EMERGING EVIDENCE REPORT 2

SOCIAL NORMS AND SUPPLY CHAINS: A FOCUS ON CHILD LABOUR AND WASTE RECYCLING IN HLAING THARYAR, YANGON, MYANMAR

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ABOUT THIS REPORT

This Emerging Evidence Report examines the social norms, and the material and institutional factors that influence the employment of children in various forms of hazardous work in Hlaing Tharyar township, Yangon, Myanmar. In particular, it focuses on hazardous child labour in solid waste management in local communities and the roles of high-risk informal moneylending and labour intermediaries.

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Photos

Page 10: Burmese citizens whose ancestors came from Tamil Nadu work together to recycle metal in an industrial zone. Kinship and ethnicity are important in the mobilisation and organisation of labour. Page 24: Waste buyer in the community. Different types of waste are organised, sorted, and weighed in residential areas and sent onwards for further sorting and recycling.
Page 25: Waste buyers in the community are mostly small informal enterprises. They collect specific types of waste in residential areas and send it onwards for further sorting and recycling. Page 28: Young woman organising and categorising plastic for a waste buyer near Htein Pin Dump Site, Hlaing Tharyar. Page 38: Gender norms and roles are important in organising and mobilising labour. The administration of a plastic recycling factory is mostly done by young women.
Photographer (all photos): © Pauline Oosterhoff.

The Child Labour: Action-Research-Innovation in South and South-Eastern Asia (CLARISSA) is a consortium of organisations committed to building a participatory evidence base and generating innovative solutions to the worst forms of child labour in Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Nepal.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is the result of the collective thinking of many organisations and individuals. The authors are grateful for all the contributions from members of the CLARISSA social norms workstream. This workstream focuses on the role of social norms, families, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs to underpin activities that build a strong evidence base and generate innovative solutions to the worst forms of child labour (WFCL. Particular thanks go to other workstream members Jill Healey, Childhope; and Shona Macleod, Consortium for Street Children.

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ACRONYMS

CL child labour

DFID Department for International Development

HTY Hlaing Tharyar

IDS Institute of Development Studies

ILO International Labour Office

IPEC International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour

NGO non-governmental organisation

SME small and medium-sized enterprise

Tdh Terre des hommes

WFCL worst forms of child labour

YCDC Yangon City Development Committee

Section 1:

INTRODUCTION

1 INTRODUCTION

This scoping report is part of the Child Labour: Action Research Innovation in South and South Eastern Asia (CLARISSA) research programme led by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS). CLARISSA is working with partners in Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Nepal to identify ways in which children's options to avoid engagement in hazardous, exploitative labour can be increased. Core partners are Terre des hommes (Tdh), ChildHope, and the Consortium for Street Children.

In 2018, the Global Slavery Index estimated that around 575,000 Burmese live in modern-day slavery, which is equivalent to approximately 11 in every 1,000 people in Myanmar (Burma) (Walk Free 2018: 87). Child labour is prevalent and visible in Myanmar. The Labour Force Survey conducted by the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security (MOLES) in collaboration with the International Labour Organization in 2015 reported that approximately 1.13 million children aged 5–17 years (i.e. 9.3 per cent of the child population) are engaged in child labour. Among those, half are working in hazardous conditions that are likely to harm their physical, mental or moral development and they work very long hours (up to 13 hours in teashops). The survey reports that 24 per cent of children engaged in hazardous work in Myanmar are 12–14 years old and 75 per cent are 15–17 years old (MOLES and Central Statistical Organization 2015a).

A turbulent precolonial history and colonialism followed by decades of war and political conflict in ethnic minority regions have led to mass displacement, breakdown of education and health systems, militarisation, and destruction of infrastructure in Myanmar (Myint-U 2007; Kramer 2015). These circumstances, plus a fragile legal system, weak labour laws, and natural disasters (cyclones) have rendered hundreds of thousands vulnerable to human trafficking and various forms of exploitation (Chan 2018). Myanmar is a large and highly diverse country and the vulnerability of some people occurs simultaneously with the rapid expenditure growth of others – including some poor sections of the population (Aung 2016). Obtaining a clear picture is hindered by a long history of restrictions on researchers, students, journalists, activists, and foreign officials to study and write about Myanmar (Selth 2018; Altbach 2007; Larkin 2010; Lewis 2017). This is complicated by rapid and poorly planned economic development and population

growth, which makes it difficult for anybody to keep track of changes. A recent trend to employ academics in consultancies may not always be helpful (Thawnghmung 2017). Obtaining reliable statistical data and information that is free from political bias and propaganda is difficult, as illustrated by the 2014 national census in which the government excluded the Rohingya ethnic minority (Heijmans 2014; Associated Press 2014).

Given its political history, it is not surprising that very little is known about what works to reduce the worst forms of child labour (WFCL) in Myanmar. A rapid evidence assessment of the literature on modern slavery, of which WFCL is a subcategory, found only six intervention studies or evaluations on child labour (Yunus *et al*. 2019). Almost 80 per cent (n=14/18) of these were published in 2013 onwards. Most of the studies (12/18) looked at trafficking.

This means that there is a need to build a strong evidence base and generate innovative solutions to WFCL. However, it also means that great care should be taken to examine the context in order to assess the possible effects of a programme such as CLARISSA.

This scoping report is part of multiple investigations and discussions to prepare the implementation phase of CLARISSA. It builds upon a broader field scoping mission in Hlaing Tharyar, which – amongst others – aims to get a picture of child labour in the various supply chains in the township.[1]

1.1 Social norms – part of a holistic, ecological approach

In order to tackle child labour more effectively, in-depth analysis is needed in each context to identify the drivers of the worst forms of child labour in order to design effective interventions. The causes of child labour are complex and context specific, but there are some common factors that increase children's vulnerability and these need to be addressed in interventions to reduce WFCL. While poverty is an underlying factor, the relationship between poverty and child labour is complex and the evidence does not support a simple causal relationship between poverty and child labour (Krauss 2013). The UK Department for International Development (DFID) has also developed a conceptual framework for child labour that also sets out the need for a holistic understanding of child labour.[2]

1   The results of that scoping are presented separately in a dedicated report.
2   DFID Child Labour Conceptual Framework, July 2017 (http://iati.dfid.gov.uk/iati_documents/31991098.odt).

Box 1: Supporting positive family dynamics and social norms – summary of review and scoping evidence

Social norms, also called societal or cultural norms (Gelfand and Jackson 2016), are unwritten rules shared by people in a given society or group that define appropriate actions for the members of that group (Cislaghi and Heise 2018; Cislaghi and Shakya 2018; Elster 1989). To understand the drivers and causes of the worst forms of child labour (WFCL),* the relevance and acceptability of interventions to protect children from WFCL, and to develop interventions to counteract them, an understanding of social norms is essential. In recent years, social norms theory has been applied in low- and middle-income countries to address a variety of challenges for children's wellbeing, ranging from adolescent health and female genital cutting, to child marriage and corporal punishment. Examples of social norms related to child wellbeing include:

- **'Good children' help in the family business as soon as they can and contribute to family income;**
- **Parents who care about their children hit them when they misbehave as a way to educate them properly; or**
- **Respectable girls get married soon after puberty.**

For practitioners to be successful in using social norms theory they also need to take into account other factors that work to sustain a given behaviour. These include structural factors such as laws, governance (political representation), economic policies (tax, social protection, job market), and the criminal justice system, as well as material factors such as the availability of services like infrastructure, land, and other assets, profits and losses made from trafficking, and employment. At a familial and community level these can include poverty, and a lack of aspirations and perspectives.

These structural and material factors shape behaviour and norms. We assume that given reasonable choices and long-term perspectives, parents would prefer to keep their children away from hazardous forms of labour. The identification of such factors must be part of a comprehensive strategy to transform harmful behaviours. Exploitative and positive social norms (re)inforce and (re)produce material and structural realities. A qualitative diagnosis of the complexity of norms which looks at power dynamics, and institutional and other factors at play is crucial for designing successful interventions. Steps to facilitate norms vary according to the kind of norms that exist in any given setting and how they are sustained. The key point in social norms work is that 'enough people must see that enough people are changing'. Often, the most frequent three elements are mentioned:

Social norms on children's labour, and attitudes to education and gender roles are important factors in influencing which children work and on what. Social norms interact with wider factors such as poverty and access to education. Initial scoping in Myanmar showed that child labour (including WFCL) is the result of a combination of families' economic situations and parents' lower level of education, together with social and societal attitudes and practices, combined with institutional factors and the lack of adequate legislative measures, and material factors of resource mobilisation and indebtedness.

Social norms shape what is known as social 'scripts' and 'discourses' (see Box 1). With scripts in this context we mean prescriptive sequences of actions in which people automatically engage, in particular situations (Bicchieri 2016). And norms are rooted into scripts because scripts contain empirical and normative expectations, and violations of scripts typically elicit negative emotions and remedial actions (*ibid*.). Child labour can be part of a script in which it is the normal thing to do from the point of view of all actors, and these norms (both descriptive and normative) are fuelling the 'family scripts'. Some scripts or

Box 1 (cont.)

1 **Generation of motivation to change.** People's aspirations and attitudes align with new positive practices. People gather in small groups that spontaneously or with facilitated support renegotiate the in-group norm.

2 **Enactment of new positive practices.** With the support of this new group, people implement new practices that are witnessed by the larger social network. The levels of (formal or informal) support needed to implement new practices varies.

3 **Diffusion of new practices.** As these new practices are carried out, the larger social network observes and witnesses their acceptability. New norms begin to take hold.

Material and institutional factors (re)inforce social norms in ways that can either protect from WFCL or increase exposure of children to them. The normative equilibrium is embedded within the constraints of the material and structural contexts so that they reinforce each other in ways that require addressing both (the material and the normative) in their interaction for change to take place. Social norm work needs to recognise the intersectionality of WFCL: ethnicity, caste, gender, and age are all important factors regarding who is exploited and the justification of it. In Nepal, for example, a large number of the child labourers in CLARISSA consortium partners' programmes are from ethnic minorities.

Social norms work often looks at how different reference groups view norms, using tools such as vignettes and ranking. This can help to form participatory action research by groups with multiple stakeholders, who can help to uncover and analyse local obstacles and opportunities to change behaviours and norms which may not be visible to outsiders; for example, illegal activities or those that are a public secret – such as substance abuse, unproductive household expenditures, or perverse incentives.

* Definitions related to these types of work are guided by ILO C. 138 on Minimum Age and ILO C. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour. The definition includes (a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale or trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom, or 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 purposes; (c) the use, procuring, or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs; and (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.

Source: Oosterhoff *et al*. (2019).

discourses are more powerful than others. In a dominant script or discourse in which children are expected to work, children may therefore have very limited alternatives to make choices and can report to 'willingly' engage in work.

Social norms have not been given much attention in research on child labour, but are important in understanding why some children work even if it is not directly economically profitable.[3] In most low- and middle-income countries families are economic units, and the vast majority of workers – including children – are employed in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

This blurs the lines between economic and emotional or cultural norms and functions.

1.2 Social norms, supply chains, and SMEs

CLARISSA focuses on WFCL in supply chains which can be located in many different geographical locations – even beyond national borders – as a whole. In Myanmar, it focuses on the fishery supply chain.[4] Complementary to this supply chain focus is a geographical location-based focus where we examine different forms of WFCL, regardless of

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3   A recent study in Ghana highlighted the importance of social norms, showing that children's contribution to agriculture may have high cultural value and be a key part of cultural identity even if their work may not be necessary for family income (Krauss 2013).

4   Scoping on fishery in Myanmar – a very diverse sector – is described in various other forthcoming CLARISSA reports.

the supply chain. One such area is Hlaing Tharyar, which has involvement of children in WFCL in various sectors; for example, garment 'pop-up shops', teashops, and waste collecting. To work on social norms in a systematic fashion it is necessary to have, amongst others, detailed knowledge of the stakeholders involved, and these are different in each sector. This means that exploring in-depth social norms in one section of a supply chain where WFCL is found requires making a choice to focus on a particular sector, then mapping out the stakeholders in that sector and assessing if and how we can work with them. Some sectors are more open to collaboration than others.

Within each supply chain we expect most child labour to be located in SMEs. SMEs account for the majority of businesses worldwide – 90 per cent of businesses and more than 50 per cent of employment worldwide. Formal SMEs contribute up to 40 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in emerging economies.[5]

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5   www.worldbank.org/en/topic/smefinance

1.3 SMEs – the overlap between kinship networks, high-risk credit, and labour intermediaries

What counts as an SME and the number of employees a business can employ to be considered 'small' or 'medium' varies in each country. However, a common characteristic globally is that SMEs are mostly owned and managed by families, who are embedded in wider kinship networks. This porous border and the overlaps between families and economic enterprises necessitates an understanding of the norms and the political economy of these familial and kinship networks in relation to labour. Families have norms about what can be expected from each member in terms of their economic contribution – including labour. Working with these families to understand how norms about kinship obligations relate to the economic conditions in these familial settings is key to developing innovations to reduce prevalence of WFCL. Given the central role of

Table 1: Percentage of households with at least one working child by indebtedness status

Houshold	Myanmar	Urban	Rural
All households	9.9	6.6	11.1
Indebted households	12.0	8.9	12.6
Non-indebted households	8.7	6.1	10.1

Source: MOLES and Central Statistical Organization (2015a).

kinship relations in employment in SMEs, it is important to understand if and how recruitment for SMEs is organised, and what norms guide employment and deployment.

SMEs all over the world face major obstacles in accessing low-risk capital – with many depending on loan sharks, family, and friends as a result. Although SMEs generate seven out of ten formal jobs, and are thus vital in the global economy, access to finance is a key constraint to SME growth.[6] Lack of access to safe credit is the second most cited obstacle facing SMEs to grow their businesses in emerging markets and developing countries.[7] Research has shown that at the familial level indebtedness is co-related to child labour, and reasons for familial debt can be many – including health emergencies and gaps between the timing of income and payments like rent. Because of the overlapping economic functions of families and SMEs it is important to have a better understanding of access to capital and debt of both.

Research on moneylending shows that 'moneylenders', 'loan sharks', and other sources of informal and high-risk credit operate within a wider and often interconnected network of different types of credit, including microcredit and credit and savings groups (Idris 2020). To develop innovations to reduce WFCL, understanding the relations between the different types of credit and the obligations they entail is essential. The launch of microcredit programmes in locations with little employment and investment opportunities, and high migration has, for example, been reported to result in an increase of the prices of illegal migration to the USA by so-called 'coyotes' in Guatemala (Stoll 2012). When families have no investment or job opportunities, migration to a place where there is work, even if that involves hiring a smuggler, is perceived as a good investment, and this can have an economic rationale. When the amount of money that people can borrow increases due to a decrease in the interest rate, it can increase the rates asked by traffickers. Improving SMEs' access to finance and finding innovative solutions to unlock safe sources of capital and adult, skilled human resources is one of the broader contextual challenges of reducing WFCL.

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6   *Ibid*.
7   *Ibid*.

Section 2:

SCOPING OBJECTIVES

2 SCOPING OBJECTIVES

The scoping presented here was led by the social norms workstream. It pursued three main objectives: (1) to start a diagnosis of some of the prevailing **social and other material and institutional factors** influencing specific types of WFCL in Hlaing Tharyar; (2) to start building an understanding of the social norms and the material and institutional factors around high-risk **moneylending and intermediating child labour**; and (3) to develop our understanding of the social norms and other material and institutional factors supported by **employers of children** in Hlaing Tharyar – most of whom are SMEs.

In line with the overall Theory of Change for the social norms workstream, the scoping examined five interlinked levels:

1 **Children**: What are the main WFCL in which children are involved and what are the social norms that they experience?

2 **Families**: What are the social norms and material constraints that are faced by the families concerned? This includes investigating the landscape of credit opportunities and sources in the communities.

3 **Intermediaries**: Who helps people/children to get jobs and access to capital. What kinds of people go to which kind of intermediary? Do intermediaries also play other roles (e.g. credit providers, landlords)?

4 **Employers**: Global evidence suggests these are mostly microenterprises or SMEs: what are their expectations and the social norms that influence their decisions? What are the perceived benefits of WFCL?

5 **Communities**: What is the social and institutional landscape influencing WFCL in Hlaing Tharyar? Who are the key stakeholders that influence norms and practices related to WFCL?

2.1 Why Hlaing Tharyar?

The scoping focused on Hlaing Tharyar, one of the largest townships in Myanmar. It is a satellite town of Yangon where Terre des hommes (Tdh) operates child protection and health programming. Based on Tdh direct field experience, consultations with local stakeholders, and a literature review, Hlaing Tharyar was identified as having a high prevalence of child labour – although accurate numbers are not available (ILO/IPEC 2015a) – including some of the worst forms of child labour. On the other side of the Pan Hlaing River, west of Yangon, Hlaing Tharyar is home to an estimated 750,000 to 1 million people, most of whom are migrants, many working in the factories of the industrial zone. Hlaing Tharyar's one dozen industrial zones contain more than 850 factories employing more than 300,000 workers, many of whom make garments. The phenomenal population growth – particularly over the past decade – has resulted in 15 per cent or more of Yangon's urban population being crammed into this single township, where residents are mostly of lower-middle and low income, with an estimated 200,000 residents living in informal settlements and slums. Established in the 1980s, a large part of the population is assessed to be composed of internal migrant workers, many as a result of the post-Nargis migration (estimates reveal that many Hlaing Tharyar inhabitants are originally from Ayeyarwady Region).[8]

Due to its large and fast-growing population in an informal setting, the demand for services and infrastructure is likely to exceed the supply, but reliable data are lacking. Hlaing Tharyar faces various social problems (e.g. robberies, criminal gangs, karaoke parlours that double as brothels, drugs trading, and the informal leasing of land and housing). Media reports describe the township as a 'Wild West' of Yangon.[9]

The township has many geographical and identity-based communities. A choice has to be made about where in Hlaing Tharyar the project can work, in which sector, and with whom as CLARISSA cannot cover all the residents.

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8   Since our scoping visit – which took place at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic – Myanmar has taken many measures to reduce the spread of the virus including restricting movement which will have an impact on migration in and out of this township, which cannot be predicted.

9   https://frontiermyanmar.net/en/government-seeks-to-tame-hlaing-tharyar-yangons-wild-west

Section 3:

APPROACH AND METHODS

3 APPROACH AND METHODS

The initial scoping visit on social norms took place between 27 January and 4 March 2020 by an international, mostly female, team who are also the authors of this report. (More detailed questions can be found in the Terms of Reference in Annexe 1.) Interviews were conducted in Burmese with whisper translations for the international consultants. We used mixed methods, each building upon each other:

1 Desk reviews included a systematic literature review of interventions on modern slavery and WFCL, and a rapid literature review of academic and grey literature.

2 A participatory review of preliminary results of broader field research on supply chains and sectors in Hlaing Tharyar[10] with reported forms of child labour and WFCL in order to select and determine the sectors to be further investigated during the filed visits.

3 Field observations.

4 In-depth interviews.

5 Focus group discussions.

6 Joint verification prior to the joint analysis of various data sets of local and international researchers.

7 Joint feedback with Tdh of key findings prior to departure.

3.1 Desk reviews

Both the international and local research members conducted desk review studies, with some overlap. The international team focused more on academic studies, evaluation reports, and grey literature and media reports in English. The national team focused more on grey literature and media reports in Burmese and on studies available only in hard copy or in-country. Both teams continuously collected additional data to check assumptions and emerging ideas.

3.2 Participatory review of preliminary results of broader field research on supply chains

The two local consultants had started to map the various sectors with WFCL prior to the arrival of the international

team. This resulted in a list of 13 sectors operating in the township. Thirteen types of labour and forms of WFCL were identified covering domestic work, drug trafficking, the garment and food processing industries, construction work, sex work, street-related work, and market-related services. See Annexe 2 for more detail.

To narrow down the number of sectors we applied a combination of criteria:

- **The destination and source of child workers are both located in Hlaing Tharyar. We neither visited workplaces nor interviewed workers from outside the township.**

- **The reported prevalence of child labour and WFCL in the literature on Myanmar.**

- **The observed prevalence of child labour and WFCL in Hlaing Tharyar, or other working areas of Tdh in Yangon.**

- **The experiences of Tdh and consultants with regard to accessibility of these workplaces in Hlaing Tharyar or other working areas of Tdh in Yangon. We excluded sectors to which attempts to access had failed repeatedly and sectors with reported attacks on non-governmental organisation (NGO) researchers or other 'outsiders' such as the drug trafficking sector.**

- **Size and potential growth of the sector: We prioritised sectors that are growing.**

- **Age group of the children involved: We prioritised sectors which (also) employ children under 14 years old.**

- **Gender balance: We aimed for a combination of boys and girls.**

- **Types of hazards likely to result in harm for children: we prioritised work which fits the international criteria for harmful work (e.g. night shifts, exposure to extreme temperature changes, hazardous materials or instruments, closed spaces, etc.).**

- **The proportionate prevalence of WFCL amongst the overall child labour prevalence.**

What is considered as WFCL can vary between different stakeholders, each having a different position and voice. Examining these different perspectives is not only important in the programme, but from a social norms perspective we also have to follow international

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10 This work has been commissioned by the Tdh office in Yangon as part of the work on supply chains. The results will be published in a separate report.

and national guidelines. We used a combination of international and national definitions to identify if and how WFCL is used in the 13 sectors identified in Hlaing Tharyar.

- **Employment below the minimum age (i.e. 14 years old, as stipulated in the different regulations).**

- **All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, children in prostitution, and other forms of sexual exploitation.**

- **The involvement of children in illicit activities, such as drug trafficking.**

- **Any hazardous 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. This includes:**

  – **Work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces;**

  – **Work with dangerous machinery, equipment, and tools which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads;**

  – **Work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to extreme temperatures, noise levels, etc.; and**

  – **Work under particularly difficult conditions such as long hours or during the night or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.**

Applying these criteria to the 13 sectors with reported and/or observed incidence of child labour, the team jointly selected the following sectors in Hlaing Tharyar for field visit planning as part of this scoping:

- **Garbage collection** (solid waste management): **The prevalence of children engaged in waste picking was widely observed and known in Hlaing Tharyar township outside the centre. Defining characteristics include young age (often under 14); hazardous work due to the unhealthy environment; extreme temperatures; and possible exposure to hazardous substances (e.g. fumes, toxic materials). In addition to these elements, the waste management sector is linked to the increasing population and economic growth and urbanisation.**

- **Work in teashops: Hlaing Tharyar is host to hundreds of teashops of different standards each tailored to different clients and markets. The number of children working in the teashops is** relatively high, many under 14 years of age. The potential hazards are largely linked to the long working hours, including at night, and the use of kitchen equipment such as knives, and handling boiling water is also dangerous, especially for young children. From a macro perspective, the sector is also booming, being linked to industrialisation, urbanisation, and consumption.

- **Work in markets: Similar to the teashop conditions, children working in markets have been reported to be either under 14, and/or working nightshifts, under very difficult conditions like carrying heavy weights or manipulating sharp equipment. The growth of the sector is also constant with forecast increased exports.**

- **Fish food processing: The involvement of children in WFCL in this sector was less defined, but the team decided to gather evidence on it, linking it to the fishery work led by the supply-chain workstream. Initial observations included the fact that there were fewer fish-processing plants in Hlaing Tharyar, where some children under 14 years old were working, possibly doing nightshifts, under difficult conditions such as being exposed to extreme temperatures (ice) and potentially harmful sharp equipment.**

3.3 Field observations

To plan our field visits, we listed the access points and locations of the 13 selected sectors. We worked with existing contacts in these locations and planned to expand the list of locations and people based on the experiences in these sites. Although this scoping focuses on Hlaing Tharyar, understanding the drivers of WFCL and related social norms implied identifying the benefits of involving children at different levels of the chain and across different kinship networks. The value and supply chains of each of these sectors can extend beyond Hlaing Tharyar as a township and potentially beyond national borders. We made observations in the following sites at different times of the day:

- **Htein Pin dump site (daytime);**

- **Wards 2, 3, 15, 20 (daytime and weekend);**

- **Tharyargone area (daytime);**

- **Thirimingalar wholesale vegetable market (West Central Yangon) (night-time);**

- **Dala township (daytime); and**

- **South Dagon industrial zone 2 (daytime).**

To structure the observations we also used a few tracing and trajectory methods adapted from anthropology such as:

- **Following the division of labour across time. We followed five families who beg for fish at the wholesale fish market at night and then sell it in the township. We met the same families twice at night and followed them back to Hlaing Tharyar one morning.**

- **Following the division of labour along the life cycle of an object. We followed pieces of waste through various stages of sorting in different increasingly specialised sites in separate locations.**

We also visited two other adjacent townships to better understand and envision the specificity of Hlaing Tharyar township within Yangon. In those townships we also looked at recycling and waste collection.

3.4 Individual and group interviews

Prior to the field visits we identified the type of stakeholders that we would want to interview in each sector and along its related supply chain. We also divided up the tasks within the team (interviewer, note taking, observing). We used mixed sampling methods including:

Cluster sampling: In specific locations at given times:

- **Starting with geographical areas based on the sectors initially selected (one dump site, two markets, and teashops), we conducted observations and individual interviews, combined with transect walks.**

- **Observations and interviews on different forms of WFCL were conducted directly by the two local consultants and Tdh staff at a given time (e.g. early morning in the markets), in the local language (with translation).**

Snowballing: Based on the initial respondents from the cluster sampling, we tried to run up (or down) the supply chain in the related sector. This included:

- **Individual interviews with waste buyers – up the chain to community waste buyer; with children collectors in communities; and down to waste recycling 'factories'; and**

- **Individual interviews with indebted working families and children leading to individual interviews with a police officer; and with moneylenders and a so-called 'gangster', who is often charged to recover unpaid debts.**

Volunteer sampling: The snowballing technique was also combined with volunteer sampling, particularly for the focus group discussions organised with children working in food processing and in fish markets. This approach was used in order to avoid pressure on the respondents.

We conducted the following interviews and discussions:[11]

Individual interviews: All individual interviews were conducted directly by the two female local consultants and the male Tdh staff in the local language, while some questions were asked by the two international team members and translated. Oral consent was systematically sought and obtained prior to interview taking place.

- **55 persons were interviewed of whom 21 were children (representing 62 per cent of interviewees), amongst whom 13 (62 per cent) were boys (particularly working in waste, and in the markets either offering services or begging for fish) and 8 (38 per cent) were girls (mostly working in the (fish) market, begging for fish, or in the fish food processing industry, with one exception of collecting waste with her mother).**

- **The children interviewed were mostly between 8 and 17 years old, and all were working in the worst forms of child labour, as defined above.**

- **Most interviews took place on work sites (67 per cent), 17 per cent in the premises of community-based organisations, and 16 per cent were in a private space (for gangster, moneylender, and police officer interviews) for security reasons.**

3.5 Group discussions

The local researchers conducted two focus group discussions with children: (1) with three boys collecting waste, in the presence of one mother and one community worker; and (2) with three girls working in a food processing factory, in the presence of one mother also working in the same sector.

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11   11 Between 28 January and 3 February.

Section 4:

LIMITATIONS

4 LIMITATIONS

- There is a general lack of reliable data and research in Myanmar reflecting rapid political, economic, and social changes. Despite some opening since the instalment of a quasi-democratic government in Naypyidaw in 2011, numerous formidable challenges in conducting research in Myanmar remain to this day (Selth 2018). This results in difficulty in obtaining reliable statistical data and information that is free from political bias and propaganda (Larkin 2010; Lewis 2017). This constraint limits the capacity to identify, for instance, reliable data concerning an overall census of the population or migration patterns.

- This scoping report is exploratory in nature and scope. We used mixed methods that can be further developed and/or narrowed down.

- The sampling methods relied on existing contacts to provide entry to different people – they do not claim to be representative of a township of up to 1 million people.

- Many of our contacts had been established in the two months prior to our visit or were established during the visit. Given the illegality of child labour and the political history of Myanmar, we assume that we missed the kinds of detail and depth in our interactions that can come only from trust. Building trust takes effort and time. In some focus group discussions only a few people spoke openly, while others observed.

- Due to time limitations and access difficulties, we could not examine some areas that appeared relevant to investigate in more depth such as the food processing plants, establishing the age of young women in the fish market, or interviewing teashop child workers.

- This is a qualitative study, relying on narratives and observations. We were not able to verify this information with other types of evidence (e.g. material artefacts or biomedical data). We were only able to speak with different members of a family in some cases.

- It was very difficult to understand with accuracy the remunerations for the different types of work that children are involved in. Waste buyers, external stakeholders, and children mention different amounts, but whether they use the same measures and what these numbers mean is not clear.

- We visited during the dry season – which is very different from the rainy season – and we expect that there is seasonal variation in people's responses, priorities, and preferences.

Section 5:

KEY FINDINGS

5 KEY FINDINGS

Findings of the scoping are presented first with overviews per sector of activity and types of WFCL, and then with general findings and observations regarding social norms, and access to credit and labour intermediaries.

5.1 Waste

The global production of waste is expected to grow more than twice as fast as the world population by 2050 (Aung Myint Maw 2016). East Asia and the Pacific regions are estimated to generate 23 per cent of the world's municipal solid waste. In most cases, the economic growth, particularly in urban areas, is linked to an increase in waste production. Evidently, waste management is equally important for environmental, health, and economic reasons. Previously, Myanmar's recycling industry exported much of its recyclable plastic material to China, whose manufacturing industry repurposed the material. However, in 2018, China began producing so much plastic domestically that it no longer needed to import the raw material from outside sources, disrupting sales of exports in this industry (Mckevitt 2019).

On the other hand, reports are increasing about western countries sending their waste to South East Asia. Although no specific information was identified for Myanmar, South East Asian countries are taking a strong stand to refuse the garbage sent from Europe or the Americas. For instance, on 23 April 2019, a Malaysian government investigation revealed that waste from the UK, Australia, USA, and Germany was pouring into the country illegally, being falsely declared as other imports (Ellis-Petersen 2019).

A number of studies, including from the World Bank, have demonstrated that although there are very few reliable estimates of the number of people engaged in waste picking (even less so of the number of children) or of its economic and environmental impact, for the urban poor in developing countries, informal waste recycling is a common way to earn income (Medina 2008). Local interviews have also put forward the 'business' perspective of waste management as there are no investment costs, there are very few barriers to entry into this activity, and it requires flexible manpower with no specific skill sets. These conditions offer obvious potential opportunities for 'child or parent-led' micro-entrepreneur activities in community waste picking.

Hlaing Tharyar has growing waste production. To manage it, the township is expanding the number of waste collection points, is collaborating with the private sector, and is making efforts to develop policies on waste management. But given the rapidly growing population and scarce resources – human and financial – this is a major challenge. Much garbage is therefore collected, sorted, and recycled by small informal enterprises in which families and kinship networks play a central role.

Figure 1 attempts to explain the observed waste picking and (solid) waste management process.

Hlaing Tharyar is composed of various geographical districts, comprising 20 wards and 17 villages[12] in which there is an unknown number of community dump sites (community collection points) designated by the Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC).

- **The YCDC (and a subcontracted private company) collects waste from these community collection points and transports them to Htein Pin, the main disposal dump site for solid waste in Yangon designated by the YCDC.**
- **From these community dump sites and other places in the community, children and families collect the waste for recycling and sell it to recycled waste buyers in the community.**
- **In the meantime, YCDC staff and their family members or relatives collect waste from the community dump sites and from the main disposal Htein Pin dump site and sort it before selling it to recycled waste buyers located nearby.**
- **All the recycled waste buyers sort the waste and sell the various kinds to waste recycling factories.**
- **Waste recycling factories also sell the recycled waste – we were told that some is sold to China, India, and locally. We were also told of Japanese investment, and ADB (we assume this is the Asian Development Bank) but we were unable to verify this information.**
- **Children operate largely in the streets, but also between the community collection points and the waste collectors/buyers, i.e. the lowest entry point of the supply chain.**
- **Children only deliver to informal waste buyer SMEs – who then sell to other sorters and recycling factories.**

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12   The total number of villages is unclear and seems to change. ILO/IPEC (2015a) listed nine village tracts.

Figure 1: Schematic presentation of the organisation of waste management in Yangon

Source: Authors' own.
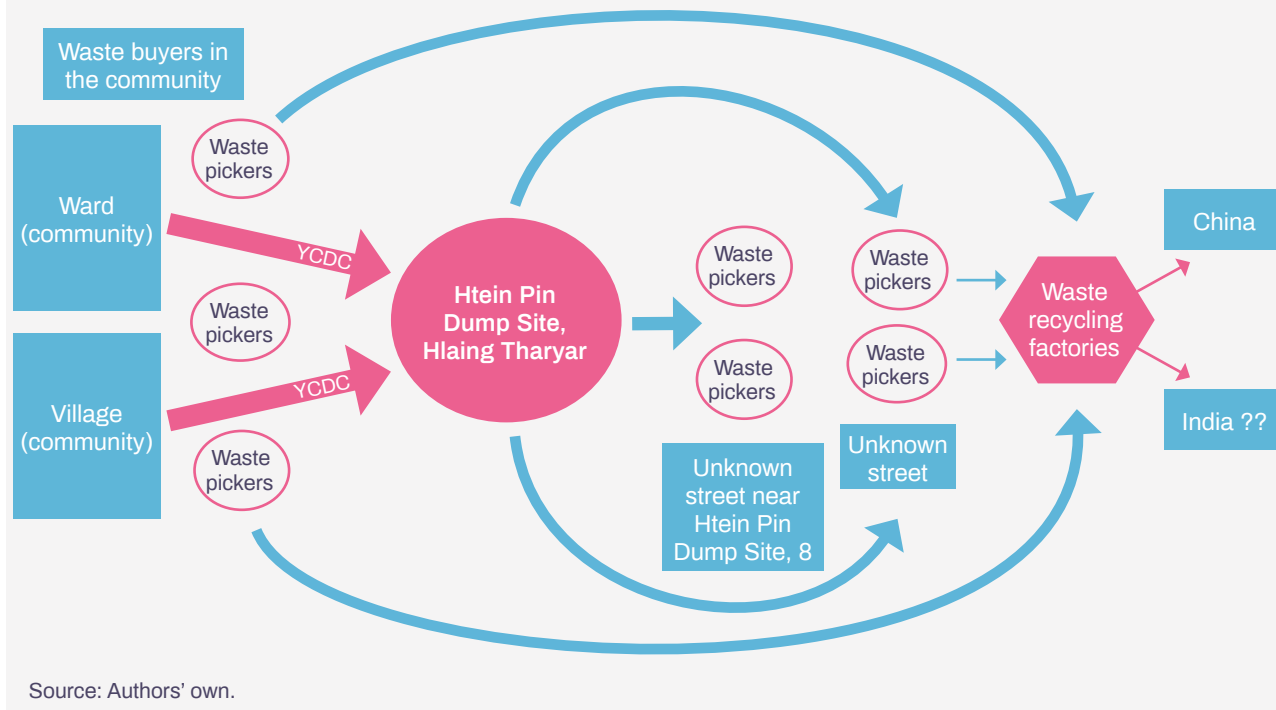
5.1.1 Socioeconomic situations and perceptions of children involved in waste picking

From observations, interviews, and focus group discussions, the following elements are highlighted:

- **Children may be involved in waste picking from a very young age: We observed children looking as young as three or four years old who were accompanied by parents or older siblings. This situation can have significant impacts on health and wellbeing, not only for the children who work, but also for the younger ones who are accompanying parents and being exposed to unhealthy and potentially damaging environments.**

- **It appears that both boys and girls are involved in waste picking, although through different patterns. Girls are mostly picking waste accompanying their parents, as are young boys. However, from an older age (apparently about 12) boys then start 'operating' without parents.**

- **Peer support: From the boys and waste buyers interviewed, boys mostly operate in pairs or groups of three or four, in order to protect and support each other.**

- **The children involved have had a basic education; they combined education and work in waste picking and eventually dropped out of school around grade 4 or 5 (end of primary).**

- **Remuneration: It was very difficult to understand with accuracy the remuneration, and there are also a number of stereotypes and schemes associated with waste picking. From the children consulted, they can make up to 3,000 to 4,000 Kyats a day (individually), or 8,000 to 10,000 Kyats for two (£4–5). Waste buyers and external stakeholders tended to overestimate the remuneration compared to what the children declared. For information, a comparative table of the different remuneration schemes is presented in Annexe 3.**

- **Role of waste buyers: Community waste buyers feel they play a protective role towards these children who pick waste and have no choice but to support their families. The waste buyer interviewed declared having to pay off the police (5,000 Kyats) when children are caught, as waste picking is illegal. He said that sometimes he loses carts which he has lent to children for waste picking, but he seems to believe he is in a mutually positive relationship: he supports children who are in need and they bring him waste for his business.**

- **Advance money: Children and waste buyers confirmed that at times waste buyers will offer advance money, or put carts at the disposal of children for facilitating the waste collection.**

When an advance is given, it is unclear if children receive less when selling their recyclables. These instances may form part of normal 'commercial' relationships where buyers try to incite children to bring them materials. However, the boys interviewed declared that this did not influence their 'fidelity' towards the buyer, and they would sell to the ones closer to them.

- **Credit and debts**: 'All families have debts', declared various people interviewed. It appears to be a common denominator of many deprived families in the area. The children interviewed reported being in these economically difficult situations, and debt or poverty in addition to health concerns – in particular, disability or debilitating health conditions – or one of the parents having passed away were found to be common.

- **Labour intermediaries**: This is a highly informal sector with many SMEs connected along a chain of sorting garbage. In principle, individuals (adults and children) can start to work of their own free will at a time of their choice in their neighbourhood. However, in practice there is competition between individual garbage collectors. At the sorting points we visited employment appears to be along kinship and ethnic lines. Burmese ethnic Indians from Tamil Nadu, for example, were observed to work with each other at various stages of sorting garbage such as metal.

- **Labour trajectory**: Several adults interviewed believed in a trajectory for boys, starting with working in teashops, where they make very little money and any damage they cause is deducted from their already low income, work very long hours, and risk being scolded and physically abused by employees, to waste picking, where there is more flexibility, to drug selling. This perception may be linked to the societal attitudes towards children involved in waste picking.

- **Negative perceptions**: Children involved in waste picking (and probably adults likewise, although this was not investigated) face a number of negative stereotypes and prejudices. They are deemed to be involved in various acts of delinquency, although when asked about specificities, these evolved around stealing from houses, stealing clothes hanging out to dry. The police officer interviewed also mentioned drug trafficking, particularly of

WY (Yaba – a synthetic drug popular in South East Asia). He reported that two out of three crimes involving children are for drug-related activities, which does not match the (very limited) data on the reasons why children end up in rehabilitation and suggests that minor crimes like petty theft are more common, but this information could not be verified.

5.1.2 Societal attitudes and perceptions on children involved in waste picking

- Waste picking is a common form of work for deprived communities in various parts of the world. Opportunities for waste picking as a source of income are growing; it requires a very low skill set and is easy to enter, but the activity has low social status. The sector is gendered – most workers are men and boys.

- Waste buyers report that they play an important role of 'social protector' for the waste picker children, who are expected to work due to their parents' poverty. They see themselves as taking on a familial protective role. They work openly.

- The children we observed and met looked and reported to be abiding by social norms and expectations to contribute to their family's income, and 'preferred' to work to bring money home.

- The children consulted indicated that they would prefer to do another type of work. (One wanted to work in a factory or in the electricity business, and the other one would like to work with his mother selling at the market, as he does after collecting waste, but unfortunately this does not generate enough income).

- Children complained about the unsanitary conditions, small cuts, and foot injuries while collecting, and the high temperatures during the day. Having to endure the heat of the day is apparently linked to the need for the children to start after 10am in order to avoid the YCDC dump collectors and having to hide from the police; this is an additional pressure for them.

- Negative stigma is associated with waste collection (we assume linked to 'dirty' jobs, although this was not assessed during the scoping), and to related delinquency.

- Children involved in waste picking are perceived negatively, and this attitude is further heightened by adults' perceptions that they earn 'a lot of money'. These perceptions would need to be

further researched, but it may be a 'cognitive dissonance' to explain why a child would be involved in such activity, i.e. that it could only be for money. The parents interviewed, though, declared they would prefer their child to do another activity, even if they earned less.

• **The children interviewed alluded to the fact that there is a level of freedom in the job that can be enjoyable. They have flexible working hours and can stop when they have enough money. They do not have an employer scolding them all day. The boys involved in waste picking declared children working in teashops are in a worse form of child labour than themselves.**

5.2 Markets

Hlaing Tharyar has a growing population with different backgrounds and incomes. The township has a variety of formal, semi-formal, and informal markets and shops. At the bottom end are individual households who sell things on the street near their home, while at the top end there are air-conditioned supermarkets. In between are covered and open markets. Research from 2016 shows that the current wholesale markets in Yangon comprise both large-scale and medium-/small-scale wholesale trade and retail trade practices.

The volumes sold per trader differ considerably (ranging from 25,000kg/day to as little as 244kg/day), but overall remain fairly limited, with more than 60 per cent of the sampled traders selling less than 2 MT per day, and 22 per cent even less than 0.5 MT per day (Joosten, Wertheim-Heck and Thi Mar Win 2016). Hlaing Tharyar is near to huge wholesale markets for fresh produce such as Thirimingalar wholesale vegetable market and Yangon's San Pya wholesale fish market.

The San Pya wholesale fish market hosts 200 shops and 400–500 sellers, and 4,000–5,000 tonnes of fish are sold every week (Myat Nyein Aye 2013). The market comprises marine and freshwater fish and is frequented

by chefs, retail owners, and 'housewives', i.e. its clients are mixed and diverse (Myat Nyein Aye 2013).

Given the geographical dispersion of these markets, we focused on large markets with reported child labour. We conducted observations and interviews on three different occasions at the vegetable market and the fish market and followed five families begging fish from the wholesale market to sell in their local streets.

5.2.1 Thirimingalar wholesale vegetable market, 2am
The wholesale vegetable market in Yangon functions mostly as a 'terminal wholesale market', where produce is channelled to consumers through trade between a network of wholesalers and retailers. Some of these retailers are large, but most shops in these markets are small or medium in size.

During our visit starting at 2am we observed a mix of regulated and informal practices. Most shops appeared to be small and their owners reported employing people recruited through extended kinship networks.

We observed children in the market doing different types of work: boys' labour ranged from sewing/closing baskets for 100 Kyats a bag, to carrying produce (apparently mostly to individual retailers parked outside the market) for 500 Kyats a bag. Interviews with one leader of the workers revealed that new workers, including children aged from 12 years old, are recruited through peers (friends of friends), and children and adults potentially 'compete' with one another and some have fights. It was unclear if children were remunerated at a different price, but our assumption is that remuneration is the same for the same type of jobs (carrying/transporting) and the remuneration is relative to what can actually be carried by a younger person, compared to an adult. One father declared he brought his sons to the market to teach them how to work. Some of the younger boys may guard vegetables when carrying is too heavy for them. Workers, including children, operate from 5pm to 6am with a peak between 11pm and 4am.

From our interviews and observations, girls in the market mostly work at the informal food stands, which operate all night from 5pm until 5/6am. Underage girls (16 years old) are also reportedly recruited through peers and informal kinship-based connections.

An intriguing sight in the market was **novices 'begging'** at 2am. About 15 young girls, some looking under 12 years old, were observed walking around the market begging for alms. Although no specific questions were asked about this, a quick internet search confirmed that Buddhist hierarchy and patriarchal Burmese society results in what a modern Buddhist nun declared, '[N]uns suffer not only a lack of respect due to negative, patriarchal views that still hold sway, but also a lack of public support' (*Ei Cherry Aung* 2015). A report from the *South China Morning Post* (2019) revealed that many of the novices originate from conflict states and are sent to nunneries to find refuge and protection, but 'life in monastery appears to be more difficult for girls than boys'. Considering the extremely early hour when very young girls are sent to beg, this issue and the fine border with WFCL may be worth exploring further.

5.2.2 San Pya wholesale fish market

The wholesale fish market is open all night and is very active. Different types of 'gendered' jobs were observed at the market at 3am:

- **Boys, including some as young as 12 years old, are engaged in selling or transporting fish, or cutting or transporting ice. These activities require carrying heavy loads, using dangerously sharp utensils, and being exposed to extreme temperatures (ice) all night. The transport of fish is both regulated (with some adults buying expensive licences) and unregulated. As this is a very physical task, older boys may be engaged.**

- **Girls, mostly teenage, are said to be more involved in the processing of the fish, i.e. cutting off heads, scrapping skins, etc. This also involves the use of sharp knives and icy conditions with no proper protection observed.**

The speed, hours, sanitary conditions, and types of jobs overall make it an extremely hazardous environment for children to work.

A specific phenomenon was observed and followed through; namely, '**begging for fish**'. We met and observed some 10 to 12 families sleeping in the street on the outside walls of the fish market at night with their young children (one as young as 12 days old, well taken care of by a tired and economically deprived father, struggling to powder-milk feed the little one in unacceptable hygiene conditions). While the parents and young children rested and slept, the 8–12-year-old children of these families (15–20 children), both boys and girls, wandered around the market all night, many with bare feet in the mud and icy water, picking up dropped fish or begging the sellers for fish. Once they had collected enough fish in their plastic buckets, at dawn the children and their families returned to Hlaing Tharyar to sell these fish in the streets. All these children have dropped out of school and they suffer from deprivation of sleep as well as very poor hygiene (and potentially health) conditions. All the families we met and interviewed are indebted or have faced health issues which prevented one of the family members (most commonly the man) from generating income. The children are recruited in this hazardous form of work by their parents and through neighbours and word of mouth, and they operate as part of these micro family businesses. After the age of 12 years, girls stop begging – due to 'shame' they say, and potential sexual harassment – and boys start working in other jobs in the market. Although no specific gender differences were observed, some families interviewed reported that one of the boys stayed home with his grandmother to study while his sisters and other siblings were begging on behalf of the family; and a 14-year-old transgender child was interviewed while picking up fallen fish from the ground (being too old to beg) and operating independently with neither parent present.

5.3 Teashops

Teashops in Myanmar include a wide variety of establishments serving tea and food at different times of the day for various types of clients. They can be small shacks or large open-air or covered restaurants with extensive menus. There are hundreds of these teashops in the township.

Child labour in teashops is relatively widespread and can be observed in public with children serving food and drinks or semi-public with children washing dishes in the back. All interviewees, including children in WFCL, reported that children in teashops earn the least (especially younger children) and this seems to be confirmed by existing literature (ILO/IPEC 2015a). This may also be because working children in teashops receive accommodation and food as part of the work package. Children working in other forms of WFCL (particularly in waste picking) identify teashops as the worst form of labour for them, due to working conditions (very long hours – 7–12 hours a day up to seven days a week), very low remuneration

(approximately £31 a month), and the risks of scolding and maltreatment by employers. Although girls also work in teashops and restaurants, it appears that boys (including under 13-year-olds) are predominant in teashops.

According to the single interview conducted with a teashop owner, children are employed in teashops for two main reasons:

- **A lack of sufficient manpower (considering wages). Indeed the teashop owner declared having significant difficulties in attracting and recruiting waiters, probably due to the very low wages offered and the long hours worked. He complained of constantly having to look for staff but not being in a position to increase wages.**
- **An 'offer' of children by parents who place them there to work. The employer displayed a strong patriarchal discourse of supporting the children and the family, often mediating between the child and his parents, offering new clothes and other small benefits to the children to keep them motivated, and paying money in advance to parents.**

5.4 Fish food processing

Reportedly there are less than ten fish food processing 'factories', or stalls, in San Pya wholesale fish market, but fish food processing occurs elsewhere; for example, in alleys nearby where it is unclear if these are part of the market or separate 'processing' enterprises.

The three girls and adult woman interviewed who worked in two different fish food processing factories admitted 'enjoying' their work there. The girls, who started as young as 13 or 14 years old, work in Hlaing Tharyar industrial zone, preparing the fish. The girls interviewed do not have ID cards, nor do their parents. Some factories appear more regulated than others; in one, the mother had to insist to her employer that her underage girl is accepted for work, which was granted as a 'favour', while in the other, girls declared about 30 per cent of workers are underage as the management does not request a national registration card to work.

The girls reportedly work six days a week from 7.30am to 5.30pm and welcome the overtime requested two or three times a week from 5.30pm to 8pm as this generates more income. As they do not have ID cards and are not of the age to work legally, they are paid per result: 250 Kyats for a bucket of processed fish (a girl can do five to eight buckets in five or six hours while an adult can do 10 to 12

buckets a day – with apparently similar remuneration). Some of the children apparently work at the factory after school and have more flexible working hours. Seasonal work is also important during the school holidays and up to 70 girls may work during this period.

There seems to be a full acceptance of these girls working in the food processing factory: they claim to feel well accepted by other adult employees and their employers, and enjoy good working relationships with their co-workers. The girls say they wear protective gloves when working, although these have to be purchased by them directly.

5.5 The role of intermediaries and moneylenders

Labour recruitment and mediation in all these sectors and locations is informal. Labour supply and demand is mediated through familial and kinship-based or peer group networks (i.e. friends). Formal labour recruitment is minimal – if at all existent. The economic importance of families, kinship, and ethnicity was also observed in recruitment of labour during the scoping, with kinship connections in the organisation of labour in metal recycling (Burmese citizens with Tamil Nadu family origins), fish begging (nuclear families), and work in the markets (extended kinship connections such as cousins).

Some people claimed to have heard of intermediaries, but no one could identify any, or knew of any. It could be that they associated intermediaries with people who help with international migration or with formal employment. It appears that children get engaged in some of the WFCL in the sectors we were able to look at by canvassing employers directly – or through their parents, as the most common form, followed by word of mouth and social connections, forged by family, kinship, and ethnicity. It was not clear if and how residence in itself played a role in recruitment into WFCL and if and how residence overlaps with ethnicity or region of origin. The labour mediation we were able to observe followed a system of patronage – providing privileges based on criteria other than just merit or economic profit.

The specific role of moneylenders was, however, investigated in more detail. Our interviews suggested that many residents (if not most) in this township have difficulties accessing low-risk capital, but the strategies to respond to this are diverse. Informal moneylending in the community from friends, moneylenders, relatives, and other people in extended networks is reportedly very common and widespread.

Moneylenders are deemed necessary. They are reportedly unavoidable for economically deprived families who do not have access to formal credit lines. They fulfil a necessary function in the community, yet many stakeholders report negatively about these people and their activities. These perceptions seem to be associated with the 'underground' illegal nature of their operations, and the risks linked to default for borrowers. We heard from various respondents that 'gangsters' are hired by moneylenders to recover overdue debts. All community members and the police advised us to stay away from the 'dangerous' moneylenders and these 'gangsters'. However, a 'culture of silence'[13] around illegal activities can be part of the problem of indebtedness and exploitative (labour) practices in impoverished communities.

Thanks to the incredible community connections of our local researchers, two moneylenders could be met in private on the first day of the scoping. We learned that all moneylenders are female, an observation that was confirmed by all stakeholders during the rest of our visit. The two we interviewed were both 30-year-old mothers who attended the interview with their small children. Both lived in the community, dressed modestly, spoke calmly and contradicted the 'dangerous' image that had been pictured to us. One was emotionally shaken on that day as one of her 'clients' had just fled without paying and she lost 2 million Kyats (£1,100).

These women operate with people they know and trust from their communities. The role of men and their husbands in this landscape is unclear, but most borrowers are reported to be female. It is possible that these women

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13   The importance of a code of silence is well known in research about 'the mafia' in Italy where it is called *omertà*. But negative attitudes towards informers or whistle-blowers are found in criminal, semi-legal or informal circles in many countries and cultures. It is not something that could be seen as a specific cultural norm in this township in Myanmar.

are not operating alone but are a front for men who may
fear to be arrested, or that they are part of a specific tier
of a wider credit system with many different sections
and tiers, but these are assumptions. There is a lack
of data and evidence about this topic – qualitative and
quantitative – in Myanmar.

The interviewed moneylenders operate mainly through
four types of schemes:

• **20 per cent interest per month;**
• **Repay within 24 hours: 30 per cent interest;**
• **Borrow 100,000 Kyats – repay 10,000 a day for
  13 days; and**
• **Borrow 100,000 Kyats – repay 5,000 a day for 26
  days.**

Clients are selected through specific criteria, including
some form of stability like having a job, or possessing
property such as a house, TV, etc. that could be seized in
the case of no repayment. From all interviews, including
with community members and other stakeholders, no one
had heard of bonded labour linked to debt repayment,
and moneylenders do not play intermediary roles for
their clients who cannot repay, some of whom resort

to 'gangsters' to intimidate (and at times hurt) or seize
failing clients. Some of the norms identified in these
relationships include their 'necessity and accessibility':
most poor people in the community need access to
liquidity but cannot access this through formal channels,
so the moneylenders play a necessary role in this
context, being more easily accessible to those in need
as transactions are more often based on trust than the
documented files requested in more formal channels.
Cases were reported to us of access to international
NGO and NGO microcredit schemes to repay debts or
from moneylenders themselves to lend to others at higher
interest rates. High interest rates are also justified by
the moneylenders by the risks taken: the higher the risk,
the higher the interest, and potentially their 'dominant
position' in the community. Loan default by running away
is indeed a risk that has been widely reported by many
stakeholders in the township. Teashop owners who
provide an advance also reportedly face these risks.

Most loans are reportedly used for investing in small
businesses, health, or house renting. Repayment
conditions may be renegotiated depending on the
capacities of borrowers. According to our interviews, in
every family that borrows money, there is a child working.

Section 6:

CONCLUSION

6 CONCLUSION

Despite clear limitations for accessing reliable evidence linked to the scope and methodology employed in this scoping, the findings gathered highlight a number of key areas for further exploration. In this dynamic and growing township housing mostly migrants, it appears that there are particular material conditions which contribute to driving children to labour, including hazardous and exploitative forms; namely, the fragile socioeconomic situations of parents together with difficult access to credit and cash to face shocks or economic developments. Due to time restrictions and because it was not the object of the scoping visit, we were not able to examine access to health or educational services for residents and migrants, but it is likely that migrant status disrupts access to essential services. The limited opportunities to work in safe conditions and the high demand for low-skilled jobs in specific sectors where children are more flexible and respond more easily to the working conditions, constraints, and remunerations, like in teashops or waste recycling, also seem to be determining factors for children being pulled into certain WFCL. These are associated with gender and social norms related to the responsibility of children to contribute to the family wellbeing, and the patronising attitudes of employers who justify the involvement of children as an act of kindness to help children in difficult circumstances. In light of these, a number of considerations and recommendations are outlined below and will serve to inform future development of the CLARISSA programme.

6.1 Cross-cutting issues

Across sectors and interviews, some commonalities between the children engaged in WFCL seemed to emerge and are presented below and will be explored further in section 6.2 on social norms.

- **It seems that many (most) of the children we met in Hlaing Tharyar who were engaged in WFCL originate from families who have migrated internally, coming mostly from the Delta region. Many appear to be living in informal settlements.**

- **All the children in WFCL interviewed said they came from families facing health issues: either the father (or mother) had passed away, or one parent had become debilitated due to a disease or disability, or the family faced excessive health costs (linked to multiple pregnancies, for instance). This is corroborated by the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour**

(IPEC) study undertaken in 2015 which revealed that 20 per cent of child labourers reported their father had passed away and 7 per cent their mother (as opposed to 10 per cent and 2 per cent respectively for non-working children) (ILO/IPEC 2015b). We were not able to explore how this impacted in the trajectory to WFCL but it seems to be a significant common fact amongst all the children interviewed.

- **Family trajectories: From initial discussions with stakeholders in our focus group discussions, it appeared that most of the children engaged in WFCL came from families where parents themselves had low-skilled jobs (e.g. waste picking, factory food processing), or unsecured micro-businesses (selling vegetables or fish begged by their children). The fragility of the family's economic situation could be a determining factor for the engagement of children in WFCL as explored in section 6.2 on social norms and expectations of children. Within the families there are scripts for different members based on social norms, including norms about gender, age, sexuality, and types of work which are different within and between ethnic groups. We did not have the time to explore these wide-ranging social norms and how they interact in depth with WFCL in different sectors. To understand how the intersections between culture, labour, and entrepreneurship (formal and informal) result in WFCL will require the focus to be considerably narrowed down.**

- **Lack of access to formal decent work: All stakeholders reported that lack of livelihood opportunities and decent work are major structural issues which shape labour, including child employment in hazardous work.**

- **Lack of access to safe credit, capital, and debts: Our respondents lack access to capital and have to rely on informal and high-risk, high-interest loans resulting in and aggravating debts. Indebtedness is very widespread in Hlaing Tharyar and a common factor amongst families with children in WFCL. While it will take effort and time to build trust with the different stakeholders – including moneylenders and families – it is a determinant factor in the local economy in Hlaing Tharyar which requires further investigation. This is particularly relevant given the links with credit and saving groups, microcredit, and the gendered**

nature of moneylending, with women lending and borrowing in a mostly patriarchal cultural context. The available research on high-risk moneylending suggests that interventions to improve credit access can have many unintended, possibly harmful consequences (Idris 2020). The 2015 labour force survey (MOLES and Central Statistical Organization 2015a) also reveals a link between debts and children's involvement in labour, although it appears to be less significant than what the initial scoping implied.

- **Lack of clear, exclusive economic rationale to employ children:** We could not verify the differences between wages for children and adults. These can also vary per sector and per employer. However, the interviews suggest that there is no clear economic rationale for employers to employ children. Employers pay per piece or based on quantity; for example, in food processing or waste picking factories. Workers and buyers did not mention a difference in the amount paid to children and adults. However, the productivity of a child was considered different from that of an adult, meaning that children have to work longer hours to produce the same as an adult. In this context, it would be interesting to explore what would be the rationale for employers (in food factories, for instance) to employ children if they are not as profitable as adults. In the case of waste picking, there seemed to be no discrimination between the amount paid to children and that to adults per volume collected. We heard several accounts of parents asking employers to please employ their child as part of their patronage. Rather than understanding capital as purely economic or financial, a conceptual framework that understands capital as having multiple forms (social, economic, cultural) building upon thinkers such as Bourdieu (1986) and work on (child) bondage and patronage that recognises how social and economic norms interact would prove more promising to start understanding the (re)production of WFCL. Having better evidence on the economic rationale – the costs, risks, and benefits of WFCL – is, however, an essential piece of this puzzle.

- **Lack of preference for child labourers, but a need for low-skilled, cheap, and reliable labourers:** In no interview was there a preference mentioned for children due to their possible specific skills (size, flexibility, agility, docility, etc.). This could potentially have been quite different if we had selected other sectors, like domestic work or sexual exploitation. We found that employers need low-skilled and cheap labourers – who can be adults or children. When a teashop owner has a difficult time finding people to work reliably for the wages they think they can afford, children come as a possible alternative, especially when parents contact teashop owners to offer their child as a worker. Similarly, in waste picking, payment is based on volume. The work in waste management is stigmatised and less desirable from a social perspective for adults. When children step in to do this work it does not mean that waste buyers select children because of a preference for child labour, they may simply need somebody to do this socially undesirable work. A comparative table of different remuneration schemes is presented in Annexe 3.

- **Usage of remuneration:** All the children interviewed reported that they shared their earnings with their parents and did not spend it on themselves. This is consistent with the expectation that children should contribute to the family's income in cases of economic hardship.[14]

- **Education:** All the children interviewed had attended school, most until year 4 or 5 (i.e. end of primary). Some started working while still at school, but it was unclear if their engagement in work was a determining factor for dropping out. Children and parents' views on education were diverse: some would prefer to continue their education, but other children (mostly the teenagers) were keen on finding a better income-generating activity. The parents and community members interviewed also had differing opinions about the role of education, and many alluded to school being an unsafe environment for children where they may get exposed to drug trafficking and other socially unacceptable behaviours.

6.2 Overarching social norms in WFCL in Hlaing Tharyar

For interventions that are informed by social norms theory it is necessary to have a clear picture of the stakeholders involved, and also look at other factors such as gender,

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14   Indeed, non-working children do not seem to feel the same pressure to contribute to family income.

culture, ethnicity, and class that shape the norms of groups, etc. Because the population of Hlaing Tharyar is made up mostly of migrants who come from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, general statements about social norms in this township – and even in a neighbourhood within this township – are untenable. The stakeholders are different for each sector – and for an intervention one needs to have specific information about norms and behaviour. For instance, social norms work with a mostly Tamil ethnic community in metal recycling is likely to be quite different from work with plastic waste pickers from Mon ethnic communities, or girls who clean fish from the Delta region at a market or in a food factory. Steps to facilitate any change in norms vary according to the kind of norms that exist in any given setting and how they are sustained. This scoping mission can therefore only identify general social norms as a compass for future more focused and in-depth work. Narrowing down the focus will need to involve a combination of criteria that builds upon some of that used in this scoping.

6.2.1 Children are expected to contribute to the collective family's wellbeing

While the exact formulation may need to be specified and verified through further research, there are clear and shared expectations that children should contribute to the collective family wellbeing by paying respect and being obedient to their parents, being good students, and contributing to the family income in cases of fragility. Children themselves expressed that they 'have to contribute to supporting their families', and this may entail different things, including (1) working outside the family home/dwelling place to increase the family income, (2) working to support the family business, and (3) undertaking some household chores (not directly assessed but taken from the literature review). Many of the children involved in waste picking and fish begging or working at the market reported that additionally they worked with their parents in the family business (mostly selling produce).

Although most children reported wanting to do something else, there was no sense of victimisation amongst the children interviewed. Linked to workstream 4 on children's agency, it would be important to internalise the normative expectations shared by these children and the implications for programming. This is because immediate income generation (as opposed to investment in future development of human capital through education) seems critical for the children concerned and their families. Likewise, a family-based approach, which recognises collective familial decision-making may be necessary as

the family wellbeing interconnects and may be prevailing over the individual's wellbeing. It is also key to keep in mind that these families are living in a context with constrained options for state support for individuals. This means that families are main sources of economic, social, and emotional support for individuals.

These social norms seem to be equally shared by parents, and other stakeholders like the community (police officer, moneylender) and employers themselves. All the stakeholders interviewed expect children from very poor families to work in order to support the family income, and to obey their parents.

Apart from the teashop owner, there did not seem to be a proactive effort from employers to recruit children, but rather that they 'tolerated' the presence of children in order to comply with these normative expectations to help children from deprived families to access income. The mother of one 14-year-old girl working in the fish processing factory declared that she had to insist that her daughter was employed, and that this was a 'favour' from the employer to support her, a widow. 'Employers reported hiring children in response to the parents' or the children's demand or request' (ILO/IPEC 2015b: 39).

This norm reflects patronising views on work relations in which employers emphasise their support to these children; for example, by helping them to access health services, or talking to the police when a child is in trouble. This view may be shared by the children and is similar to what has been described by Austin Choi-Fitzpatrick (2017) in his work on slaveholders in Uttar Pradesh. Patronising and patron–client or feudal discourses like these are powerful in stopping people from taking rights-based action when they shared by both employer and child.

6.2.2 Children should not compete with adults for wages

The economic impact of 'unfair competition' triggers tensions between adults and children in workplaces. In particular, in the markets we were told of fights between children and adults, linked to remuneration. This is confirmed by the literature review: 'Adult workers expressed concern about child labour's impact on adult employment wages, rather than the working conditions or hours experienced by the children' (ILO/IPEC 2015b: 30). It is likely that WFCL could be acceptable forms of labour for adults, and children's involvement drives incomes down, particularly for these adults who also have very low-skilled jobs, in turn impacting negatively on their ability to provide for their own family and possibly putting a burden on their own children.

6.2.3 Children should be protected from hazards and potential harm

While it is acceptable for children to work in order to contribute to their families and learning to work is an important aspect of life, it is not acceptable for children to be involved in work that has a negative impact on their own health or to become engaged in criminal activities. Working in a fish processing factory is acceptable and preferable for children because it teaches them some skills in a modern setting. Working in teashops does not teach children new skills and the long hours are hazardous for their health and wellbeing. Employers comply to these norms through a common discourse of fulfilling a social (and protective) role for children and their families. They all adopt a patronising attitude towards these children: 'I buy them clothes and try to tell parents to be nice to the children' asserted the teashop owner, and 'I go to the police when children are arrested and I pay for them to get out', declared a community waste buyer. As children have to work to support the family, in line with family scripts, employers feel 'expected' to reinforce these norms by offering employment to children of families in need. This patronising discourse allows employers to employ children knowingly (ILO/IPEC 2015b).

6.2.4 Young children have less shame than adults

Begging and waste picking have negative stigma. Young children are sent out to do this work because they are seen as experiencing less shame and blame. Shame is also gendered with girls experiencing shame differently to boys – especially after menstruation starts.

6.2.5 Boys and girls can do different kinds of work

Certain types of work appeared to be more acceptable for girls or for boys: teashops seemed to be predominantly a 'male space' although girls are also employed there; in markets, girls work in services like informal catering while boys carry loads, probably linked to physical capabilities; and in waste picking teenage boys appeared to work in peer groups, and girls with their parents. Begging for fish seemed to be gender indiscriminate. Norms about work are gendered, potentially burdening women and girls more than men and boys: '[O]n the one hand, parents, children and members of society subscribe to the view that girls belong in the home […], on the other hand girls are considered strong and capable to perform the same work as boys' (ILO/IPEC 2015a: 1).

6.2.6 Children should get an education

Parents and community members mostly agreed that the involvement of children in work was a necessity. There seemed to be a consensus that it would be preferable for their children to be in school. Children themselves did not always see the value of education for their own future.

6.3 Implications for practice, policy, and research

6.3.1 Practice

- **Embed a child-centred approach and ensure the active involvement of children in identifying and developing choices and alternatives. This is important to inform any 'action' possibly related to vocational training, etc.**

- **Select locations and sectors according to where WFCL occurs – integrate a geographical approach with a supply chain approach for programme coherence and practical operations. A sector that fulfils basic criteria is waste management. Options that can be further explored are areas in and around markets where there are also teashops, and food processing both in and around markets and in industrial or semi-industrial settings. Avoid mission creep.**

- **Focus on SMEs and how they are situated within kinship networks for labour recruitment. Recognise that SMEs face major obstacles in accessing low-risk capital, with many depending on loan sharks, family, and friends as a result. Moneylenders are both feared and appreciated because they provide a critical service that people and SMEs both need to survive.**

- **Break the culture of stigma and shame which surrounds waste collection. This is an essential service and a collective good in which all citizens have rights and responsibilities. Counter norms which justify processing waste as an opportunity for a livelihood for poor families and their children.**

- **Work with community leaders who are considered successful. Gangsters and moneylenders are widely considered as individuals who provide services that people need. Rather than making them targets for intervention, and demonise them without knowing their perspectives or motivations, it makes more sense to examine if and how we can find common ground.**

- **Children who work fulfil an important function in their families and a social role. Children's discourse is not articulated around their rights, or as victims, but rather about their obligations and the roles they play in the family. Any programming**

and action research will need to critically integrate this and involve children in exploring this status. This indeed would be important to inform any 'action' possibly related to vocational training, etc.

- Work with people's aspirations and strengths for their lives and their wellbeing. Avoid a focus on what Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory (Rogers 2010) would call a focus on laggards – people who do not want to change – rather than the majority of people. Generate creative ideas and innovations in a sector which thrives on creativity and human connections.

- Consider integrating work better with education, allowing children to go to school and do some work (safely). Very few respondents (including government workers like the police officer or YCDC workers) pointed to the state as the main duty bearer to ensure the protection of children and welfare of the family. Most appeared to rely on community-based mechanisms and family survival strategies. Work around demanding accountability could be both interesting and worthwhile, but it is unclear whether the political and economic context in Myanmar would allow for this.

- Work with a clear conceptual framework and clear evidence-informed definitions – these can be co-constructed – that firmly locate social norms within a broader ecological framework in which structural contextual constraints and factors are recognised.

- The scoping surfaced the intersections between health-related issues, family composition, socioeconomic status and support mechanisms, indebtedness, and WFCL. It would be important to further investigate these findings with participants and understand, beyond the economic situations, key social and material drivers to WFCL. Make sure that available evidence is used to avoid re-inventing the wheel or initiating or supporting interventions that have been shown to be inefficient or even harmful.

6.3.2 Research

- Work with the community-based waste collectors to set up action research and interventions that recognise their essential role in keeping these communities clean, safe, and healthy. WFCL in waste picking is mostly concentrated at the community level – see Figure 1 for visual clarification. While waste has to be collected, the processing of it needs to be carried out in a manner that is as decent as possible, which means protecting workers – especially children.

- Explore common themes across the countries targeted by the CLARISSA programme; for example, workers in the adult entertainment sector, leather, and waste management are all stigmatised. What can that stigma and shame tell us about the causes, pathways, social norms, and political economy of WFCL?

- Develop research that produces evidence on the costs, risks, and benefits of WFCL to bust persistent myths and simplistic views about child labour.

- Explore family trajectories and scripts, including labour trajectories through a strong gender lens, to understand which of these norms influence the engagement of children in WFCL, and to assess possibilities and motivations for change between the different actors, including children, families, and community members.

- Focus on responding to patronising norms around child labour that use familial responsibilities to justify the employment of children in WFCL, ignoring children's rights and potential abuse of child workers. Understanding the productivity and profitability of different types of manpower could shed some light on alternative ways to support poor families; for example, through wages offered to adults rather than children.

- How the moneylending landscape functions, as well as people's material constraints which are in turn shaped by wider structural political and economic factors, need to be investigated further as debts and lack of safe credit are significant factors in families with child labourers. There is a lack of research in Myanmar, but the evidence from other contexts suggests that interventions can be harmful. Key questions include: Who are the moneylenders? What is their work trajectory? What are the gender dynamics? What are the social norms of moneylenders and what are the costs and benefits of changing them? How do they see their role in the community and what are the boundaries of that community? What are the viable options of credit existing within the community and how do they interact with those forms of credit?

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ANNEXES

ANNEXE 1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

CLARISSA Social Norms Workstream Terms of Reference for Scoping Myanmar – 2020

Context

The CLARISSA programme is a multi-partner consortium aiming to identify ways in which children's options to avoid engagement in hazardous, exploitative labour can be increased. Led by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), core partners are Terre des hommes (Tdh), ChildHope, and the Consortium for Street Children.

The programme focuses its work around three target countries – Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Nepal – where there is documented evidence of WFCL. In each country, initial research and scoping has resulted in the programme narrowing down the focus of CLARISSA's work.

In Myanmar, it is proposed that this scoping investigates WFCL through a 'neighbourhood' approach, focusing on the urban slums of Hlaing Tharyar (HTY), one of the poorest areas of Yangon.

In HTY, the incidence of child labour is important, mostly affecting very poor and migrant communities, and children are involved in different forms of WFCL working under hazardous conditions which include, amongst others, lengthy working hours and physically taxing environments, such as working in extreme temperatures or without the requisite safety measures and protective clothing.

There are indications of gender norms and social norms playing a role in justifying work; however, it is now necessary to conduct scoping in Myanmar to assess interlinked elements contributing to WFCL.

Objectives

This scoping aims to help the workstream to better understand the drivers that result in children working in HTY so that further research and interventions can be most effectively targeted and developed. It seeks answers to the following questions:

- **What are the main WFCL in HTY and what are the practical factors of WFCL in HTY (e.g. economic imperatives) that result in children working in the worst forms of child labour? Who benefits from these economic imperatives? Are there other**

benefits (childcare, learning life skills, adventure)? How are the benefits and burdens gendered and shaped by other social characteristics (race, religion, age, etc.)?

- **What social norms influence WFCL in HTY?**

- **Who are the key stakeholders that influence norms and practices related to WFCL?**

- **Which stakeholders can we effectively, ethically, and safely continue to work with as part of the CLARISSA programme?**

- **What are the social norms and practices that we should work on in the different locations and amongst the various stakeholders (children, families, moneylenders, intermediaries, employers, and other local actors)?**

- **What are the perceived benefits (of these different stakeholders) of these practices?**

- **Initially assess, what could be some of the perceived costs to these stakeholders of changing social norms?**

- **What are the sources of credit in these communities? Which are preferred? Do people take credit from different sources for different purposes/amounts? What are these sources? Are there times during which they are more reliant on credit? Are there times during which credit is less available and people are more likely to go to loan sharks? How much credit do people have? Do they see this as a bad thing?**

- **Who helps people/children to get jobs and what kinds of people go to which kind of intermediary? How long are people in jobs for? Are people more reliant on intermediaries for long-term or short-term jobs? Do intermediaries differ for children and adults? Do intermediaries also play other roles (e.g. credit providers, landlords)? How do people perceive labour intermediaries?**

This scoping should help the workstream to decide where, with which stakeholders, and with which norms it is acceptable, safe, and ethical to work. It will also contribute to shed light on the following questions:

- **How common, acceptable, and persistent are these different norms and practices amongst the different stakeholders?**

- **What are the trajectories of the different stakeholders involved? At which stage and where should we work in the trajectory into and/or out of the worst forms of child labour? Based on these**

trajectories, where would our priority be in these trajectories, e.g. prevention, workplace changes/ improvement, rescue/rehabilitation, etc.?

• **What could our Theory of Change (TOC) look like?**

• **What is the change in social norms and material realities that we would need to see to reduce the prevalence of minors in the most exploitative forms of labour? How and why do we expect such a desired change to happen? Who would need to be involved? How long do we think this would take?**

This scoping exercise is part of a larger process of scoping, which includes a general scoping on the situation of WFCL in Myanmar, and this current one, more specific on the social and material norms influencing WFCL.

Phase 1: A general scoping (not specifically linked to the social norms) will be undertaken to better understand the realities, contexts, origins, etc. of children involved in the worst forms of child labour in HTY.

Phase 2: Develop our understanding (diagnosis) of what are the social as well as material and institutional factors and other factors such as power dynamics that may cause or influence the involvement of children in WFCL in the garment 'pop-up shops' and in the fisheries of Myanmar. This scoping is mostly to surface the complexity of social and other norms that drive behaviours and practices regarding WFCL. It is mostly to 'explore' what norms are sustaining these practices, while the Participatory Action Research groups will focus more on 'investigating, measuring, and acting on behaviour change'.

Phase 2 will comprise of three areas of scoping:

1 Diagnose the prevailing social and other norms influencing specific WFCL to be selected in HTY. This will particularly (but not exclusively) look at the following questions:

• **What are the social norms and practices and material and institutional constraints driving WFCL?**

• **What are the social norms that children and families follow and are influenced by? For instance, in the draft scoping it is referred to the fact that *'the vast majority of children (70 per cent), are the ones making the decision to quit school and join the workforce'*. Or *'Parents and children will consider it normal for the child of a poor household to contribute to the family's income, regardless of its impact on the child's health or education.'* What are the contributing factors to these expectations that children obey? What are the social norms of**

parents who send their children to work in WFCL? Who and what are the influencers in children's decisions about their work or schooling? Who and what influences parents' decisions? What are acceptable/unacceptable tasks and jobs for children to do? Are there differences between gender, age, ethnicity, religion, etc.?**

• **Map out the different actors/reference groups influencing children and parents.**

• **Map out various other stakeholders relevant for this work (NGOs, policymakers, village or religious leaders, etc.).**

2 Develop our understanding of the social and other norms around moneylending and intermediating child labour. This will attempt to answer some of these questions:

• **How prevalent is moneylending in the communities in HTY where children are involved in WFCL?**

• **What are the various sources of credit (microcredit, credit and savings groups, family, banks, moneylender, etc.)? Who are the families borrowing money from high-interest moneylenders (characteristics, socio-demographics, etc.)?**

• **Why do these families borrow money from moneylenders?**

• **For what types of expenses is the money lent?**

• **What are the other existing channels for borrowing money?**

• **Who are the moneylenders/intermediaries (profile, origin, links with the borrowing families, etc.)?**

• **How do families get in contact with them?**

• **What are the laws and policies regarding consumer credit? What are the rights and duties of the borrower and the lender? What paperwork are individuals entitled to when taking out a loan from an informal moneylender? Is debt individual or collective (i.e. household based)?**

• **How is their function perceived within the community?**

• **How can we enter in contact/work with these moneylenders/intermediaries?**

3 Develop our understanding of the social and other norms supported by employers of children in HTY. These may include questions such as:

• **Who are the employers of children (profiles, types of businesses, incomes streams, etc.)?**

• **What do they know about the institutional background of child labour and WFCL?**

- **What do they think about child labour? In the draft initial scoping it is mentioned 'The employer will as well believe that, by employing a child, he is contributing to the wellbeing of that household'.**
- **How do they define children? How do they define acceptable working conditions for children, etc.?**
- **How do they enter in contact with children?**
- **What are the costs/benefits of employing children? For them, and for the 'wider community'?**

Phase 1 is planned to be conducted as a more general scoping. Phase 2 and its various elements could be developed based on the existing literature review carried out via desk research. Some elements could be initially identified by Tdh in Myanmar and its partners. Other elements will involve a visit to Myanmar by the IDS workstream lead and Tdh social norms technical expert, who will work in partnership with Tdh to interview selected key stakeholders.

Methodology

Methods will include

- **Desk literature review of key documents;**
- **Social norms mapping and ranking;**
- **Trajectory walks;**
- **Individual interviews with children, families, intermediaries, moneylenders, employers, experts and CSOs;**
- **Group discussions with some of the above-mentioned actors using some tools (mapping, ranking);**
- **Joint preliminary analysis of findings at team level;**
- **Feedback sessions; and**
- **Revision of joint analysis based on feedback.**

Deliverables

- **Power Point with key findings and some outstanding questions for the feedback session;**
- **Brief report (five pages); and**
- **Outline for development of vignettes.**

Time frame

We have five days for the field work at the end of January. The technical lead (IDS) and Tdh social norms technical expert will be supported by the Tdh team in Myanmar.

Date	Activity	Logistics and Lead(s)
25/26 January	Arrival in Myanmar	
27 January	Morning: Team catch up. Training in Yangon with everyone, practice social norms mapping, making notes. Afternoon: Social norms mapping (we can do this with the team and extended partners, people they work with on CL and fish).	
28 January	Morning: Travel to HTY. Afternoon: Trajectory walk(s) from household to site with WFCL, credit (including informal) – what is the social-economic life of WFC in this location? What is the labour demand and supply in this location?	
29/30/31 January	Field visit – data collection and write up in each location.	
3 February	One day joint analysis with team, write up summary in PPT, translation.	
4 February (am)	Morning: Half-day feedback session (inviting people who Tdh thinks are useful and helpful for this visit as well as people who need to know what we do.	
4 February (pm)	Departure	

ANNEXE 2 SELECTION FOR THE SCOPING

Sectors of work/ tasks conducted by children in HTY	Gender	Age group	Growing sector	Accessibility	WFCL	Proportionate prevalence
1 Domestic work (most outside of HTY)		10–18 (mostly up to 14/15)	⇑			
House chores	Girls					
Caring (aged people and children)	Girls					
Shop keeping	Girls					
2 Teashop/ restaurants		8–18	⇑⇑ in HTY	Parents Children Owner Manager Relatives/ neighbours	1, 2	
Serving	Boys		Over 200 teashops			
Cleaning dishes	Boys					
Cooking and preparing food	Girls					
3 Drugs		12–18	⇑⇑⇑ in HTY	Police Users Parents Distributors Local authorities CSOs Dangerous		
Sell	Both boys and girls					
Transport	Both boys and girls					
Recruitment	Both boys and girls					
Use	Both boys and girls					
4 Garment	Girls (less boys)	14–18	⇑	Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association (MGMA) Zone committee Labour department Labour unions CSO: Confederation of Trade Unions Myanmar (CTUM) Social welfare		
Helper cutting						
Sewing						
Transporting items from one site to another						
5 Construction			⇑			
Carry	Both girls and boys					
Smach	Mostly boys					

6 Sex (site-based and mobile) & entertainment			⇑⇑ in HTY	Broker (informal); customer/client Owner/ manager/ supervisor CSO permit from Yangon City Development Committee	1 & 3	Limited proportion of children involved *Not enough children to be selected and no good access*
Sell sex and drugs	More girls					
Recruit	More girls					
7 Markets/shops		12–18	⇑	Parents, children, friends, owners, buyers, intermediaries (friends, family members, neighbours)	1, 3	Many children
Carrying	Boys		75 markets/ shops			
Selling	Girls					
8 Street work: selling reusable items/ flowers/ water bottles/ snacks and fruits	More boys	10–18	⇑⇑ in HTY	Parents Children Owner (waste dump) Middlemen Buyer Intermediaries (informal, kinship, neighbourhood)	1 & 3	*Not necessarily WFCL* *No clear access as very spread*
9 Street begging						
10 Recycling waste:		6–15	⇑⇑ in HTY	Parents Children Owner (waste dump) Middlemen Buyer Intermediaries (informal, kinship, neighbourhood) Requires a permit from Yangon City Development Committee	1 & 3	Great numbers of children involved and a sector in expansion
Collecting/ waste picking from streets, etc./selling to recycling companies	Both boys and girls		20–25 recycling points			
Sorting	Both boys and girls					
Carrying loads	Boys					
11 Transportation	Boys	12–18				
12 Food processing (fish and prawns)		8–13	⇑⇑ in HTY	Friends/ neighbours Parents Children For the moment we do not have access to owners, but could try to develop relationships with them in the future	1, 2, 3	Large proportion of very young children
Packing	Girls		3–4 food processing in HTY			
Cleaning	Girls					
Cutting heads of fish	Girls					
Carrying	Boys					
13 Mechanics	Boys	10–18				

ANNEXE 3 REMUNERATION SCHEMES

Type of work	Daily income in Kyat	Equivalent in £	Monthly income in Kyat	In-kind support
Children in waste collection (*according to community waste buyer*)	8,000 to 10,000 for 2–3 children	4–5		Community waste buyer claims to pay off police when children are in need: about 5,000 Kyats
Children in waste collection (*according to children*)	6,000 on good days; 1,000 to 2,000 on bad days			Boys can get advance up to 20,000 Kyats from certain waste buyers
Children (boys) sewing bags in vegetable market (*from adult interviewed*)	100 per bag	0.05 per bag		
Boys carrying bags in vegetable market (*from adult interviewed*)	50 per bag	0.025 per bag		
Boys transporting bags in vegetable market (*from adult interviewed*)	10 to 20,000	5–10		
Begging for fish (*from some parents*)	8,000 to 12,000 for the family	4.2–6.3		
Begging for fish (*other parents*)	6,000 to 8,000 (for 5–7 family members)			
Female processing fish in the market (*from female interviewed*)	7,000	3.7		
One boy who works in the wholesale shop at fish market (*from mother*)	7,000			3,000 Kyats per day in cash and the rest at the end of the month
Boy in teashop (*from teashop owner*)			60,000 (£31)	Housing and food, plus some clothes occasionally, and salary increase (10,000–20,000 Kyats every 6 months and a bonus every year) as an incentive
Girls in fish-processing factory (*from girls*)	5,000 to 6,000	2.5–3		Have to buy gloves (300 Kyats) and get 4,000 Kyats for overtime
Girls in fish-processing factory (*from girls*)	1,250 to 2,000	0.6–1		250 Kyats per bucket ; 5–8 buckets a day
Women in fish-processing factory (*from working adult*)	2,500 to 3,000	1.3–1.6		250 Kyats per bucket ; 10–12 buckets a day

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CLARISSA works by co-developing with stakeholders practical options for children to avoid engagement in the worst forms of child labour in Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Nepal.

The participatory processes which underpin the programme are designed to generate innovation from the ground which can sustainably improve the lives of children and their families.

The programme's outputs are similarly co-designed and collaboratively produced to enhance local ownership of the knowledge, and to ensure that our research uptake and engagement strategy is rooted in the direct experience of the people most affected on the ground.