a threat to health, life and human dignity, but at the same time they often mention that they feel proud of their work and the advantages it is to earn an income to support their families. They also value the friendship and solidarity they share with their co-workers. The majority of workers prefer to combine school with work. Most children do not see school as an alternative to solving their problems and neither do they condemn work and idealize school as dramatically as it is often stated in international literature on child labour. Children frequently react with a mixture of mockery and disbelief upon legal prohibitions of work for children under 15. Their greatest worry is what would happen to them and their families if they are no longer allowed to work. Many children would see the only solution to go ‘underground’ and flouting the law, which would make it even harder to control exploitation and working conditions (Liebel 2004:73).

Those in favour of children’s rights to work, contest the way work is seen as an obstacle to education, in some cases children work in order to pay their own school fees, uniforms and stationary. My study from Nepal confirms this, as shown in table 3 in the previous chapter. At the same time there is little proof that increased schooling reduce children’s workloads (Ansell 2006:174.). A study by Olga Nieuwenhuys (1994:202) from Kerala in India found that high incidents of school attendance were not an antidote against child work as it was in the nineteen-century Europe. School and work remain parts of different arenas and are in many respects complementary. Further, the introduction of education in Kerala was not accompanied by realistic legislations to reduce the work of children, or implementation of new economic structures that could have made children’s work redundant.

Many children, though far from all, consider work combined with education as the best way of preparing for the future. A declaration prepared by children and youth from 33 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America state that: “We are against exploitation at work but we are for work with dignity with hours adapted so that we have time for education and leisure” (Muscroft 1999:71-72).³

³ The statement was developed at the First International Meeting of Working Children in Kundapur, India, 24 November to 8 December 1996.

Sanctions such as boycotts of products are unlikely to benefit children unless substitution opportunities are given (Rogers and Standing in Liebel 2004:39). Those children underage that are ‘saved’ from industries such as working on carpet and footballs could be driven into prostitution or destitution instead (Munck 2002:130).

2.4. The family situation of working children

The decision to work is usually taken by children or their parents. Children’s involvement in the decision differs between societies, but it is often difficult for children to refuse to work when they are anticipated to do so and the family income depends upon their contribution. Parents might really believe that they are acting in the best interest of the child by sending them to work (Ansell 2006:170, ILO/IPEC 2004:96-98). In Nepal and Thailand parents and sometimes relatives, usually play a part in enrolling children as domestic workers (ILO/IPEC 2004:96-98). Results from my study confirm that parents often provide work for their children. Even though the work areas in Kavre and Balaju are different, parents play an equally active part in providing jobs for their children.

Table 4: How children were employed

How did your child get its job?	Kavre	Balaju
The children followed their parents to work or they work at home or on the families own land	62% (29 answers)	48,8% (22 answers)
The children arranged it themselves or got the job through their own friends	4,3% (2 answers)	22,2% (10 answers)
The parents arranged the job for the children	2% (1 answer)	13,3% (6 answers)
The children got their job through relatives	10,7% (5 answers)	11,1% (5 answers)
The children got their job through villagers	19,1% (9 answers)	0%

Other answers were: 1 parent in Balaju answered that they encouraged the child to go outside and find work, 1 parent in Balaju said that a stranger came to the neighbourhood and offered a job, and 1 parent in Kavre said that one of her sons got his job through his brother.

In this question one number can account for several children but it represents the situation of one family. Some families’ listed two different explanations for how their children were employed, and then both reasons were counted. Some of the cases where children work at home are not listed here, because the children were often doing this in addition to other work. In those cases the way they got the job outside the household are listed.

Boyden et al. (1998:243-244) write that sometimes it seems to be an automatic assumption in national and international policies that families are unaware or neglectful. Among fieldworkers there is some fear that including the parents may serve as an obstacle to child protection. They assume that parents will defend child exploitation because they benefit from it. However, Boyden argues that the literature reporting on parental attitudes towards children's work, education and future does not justify such perceptions. Most parents do not want their children to work in harmful conditions and they express frustration that poverty or other factors put their children's education, health or development at risk. Parents need to be seen as partners in relation to working children, rather than targets (Boyden et. All 1998:243-244). This corresponds with my findings, as I will get back to in the analysis.

A study by Domic Ruiz (1999 in Liebel 2004:59) from La Paz in Bolivia devoted to male children aged ten to fourteen is especially concerned with the relationship between parents and children. Ruiz is interested in how children's work is 'represented' through children's feelings on one side and those of the parents on the other hand. According to his study; both the children and parents agree that children's work is important because it supports the family economically and enables children to support for themselves. Both parts also agree, although given less value, that work is significant for learning. First of all they have in mind that children's income can make it possible to afford the necessary expenditure to attend school. At the same time, children also connect their work to discrimination, maltreatment, and other difficulties (Liebel 2004:59-60). The monetary situation of contributing to the family often gives children a privileged position within the family. On the other hand, not all duties are recognized as work in the thinking of children and parents. Work within the household without payment is considered to be a natural obligation and is perceived as 'helping' (Liebel 2004:60-62).

Children from Asian countries participated in a forum in Bangkok in 1997, concerning intolerable work for children. Family duties were mentioned many times in discussions. Household work was generally accepted as children's obligation to help the family, but perhaps only until a certain limit. One child asked, "It is children's duty to help parents, but if the work is harmful to them, is it child labour? Another child answered; "If parents ask, it s not forced. It is a kind of sharing. As long as it is not forced (Rialp in Weston 2005:190)."

I have in the previous connected my findings from Nepal to international research on children's work. The presented literature and findings in this chapter will serve to inform my internal analysis in chapter 4.

3. Methods of data collection and analysis

This chapter outlines and specifies methods of data collection and the framework employed to analyse the obtained findings, as well as research ethics and consideration of validity and reliability. The two local areas of study are also described in the following, in order to contextualize respondents' in relation to local social, economic and environmental surroundings.

3.1. CONCERN, CWISH and HUREC

This study was conducted with the help and facilitation of two partner organizations of Save the Children in Nepal, named CONCERN and CWISH – and HUREC, which is a partner of CWISH. The organizations contributed through their local contacts, to identify parents that were willing to be interviewed.

CONCERN is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that works to protect underprivileged and working children. CONCERN believes that all kinds of child exploitation can be completely abolished and that empowerment of underprivileged and working children is a dire necessity. CONCERN's mission is to facilitate and protect the Rights of the Child. The organization acts to promote a better social and natural living environment for children, and to abolish all kinds of exploitation. Two of CONCERN's objectives are: *“To assist in the economic development of underprivileged children and their families.”* And; *“To alleviate child exploitation by reducing and removing child labour (Concern, 2009 a)”*. CONCERN plays a strong part in advocating the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child both in Nepal and internationally through its network linkages (CONCERN 2009 b).

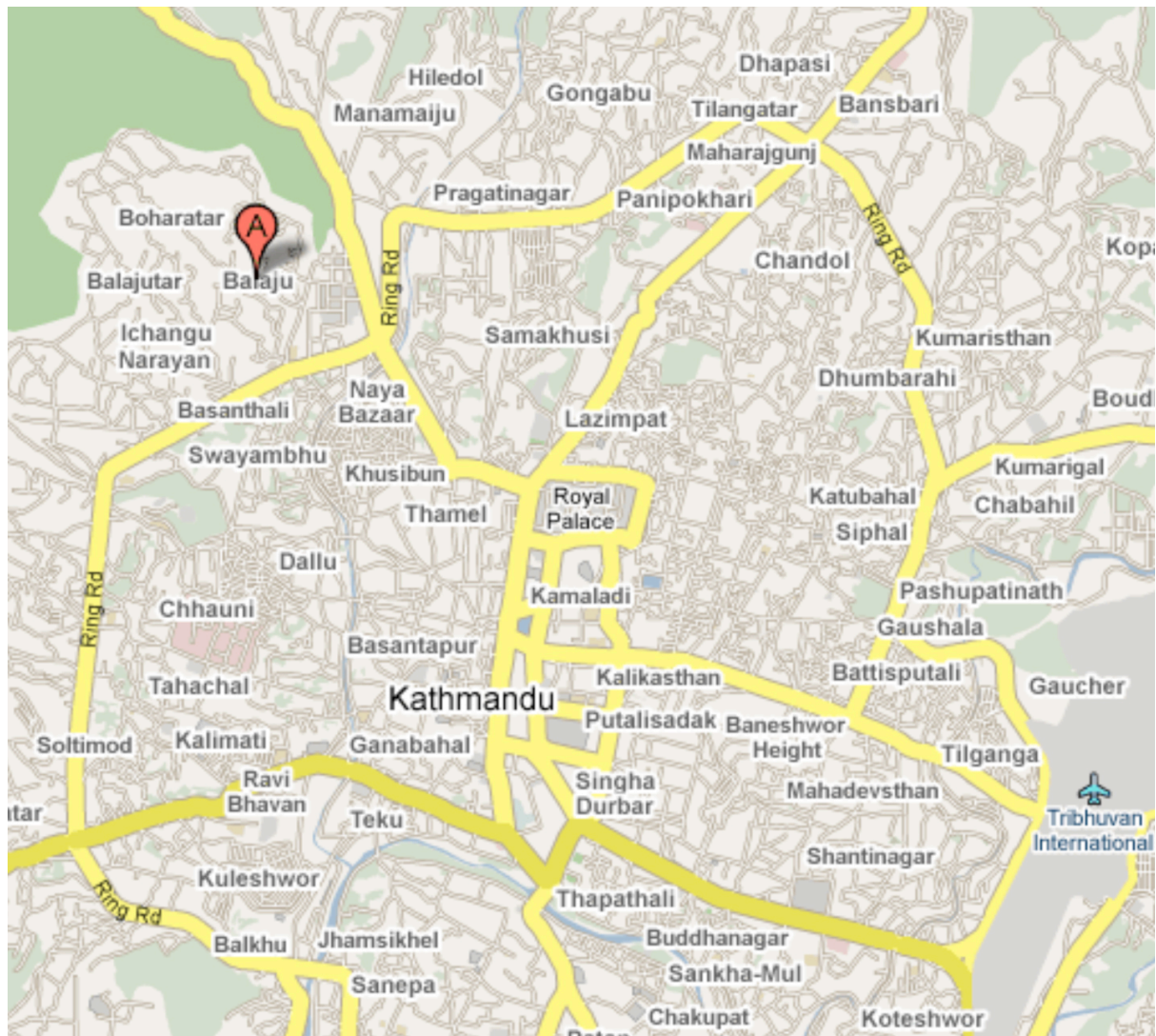
CWISH is a human rights NGO that works all over Nepal and advocates for the promotion of peace and human rights in the world (CWISH, 2009 a). CWISH works with children, women and youth. Their main child target group are children employed as domestic workers, children engaged in the worst forms of child labour and children vulnerable to child labour (CWISH, 2009 b). CWISH's effort towards working children is especially focused on education for child domestic workers, aiming to improve their work situation and withdraw them from the worst forms of domestic work (CWISH, 2009 c). Most parents that were interviewed in Kavre are not a part of CWISH's programmes, but they were identified through CWISH's local partner Human Rights and Environmental Education Centre (HUREC). HUREC is a community-based organization (CBO) that has previously carried out a project with CWISH in Kavre. The organization facilitated meetings with VDC representatives in the district (VDC's are the smallest administrative units in Nepal). The VDC representatives know the local area and scheduled meetings with the parents.

3.2. Balaju

Balaju is an urban industrial area located on the ring road that surrounds Kathmandu. Migration from rural areas to this community is common. Most of the families interviewed in this study had moved from the countryside in search for better work opportunities, or because they had run away from the previous Maoists conflict. The main livelihood in Balaju is self-employment and the service sector (Gautam and Oswald 2008:7). Approximate population within a radius of 7 km² counts 264 267 people (Falling Rain, 2009).

Balaju houses a large industrial district with 62 operating industries and 14 new industries under construction. The industries produce a wide range of different products, and the park has 3800 employers (Balaju Industrial District, 2009). Still, the informal sector in Balaju is substantial almost none of the parents or children in my study work in the industrial district. I do not have data to prove it, but I assume that the industrial district generate work for the informal sector. I observed porters carrying things outside the district, and mothers and children informed me that they produce thread for carpet factories. I know that there are carpet factories inside the industrial district, as I interviewed a mother in a carpet factory there.

Besides being an industrial area Balaju lies on the border between the city and green fields and jungle. The environment in Balaju hence covers both crowded, polluted areas, and more calm areas in the crossing between the city and village sites. I worked mainly in Balaju, but a few interviews were conducted in its proximate areas of Nepaltar, Lolang, Machapokhari and Manmaiju. Some of these areas are located in village sites with farming activities; about a half, to one-hour walk from Balaju.

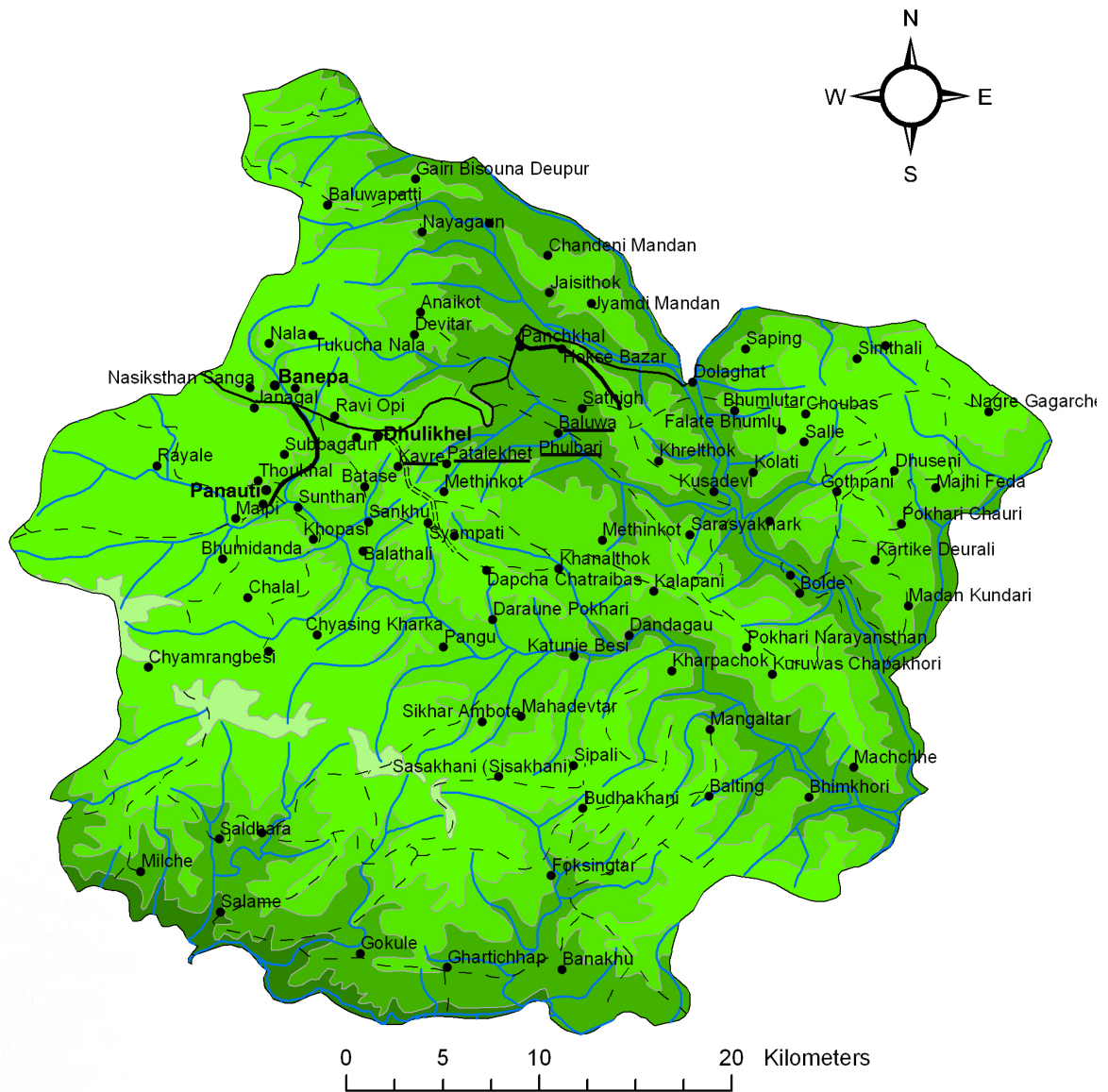


Source: Balaju (Google maps, 2008)

3.3.Kavre

Kavre is a hilly farming district located near the capital of Kathmandu. Travelling by public transport following the main road takes approximately 1 to 3 hours, depending on where in the district one is travelling – and the level of traffic jam. Even though the district is located close to Kathmandu valley it remains isolated from mainstream development, especially education. Despite the districts housing of reputable Kathmandu University, the level of education remains low throughout the whole district and can be compared to a remote district (Nepalese Children's Education Fund, 2009).

Kavre consist of a collection of 87 villages and three small towns spread across 1400 km² of very steep hills, the total district population is estimated to be 385 672. The majority of the people live in the small villages with limited road access. Terrace farming is the main occupation in Kavre, and it is common to have extended families involved in work to meet the subsistence needs. Most of the population live below the poverty line, the literacy rate remains lower than the national level and health problems are of great concern. There has been a long-term lack of economic opportunities and the rugged hilly landscape makes all forms of transportation and provision difficult. Certain services are available in the more urban areas of Kavre, but still large parts of the district remains cut off from important infrastructure (Integrated Community Development, 2009). The Arniko Highway that links Kathmandu to the Tibetan border passes through Kavre but many small villages are situated significantly far away from this road. The areas covered by the study were Baluwa, Phulbari, Kavre and Patalekhhet VDC in Kavre district. Most of these areas were situated in relative proximity to the two smaller towns of Dhulikel and Banepa, as well as Arniko Highway. This makes migration to Kathmandu an opportunity for children as well as parents.



Source: Kavre (Nepal maps collection, 2009, edited from original version)

The map above shows all of Kavre district. However the study was conducted in Kavre, Patalekhet, Phulbari and Baluwa VDCs. These areas are underlined on the map, next to Dhulikhel.

3.4.Interviews

My methods of data collection and analysis are qualitative. Most qualitative methods are characterized by a direct contact between the researcher and the respondents. An important goal is to gain an understanding of social issues (Thagaard 2003:11).

My main tool is a structured interview schedule (Appendix 1). In this interview method questions are asked in a standardized way and all questions must be asked. Most questions have pre-set answers to chose between and the results are easy to analyse (Laws et al. 2003:287). To do structured interviewing it is important to carefully prepare the questions and answer alternatives (Grønmo 2004:166). I spent about two weeks making the interview schedule; this was done in collaboration with Save the Children, CWISH and CONCERN. They recommended me to use this kind of interviewing. Structured interview schedules would be easiest to analyse due to my limited amount of time, as I had to finish my analysis before I left Nepal. At the same time they emphasised that they were interested in a certain amount of data to achieve a general impression of attitudes in my respondent group. The purpose of my internship was to complete a project that is relevant for my master program and at the same time useful for Save the Children. Hence, it was natural that their recommendations informed my choice of methods.

Most questions in my interview schedule are closed-ended, but some questions are open-ended to make the respondents elaborate upon certain categories. Closed-ended questions have fixed alternatives of answers and the respondents choose the option that best suits their situation. Open-ended questions have no pre-given answers (Grønmo 2004:165). The open questions in my interview schedule were either considered as especially important, or difficult to categorize into pre-structured answers.

I personally collected all the answers. This was done because most the interviewed parents are illiterate and it was not possible to easily distribute the forms. Personal interviewing may contribute to increase respondents' attention towards the interview; at the same time it is possible to explain confusing questions (Johannesen et al 2005:232). I took notes if additional relevant information came up during the interview. Sometimes informal conversations derived from the questions. New aspects were discovered like this, such as a high prevalence of alcoholism among the fathers. I did not change my structured interview schedule because I needed answers that were possible to thematically categorize afterwards. However, if none of the given categories were suitable I noted down the alternative answer. I was careful to make my

fixed categories override the reality. In this way some new categories appeared during my collection of data and this is visible if my analyses is compared to the interview schedule in Annex 1. In total, 40 structured interviews were conducted in Balaju area, and 40 in Kavre.

I conducted 11 in-depth interviews (Appendix 2) in addition to the structured interviews. 10 of these were also interviewed with the structured interview schedule, and one was an external sample. I chose to do this to crosscheck my structured interviews and to gain deeper perspectives on specific issues. This type of interview is qualitative and discovery oriented. The questions are open ended and framed to make the respondent elaborate upon a topic, instead of simply answering yes or no. The format is semi-structured, some prepared questions reflect the research objective; still follow up-questions are made according to the natural flow of the conversation (Guion 2001:1). Originally the plan was to do 100 structured interviews, and 5 in-depth interviews, but due to lack of time the interview schedule respondents were downsized, and compensated for by collecting more in-depth interviews. In addition, I conducted in-depth interviews with 2 VDC representatives, 2 children and 2 persons with substantial knowledge about working children in Nepal (Appendix 4).

5 focus group discussions with children were arranged to compare parents and stakeholder's views to children's views (Appendix 3). Focus groups explore the opinions of a group who have some experience in common (Kumar 2008:124). The researcher serves as a facilitator more than an interviewer, and the group interaction is in focus (Johannessen et al. 2005:149). It was challenging to make the children discuss my questions, as they appeared to be shy. The ideal situation would be to get to know them first, but it was not possible due to time-constraints and geographical obstacles. Johannessen et al. (2005:152) write that if the group is too big it may happen that some respondents do not participate. Small groups demand more participation, but at the same time, if some respondents do not participate the level of interaction are more vulnerable. I experienced this problem more or less in all the groups, independently of size and composition. Hence, it became an interview situation rather than a facilitated group discussion. Still, even though the communication was challenging, I did get some good answers. One weakness was that I did not have the possibility to regulate the combination of respondents in the various groups. Ideally a focus group should be both homogeneous and at the same time represent different attitudes. Varieties within a group may be gender, profession, education level and age (Johannessen et al. 2005:152).

3.5. Analytical Approach

ILO/IPEC list some family-related factors that may influence why children work. They are grouped into “internal” family factors or external factors that have to do with the interaction between the family and society at large (ILO/IPEC 2004:91). I have modified the model and adapted it to my study and I will analyse my findings thematically in line with this model. My data mainly concern internal factors but I chose to cover external factors as well to contextualize working children’s situations, and discuss how society and laws may affect children’s work. The section on external factors mainly consists of examples found in relevant literature, supported by my own observations and interviews. The internal and external factors serve to inform the discussion about whether or not international conventions regulating children’s work are compatible with internal family situations.

Table 5: Analytical Framework

Internal Factors	External Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family situations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Single-parent families - Family Illness or incapacity to work - Dysfunctional families • Family Values <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education - Gender - Parents’ awareness of harmful work • Parental skill and education level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Conventions • National laws and enforcement • National Economic Policies • An expanding informal market • Economic shocks • Socio-economic status • Urbanization

Source: modified from ILO/IPECs model (ILO/IPEC 2004.91)

Save the Children claim that poverty is broadly speaking the fundamental cause of child labour in the South. This is also confirmed in my study from Nepal. Economic poverty creates desperation and families that are willing to send their children to hazardous or exploitative work (Muscroft 1999:74). The factors outlined in the analytical framework above may influence poverty and working children’s lives in various ways. I will further clarify and specify the factors listed above in the introduction to the analysis of external and the internal factors in chapter 4 and 5.

My approach of analysing internal factors is in line with Thagaard's (2003:154) description of a theme centred approach. The rationale is to compare information from all the respondents and the findings are grouped into categories when analysed. The analytical process can be grouped into one descriptive and one analytical stage. The purpose of the descriptive phase is to outline and group the material. Examination of themes by comparison of information from respondents characterizes this phase. While in the analytical phase, the purpose is to gain a deeper understanding of the presented findings (Thagaard 2003:155).

In the descriptive phase I grouped the questions into categories. Within the open-ended questions many answers correspond in the sense that they express the same reasons. For instance the various given reasons why children work are broadly speaking; the children work for the basic needs of the family, for themselves, because of parent's lack of time, or because of sickness, death or old age of the parents. It was a challenging process to group the answers because they often express several reasons, like this: "We need to eat every day and my wife can not work properly so they need to work." I then grouped it as both "sickness death and old age of the parents" *and* to "cover the basic needs of the family". This was done because it would be hard to make sense of the data if I were to separately list all answers that contained various reasons. The closed ended questions were categorized in advance in the interview schedule; hence, I simply counted the number of answers in each category.

Regarding the in-depth interviews and focus groups it was harder to define any patterns, as there were few respondents. However, the purpose of these interviews was to support and control for my findings from the interview schedule. A substantial part of the attained information confirmed my findings from the interview schedule; hence it is not cited in details, but I have used quotations from these interviews when presenting various themes in my analysis.

After grouping my findings into categories, I proceeded to the analytical phase. I then identified patterns within my research material and further grouped it into the overall themes that are outlined under "internal factors" in the analytical framework in table 5. The various categories within each theme are analysed and discussed in chapter 4.

The external factors outlined in the analytical framework model are mainly discussed through relevant literature, supported by my internal findings. The external themes were identified through the original ILO/IPEC model that my model derives from, as well as from my own findings and corresponding literature. The external factors are discussed in chapter 5.

Within a theme centred approach it is the comparison of the respondents that is in focus. It has been argued that this is at the sacrifice of every informant's social context as all the cases are torn apart and analysed in light of other findings. On the other hand this method of

analysis serves to better protect the integrity of each informant (Thagaard 2003:168). However, this approach is appropriate for my study because, as I interviewed 80 informants, the aim is to tell something about the broader picture. It is not enough to generalize for all of Nepal, but I believe I am able to present some patterns and tendencies among the participants in my study.

3.6.Respondents

My methods of locating respondents can be described as judgemental or purposive sampling, and snowball sampling. In judgemental or purposive sampling the researcher only interviews those people who in his/her opinion are likely to provide the required information to achieve the objectives of the study. In this study the target group are mainly parents of working children. Snowball sampling is a process of selecting respondents using networks. Informants are asked to identify other people with relevant information (Kumar 2005:179, Overton and Diermen in Scheyvens and Storey 2003:43). Some parents in Balaju that were outside CONCERN's programme were identified like this.

To identify parents in Kavre, I worked with CWISH's local partner HUREC. The organization provided contact with three VDC representatives who followed us into the field and arranged for interviews with parents.

In Balaju the chain was shorter as I used a translator who had worked with CONCERN. She knows all the parents of the children supported by CONCERN. We went directly to their homes and they were informed through their children who regularly come to CONCERN's IT Centre for Working Children in Balaju.

The respondents in Balaju are mainly mothers, in 33 cases, but other people were often present during the interview – such as neighbours, relatives and children. Both the mother and the father were present in 5 families, and in one incident a father was interviewed alone.

In Kavre there are several households where the father for some reason is the single head of the house. Hence, the representation of fathers is higher than in Balaju. 9 fathers gave answer alone, and there was one case where both the mother and the father were interviewed. Still, mothers' voices are strongest also in Kavre, with 30 answers of mother's opinion.

The concept of "mother" and "father" are also used in cases where relatives are in charge of the family. They were then questioned about their own views, because they function as parents, and all the children under 18 in the household were counted.

3.7. Interview setting

The parents who were interviewed in Kavre district lived in Baluwa, Phulbari, Kavre and Pathlakhhet VDC. The interviews took place in private homes and VDC offices. Some home visits were also made. Sometimes it was not possible to get a private room, and many people gathered to listen. On the other hand, when we got a private room, people would frequently listen in the window and door openings.

In Balaju the parents were interviewed in different settings. We tried not to interrupt people's daily activities too much and therefore we went directly to their homes or work places. This was possible because the proximity between the interviewees' homes are shorter than in Kavre. Most of the interviews were conducted in private homes, but some interviews were also completed in; a stone quarry; a carpet factory; in street shops; in CONCERN's office; in a restaurant; while the interviewee were doing laundry by the well; and while someone were doing spinning at home. People often gathered to listen, but it was usually a few children or neighbours, and certainly not as many people as in Kavre.

3.8. Reliability and validity of data

Reliability and validity is of great importance to the usefulness of the results. Reliability refers to how accurately the data are measured, collected, coded and so on. Validity refers to whether the data actually say something about the phenomenon one has set out to study (Hellevik 1991:43).

My strategy of interviewing both parents, children and various stakeholders strengthens the reliability of the study, as is described in the following quote:

"Surveys based upon information gathered by from the heads of the household or proxies must in some way be suspected as they cannot represent the real situation of the child themselves. Children should therefore be interviewed. Parents, employers, community leaders and any others who can provide information and insight into the condition of children can also be talked to, listened to and interviewed to provide a complete picture of the context of children in the selected area (RWG-CL 2000:25)".

A tape recorder was used when conducting in-depth interviews and focus groups, and the interviews were then transcribed as per the English translation. The interview schedule were not taped due to lack of time for transcribing, and because most of the questions are closed ended. I will anyhow argue that it gives the most accurate representation possible within my limited amount of time and resources. The ideal situation would of course be to record all the 80 interviews as well, but I took additional notes during the interviews to capture the essence of other relevant information discussed.

I had two translators working for me. My translator in Balaju knows all the parents. At first I was a little worried that it might affect the result negatively if they did not feel comfortable sharing their problems with someone they know. But I found the opposite to be true and I had only positive experiences. It seemed like the parents were more open minded and they told us that they have nothing to hide because my translator knows everything already. At the same time my translator asked them specifically if she knew that something was left out. This served as a quality control, which I believe made my data from Balaju slightly more reliable than the ones from Kavre. My translator in Kavre also did a very good job, but she did not have the same possibility of controlling that the information we received were accurate. However, one incident of falsehood was discovered. A mother claimed education to be more important than school, but her daughter said that she works 15 hours a day in a brick kiln factory and her parents refuse to send her to a flexible education class. This confirms that parents sometimes answer what they believe to be expected of them.

Working with a translator was challenging, but I believe that I prepared both my translators in the best possible way. I attempted to keep an open communication with them through the whole process. We spent time before going into the field to talk about how the research questions should be asked and the purpose of the study (Laws et al 2003:256). Both of them read through my background material and research design, as well as the interviews I had prepared. One of my translators translated the interview schedule to Nepali and this was quality assured by HURECs representative in Kavre. It is important to control whether concepts used might be interpreted differently in another language (Laws et al 2003:256). I wanted both my translators to ask the questions similarly, using the same words in Nepali to avoid different interpretations among the parents. This was not followed strictly, but I do believe it created a common sense of understanding.

Throughout the whole process I stressed that I need the correct translation word by word, and that they should not put their own interpretations into, or sensor, what the respondents said (Laws et al. 2003:256). I told them to translate everything, including things they considered as irrelevant because it might be relevant to the study after all. This was the biggest challenge, because sometimes the respondents spoke a lot and I only got a few sentences translated. I argued that I needed to know everything, but often times they answered that the respondents were only speaking about the same things in a different manner. If I did not find the topic relevant I did not ask for further information, but there were several incidents where important information were revealed through such questioning.

I do believe that my data are as reliable as they can possibly be when working with translators, as I was very focused on possible misunderstanding and how I communicated with them. I will argue that I controlled for sources of error in the best possible way within my limited amount of time and resources. Through interviews with children and other relevant stakeholders I was able to cross-check the reliability of data.

Validity depends on the quality of the survey. Findings have to be continuously checked, questioned and theoretically interpreted (Kvale 2007:168). I demonstrated in the previous that I have attempted to quality assure my data throughout the whole process. Thaa-gard (2003:180) writes that the researcher must take on a critical position in reviewing find-ings, and consider whether the new study can be verified by other research. I take on a critical analytical approach as I question possible sources of error in the following chapter, as well as in my analysis. At the same time my study is in coherence with other research on children's work, which is demonstrated in chapter 2 and 4, and to some extent in chapter 5. As stated in the beginning of this chapter, validity concerns whether the collected data actually say some-thing about the phenomenon one intends to study (Hellevik 1991:43). I will argue that my conclusion demonstrates that I adequately answer my research question, and that I manage to capture various aspects that may influence children's work.

3.9. Research ethics

All the participants were informed before the interview took place about who I am and why the study was conducted. They were informed that no names of any interviewees would be mentioned later and that they could interrupt the interview or skip questions if they felt un-comfortable (Thagaard 2003:22,24). When using the tape recorder I always explained the purpose and asked for permission first. At the same time I asked for their honest opinion.

"It is very difficult for people in need to understand that you are only interested in them for the purpose of broader study, and will not bring assistance in their wake.... on the other hand if we worry to much about raising expectations we would do nothing (Laws et al 2003:235)."

In this regard it is particularly important to be honest with participants about possible out-comes (Laws et al. 2003:235). I emphasized that I cannot promise any benefits from my study, because I am not in the position of promising anything as I do not facilitate economic resources. I told the participants that the results will be delivered to Save the Children, CWISH and CONCERN, but I do not know how they will consider my findings. Still in spite of this, many people in Kavre seemed to have expectations of economic or educational sup-port. It is a difficult situation and I again tried to explain my position as "only a student". I did not particularly experience this in Balaju. I believe the reason may be because I mainly inter-

viewed parents who already receive support from CONCERN, and most of them knew my translator. Of course there is a chance that this may have affected respondents in Kavre and that the high priority of education, for instance, may be due to expect of such support. However, most families in Balaju already receive support, hence they do not need to lie in this regard and they may serve as a control group compared to parents in Kavre. As the results are almost equal between the two groups in this particular question, it indicates that parents in Kavre are honest. On the other hand, the motives of answering may be different, and I have to acknowledge that this may be a possible source of error.

Another challenge in Kavre was that many parents had to spend substantial parts of the day walking to the meeting place and then wait in line for their interview. We tried to invite people at different times so they would not have to wait for hours for their interview, but they still showed up at the same time. They had obviously spoken together and as my translator expressed it: "It is the habit of villagers, they always come together, they have never experienced this before". Laws et al. is stating in the book *Research for development* that when taking up time that people would otherwise spend contributing to the household income, the researcher might want to give the participants some recompense for this (Laws et al 2003:235). In Kavre I found that this was necessary. The reason why it was arranged like this was on advice and decision from HUREC, otherwise it would be very difficult, and too time consuming to go through with the study. To give some kind of compensation I distributed two writing books, two pencils, one sharpener and a packet of biscuits to each parent. In the first VDC almost all the children attended school so it turned out to be a useful gift. However, in other VDCs the prevalence of school going children were lower, which made it feel like an inappropriate gift to give.

4. Internal factors affecting children's work

This chapter will discuss and analyse findings according to the themes grouped under “internal factors” in the analytical framework in table 5 on page 25. At first the outlined themes will be clarified in order to inform the following analysis.

Difficult family situations refer to a number of misfortunes that might affect a family such as the death of a family member, illness or the remarriage of a parent that might create frictions in terms of a new unsympathetic stepparent. Dysfunctional families have problems with alcohol or drug abuse, violence or sexual abuse. All of these factors might lead to unsupportive families. Difficult family situations have been found to push children into the labour market in a number of studies (ILO/IPEC 2004:88). This study found single headed households, sickness, death, old age and alcoholism to be factors affecting children's work.

Family values relate to attitudes towards work, education, respect to women and children, sexual abuse, alcohol, family pride, the relation between the family and society and so on. These values are communicated from parents to children and influence the choices parents make for their children, also regarding work (ILO/IPEC 2004:88). I have in chosen to focus on parents' attitudes and awareness towards gender, education and work, and the harmful effects of work. It is a common assumption that parents are neglectful and unaware of these issues (Boyden 1998:243-244).

Parental skill and education level are assumed to influence parents' attitudes towards work and education. If the parents have never received any specialized training or education they might not see the value in educating their children (ILO/IPEC 2004:94). I have examined parental skill and education level compared to their attitudes towards education.

4.1. Family situations

Save the Children states that wherever adults die, are injured or too sick to work; children have to take on the responsibility of supplying themselves and/or the family (Muscroft 1999:74). I found that families with only one adult income are common, and there are also some cases where both parents are unable to work and the children's income serves as the family's single income source. Many families are vulnerable to alcoholism, sickness, death and old age, which in turn results in single income families; and as most parents have low paid and/or unstable jobs, one income is usually not enough. Additional information noted during the interviews implicates that when one or two parents for various reasons do not contribute to the household; the family economy becomes particularly dependent upon the contri-

bution of children. There is no insurance or backup funding to handle these kinds of situations. Some social protection for workers in the formal sector do exist, but informal workers are outside the system and do not receive any support in terms of sick leave, insurance and medical care in case of work accidents, deaths or injury (Upadhyaya 2003:4).

10 parents in Kavre do not work due to sickness or old age, and 2 mothers left their husbands. 18 households in Balaju do not receive any, or very little support from the father; either because he is dead, unemployed, drunkard, sick, or divorced. There is also one case where the father is unknown, and some cases where he does not look after them. In some families one of the parents had run away with another partner.

The mothers in Balaju tend to be more responsible than the fathers when it comes to taking care of the family. 5 of the mothers did not contribute economically to the household, but only one of them is drinking. The others were sick, too old to work, or dead. When grandparents for some reason are in custody of their grandchildren, the children often have to take on work because their grandparents are too old to earn a living.

There is a substantially high prevalence of alcoholism among the fathers both in Balaju and in Kavre. In Balaju 13 households informed me that the father is drinking. Even though many of these fathers work, their wives complained that they are making trouble and often run off with the entire salary. After revealing several cases of alcoholism in Balaju I wanted to ask all the mothers in Kavre if their husbands are drinking, but that turned out to be difficult as there were sometimes too many people listening. I also interviewed more fathers in Kavre than in Balaju, and it was difficult to ask them directly. Not many mothers expressed frustration about their husbands drinking problems, but there were a few comments, and I tried to ask whenever the situation was convenient. I uncovered in total 9 cases of alcoholism in the families in Kavre, and the numbers are likely to be higher. This high prevalence was confirmed by information received from the VDC representatives and children. One mother from Kavre said in the in-depth interview that: "My husband earns money but he uses it for himself for drinking and playing cards, and I myself earn money for the family".

I raised the question of alcohol problems in two focus groups with children in Kavre. In one of these groups none of the children had alcohol problems in their family, but when asked if there are many families where the fathers are drinking, the children confirmed that; "there are lots of". The children were then asked if they think that the fathers drinking problems has an impact on working children. One child answered that: "Yes, they are copying their parents and they are disturbed in their education and they get bad habits". In another group three out of five children stated that their fathers are drinking and that the drinking is causing trouble.

In Kavre 25% (10) children work because of sickness, death or old age of caretakers or parents, but the numbers are likely to be higher as 22,5% (9) of the children work because of their parent's lack of time. This last category is often closely connected to single parent households, or families where only one of the parents are able to work due to sickness or alcoholism, and hence the work burden falls on the parent in charge and the children. Sickness, old age or deaths were a reason mentioned more often in Kavre than in Balaju. Only two parents, both in Balaju, voiced that the fathers drinking were a direct reason for children's involvement in work. However many answers were more general and referred to the family's "difficult situation" and as I know that the number of alcohol problems affect more than two families, "difficult situations" might also refer to alcoholism. If this is true then the presumed coherence between alcoholism and children's work are higher.

It may be argued that it is not the appropriate role of children to serve as breadwinners of the family and that it is negative when children have to take on the position as an adult. However, if children's contribution provides for medicines to a sick parent so that the mother or father will survive, is it then wrong for children to work? At the same time children's contribution may provide some food for the family and education support for the child. In an ideal world all countries would have free healthcare and social welfare for such families, but what do children do in a realistic world where such systems are not functioning? Children's work may be positive under the given circumstances.

4.2. Family values

I will in the following section present parents attitudes towards education and work. Judging from the literature on children's work I found education and gender to be relevant areas of study, along with parents' awareness of children's work situations. A common notion is that most parents who keep their children out of school to work are ignorant of the value of education (Boyden et al. 1998:136). My findings found the opposite. It is also assumed that girls' education is considered to have low value.

"Tradition and culture also play a role and the perception of childhood and what responsibilities children have towards their siblings, elders and parents often decide whether a child has to work or can attend school, this especially affects girls. (Behera 2007:8)."

I found that parents value education for girls as equally important to the education of boys. However, in Kavre traditional values regarding girls' contribution to the household appears to dominate.

As mentioned earlier, programmes that target families often focus on awareness raising for parents. Education and gender are two areas of concern; parents' assumed ignorance of the

harmful effects of work is another (Boyden et al. 1998:243-244). I will in the following analyse parents' awareness and attitudes towards education, gender and harmful work.

4.2.1. Education and work

The following table indicates that most parents are aware of the importance of education, but at the same time, work got a high priority as option number 2. Most parents also believe that children's first priority is education.

Table 6: What parents prefer their children to do

<i>What do you prefer you children to do?</i>	Kavre		Balaju	
	No. 1	No. 2	No. 1	No. 2
<i>Priorities ranking No 1. as the most important one.</i>				
Education	36	2	34	0
Work	2	20	2	16
Work and Education at the same time	2	6	4	8
Get married and take care of the parents and the family	0	2	0	1

Table 7: What parents believe their children prefer to create a good future

<i>What do you believe your child thinks is the best option to create a good future for him/herself?</i>	Kavre		Balaju	
	No. 1	No. 2	No. 1	No. 2
<i>Priorities ranking No 1. as the most important one.</i>				
Education	27	0	25	0
Work	0	6	1	8
Work and Education at the same time	3	3	2	9
I don't know	11	0	13	2
Get married and take care of the family and the parents	0	0	0	1

The respondents in table 6 and 7 were asked to prioritize only one category as number 1. The parents that had any second preferred preference also chose an option number 2. Both of the tables above list numbers, not percentages, as there are so many low numbers.

32 of the families in Balaju receive education support from CONCERN, and this makes it likely to believe that it has affected their views on the importance of education. However, in Kavre 34 families do not receive any NGO support at all but education is still prioritized slightly higher than in Balaju, even though the percentage of children attending school is lower. This makes it more likely to assume that parents' attitudes towards education are a result of external influences. Several parents emphasized that the times are changing now, and that this is the age where everyone should be educated. It corresponds with Baker and Hintons (2001:190) notion that Nepalese parents' embrace some elements of modern childhood, such as education, while they hold on to some traditional values such as children's work. Parents' clearly prioritized work as their preference number 2 regarding what they prefer their children to do, this does not correspond with their assumption of children's preferences. Looking at my findings afterwards, it would have been interesting to include a category of "leisure and play" which is dominant in the "western" view of childhood (Boyden et al. 1998:15,16,29).

Table 8: Level of school attendance

	Kavre	Balaju
All of the children goes to school	40% (16 families)	62,5% (25 families)
Some of them quit, some still attends school	22,5% (9 families)	25% (10 families)
They used to but they all quit	5% (2 families)	7,5% (3 families)
None of the children goes to school	10% (4 families)	0%
In Kavre 7,5% (3) of the parents stated that their children goes to school sometimes, and in 10% (4 families) children only attends school half a year due to brick kiln work. In Balaju there were 1 case stating that some of the children are going to school.		

In Kavre the drop out rate and the number of non-school going children were higher than in Balaju, but parents are still aware of the importance of education. Many parents said that it is important, but they are not able to send their children. Out of 9 families in Kavre where some of the children quit school, 6 of the cases were due to poor family economy.

When children in Balaju were asked if they think their parents would prefer them to go to school or work, there were an unison outcry from all the children at once saying: school. At the same time all the children agreed that their parents do not want them to stop working, when asked why one child said: "They want to but due to the economic situation of our families they do not want us to stop working".

These two slightly different questions confirm information received from the parents in Balaju, both the children and the parents have a high awareness about the importance of education. However, it appears to be a gap between good intentions and the ability to go through with it. Parents want their children to be educated but they are often not able to make it happen without external support. Children's work is an important contribution to the family economy and enrolling them in education means loss of income.

However, the results from Kavre were not that clear. In one focus group, two girls and one boy said that if they have got work to do at home the parents do not allow them to go to school. Another group was asked what their family need to make it possible for them to stop working, then one girl said: "If we have enough money it is possible for us not to work anymore". Then another child said:

"If the parents are convinced by someone then it will be possible. If others tell them that if your child becomes a learned person then they will be a good person in the future then that will help us to stop working."

Three children agreed with the last answer. In one group the children said that their parents want to stop them from working but they are unable to. At the same time the children also said that they think they have to work because the parents' income is not enough, and if they work it will be helpful for the family. The answers indicate that either do some of the parents lie when asked about their attitudes towards education and work, or there is, as in Balaju; a gap between good intentions and action. Another possibility may be that the parents do not communicate with their children about what they really want for them, as they do not consider it realistic to happen.

With a high percentage of the parents stating that education is more important than work it is easy to assume that this is their honest opinion. However, in some cases the answers may be a result of parents choosing the answer they think is the most appropriate. And as I discussed in the chapter about research ethics, there is a possibility that the parents expect education support and that this may affect their answers. Further, as mentioned in the chapter about research ethics and reliability, one girl in Kavre said that the parents' need to give higher priority to education than work. And in one individual interview with a hard working girl in Kavre the girl revealed important information contradictive to what her mother said. When asked if she thinks that her mother and father would like her to stop working and go to school every day she said; "My parents don't like me to stop working and go to school every day". When asked why, she said: "I do not know, we just have to work more". She attends school half a year when the family is not working in the brick kiln area. When she was asked about

education possibilities in the brick kiln area, and if there are any NGOs working with education there she said: “Yes, they wanted to support me with education but my mother and father didn’t send me. They told me: just do work, you can read when we go back to the house”. Contradictive to this, her mother claimed that she gives more importance on education. The VDC representative was also present during the interview and she said that she thought the mother was lying in this question, and that her correct answer would be to prioritize work and education at the same time as number one. The mother also said that if they earn 500 rupees a day they spend all of it on food. This statement indicates that the family does not have reasonable control over their economy, and this might inform the hard work of the child.

4.2.2. Gender in relation to education and work

Out of the total number of children in both Kavre and Balaju; 58,8 % of the boys and 70,9% of the girls worked.

Table 9: Gender, work and education

	Kavre	Balaju
Working boys	55,4% (31 out of 56)	62% (36 out of 58)
Working girls	68,9% (42 out of 61)	68% (45 out of 66)
Parents who prefer both son and daughter to be educated	92.5% (37 parents)	82,5% (33 parents)
Parents who give more importance on education for the son.	2,5% (1 parent)	10% (4 parents)
Parents who give more importance on education for the daughter.	5% (2 parents)	5% (2 parents)

Even though the percentage of working girls is higher than the percentage of working boys, it is not necessarily gender discrimination. It might as well be because more girls work within the household as this is traditionally, and still mainly women’s work in Nepal. This study does not count gender specifically how many girls that work with household compared to boys, but it was one of largest categories of work that the children are engaged in. The general impression from the study is that more girls are engaged in household work. This category are especially big in Kavre, 67,1% of the working children are involved in this work, and it might explain why the number of working girls is substantially higher in this region compared to Balaju. However, if parents do not want to discriminate between son and daughter in educa-

tion it is possible that this might be transferable to the question of work as well. If this is true, then the higher incidents of working girls are likely to derive from traditional cultural expectations of girls work in the household. In one focus groups in Kavre a girl gave a comment that implicated that this assumption is right: "They told me that you are not allowed to go to school if you do not work in the house. But they only tell this to the daughter". Another girl in Kavre said; "My neighbour came to my house and asked me why I should study, they told me that it is not necessary to study, just go outside and work to help your mother." These two comments indicate that there are attitudes not only within the family but within the community that may affect children's work, although it is not possible to judge whether the last comment were especially directed toward girls position.

If parents are telling the truth in the question about who they prefer to be educated it indicates that the higher percentage of working girls in Kavre are either due to expectations of their household contribution, or that there is a gap between equal intentions and action.

In total 70% (49 parents, 26 in Balaju and 23 in Kavre) of the parents that gave equal priority to the son and daughters education answered in one way or another that it is because they are equal and have equal rights. Some of these answers also listed additional reasons. Several parents added that "they are both my own children" and some said that there should be no discrimination between son and daughter, and many parents, especially in Kavre, parents emphasized that love is equal for both of them.

10% of the parents (4 parents in Kavre, and 3 parents in Balaju) emphasized on the future perspective. They believe that their children will get a good future if they are educated. And that it is equally important for boys and girls because they will both face the same problems in the future. One of these answers pointed out marriage as an issue relating to girls education:

"It will be good for them if they are educated because in our society the educated boys look only for educated girls to marry and if an uneducated girl are married to an educated man then there can be discrimination and the girls can be dominated."

8,5% of the parents (4 parents in Balaju and 2 parents in Kavre) pointed out how the times are changing and said that this is the age where everyone should be educated. Some said that now both daughters and sons have equal rights and it is more common to educate both of them. One answer from Kavre emphasized on awareness rising on child marriage: "I married when I was 13 and I want my children to be aware of these kinds of situations, so I want them to be educated".

When looking at the reasons listed for giving more importance on education for the son, two of the answers states that the daughter is already married so there is no need to educate her now. Another one is simply: “Because I have no daughter”, hence this leaves only two answers which clearly favours the son. As for the answers that favour the daughter, the reasons listed were connected to the male dominant culture as a reason why it is especially important to educate the daughter. It is also interesting to note that according to table 7 on page 35, parents do not want their children to get married and take care of the parents.

My findings show quite healthy attitudes towards gender, education and work; contradictory to what is claimed in much of the literature. Parents appear to have a high awareness of the importance of education for both girls and boys, and the importance of education in general; however there seems to be a gap between good intentions and the ability to fulfil these. Children’s work is in general considered necessary. In rural areas there appear to be cultural expectations related to girls work in the house, which may not be considered as discrimination, but it is likely to be a result of traditional cultural values. As mentioned earlier one can see a divide in Nepal today between traditional values of childhood mixing with universal values concerning for instance the value of education. Judging from my findings, parents’ attitudes towards education are usually not a contributing factor to children’s work. As shown in table 3 on page 13, children work because it is necessary due to family poverty. At the same time children’s work often enable them to go to school. Those parents who are not able to educate their children express frustration in this regard. Many parents appear to realize the importance of education to break the circle of poverty. One may argue that children work affects their education, but if the alternative is no education, is it still negative to work?

4.2.1. Parents’ awareness of harmful work

Most of the harmful sectors that children in this study are employed in are located in Kathmandu. In one question the parents were asked whether it is good or bad that children work in the city.

The parents in Balaju are almost equally divided between positive and negative comments. 18 are positive and 19 are negative. 3 parents said that it depends on the situation and the circumstances, stating that working is not good without studying, and that it is good to work if the work place is good and well paid. Among the positive answers the most frequent comments conclude that it is good for the economical situation of the family; 10 answers relates to this.

In Kavre the results are different. 25 parents are negative to children's work in the city. 6 parents are positive, and 9 parents are neutral in the sense that it all depends on the situation and circumstances. Some said that if they have enough food and land in the village it is not good, and others stated that if they can get education and a good job it is good.

This question seems to have been interpreted differently in Balaju and Kavre. Most families in Balaju already live in the city and their children are working there, hence it is a question about their present situation. The answers from Balaju confirm that parents address the current situation. 5 parents expressed that they do not want to send their children to work, but it is necessary due to the difficult situation. In Kavre parents rather focus on the consequences of sending their children away, and the importance of contact between parents and children. 9 parents focused on parents love for their children and children's need for parents love, parents' worries, and that children should stay at home so they can "sit around the parents". One mother had lost contact with her son:

"I feel that it is bad; I want them to sit around the parents. I am really worried about my son who left the house. What if he's killed? I don't have any contact with him and I am worried about what he's doing."

As most of the children in Balaju live with their families, this question probably does not have those kinds of connotations. Having that in mind, it might explain why parents in Kavre are more anxious. Naturally it will be harder for children if they have to live alone in the city, instead of along with their families while working. In Kavre 5 parents emphasized that it is not good for children to work in the city because it is hard work, and 4 parents said that it is bad for children to work in the city because the employers can treat them badly and beat them.

Parents in Balaju does not emphasize on the risks children face when working in the city, only a few parents mentioned the bad health effects and there were just one comment about abuse from employers. Maybe they do not see the city as a threat as they cope with city life every day? The parents in Balaju are more concerned about how work may hamper education, as most children work and study at the same time. In Kavre the percentage of school going children are lower. Some parents in Kavre consider it the other way around; that living in the city may bring along positive opportunities for education and work at the same time.

Judging from the presented findings above, parents in Balaju appears to be unaware of the consequences work may have on children's health and development. However, another finding display that parents' in Kavre and Balaju are equally aware, or unaware, of the difficulties connected with children's work.

24 parents in Balaju and 21 parents in Kavre answered no to the question of whether they know anything about how their children feel about working. 19 parents in Kavre and 16

parents in Balaju answered yes to the same question. In both Kavre and Balaju the majority of children had told their parents that it is difficult or hard to work. In total 62,8% (22 comments, 11 in Kavre and 11 in Balaju) of the answers relates to this. One mother that runs a street shop with her children in Balaju said:

“Usually they do not tell me anything but sometimes they tell me that this job is very troublesome and they say; please mummy leave this job, because they have to stand in the street till 12 o’clock. If someone says some bad words we have to bear that.”

In the second largest category, including 20% (7) of the answers, children had told their parents that they understand why they have to work. There were also some other comments; “If they go for work sometimes the employer don’t give money after working. It is better to work with middle class people because rich people are greedy and don’t give money”. Another parent answered that her children had accused her of destroying their future: “We’re not getting proper education because you’re unable to send us, now we cannot have a good future and live easily because we’re working.

4.3.Parental skill and education level

When parents were asked how it might be possible to withdraw their children from work, some parents said that better market access does not work because they cannot calculate so they cannot sell things. Some parents also said that a better-paid job is not possible to get because they are not educated. Most parents’ have low income and unstable jobs in the informal market. Common for all of them is a general low requirement and necessity of education to perform the job. However, the following findings confirm that even though there is a high level of illiteracy among the parents, the parents emphasize on the importance of education.

Table 10: Parental level of education

<i>Parents level of education</i>	Kavre		Balaju	
	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers
Can not write and read Nepali and/or English	33	25	33	19
Can write and read both Nepali and English	0	2	0	0
Can write and read Nepali	1	2	2	6
Can write and read a little or some Nepali	2	6	5	8

The table list numbers, not percentage, as some parents are dead or have left the family it is difficult to make correct calculations.

Several parents commented that their own poor situation is a result of their lack of education and they are therefore aware of the importance of education. One parent said: "I want to give more importance on education because we are facing too much trouble without education. I want my son to be a learned person to make his future bright."

Answers from the 11 focused interviews prove that few families can predict the exact family income in a month. Only one family in Kavre knows how much income the family earn in a month, others said that they do not know, or that it depends upon whether or not they have a job. Some said that they do not know because they only work and then spend money. In Balaju the parents gave more approximate answers, but some said that the income depends on the work situation, as it is often fluctuating and unstable.

Common for most of the fathers in Balaju is that they have low paid and/or unstable jobs where the amount of work and salary varies from day to day. Only five of the fathers can be said to have stable jobs (tailor, electrician, conductor in bus and two drivers). The most common work was porter, 10 fathers did that.

The same thing applies to a certain degree for the mothers in Balaju, they tend to be employed in low paid jobs, with unstable salaries. But the mothers appear to be more innovative than the husbands as several of them are self-employed. The most common work is to work in street shops or other small self-employed businesses, and the second most common is stone quarry work. However, in stone quarries the incomes are more predictable. Even though they get paid according to how much stone they can chop, the salary is to a certain degree fixed as they know approximately how much they can manage in a day. Only two mothers have jobs where the salary is more fixed (restaurant and tailor).

In Kavre the most common work among parents are brick kiln and farming. Some families do both and work half a year in brick kiln and half a year in farming, and others work in full time in farming. When working in brick kiln the income is to a certain degree predictable, but it is still low-income work. The high dependency on farming generates unstable incomes as it depends on good seasons, and failed crops can be fatal. Lack of land is also a problem, 12 fathers, and 11 mothers specified that they work either solely on others land, or on their own and others' land, and the number is likely to be higher as this was not a specific question. Lack of land leaves families with unstable income, as the work they can get depends on availability.

My findings confirm a clear link between parents' low level of education, their low level of skills – and their unstable work in the informal sector. This again leads to poverty and dependency upon children's work. Children's work is a result of, and a contributing factor of

entrenched poverty because a child trapped in work grows up to be an adult with poor prospects of how to rise out of poverty. It is a circle that repeats itself in the next generation as child labour grows out of parent's lack of skills to find work and support their family (Behera 2007:8).

5. External factors affecting children's work

This chapter discuss external factors affecting children's work, based on the themes presented under external factors in the analytical framework model on page 25. The following chapter is mainly based on literature, supported by examples from my study. First, the purpose of the various themes will be briefly introduced in this introduction. Thereafter, separate chapters will further specify and discuss these.

International Conventions on children's work is an external factor that informs national laws regulating children's work and NGO's working in this field. The chapters about international conventions serves to inform the discussion in chapter 6 regarding the compatibility of international conventions in relation to working children's family situations. At the same time it also informs the chapter about national laws and enforcement, as I will link this to international conventions.

The chapter about national economic policies concerns the globalization of national economies as an underlying factor of child labour. Restructuring of economies through economic stabilisation and structural adjustment programmes has in many countries led to declining income for the poor. Cuts in education health and other public services makes poor people especially vulnerable. Many families cannot meet all the expenses these cuts results in and hence; their children have to work (IWGCL1997:8).

Enforcement of laws regulating children's work around the world is often weak. Labour departments and staff may be underfunded and under-staffed and courts may fail to enforce the law. At the same time production of products often include several steps of manufacturing and outsourcing which makes it difficult to control the production chain (Child Labor Public Education Project 2009). The chapter about expanding informal markets discuss how global markets complicates enforcement of laws that regulate children's work. I will use examples from the Nepalese carpet industry to demonstrate how informal outsourcing complicates law regulation, as well as how enforcement may serve to encourage an informal market.

The chapter about economic shocks address how poor families of working children are vulnerable to sudden unpredictable shocks. Such external shocks may derive from failed crops or adult unemployment. This might lead children into work and even though it might be thought of as temporary, studies confirm that once children leave school it is hard to return (ILO/IPEC 2004:92).

A desire for increased consumption or more comfortable lives, motivate adults and children to leave rural areas where incomes are low, in hope of more rewarding opportunities in the cities. Urban-based child labour is often a result of such internal migration (ILO/IPEC:2004:92). The chapter about urbanization discuss how urbanization has an impact on the families in my study.

The chapter about socio-economic impacts locate my respondent group within vulnerable categories. In many countries the parents that send their children to work belong to social, religious or ethnic minority groups. Such groups might have been socially marginalized for generations and the poverty rate may be substantially high. Children from excluded groups might find themselves on the very low pile of the ladder (ILO/IPEC 2004:90-91).

5.1. International Conventions regulating children's work

Today there is a growing divergence between those who strive to abolish children's work on the one side, and those who advocate for children's rights on the other side. Within the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the aim is to combat exploitation of children, rather than removing them from work (White 1996:13). Whereas ILO Conventions on the other hand, present abolitionist approaches.

5.1.1. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (The CRC)

The CRC permits the fusion of the four 'P's: participation, protection, prevention and provision, which are all important perspectives of children's rights (Van Buren 1995 and Fottrell 2000 cited in Bendiksen 2006:14). The CRC spells out children's basic human rights to be: the right to survival; to develop to the fullest; to be protected from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and to participate fully in family, social and cultural life. The four core and guiding principles of the Convention are non-discrimination; promoting the best interests of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and respect for the views of the child (UNICEF 2009). The Convention contains 54 articles. The first 41 articles concern the rights of children, and the last articles, from 42 to 54 deal with formal procedures for becoming party and systems of implementation and monitoring (Van Buren 1995 and Fottrell 2000 cited in Bendiksen 2006:14).

According to Muscroft (1999:23) a country voluntarily accept the obligations and holds itself responsible for the success or failure of implementing the Convention when ratifying it. The fulfilment of children's rights then becomes a responsibility of the government. The Convention has also created a new opportunity of public debate and organizations functioning

as “watchdogs” to increase the transparency of policy-making and advocacy towards governments. Nepal ratified the CRC in September 1990 (RCW, 2005)

A change partly brought about by the Convention is that children’s views have become more visible and valued. The belief that children have the right to express their views upon decisions that affect them is one of its more radical elements. Traditionally children have been characterized as dependent, powerless, incompetent and politically silent. The Convention challenged these views by characterizing children as competent with the right to speak out (Muscroft 1999: 24,26,28).

Putting too much emphasis on the identity of young workers as children have sometimes been reported to increase their exposure to abuse and exploitation by authorities and other adults. Many children state that it would be more advantageous to gain the same rights as adult workers with full working rights, which they would find more protective in practice than special rights for children (Ennew et al. in Weston 2005:32-33). Some argue that when constructing children as an own group, the full range of rights outlined in the UDHR is challenged (Ennew et al. in Weston 2005:51). Defenders of the CRC reject that it weakens basic human rights for children and claims that the CRCs simply address human rights adapted to the particular status of children (Ennew et al. in Weston 2005:33).

Article 32 in the CRC specifically addresses economic exploitation of children;

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.
2. States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular:
 - (a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;
 - (b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;
 - (c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article (Hodkin & Newell 2007:479).

The article states that countries must have regard to “the relevant provisions of other international instruments”. The most relevant are International Labour Organization (ILO) Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention 1999 (No. 182) (Hodkin & Newell 2007:479). However unlike ILO-Convention number 138 the CRC does not require a clear age criteria and is therefore less binding in this regard. By referring to other international measures the CRC can have a canvassing function (Verhellen 2000:120). Article 32 does, unlike most other international regulations on child labour require that states regulate the conditions of children’s work. ILO conventions tend not to cover this

aspect because it is considered unnecessary, as the goal is to eliminate child labour (Cullen 2007:4).

The CRC sets out two models; child agency and child welfare. Child welfare is expressed through Article 3 (Cullen 2007:4).

1. In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration (Hodkin & Newell 2007:35).

Child agency is set out in article 12:

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child (Hodkin & Newell 2007:149).

The tension between child welfare and child agency concerns many aspects of child labour. Bourdillon (2006:35-56) found in his study of domestic child workers in Zimbabwe that 71 percent of the children in his survey (out of a total number of 144) emphasize that they want to work. They listed various reasons why, in some cases it gives children a sense of pride and achievement, for others they see no other option but working. Bourdillon argues that children's opinions should be taken seriously because it relates to children's right to have a say in decisions that affect them. However, he further argues that this does not necessarily mean that we should automatically accept their wishes. We need to ensure that when children are employed, their lives are not jeopardised (Bourdillon 2006:35-36). With regard to the worst forms of child labour and slavery-like practices the welfare principles dominate and the exclusion of child agency is not particularly problematic (Cullen 2007:4).

However, there are examples that programme policies informed by the convention might be a disaster if it fails to incorporate children's agency. In Vietnam's capital Hanoi the government and the child focused aid agencies Redda Barnan and PLAN International implemented a programme of returning children working in the streets to their rural homes. The programme was a disaster according to many of the concerned children, and they quickly returned to the city. They were sent back to their families without any provision being made to compensate their families for the extra expense of supporting a nonearning person. This programme clearly put adult wishes above those of the child (Burr 2006:128-129).

Within organizations there may be contrasting views among staff members, not coherent with the international policies that they work to implement. A Nepali may agree to a program even though he knows that it is inappropriate to implement it in Nepal, in order to secure his own job security (Burr 2006:70). Rachel Burr states that in her experience from Viet-

nam she often found that Vietnamese staff could praise project that they personally had reservations about. A local woman who worked for a child-focused international NGO said that;

“But for us we have many customs which prevents us raising children... social, economic situation.. they say children should not work... But for many that is an impossibility: Many of us aid workers know this and there is a difference between the foreigner’s approach and ours but we do not voice this. Rather we prefer to do as much as we can. We know our country is not ready for many of these changes (Burr 2006:71)”

Another aspect is that children’s participation rights defined by the Convention is essentially what one could term ‘civil rights’. Critics state that the convention does not adhere to local culture specific values (Burr 2006:16). It is particularly the element of participation that has caused discussions and confusion across the globe.

Poverty impacts on many childhoods and is part of their lived context of the type and extent of their participation. Indeed in poor communities children may be vibrant participants whether through their involvement in paid work, labour within their family or even as a source of laughter for weary adults. Is this any less authentic’ because it does not take place in a public arena and is not about children identifying their own needs as somehow individualistic and separate (Skelton 2008:174).

Since work is one of the most constructive ways in which we can shape our own environment could the right to work then be considered an important participation right (Verhellen 2000:121)?

There are also several other articles in the CRC that may be relevant to children’s work. Article 26 deals with recognition by state parties of every child’s right to social security and states obligation to provide this social security in accordance with national law. Given the laws against child labour, children may not acquire this safety by means of their own labour. If children work because of exceptions to the ban on child labour, does this entitle them with social security (Verhellen 2000:120)?

Article 13 and 15 recognize the right of the child to freedom of opinion, association and of peaceful assembly. Does this article provide children with the right to set up workers associations and ways of participating to improve their working conditions (Verhellen 2000:121)?

Article 18 concerns the responsibilities of parents

1. States Parties shall use their best efforts to ensure recognition of the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child. Parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child. The best interests of the child will be their basic concern (Hodkin & Newell 2007:231).

This article states that parents are responsible for promoting the best interest of the child. If the child’s work ensures the family food and maybe provide for part time education for the child; can it then be considered parents’ responsibility to send the child to work?

In much of the debate about children's work, attending school is assumed to be a solution. Article 28 states that it is a part of children's right to be required to attend primary school and that state parties are obliged to make primary education compulsory and free for all (Woodhead 1999 36-37). Several programmes run by experienced NGOs take advantage of learning opportunities in children's everyday lives. One example is to teach children how to use their experience as workers to learn how to run a proper business to help them develop their intelligence and competencies. Such an approach is also in line with article 29 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (Boyden et al 1998:224):

States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to: (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential (Hodkin & Newell 2007:437).

Article 31 is also important for working children as it states the right to rest and leisure, as well as article 42 which refers to the importance of knowledge about the CRC to ensure its implementation (Verhellen 2000;121-122). Other relevant articles are; the right not to be discriminated against (Article 2), the right to remain with parents (Article 10), the right to protection from physical and mental violence (Article 19), the right to health and health facilities (Article 24), the right to a standard of living adequate to support for the child's development (Article 27), the right to freedom from sexual abuse and trafficking (Article 34 and 35) and the right to rehabilitation from exploitation and abuse (Article 39) (Boyden et al 1998:194).

One weakness of the CRC is that it has no formal complaint mechanism and no effective sanctions in terms of implementing the convention (Muscroft 1999:18). The CRC leaves it to national governments to implement the stated goals, without solving the sticky problem of how to find the necessary resources to achieve this (Burr 2006:15).

5.1.2. The Minimum Age Convention No 138

The Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No 138) is a set of principles that applies to all sectors of economic activity, including working children that does not receive wages (Hodkin & Newell 2007:481). Only child work in educational institutions and on small family farms producing for local consumption was exempted (Boyden et al. 1998:188). It is the most comprehensive ILO instrument on child labour. The Convention pursues states to take action to effectively abolish child labour and, it obliges signatories to fix a minimum age for admission to employment to a responsible level that is consistent with the fullest physical and mental development of young persons. The minimum age should be fixed according to school age and the Convention stipulates that this age should not be below 15 years of age. However, countries with relatively underdeveloped economies and educational facilities are allowed to temporari-

ly adopt a lower standard of 14 (Boyden et. Al 1998:189). The Convention fix 18 years as a lower limit of involvement in work that is likely to jeopardize “health, safety and morals of young people” but allows children above 16 years old to perform such work if they have been adequately educated and instructed (Boyden et al. 1998:189).

The Minimum Age Convention also intends to protect adult labour market, through ensuring full employment and fair wages of adults, whose employment and wages would be undermined by allowing children’s work (Myers 1999:15). ILO convention No 138 is founded on the idea that children should not be involved in work of any kind, and education and work is seen as mutually exclusive (White 1999:134).

In Nepal the lower age limit for work is 14 years, as I will get back to in the section about Nepalese laws on children’s work. Nepal ratified ILO Convention No 138 in 1997 (ILO, 2006).

5.1.3. The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No 182

The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No 182) requires Member States to “take immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency” (article 1) (Hodkin & Newell 2007:482). The worst forms of child labour are defined in article 3

- a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- (b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
- (c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;
- (d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

(Hodkin & Newell 2007:487)

Convention No 182 marked a move away from an abolitionist approach to focus on priority areas based on harm to children. It is a controversial move as some might argue that all employment of school-aged children is harmful and violates children’s rights (Cullen 2007:155). Nepal ratified ILO Convention No 182 in 1999 (ILO, 2006).

5.2.National laws and enforcement

“Government of Nepal is committed to eliminate all exploitative forms of Child Labour. This commitment is duly expressed through the ratification of the ILO Convention No. 138, 182 and Child Right Convention of United Nations (National Master Plan on Child Labour 2004:2).”

Nepal is among the countries that have taken the initiative to establish new constitutional rights for children that reflect the principles set out in the CRC. Another main kind of institutional change has been the development of central co-ordinating bodies within the government. However the implementation of child policies has been slow. The responsibility to monitor policy towards children have been located alongside the responsibility of women’s rights, hence weakening the attention towards children’s issues (Muscroft 1999:23-24).

Article 17 and 18 in the Children’s Act 2048 from 1992 are especially important in implementing the Minimum Age Convention No 138, the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No 182, as well as the CRCs definition of harmful work. Article 17 states that no child below the age of 14 years shall be employed in work as a labourer. A child who has attained the age of 14 is not allowed to work from between 6 pm to 6 am (considering the Nepali definition of a child as a human being below 16 years of age, this refers to a person between 14 and 16 years of age). The article further states that no child shall be made to work against his or her will, and that every child labourer shall be provided equal remuneration for equal work. Article 18 states that no child shall be engaged in work that is likely to harm children’s health or be hazardous to children’s life

Chapter 5 in the Children’s Act concerns children’s working hours and leisure. The child shall be provided breaks every third hour and one day of holiday every week. Approval to employ children in industrial enterprises or corporate bodies must be obtained from the child’s parent or guardians and the district welfare officer (All of which is referred to above is sited from the original The Children’s Act 2048 1992).

The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act from 2000 builds on the Children’s Act but further specifies punishments for employers. If the labour inspectors find that employers break the law regulating child labour, the child is to be withdrawn from work and handed over to their parents or guardians. In cases where the child has no guardian or parents, the child is to be kept in a children’s welfare home or in any organization looking after children.

The Child Labour Act further states that a Child Labour Eradication Committee shall be set down in order to suggest how to arrange for necessary health and educational and vocatio-

nal training for working children. The committee shall also provide for appropriate employment of children, as well as discourage and eradicate the employment of children (All of the information referred above is sited from the original Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 2000).

The National Master Plan on Child Labour (NMP) from 2004, reviews the current situation of child labour in Nepal, its many causes and consequences, and relevant legislations and programmes. It outlines an ambitious strategy to eliminate child labour within 2014:

“A long-term perspective has been adopted to eliminate child labour within the next 10 years by increasing awareness among child labourers and their guardians, especially those working in the informal sector, and by extensively launching income-generating and self-employment programmes, along with special programmes for basic education, health and social security. The main objective of the 10th Five-Year Plan with regard to child labour is to eliminate most of the worst forms of child labour in various sectors currently prevalent in Nepal (National Master Plan 17:2004).”

The master plan evaluates ILO Convention NO 182 in relation to the Nepalese context. 16 worst forms of child labour are identified in the plan, these are listed to be; slavery and forced labour, prostitution, trafficking, drug peddling, armed conflicts, scavenging and rag picking, portering, small restaurants and bars, domestic service, overland transportation, carpet factories, brick and tile kilns, match factories, leather tannery, stone quarries and coal mines (NMP 2004: ANNEX 2.7).

Chapter three of the NMP analyses children’s involvement in work and the intervention needed. It states that some exposure to work as a part of children’s learning experience is acceptable as long as it is suitable to their age, but children need to be provided with good care and education. The following are some important factors listed to evaluate the justifiability of children’s involvement in work; whether it is fulltime, whether it interferes with schooling, whether the work violates national or international standards, whether it is work for wages or remunerated, whether it is harmful, and whether it is exploitation (NMP 2004:20).

The NMP reflects many of the issues treated in the international literature on children’s work. Among them are the realization that child labour is linked with poverty and family problems and the recognition of various other problems such as alcoholism, violence and gambling. Awareness rising among employers and parents, education adapted to the needs of working children, and creating economic opportunities for the families are some suggested steps to change this (NMP 2004:20-22).

“Child rights and welfare initiatives cannot be thought in isolation from the family members and the home environment. Parental love and care are the most important aspects to avoid child labour and exploitation of children. Therefore, parents must be made part of the endeavour to eliminate child labour (NMP 2004:23).”

5.3.Lack of enforcement

Nepalese laws on children's work correspond with the CRC and ILO Convention No 182 and 138. However, several studies have revealed constraints in enforcing the laws regulating children's work in Nepal. Among them are lack of awareness among parents and lack of clarity in definitions on 'childhood', 'work', 'child labour', age of the child, age of the employment prohibition, and the definition of hazardous work (CWIN/Plan Nepal 2006:68-70).

I conducted an interview with Shiva Sharma at the National Labour Accademy in Kathmandu, Nepal. He claims that a substantial part of the problem is that even government officials use child labour:

“And the domestic workers in urban areas, who keeps them? It is all government officers, and I would suspect all the ex-patriots, I mean Norwegians, Canadians, Americans. And the university teachers and probably people like me, and maybe the judges in the courts, because they are the ones with higher stabile income, so they are the users of domestic child workers, and where is the enforcement?”

Blanchet (1996, cited in Haider 2008:63) points out the reluctance of statesmen and people belonging to upper social strata to reshape the unequal social structures in societies. Shiva Sharma further states that the laws regulating children's work in Nepal has rarely any effect:

“Because it is all the supply side basically comes from rural remote areas, and nobody in the urban areas hiring domestic child labour have been punished, even the law is halty there because it does not bring in those informal labour hiring under the umbrella.”

The informal sector is linked with the growing prosperity of households in urban areas, as more households can afford to hire children as domestic workers:

“And one would expect that if things are going well and people earn more it would stop, but it is the other way around - in the demand side. In the supply side, yes it works, if the household is above the poverty line, they will get better education, better transportation facilities, better health and no child labour. In the urban areas when everything gets better there is more demand for child labour. So there is a big push and pull of these two factors.”

5.4.National Economic Policies

”Many countries around the world including some south Asian countries which were facing low economic growth until few years back have now leapt forward one after another as an effect of globalization. While some developing countries like Nepal are losing out the race to show their effective presence in the global market. This has led to ever-increasing gap between the developed and the developing countries (Action Aid 2004:36).”

Despite four decades of development planning, particularly focused on poverty reduction through economic growth, the GDP has not managed to exceed the population growth rate. This has resulted in an unfavourable foreign trade balance. Low levels of export and an increasing level of imports characterize Nepal. The government formed after the restoration of democracy in 1990 favoured economic liberalisation, privatisation, “marketisation” and globalization. However, all of these efforts were not adapted to the ground reality, which resulted

in the country not being able to support the national economy as expected. Nepal's growth rate of import is much higher than the export rate, which is not a favourable situation for the economy (Action Aid 2004:39).

Kaja Ebbing (2009) interviewed working children in Kalimati, Kathmandu for her master thesis at the same time as I conducted my study. One child in her study has an interesting view considering the responsibility of the government. The question was:

What are the main problems for children in your community?

- Poverty, due to this children have to work, from the earning they join school, but due to high tension of work, they are not able to give sufficient time to study.

Who is responsible?

- Our country is a poor country, so maybe the government first, and then the parents.

The policies of liberalization in Nepal have caused deductions in social expenditures, and at the same time the burden of foreign debt has increased. This resulted in tremendous hardships and difficulties for the working population. Living standards have gone down, and as the market deregulation has removed restrictions on prices, the cost of living has increased dramatically. On the contrary, real wages have declined as well as the opportunity for better health and education (Horst 1999:57, GEFONT 1998). Some parents pointed out the "rising prices in everything". One mother said that: "Because the prices are rising and we have more family members. If the situation keeps on this way then we have to go back to the village and there our children cannot study."

The liberalization process is also tied to conditions attached to foreign aid. Nepal is signatory to agreements of implementing liberal policies that often encourage free trade and discourage regulation. This makes it impossible to control import and export. It is all a part of being a competitor in a global market with cheap labour. To survive in the world market the Nepalese government might have little choice but to ignore child labour (Flood 2004:4).

Cigno and Rosati (2005:78-79) suggest that pulling down trade barriers in countries with high human capital and comparatively large endowments of educated workers can raise the incentives for parents to send their children to school. By contrast, if trade barriers are pulled down in countries with low endowment of educated workers it can make the problem of child labour worse as it reduces the incentives for parents to send their children to school. Buthan and Nepal have five times the participation rate of child labour compared to other countries in Asia, with a similar or higher volume of trade, but better educated workforce.

5.5. Expanding informal markets

Informalization of the global market makes it increasingly difficult to control children's work. Many children in Nepal used to be employed in carpet factories. Throughout the 1990s the carpet industry was centralized in Kathmandu Valley. It was organized in hierarchical structures that linked carpet weavers to buyers mainly from Europe, through networks of exporters, subcontractors and stock producers (O'Neill 2003:423). In 1994 there was a turning point in the carpet industry as a result of another global flow; the work of the anti-child labour activists. Due to international pressure and boycott of carpets from Nepal in 1994, Rugmark was introduced as a proof that the production is child labour free (O'Neill 2003:417-419). Following this boycott, several children in the carpet industry were set free – only to end up on the street, as there were no other options. Rugmark was introduced not only to label carpets but also to rehabilitate child carpet workers (O'Neill 2003:418-419). However, the enforcement of these laws in the carpet industry and the application of Rugmark are not without drawbacks. The global market is getting increasingly over-complex and fragmented through subcontracting and outsourcing, and the informal market is mixing with the formal.

Uddhav Raj Poudyal in ILO/IPEC Nepal explains it like this;

- Now the big carpet industry has given one or two weaving equipment loops to each home and then it becomes a home business. Then children can still work, and the parents can say that we cannot intervene in their personal homes.

In my study I did find five children that worked with spinning in their own homes, and three parents stated that their children work for a carpet factory. The process of producing carpets consists of four levels where three of them can easily be done in the informal sector. Ray Poudyal further explains the enforcement problem;

“Also, we had a big discussion with the employers because we said that the Rugmark should be completely child labour free, all levels spinning, weaving, dying and washing. There are four processes that should be free of child labour, but here it is only for weaving.”

At the same time, according to Raj Poudyal, there is still a market for working children in Nepalese carpet factories because several European countries import carpets without Rugmark. Many employers have no respect for Rugmark due to lack of sanctioning, and once they get the mark they think that no they can use children in the production.

Shiva Sharma works at The National Labour Academy confirms Raj Poudyal's picture of the informal sector and states that there has been a huge loop of informalization in the labour market.

“Of total labour force, 10 % work in the formal sector, and 90% in the informal sector and again a huge percentage of the ones in informal sector lives in urban areas and it is really increasing. So production and service activities, which should have been done in the formal sector, are increasingly getting done in the informal sector (.....) So what the employers do, they do not hire people to do it in the factories, they just outsource it, so you bring 100 kilos of wool and in the household activity. Now they call it home based worker, so you start to do it, and so does your daughter. And anybody who goes to inspect the carpet factories, they do not see any child labour, because it is in the households instead. So in the supply side you have to pay less, you can keep them under control, you can make them work until twelve in the night and so on.”

Hence, it is becoming increasingly difficult to enforce laws on children’s work, and correspondingly easy for parents to provide jobs for their children.

5.6.Economic shocks

Economic household shocks may refer to accidents, diseases, loss of jobs, weather or pest disturbances on crops, or other unforeseen events. In such times there will be a pressure to put all hands to work. While shocks may be temporary the consequences can be permanent in terms of children’s work contribution, research shows that once a child has left school to work full-time it often fails to go back to school (ILO/IPEC 2004:95).

As I have shown in my “internal findings”, sickness, deaths and adult unemployment are definitely contributing to children’s work. However, in Kavre I found a substantially higher percentage of children that had dropped out of school. Some only attend school half a year due to brick kiln work or only “sometimes” according to the accurate pressure of work from household or farming activities. This may be due to two reasons; most of the families work with farming and hence they are especially vulnerable to failed crops or changes in earnings, and in times of harvest they need to put all hands to work. The other reason may be because almost none of the children in Kavre receive educational support. Hence, the children’s education might suffer more easily from household shocks, as it is an item of expenditure for the families. One mother complained that earlier she could not afford to send her children to school. Now the situation has changed, but her children feel shy to go to school because they have already missed out too many years. This may correspond with ILO/IPECs theory that school drop out due to household shocks may end up being permanent.

Enforcement of policies is another factor that may cause shocks on household levels. During my stay in Nepal the government attempted to impose an old law that had up until now not been regulated. This law bans all street vendors from running street shops on the pavements. The argument stated by the government was that the pavements had become too crowded and it disturbs vehicular movement. In Balaju, whole families are totally dependent upon the income they earn from their small street shops. They were frustrated and said that they had no idea how to make it if the government really imposed this law. There were major

demonstrations. I spoke to some of the demonstrators; one woman told me that she had spent the last 16 years working on the street in Kathmandu: “This will have direct consequences for us. We have no other options. Without our business we cannot provide food and education for our children.” This woman has five children and no village to go back to. She came to Kathmandu because of the war. The government told the street vendors to go back to their villages, but many people complained that they have nothing to go back to. The demonstrators claimed their right to be provided with other options, or alternative areas to run their street businesses (Anettes blogg fra Nepal, 2008). In the end the government formed a committee that were to relocate the street vendors and locate new areas where they can run their businesses (Gorkhapatra, 2008). The situation when I left Nepal in December 2008 was that some areas, among them Balaju, were permitted to keep up the street business as usual, whereas in the city centre a park was identified as a new location for the street vendors. If the law had been enforced without any alternative options given, the economic shocks on household level would have been severe, and would probably have affected children’s work and drop out rates in schools.

5.7. Urbanization

“Population growth, growing number of marginalized families and migration trends have contributed a lot to the increase of the child labour problems in the urban areas. With this extensive supply of child labour, many serious problems have been created in the urban labour market. (Pradhan in ILO/IPEC 1995:47)”

The quote above refers to the situation in Nepal. Growing urbanization has increased the number of working children, as well as the number of different working sectors. Increased building demands more supplies from brick kilns and stone quarries than ever before. When teashops and restaurant business multiplies, so does the number of working children in these industries. At the same time lack of infrastructure and management to handle the rapid urbanization brings about new employment to street rag pickers (Sainju 2005:10).

In general, “the village” was something quite frequently mentioned by parents in Balaju. Most families in this area have migrated to Kathmandu in seek of a brighter future, or because they ran away from the previous maoist conflict. Several parents consider the village as a ”threat” and state that there are even less opportunities there, and some said that they have nothing to go back to in the village. At the same time, some parents complained that their expectations of better lives in the city had not come true.

One of the questions I asked parents were what they consider to be the differences between the jobs children can get nowadays compared to the jobs they did in their childhood. I got some various answers in this regard, but several parents pinpointed that it is easier today,

one comment was: “Because in the village there is not much work, only farming, but in the city we get different kind of jobs like washing, stone quarry and porter.”

In Kavre many families are seasonal migrants and work half a year in brick kiln and half a year in farming. The introduction of child labour in brick kiln came as increasing urbanization demanded more bricks for construction of buildings, and there was a need to lower production costs, this increased the demand for cheaper labour (Sainju 2005:11-12).

As shown in the chapter about parents’ awareness of harmful work, parents in Kavre generally view the city negatively in terms of harmful effects on working children. At the same time some parents also think of the city as a possible window of opportunities. 6 parents were positive, and 9 parents said that it depends on whether their children can get good work and education there. This confirms that even though the majority of parents in Kavre are negative to the city, there is some attraction towards the possibilities of a better urban life.

5.8.Socio-economic status

Upadhyaya (2003:4) list vulnerable groups in existing socio-economic relations and conditions in Nepal as disadvantaged due to caste and religious or class-based discrimination. And certain groups are vulnerable due to occupation; porters and street vendors are among the groups mentioned. Women in low-income groups, child workers, landless people and low castes are also among the mentioned categories. The number of wage earners in these groups is smaller and the majority are self-employed in the informal sector. Most families in my study are largely congruent with these categories. Upadhyaya (2003:4-5) further argues that these groups are especially vulnerable as they are outside the formal system of social protection.

Regarding caste, the impression from the interviews is that it is still an issue relating to poverty and stigmatization in Nepal. Certain low paid jobs are reserved for the lower casts, but this seems to be more prevalent in the countryside. I have no empirical evidence in this regard, but according to VDC representatives, most of the interviewed families in Kavre belong to lower castes. In Balaju the respondents were more mixed as the people interviewed were mainly migrants from different casts, but I received some comments about the negative influences of caste in both Kavre and Balaju. When asked whether caste has an impact on working children one VDC representative in Kavre said:

“Yes they have a different culture and because of the different culture they have different thoughts, like low caste people they are prohibited to enter other peoples houses and because of that they need to work outside, and earlier they were also prohibited from going to school because they could not stay with people from other families. But now it is a bit improved, they are equally treated in public places, but person-

ally they are still being discriminated and that has an impact on children also, because of that they have to work outside and carry loads. “

Baker and Hinton writes that in Nepal rural origins, caste, ethnicity or gender may be more powerful determinants of how children are treated in the workplace rather than age as a structural factor hindering children’s influence on decisions affecting their lives (Baker and Hinton 2001:187).

6. Is an international approach appropriate for Nepal?

“Everybody must get together to fight the real problem – poverty – not against working children.” Ros Mery, age 15 – Peru (Muscroft 1999:63)”.

International Conventions targeting working children may end up undermining their security in cases where work is crucial for survival and well-being. Ensuring that intervention strategies are in the best interest of the child is especially crucial in contexts of acute poverty, social change, or where opportunities of schooling are inadequate and alternative prospects of work limited (Woodhead 1999:27-28). Aidworkers often hear horrible stories of the consequences elimination of children’s work may have on families if they receive no replacement of lost earnings (Boyden et al 1998:139). As shown in the previous chapter; Nepal does have laws in line with international conventions, but the enforcement has been slow. However, the examples of enforcement from the carpet industry confirm that removing children from work does not solve their problems. Instead it leads children into other working sectors, at the same time as it encourages an informal market where it is even harder to enforce laws.

6.1. Are international conventions in favour of working children in Nepal?

In a CRC framework, work cannot be seen mainly as labour law violation, detraction from education, or expressions of poverty (Myers 1999:16). As shown in the chapter about CRC, the convention covers a broad scope of children’s lives and it does not provide much reason to emphasize the reduction of children’s economic activities. Rather, the expressed concern for children’s well-being and development leads more naturally to support strategies that protect children from the harmful effects of work (Myers 1999:16).

In the in depth interviews I asked the parents what they think will happen if their child loses its job? The answers I got reflect how dependent the families are upon children’s income. Two answers were obviously connected to poverty, one parent said that then they cannot eat, and another said that: “If they stop working then I will almost die. We won’t have any food to eat and they cannot go to school”. And sometimes school is obviously no alternative besides working, as one parent said: “Then she will stay in the house, there’s no other alternative”. When further examined the father explained that the school is closed for six months. In two other answers school appeared to be an alternative. The first parent cited in the following already receives education support from CONCERN: “If they stop working it will be effective for their study, and if they don’t stop working it won’t be good for their study. If they stop working they can do better in education.”

“If they lose their job, then maybe they will find another job and it will be difficult for them. Maybe they feel shy to go to school again. In my feeling I think it will be good if they can get the time to read in school in Kathmandu, but I don’t know how they feel.”

These examples confirm that the family situations of working children in Nepal vary, and simply just removing children will not automatically improve their lives, or enrol them in education. In some cases it may work, but there is a need for individual considerations and substituting support.

National and international policies are not always adapted to the existing perceptions and situation on the grassroots level. Rachel Burr (Burr 2006:107) argues that if the goal of eliminating child labour is to be achieved it must be accomplished in stages. First, the real conditions under which children work must be examined without penalizing employers. Then financial aid must be offered to employers so they can improve the working environment. Further, the families also need economical support to make it possible to remove their children from work. Burr states that even though this might sound idealistic it is more practical to think along these lines than along the lines that dominates in the West; that children’s work must be prohibited immediately, without addressing the consequences it may have on the lives of working children.

6.1.1. Parents’ responsibilities in the CRC

Article 18 covers the responsibilities of parents; it states that parents are responsible for promoting the best interest of the child. In my study I found that children’s work often supports food and education. Often times, the option would be less food and no education. If one is to argue according to the CRC, it is possible to outline a picture like this: The parents I interviewed may break one or more of the following Articles when sending their children to work; children’s rights to be protected from economic exploitation (Article 32), the right to rest and leisure (Article 31), the right to protection from physical and mental violence (Article 19), the right to health and health facilities (Article 24) and the right to freedom from sexual abuse and trafficking (Article 34 and 35). But on the other hand, allowing their children to work often seemed to fulfil Article 28 and 29 about education and the purpose of education (when children work to support their own education), Article 26 about social security and Article 27 about the right to a standard of living adequate to support for the child’s development. If the child’s work contributes to paying rent and support for food and education, can it then be considered parents’ responsibility to provide children with work?

The best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration in all actions concerning the child. At the same time, the children are entitled the right to express their opinions in all

matters affecting them (Hodkin & Newell 2007:35, 149). This may be contradictive. However, in my experience these two principles often seemed to correspond. In general, the children appeared to understand why they have to work. One girl in Kavre commented that it is necessary to help the parents. The children did not feel too bad about working, there were comments such as:

“ We feel good about our work because if we work in the farm our parents will sell the produced things in the market, and from that money they will buy stationary things. If we don't work in the farm then that will be difficult for us, so we feel it's good to work.”

If children state their right to work and that they want to keep working because it is necessary – then sending them to work may serve to fulfil Article 3 about the best interest of the child, and Article 12 about child agency. On the contrary it may also serve to break these two Articles, if the child do not want to work.

The picture I have outlined above provides no clear answer because the family situations and the reasons informing children's vary. Still, as long as society cannot offer social protection, I will state that most of the children in the families I interviewed are better off working. At the same time, it is important to underline that there are exceptions from this conclusion, such as the girl that worked 15 hours a day in the brick kiln area.

The framework outlined in the National Master Plan on Child Labour (NMP) do emphasize the inclusion of families in the process of removing children from work. The plan outlines a reasonable interpretation of the international conventions treated in this master thesis. The NMP is contrary to Nepal's other laws on child labour, adapted to the ground reality, but the plan is still just an ambitious document and not especially useful for working children.

6.1.2. Minimum Age

The minimum age standard as conceived in the Minimum age Convention and in Article 32 of the CRC restrict the freedom of all children below a certain age to work for any given reason. The proposition that all kinds of work are detrimental to children is not compatible with modern thinking of child development and findings from social science. It does not reflect that childhood is culture specific and not always age-based. Responsible parents in many societies may find it odd and even neglecting to isolate children from economic activities and deliberately keep them away from learning important things they need to know to succeed in life. The argument that school-age children need to be excluded from work to ensure their education has been demolished by data indicating that many children successfully combine work and education (Boyden et al. 1998:193-200). The combination of work and school is confirmed by my study, especially in Balaju. Even though most of these children are enrolled in

education due to support from CONCERN, most of them would still not attend school if they were not allowed to keep working. The fixed minimum age in Nepal is 14 years. Removing children below the age of 14 from work may hamper their education if no economical substitution is given.

6.1.3. Harmful work

Most children in the families I met have to work, either support for the family, or themselves. It is common to work in stone quarries and brick kilns, which is defined as harmful work in the National Master Plan on Child Labour. A study by Save the Children involved 300 working children in countries in Africa, Asia and Central America. It was found that children have other considerations when judging what work is hazardous, than what are necessarily the leading guidelines in international interventions. In Bangladesh most girls aspire to work in the garment industry in which they have been removed from because it is considered as hazardous work. Most children judge their work according to other available possibilities. Research among the girls removed from the garment factories confirmed that several children were later on employed in brick-chipping and domestic service, which is considered to be even more harmful (Woodhead 1999:36).

If Nepal were to strictly enforce ILO Convention No 182 it would have severe consequences for many families in my study. As shown in the chapter about working sectors, high numbers of children in the families I interviewed are involved in harmful work. There are obviously many problems and ethical dilemmas in this regard, and it violates a number of children's rights. However, what kind of development is it if children, when fired from one kind of harmful work, simply shift to another kind of harmful work? The current situation in Nepal, in line with the development level of the country, is that many children have to work: Unfortunately, most available jobs are considered to be harmful. In Nepal removing children from harmful work may lead to starving families or loss of education if the child work to cover such expenses. Parents may die if the children's income serves to pay for medicines, or children may be sold for prostitution as a last way out?

The four core and guiding principles of the CRC are, as mentioned earlier; non-discrimination; promoting the best interests of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and respect for the views of the child (UNICEF 2009). If the consequences of losing a job make a child's life even worse, then it is probably not in the best interest of the child. Children's rights to survival and development may be hampered both in a situation where children are involved in harmful work, and in a situation where children are fired from harm-

ful work. If one is to strictly prohibit all harmful work, one may end up causing more damage than development. Boyden et al. (1998:224-225) argue that some work that is currently harmful to children can be changed so that dangers are eliminated and learning content is enhanced. This strategy of approaching children's work will not satisfy the objects of those who feel that children should not work, but it is a realistic option when the aim is to protect children from dangerous work. Boyden et al. (1998:212) further argue that enforcement of laws that removes children from workplaces, but which in turn exacerbates their vulnerability, should be considered a failure rather than a success. A lot can be done to improve working conditions and arrange education adapted to children's working schedule. The children in CONCERN's flexible education classes in Balaju, work in the morning and the afternoon, and attend school during daytime. When asked how they feel about working, one child said;

“In the beginning it was very uneasy to do the work because we had to carry heavy loads and we felt very awkward, but nowadays CONCERN admitted us in school so we are working only in the morning and the evening time, we get time to go to school during the daytime.”

7. Conclusion

7.1. Internal factors affecting children's work in Nepal

Poverty is the main reason why children work both in Balaju and in Kavre. 50% work to help their families' difficult situation, to provide food and basic needs for themselves and the family members (Table 3 page 13). The most common way of entering the labour market is to follow their parents to work, or to work at home or on the families own land (Table 4 page 16). These two findings confirm that the family situation determines children's work and that parents serve as an active facilitator in providing work for their children.

Poverty in the households is connected to parent's illiteracy and lack of ability to upgrade their employment situation. Households are especially dependent upon children's work when parents have unstable jobs, or when the families have only one, or no adult income. When one or two parents for various reasons do not contribute to the household, the family economy becomes particularly dependent upon the contribution of children. There are no insurance, backup funding or public social protection to handle such situations. Families are especially vulnerable to alcoholism, sickness, death and old age.

My study judge family values in relation to education and gender as fairly positive. Most parents want their children to be educated and girls' education is considered as equally important to boys' education. My findings oppose several other studies that claim parents to be ignorant in this regard. That being said, my results might have been different if I had interviewed mainly fathers instead of mothers.

Education and equality are concepts of modern childhood, at the same time these are mixed with traditional values. In Kavre attitudes towards girls' duties in the household still appears to dominate. Besides traditional values, it often appears to be a gap between good intentions and the ability to transfer it into action. Parents value work as their second preference regarding what they prefer their children to do. It is an important contribution to the household economy, and the reality is that prioritising children's education means loss of income. On the other hand many parents consider education as a way out of poverty, and children often work in order to cover their own needs for food, education, stationary and clothes.

Most parents lack knowledge about their children's work conditions. However, the majority of parents that are informed about their children's work are aware of the harmful consequences. Parents in Kavre are much more negative to the harmful effects work in the city may have on children, whereas parents in Balaju are equally divided between positive and

negative comments. This question must be interpreted contextually. Most children in Balaju already live and work in the city along with their families. Hence parents in Balaju answer according to what they think of the children's current work situation. Whereas parents in Kavre answer according to how they feel about sending their children away. This makes it impossible to compare Kavre and Balaju in this specific question. I realized afterwards that the question should have been framed differently, to rather ask more specifically about the positive and negative aspects of children's current work. However, my impression is that this is not the detrimental factor informing children's work. Judging from my other findings it seems like most families do not have a free choice to remove their children from work. It is a matter of survival and the choice between education, or no education.

7.2. External factors affecting children's work in Nepal

Nepal is lacking behind in the global market. The government in the 1990s favoured economic liberalization, without adapting these efforts to the ground reality of the country. These policies have caused deductions in social expenditures, and the burden of foreign debt has increased. The working population is suffering; living standards and real wages have gone down and the cost of living has increased. To be able to compete in the global market cheap labour is necessary, and the country is given little choice but to ignore children's work. All of these factors affect poverty, which in turn influence children's work.

Nepal has established ambitious new constitutional rights and plans for working children, in line with the CRC and ILO Convention No 138 and 128. However, lack of enforcement serves to maintain a demand for children's work. Nevertheless, if laws are implemented, the consequences may be disastrous for working children if they are not offered other opportunities. Enforcing laws on children's work is further complicated by the increasing informalization of the labour market. Implementation of laws in the carpet sector in Nepal confirmed two things: First, the strict removal of children from work does not solve their problems and the real reason why they work. Second, enforcement of strict policies encourages an informal and over-complex market that it is difficult to regulate.

Most families in my study belong to vulnerable socio-economic groups and the majority work in the informal sector where social protections are non-existent. This makes them especially vulnerable to economic shocks. In some cases shocks may be the enforcement of government laws, as shown in the case of the street vendors. As shown in the findings on internal factors, sickness, death and unemployment are shocks frequently affecting children's work.

Many families have migrated to the city either in search of a better life or as a consequence of the previous conflict. Increasing urbanization brings about new opportunities of work for children. There is also a certain level of attraction to urban areas among rural parents, as they believe their children may get better jobs and education there.

7.3. International approaches and local realities

In my research question I asked if international conventions regulating children's work are compatible with the family situation of working children. The level of dependency upon children's income varies, but the majority of families in my study will face hardships if their children are withdrawn from work without compensation. The Minimum Age Convention No 138, along with article 32 in the CRC, call states to fix a minimum age for the employment of children. Nepal has fixed this age to 14 years. ILO Convention No 138 considers work and education as mutually exclusive. However, this is not compatible with the ground reality of poor families in Nepal. Work and education are interwoven.

The CRC does not prohibit children from working, but it does, along with ILO Convention No 182 obligate states to take action against the most harmful forms of work. Most parents in my study have children employed in what the National Master Plan on Child Labour (NMP) categorizes as the worst forms of child labour. Removing children from such work will probably serve to lead them into another harmful sector, as most available jobs for children are harmful. However, the NMP recognizes that children's work cannot be seen in isolation from the family situation, and even suggests education adapted to working children's situation. The NMP is founded on the principles of the CRC and ILO Convention No 138 and 182. It outlines a strategy that confirms that the government is aware of the complex realities of children's work. However, little has been done to implement this plan.

Judging from the findings on internal factors and my discussion of external factors I will argue that Nepal is not ready for a strict elimination of working children. The families in my study need an approach similar to the one outlined by Rachel Burr (2006:107). It must be accomplished in stages. The country has no real social protection to take care of working children and their families, and national liberal policies have served to increase poverty. A strict enforcement of ILO Convention No 138 and 182 may not correspond with the best interest of the child and can possibly end up breaking several other articles in the CRC. The CRC does, contrary to the ILO Conventions, offer flexible frameworks of approaching children's work. I will argue that it is compatible with the family situation of working children *if* implementation is adapted to the ground reality, and the ambitions are accomplished in stages.

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APPENDIX 1: Structured Interview Schedule

1. How many children (under 18) do you have? Please specify how many boys and girls.

<input type="text"/>	Girls
<input type="text"/>	Boys

How many of your children are working? Please specify how many boys and girls.

<input type="text"/>	Girls
<input type="text"/>	Boys

2. What does your child(ren) work with? If you have more than one child working, please specify with numbers how many of your children who work in each sector.

<input type="text"/>	Restaurant worker
<input type="text"/>	Mechanical worker
<input type="text"/>	Domestic worker
<input type="text"/>	Brick Kilns
<input type="text"/>	Farming
<input type="text"/>	Housework and take care of siblings
<input type="text"/>	Porter
<input type="text"/>	Other, please specify _____

3. How did your child get this job? Please specify with numbers if the cases are different between the working children.

<input type="text"/>	Through relatives:
<input type="text"/>	We arranged it through someone we know:
<input type="text"/>	We encouraged our child to travel to the city and find a job:
<input type="text"/>	A stranger came to the village and offered a job
<input type="text"/>	Our child left without our permission
<input type="text"/>	Other, please specify _____

4. *Why is your child working?*

5. *Can you write and read Nepali, and/or understand English?*

Father:	Mother:
No	No
Yes	Yes
Some	Some
A little	A little

6. *What do you do for a living?*

Father: _____
Mother: _____

7. *Does your child/ren regularly attend school?*

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, all of them
<input type="checkbox"/>	No, none of them
<input type="checkbox"/>	Some of them do
<input type="checkbox"/>	Some of them quit, some still attend school
<input type="checkbox"/>	They used to, but they all quit

8. *Does your family receive any kind of support from NGOs, if yes, what kind of support?*

9. What would you prefer your child/ren to do? Use numbers 1-2, ranking number 1 as the most important one and number 2 as the second most important.

- Work
- Education
- Work and education at the same time
- Get married and take care of the parents and the family

10. Who do you prefer to be educated?

- Son
- Daughter
- Both sons and daughters

11. What do you believe your child/ren thinks is the best option to create a good future for him/herself? Use numbers 1-2, ranking number 1 as the most important one.

- Work
- Education
- Work and education at the same time
- Get married and take care of the family and the parents
- I don't know

12. Has your child told you anything about how it is to work?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what do you know about your child's work?

13. What would this family need to make it possible for the child/ren not to work anymore, and attend school instead? If more than one category is selected, please rank the most important as number one and then follow up with the second most important, and so on.⁴

- A loan
- A better paid job for the parents
- A place to sell produced goods
- I don't want my child to stop working
- Other, please specify: _____

14. What do you think is good or bad about children working in the city?

15. Has your economic situation changed the last 5- 10 years?⁵

- Yes, it has become better
Please specify how and why: _____

- Yes, it has become worse
Please specify how and why: _____

- No, it has not changed much

⁴ This question is only briefly mentioned in my master thesis as it was originally framed to map out what the families need. This was a part of my internship report but it is no longer a part of my research question.

⁵ This question was originally framed to try to capture how global economics may influences poor families. It is not a part of my master thesis because the results are equivocal and does not present any clear picture.

APPENDIX 2: In depth interviews

1. Does your child live with the family or some other place?
2. What benefits does your child's job have?
3. How much income does this family have in total?
4. Who earns the money for the family?
5. What do you think will happen if your child loses its job?
6. What is your biggest challenge?
7. Does your child receive any kind of education?
8. What wishes do you have for the future of your children?
9. Do you need any support to provide a good future for your children?
10. Is it easier or harder for children to get a job today compared to when you were a child?
11. What's the difference between the jobs children have today compared to when you grew up?
12. Do you think it is better or worse for children to work today, compared to when you were young?

Some of the questions above are not directly referred to in the master thesis because they were originally framed to address family needs, and it is no longer a part of my research question. Others confirm information that is well documented in the interview schedule. As I had to limit my amount of presented data I chose not to specifically present all this information.

Question 10-12 aimed at mapping out global influences and urbanization, but parents found the equal wording confusing and frequently considered it as one question – which was in turn interpreted differently. Hence, the obtained information was not that useful.

APPENDIX 3: Focus groups with children

- Opening question: What is your name?
- How old are you?
- Do you live with your families, relatives or some other place?
- What do you work with?
- How much do you earn a month?
- How long are your working days?
- How do you feel about working?
- Tell me about your work, what is it like?
- Why do you work?
- Who gets the money you earn?
- How did you get the job?
- Who decided that you should work?
- Do you go to school also?
- What would you prefer, school or work?
- What do your parents think about you working?
- Do you think your parents would like you to stop working and go to school every day instead?
- What do you and your family need to make it possible for you not to work anymore?
- What do you think is good about spending life in the city?
- What dreams do you have for the future?

Some of the questions above are not presented in my master thesis either because they did not reveal interesting information, or because they serve to confirm information that is already well-documented in the interview schedule. In this regard they serve as a quality control, but I had to limit my amount of presented data. Some questions are also background information that for instance serve to confirm that the families are poor.

APPENDIX 4: Interviews with stakeholders

- What do you believe is the root cause of child labour in Nepal?
- What do you think parents feel about their children working?
- What has Nepal as a nation been doing to implement the laws that regulate children's work?
- Does your organization/the VDC have any projects that also target parents to prevent, or reduce children's work?
- Do you know of any other organizations that have projects that target parents to prevent, or reduce child labour?
- Do you think that the work that the grown-up population used to do when they were children is different from the work children perform today?
- What impact do you think globalization or international influences has on children's work?
- Do you think children's work in Nepal has changed the last 50 years?