

General observation

The Committee has examined a very large number of detailed reports by States which have ratified the Convention recently, in relation to which its comments are addressed directly to the States concerned. In this respect, it has been able to note with interest in a number of instances the adoption of national legislation giving effect to several provisions of the Convention. It appears to the Committee that greater awareness of the problem of child labour is emerging among governments and the social partners. However, the Committee notes that the application of the Convention continues to frequently give rise to serious difficulties in practice. Indeed, it has noted that, even in countries which have had recourse to the technical assistance of the ILO to resolve the problem of child labour, thousands of young children continue to work, particularly in the informal economy and in commercial agriculture, plantations, mines, domestic work, construction, fishing, textiles, family enterprises and forestry. The Committee also noted the existence of a substantial disparity among governments which have recently ratified the Convention between the types and scope of the information, including statistics, provided to the Committee. It is therefore necessary for more complete information to be available, on the one hand, to allow an adequate evaluation of the nature, extent and causes of the phenomenon of child labour and, on the other and in particular to measure the progress achieved in both law and practice and to identify short- and medium-term prospects for the eradication of the most serious situations that violate the Convention.

To assist the Committee in evaluating the application of the Convention in practice, it therefore requests governments to provide the fullest possible statistical information in their next report on the nature, extent and trends of work by children and young persons under the minimum age specified by States when ratifying the Convention, extracts of the reports of the inspection services and information on the number and nature of the violations reported and on the penalties imposed. Where possible, the information provided should be classified by sex.

The Committee understands that certain governments are not yet in a position to provide full statistical data in response to its request. The Committee requests these countries to provide all the information currently available and to continue their work of compiling the statistics referred to above with the technical cooperation of the ILO.