

# MALAWI CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS (MCTU)



## Baseline Survey

**Project title:** Child Labour and Social Dialogue

**Research title:** Establishment of communities' level of knowledge on child labour and their geographical locations.

**Location of the research:** Lilongwe, Kasungu, Rumphi, NKhatabay, & Thyolo Districts

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## 1. Introduction

This study was commissioned to identify communities and their geographical locations in respect to child labour. In addition it also aimed at establishing the level of knowledge of communities on child labour in various districts including Lilongwe, Kasungu, Rumphi, NKhatabay and Thyolo. Lastly it also assessed the level of awareness of communities on ILO conventions 87, 98, 155 and 184.

## 2. Study background

Child labour is among the key challenges confronting many African countries including Malawi. Child labour is harmful in so many ways including but not limited to the following (NSO, 2016);

- ❖ Force a child to leave school prematurely
- ❖ It deprives a child's opportunity to attend school
- ❖ Force a child to combine school work with excessive long and heavy work
- ❖ Heavily contributes to unemployment levels- especially due to cheap labour
- ❖ Affects the psycho-social development of the child as the child spends much time on work rather than interacting with peers.

The government of Malawi and International Labour Organization (ILO) has formulated and enacted laws and policies to prohibit Child Labour. Various documents aimed at protecting children from child labour have been developed and these include National Action on Elimination of Child Labour (NAP, 2010), policies and programmes among others. In addition Malawi has ratified major regional and international conventions, covenants and instruments which talk to the welfare and rights of children.

Despite numerous efforts by the government in collaboration with development partners including ILO and Malawi Congress of Trade Unions (MCTU), child labour is on the rise in Malawi. Out of Malawi total population of about 18 million, 5,574,006 million are children aged 5-7 years and according to the National Child Labour

Survey (2015) , in 2012 children in child labour were estimated to be around 37% and in 2015 it has gone up to 38% (NSO, 2016). It's against this background that MCTU with financial support from ILO would like to strengthen the capacity of trade unions on social dialogue in the agricultural sector as an effective tool to address the worst forms of child labour. However before commencement of the project activities, a baseline survey was conducted to establish communities' level of knowledge on child labour and their geographical locations. The survey was therefore conducted in 5 districts of Malawi namely, Lilongwe, Kasungu, Rumphu, NKhatabay, and Thyolo.

### **3. Objectives of the study**

Below were the objectives of the baseline survey;

- i. Identify key employers in the Agricultural industry (Tobacco and Tea) in the following districts Rumphu, Khatabay, Kasungu, Lilongwe, and Thyolo-with special focus where child labour is highly practiced.
- ii. Establish communities' level of knowledge on child labour

#### **3.1. Sub-objectives**

- i. Establish perceptions of the project targeted population towards ILO Conventions 87, 98, 155 and 184.
- ii. Review project log frame to ensure the use of SMART indicators that will facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of the project results at the end of the life span.

## 4. Study methodology

This study was guided by the constructivist paradigm an approach that speaks of understanding the world as others experience it (Wagner et al., 2012). Data was collected from respondents working in the agricultural sector especially tobacco and tea. The study was designed to understand farmer's perceptions and understandings of key causes of child labour, and also if they are aware of the ILO conventions and how they protect them.

### 4.1. Data collection techniques

Three data collection techniques were employed in this study;

**4.1.1. Semi-structured Interviews;** A total of 8 individual interviews were conducted with key farmers in Kasungu, Rumphu, NKhatabay and Thyolo. These farmers were also trade union members.

These semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to establish the geographical location and communities with high levels of child labour.

**4.1.2. Focus group discussions (FGDs);** a total of 11 focus group discussions were conducted, 4 in Kasungu 2 in T/A Lukwa and 2 in Santhe and 2 in Rumphu in T/A Chikulamayembe for tobacco growing farmers and 2 in NKhatabay in T/A Kabunduli and 3 in Thyolo 2 in T/A Phuka and 1 in Kwethemule. Each FGD was made up of 12 participants and the study was very sensitive to gender as each FGD was made up of 6 Males and 6 Females. These FGDs managed to collect deep information on child labour but mainly on the key causes of child labour. In addition these FGDs allowed the researcher to establish Community perceptions towards ILO Conventions 87, 98, 155 and 184.

**4.1.3. Official documents;** the study also collected relevant data from articles, workshop presentations, and surveys. The information collected allowed the researcher to validate information collected by other tools.

### 4.2. Sampling strategy

The study used purposive sampling method which allowed the researcher to select 140 participants of which 73 were women and 67 were men.

### **4.3. Data analysis**

The study used thematic technique to analyze data. The researcher identified themes or patterns in the data of course relevant to the research study (Wagner et al., 2012).

### **4.4. Credibility and Trust-Worthy**

This study applied triangulation where different data collection tools were used, in addition peer review was also involved. This strategy has improved the confidence level of this study.

### **4.5. Limitations and challenges of the research**

The study was conducted in the shortest period of time making it difficult to develop good rapport with farmers. In addition targeted tobacco companies which are Alliance One Tobacco Malawi Limited, JTI leaf Malawi Limited and Premium TAMA Tobacco Limited rejected the study as they thought it was sensitive, with the potential of disturbing their operations. This situation inconvenienced the study as it had to quickly re-design its approach on how to identify tobacco farmers. The study had inadequate financial resources hence it only reached a total of 140 farmers hence very difficult to generalize the research findings to the whole country. This study has also taken the constructive paradigm hence the findings will be limited to the study area.

### **4.6. Ethical Consideration**

The study adhered to all ethical consideration including but not limited to the following; informed consent, voluntary participation, privacy of participants and the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

## 5. Discussion of findings

### 5.1. Introduction

Child labour is described as any prohibited work for children below 18 years and is generally considered to be work performed by children, which is detrimental to their physical and mental development or which interferes with a child's education and thereby future possibilities in the labour market (The Institute of Applied Social Science & Centre for Social Research, 2000). Literature indicates that child labour retards development and it also interferes with the social welfare of a child. Child labour is on the increase in Malawi and it is increasing in the agricultural sector (NSO, 2016; MCTU, 2016 & Building Workers Union, 2006). Child Labour continues to pose a serious challenge to sustainable development goals of Malawi.

Child Labour also erodes the realization of the fundamental rights of children and their families, as children do not enjoy full protection against exploitation and abuse, (ILO, 2000; Building Workers Union, 2006). Child labour activities in Malawi are common in the domestic sector, construction sector, agricultural, forestry, fishing and hotel and tourism sector see (building Workers Union, 2006). In the agricultural sector alone, child labour was estimated to be around 45.9% in urban areas while in rural areas it sits around 75.3% (NSO, 2016).

It is evident that some economic activities in Malawi are surviving on child labour due to cheap labour and lack of proper knowledge among children on instruments that protects them, (The Institute of Applied Social Science & Centre for Social Research, 2000). Inadequate human rights knowledge among children has exposed them to various exploitation and abuse including over working, accompanied with poverty salaries (Building Workers Union, 2006; The Institute of Applied Social Science & Centre for Social Research, 2000). It is in line with the above assertion that **“the Child Labour and social dialogue project”** aim to compliment government effort towards addressing the worst form of child labour in Malawi, especially in communities around Lilongwe, Kasungu, Rumphi, NKhatabay

and Thyolo. It is important to note and appreciate that numerous child labour projects have been implemented in the project targeted districts, however the results have not been very much satisfying, as communities believe that the key causes of child labour have not really been addressed (The Institute of Applied Social Science & Centre for Social Research, 2000).

## **5.2. The agricultural industry and child labour**

The agricultural industry is known for child labour in Malawi, especially in the tobacco growing zones unlike in the tea growing zones (The Institute of Applied Social Science & Centre for Social Research, 2000). However both industries have an element of child labour which motivated the Child Labour and Social Dialogue project to target both the tobacco and tea sector (BCCEAWU, 2006). It should also be noted that in the tobacco and tea industry there are different companies that buy from farmers.

## **5.3. Key companies in the tobacco industry in Lilongwe, Kasungu and Rumphi**

The following are some of the key companies in the tobacco industry;

- ❖ Alliance one
- ❖ JTI
- ❖ Limbe Leaf
- ❖ PTAMA

97 % of the respondents indicated that Alliance One followed by JTI, are the major buyers of the tobacco grown by farmers in the targeted districts. Respondents indicated that Limbe leaf and PTAMA have few contract farmers compared to Alliance one and JTI.

### **5.3.1. Key companies in the Tea industry NKhatabay and Thyolo**

The tea sector operates differently from the tobacco industry, as in Malawi there is no any official market (Auction) where tea farmers would take their products to. In

this case farmers will grow and sell their products to Tea Estates operating in Malawi. Some of these tea estates include but not limited to the following;

- ❖ Satemwa Tea Estate
- ❖ Mianga Tea Estate
- ❖ Makwasa Tea Estate
- ❖ Kasembereka Tea estate
- ❖ Kawaladzi Tea Estate

#### 5.4. Project targeted areas

The study visited a number of communities in Lilongwe, Kasungu, Rumphi, Khatabay and Thyolo. The visit aimed to achieve the study objectives as indicated above. Below is a summary and discussion of visit outcome.

**Table 1.**

District	Community visited	Remarks
Lilongwe	Kanengo is an industrial area and it's a long the Lilongwe to Mzuzu road. This is where most of the tobacco buying companies are located. The study visited JTI, Alliance One, PTAMA	A questionnaire with consent form was sent to all tobacco buying companies. Unfortunately all companies resisted filling the questionnaires, saying it was very sensitive. A revised questionnaire was developed but there was total silence from the companies and this situation forced the researcher to use other strategies to collect data. The data collected was then informed by purposive and convenience sampling. However 99% of farmers interviewed were contracted by the tobacco buying companies indicated above.
Kasungu	<b>T/A Santhe</b> , from Chikhoma, it's along the Mchinji road and it takes a proximately 1; 30 minutes' drive with a private car. <b>T/A Lukwa</b> , from Kasungu TDC one has to take the road leading to Kasungu National Park and travel for approximately 1.30 minutes.	48 participants were grouped into 4 FGD, each group comprised of 12 participants, 6 males and 6 females. The interaction with community members went on very well and successful. The findings of the visit were very relevant to the study.
Rumphi	<b>T/A Chikulamayembe</b> from Mzuzu take Karonga road turn left at Bwengu, and then Nyika National Park road, the road leads you into Chikulamayembe.	24 participants were interviewed, and all were contract farmers with key tobacco buying companies. Gender was well represented with 12 females and 12 males.
NKhatabay	<b>T/A Kabunduli</b> , from Mzuzu take NKhatabay road, then branch to Kawaladzi estate, it takes you straight into T,A Kabunduli	Kawaladzi tea estate farmers and random community members were asked about child labour. The interaction went on very well.

Thyolo	<b>T/A Phuka and T/A Kwethemule,</b> Thyolo Mulanje road branch to Satemwa Tea Estate and Kasembereka Tea Estate, it takes you straight into T/A Phuka and Kwethemule	Participants had wrong information and expectation of the research as they thought they will sign for allowances and have some refreshments. However the researcher managed to level the ground as proper explanations were made and consent was obtained from participants before the data collection process started.
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## 5.5. Communities' knowledge on child labour

Five districts were visited and it was found that child labour is a term that is also very common and familiar among people in the rural areas just like in urban areas. For instance almost all respondents to this study indicated that they have heard of child labour and also attended trainings or workshops on ending child labour. The knowledge on child labour has spread to all parts of Malawi but surprisingly child labour is on the rise in Malawi, not only in the agricultural industry but also in other major economic sectors like the construction and tourism and hotels industry (BCCEAWU, 2006). It is unfortunate that this development comes after heavy efforts to end child labour by government and other stakeholders have been put in place. It seems the effort is misplaced as more children are entering child labour especially in rural areas.

### 5.5.1. Communities in Kasungu and Rumphi And Child Labour

Kasungu and Rumphi are known for tobacco growing, and the study found that child labour is still happening in the two districts. However the level of knowledge differs from one community to the other, for instance in Kasungu communities showed good knowledge on child labour, indicating that numerous child labour projects have been implemented in their areas which educated them on various issues to do with child labour. In addition tobacco buying companies, they run trainings on the implication of using children in the tobacco industry. However the communities have limited knowledge on the key causes and the costs of child labour to a child and national development. How to address child labour is another puzzle that farmers in Kasungu failed to solve.

Communities in Rumphu have considerable knowledge on child labour, however majority of the participants failed to differentiate child labour from child work. Communities are misguided on key issues related to child labour. Not only that but they are not also sure of the key causes of child labour and how child labour can be eliminated.

### **5.5.2. Communities in Thyolo and NKhatabay**

These districts are known for tea estates that grow and sometimes buy tea from tea associations (farmers). Both district indicated good knowledge on child labour however failed to identify the key causes of child labour that is in their context. The ground rule in the tea industry "is estates shall not buy tea from farmers that have used a child to produce it". Farmers in the tea industry receive education and attend trainings and workshops on child labour, however the tradition is that parents have to pass the economic activities (which tea growing) of the family to their children. This assertion was common in Thyolo unlike NKhatabay saying that children need to be taught how to grow tea, as it is a backbone of families. Communities believed that this practice is in no way related to child labour, since children are involved only during holidays or after school.

## **5.6 Causes of Child labour**

Below are some of the causes of child labour;

- ❖ **Ignorance**, it has been noted that some people and employers have limited knowledge on what child labour is, hence they sometimes allocate work that is categorized as child labour, this is very common in the agricultural industry and in other sectors including the hotel and tourism sector. In addition there is a tendency that says child labour is cheap when it comes to production of tobacco, as child demands little compared to adults who have huge responsibility.
- ❖ **Limited access to standard education**, the study noticed that especially in the rural areas education facilities are below the standards. This situation has killed

the moral for children to attend school, in addition most schools in the rural areas have in adequate resources including teachers hence less attention to pupils.

❖ **Poverty**, all the participants believed that poverty is the master key behind child labour and almost half of the respondents believed that they involve children because they cannot afford normal labour. It was surprising to note that farmers failed to explain why they are poor despite several years of farming. In addition poverty was understood from three perspectives, firstly at national level, Community level and lastly at family level. All respondents believed that the poverty at family level need to be addressed first to end child labour without which child labour will always be with us, majority of the farmers indicated.

Where is Malawi getting it wrong? This is a question that has been asked by development practitioners and other well-wishers for years. The study also found out that there are so many factors that contribute towards child labour, including, peer pressure among children, lack of effective instruments and structures that protect children from child labour, guardians being lazy to monitor children, lack of knowledge by children on child rights and implications of child labour among others. 80 % of the respondents indicated that unless the key causes of child labour are addressed, child labour will always live amongst us.

## **5.6. Awareness of communities towards ILO Conventions 87, 98, 155 and 184.**

### **5.6.1. ILO Convention 87 and 98**

The study interacted with all sorts of farmers ranging from contract, associations, employed and independent farmers. Some of these farmers belonged to a union while others did not. For trade union members especially from Kasungu and NKhatabay proved to know these ILO conventions, even though they all had limited knowledge on how these instruments can be used to their advantage. For other districts they had very poor or no knowledge about them. And for the non-union members they had zero knowledge about the instruments.

### **5.6.2. ILO Convention 155 and 184**

The study found out that all the farmers had good knowledge on convention 155 and 184. The evidence showed that majority of the farmers have received a level of training and education related to convention 155 and 184. However the farmers face the challenge of translating the gained knowledge into practice as they lack appropriate tools.

## 5.7. Review project log frame

The project does not have a detailed log frame that would allow project implementers to monitor and evaluate the progress of the project activities. There is a need to develop a log frame that should indicate objectives, activities, time frame, responsible persons, verifiable indicators, Means of Verification. Below is a sample of the log frame and Monitoring and Evaluation plan;

### 5.7.1. Logical framework

**Table 2.**

Project Objectives	Activities	Time frame	Responsible persons	Verifiable indicators	Means of Verification

### 5.7.2. The Monitoring & Evaluation Plan

**Table 3.**

Indicators	Indicators definition	Target	Achieved performance	Data collection method	Frequency & schedule	Responsible person	Audience	Remarks

It is therefore important that the activities, indicators and time frame set for the project activities be realistic and achievable.

## **5.8. Study observations and recommendations**

### **5.8.1. Observations**

The study has observed the following;

Firstly child labour has changed its face in most communities, for instance most of the communities visited involve children in the farms as a way of training them to adapt and follow parent's footsteps, and this assertion is also seen in a study which was done by the Institution for Applied Social Science in Norway and the Center for Social Research at the university of Malawi in 2000. Farmers believe that the only way out of poverty is through farming, an economic activity that they believe needs to be passed on to children. Rural communities believe that farming, especially tobacco and tea is the only way out of poverty, however there are some critical questions that have been avoided and where asked they remain unanswered for instance:

- 1. Why is it that, despite farming tobacco or tea for many years farmers are still poor or poorer than their parents?**
- 2. Why is child labour increasing in the agricultural industry, despite heavy trainings and workshops on implications of involving children in the farming business?**

The above questions are unpopular in the agricultural industry especially tobacco and tea business, however once trade unions are strengthened in the agricultural industry, it is expected that through social dialogue such important questions will be fully addressed.

Secondly farmers are the most hit by poverty in rural areas, it is sad to note that despite tobacco and tea actively contributing to the economic development of this country, farmers do not adequately benefit from this business. It was heart-breaking to note that in all the communities visited (Kasungu, Rumphi, NKhatabay, and Thyolo) at least 2 in every 6 women farmers did not have a mobile phone and sometimes came to a meeting without shoes, and this was not by choice, see the institute for Applied Social Science & Centre for Social Research (2000). The

experience was an indication of how much farmers are suffering and yet they produce the main export products for the country. In some cases where meetings we done close to farmers houses it was even more discouraging to see the poor houses that accommodate these farmers. Women are the ones most hit by the poverty created by the farming business in Malawi. The Malawian tradition has disadvantaged women as they have more responsibilities than men especially when it comes to buying basic necessities especially food, cloths, beddings, education and others, including taking care of children. These responsibilities have suppressed women to the extent that they fail to take care of their own basic needs and sometimes fail to services loans from lending institutions including tobacco and tea buying companies.

Thirdly, it was also noted that the main cause of child labour in the five districts visited was poverty and yet these farmers grow the primary exports products for Malawi, which earns the government of Malawi and the private sector billions and billions of cash through taxi collection. In addition the very same tobacco and tea that these companies buy and export to other countries, have created decent Jobs for people living in those foreign countries in so many ways. Another key question that needs to be answered is:

### **1. Why are we (Malawi) failing to create decent jobs for our farmers in Malawi?**

It is evident that the only way to eliminate the worst form of child labour is through giving decent jobs to our farmers. It should be appreciated that poverty has forced farmers to double their labour by involving children in farming activities. Child labour is worse in tobacco farming as compared to tea farming, as tenants and independent farmers are hardly supervised by tobacco buying companies and the government of Malawi. It has also been learnt that the contract system in tobacco farming is fuelling poverty for farmers, as farmers fail to service the loans that tobacco buying companies give out in terms of farming inputs. It was also noted that the price at which companies buy tobacco and tea from farmers is at poverty

prices in the range of **2 dollars per kg in tobacco (around K1,500.00/Kg)** and **0.14 cents per kg (a round K107.00/Kg)** for tea. And the price depends on the quality of the product and sometimes the prices go below the indicated ones. But if one calculates the energy and time invested in both tea and tobacco growing, it is easy to recognize that farmers work for nothing. It was also discovered that majority of the farmers after selling all their products they fail to repay the loan which was used in the process of growing the product. This situation has also denied children the right to proper social welfare including education; instead they are actively involved in the business in order to boost the profits.

The study believes that it's time we start unpacking the main causes of child labour in Malawi specifically in the tobacco and tea sector. The next section will discuss the recommendations that the study believe can contribute towards the elimination of the worst form of child labour particularly in the agricultural sector.

## **5.8.2. Recommendations**

The study is fully convinced that ending child labour in the agricultural industry is very possible and that the key solution is in the hands of government, buyers/employers and workers representative organization. Various literatures agree that the key cause of child labour is poverty and eradicating poverty among farmers will help ending child labour. Below are some of the recommendations that the study believes would see Malawi a child labour free country especially in the agricultural industry.

### **5.8.2.1. Social Dialogue**

Social dialogue is widely considered as a main component of the labour movement in which labour issues are discussed (ILO, 2000). Social dialogue is the process of negotiation by which different actors in society or social partners reach agreement to work together on policies and activities. This study is convinced that tripartite social dialogue comprising farmers (MCTU), buyers (association or their representative body) and the government would be very significant to eliminating

the worse form of child labour in the agricultural industry. The agricultural industry has various issues that distort the image of the industry for instance child labour, poverty prices, farmers as being worst hit by poverty despite buying companies making billions and billions of profits and many more. It's therefore time that Malawi through social dialogue forum in the agricultural industry start engaging on relevant and important issues that matters the most to the industry. However there are conditions that need to be meant for a meaningful and successful tripartite social dialogue in the agricultural industry, for instance;

#### **5.8.2.1.1. Building the technical capacity of all social partners;**

Especially farmers in order to constructively engage on issues that affects them. It is very important that Social partners are educated on issues that affect the agricultural industry and how they affect them. For instance, including but not limited to the following; **politics (i.e. policy decisions), socio-economic factors, technological developments, Malawi legal framework, globalization, and ILO convention 87, 98, 155, and 184 among others.** In addition it is also very important to build the capacity of social partners in areas of **negotiation, organization, leadership, strategic thinking, communication, conflict-management, analytical and decision making skills among others.** Achieving this condition would guarantee meaningful discussions that would end up addressing the root causes of child labour in the industry.

#### **5.8.2.1.2. More farmers need to join trade unions;**

For successful social dialogue it is very important that trade unions in the agricultural sector are strengthened in terms of membership. In order to strengthening trade unions in the agricultural industry the other social partners need to take an active role for instance; **(1)** tobacco/tea growing and buying companies need to support trade unions in order to organize and recruit more farmers in the industry. This process would allow farmers to be well represented and also address critical issues confronting the agricultural industry in Malawi. **(2)** The government through the Ministry of Labour and Man power development needs to also give full support and

exercise political will to allow trade unions to fully organize and recruit in the industry. It should be admitted that the labour movement in Malawi especially in the agricultural industry is not that strong, however there is strong potential of improvement, if the right tools are put in the right place.

### **5.8.2.2. Campaigning Against Child Labour**

It is very important that a campaign is also launched to expose and address issues related to child labour. In this case the campaign should be informed by all parties comprised in the social dialogue forum. This will help the campaign to address key issues in the tobacco and tea industry particularly child labour. The campaign should involve but not limited to the following activities; using mass media, writing press statement and campaigning materials like burners, posters, t-shirts among others.

### **5.8.2.3. Interventions by the Government of Malawi,**

It is a must that the government of Malawi demonstrates political will by creating policies and laws that should guide the agricultural industry particularly the IPS system and the tea industry. These policies and laws should be pro-poor policies with the intention of uplifting farmers from the poverty traps that have lasted for decades. In addition the government must be transparent in making decisions relating to tobacco and tea farming especially when it comes to determining market prices.

#### **5.8.2.3.1. Proper policies and laws that should guide contract farming,**

The intentions of the integrated production system (IPS) are good and various research studies confirm that it is a viable alternative farming model that would help farmers out of poverty (Kumwenda & Madola, 2005). The system helps farmers access all necessary resources for successful farming ranging from farming inputs to technical support, for instance farmers are trained on the recent technologies and development that helps to improve production. However the system has received

heavy criticism from farmers and other stakeholders. The system is known for benefiting tobacco buying companies more than farmers and this is very visible from the response the system got from buying companies soon after its first year of implementation 2012/13 growing season, which saw a total increase of capital investment of about \$ 54,500,000.00 and more buyers advocating for the model (Ministry of Agriculture, 2014; Kumwenda & Madola, 2005).

On the other hand this study found out that contract farming is fuelling poverty among farmers in the tobacco industry. Farmers describe contract farming as a poverty tool, they believe that it benefits more tobacco buying companies than the farmers themselves. Farmers claim that even the pricing system in the tobacco business is very biased towards buyers because they strongly influence the price for tobacco. This assertion comes after the IPS claims that farmers are empowered in price determination (ministry of Agriculture, 2014). Farmers believe that the system is not well regulated as it lacks proper policies and laws that should guide the operations. Farmers strongly believe that the system is being raped by tobacco buying companies.

This study has also found out that farmers have little knowledge of the IPS system and that they mostly sign contract farming agreements without necessary understanding what the contract means and how it set the ground for their relationship with tobacco buying companies. In addition due to high illiteracy levels among farmers and lack of advocacy tools in the industry farmers have low bargaining powers which prevent farmers from negotiating and discussing the most important things that matters in the industry.

Contract farming should be based on a win-win principle that should see both parties benefiting from the system. Unless the system start delivering the much need benefits to farmers, it is still irrelevant to farmer's needs.

## **6. Conclusion**

Child labour in the agricultural industry will not be fully eradicated by strict labour laws for instance **non-use of child labour**. The tradition in the industry is that

companies will not buy farm produce in which a child has been actively involved (child labour). Its time will address the factors that force farmers or families to involve children in the fields. The study agrees with vast literature out there that the key cause of child labour is poverty. Therefore it is very important that economic tools are put in place that should economically empower farmers. In this case creating descent work in the industry is one way of addressing child labour. In addition farmers need also to be educated and sensitized on the main cause of child labour other than ignorance. Farmers need to be told on the root causes of their poverty and how that poverty leads to child labour. This study is convinced that tripartite social dialogue **(Government, Farmers (MCTU) and Tobacco buying companies)**, will strongly contribute towards ending child labour in the industry. The social dialogue platform will enable social partners discuss the things that matters the most to them and agree on a win-win solution that will see all parties happy. Proper discussions and decisions in the agricultural industry have the potential of creating societies where child labour does not survive.

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