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Child Labor Policy

Version 1.0

Child labor policy

Policy brief & purpose

Our child labor policy is our position on employing minors and aims to ensure that AfroLeadership, its representatives, country chapters and everyone we're connected with follow the law and cares for children's interests.

International, regional and local child labor laws are stricter today than they were years ago. But millions of children are still forced to work in bad conditions all around the world, and especially in developed countries.

As an organization, we want to do business in a legal, ethical manner adding value to society and the environment instead of doing harm. Helping stop child labor is fundamental to us. We want to make sure that our organization doesn't take part in children's exploitation and also helps end it to the best of our ability.

Scope

This policy applies to our entire organization and those we do business or partner with including interns, partners, suppliers, vendors and contractors.

The [International Labour Organization \(ILO\)](#) and the [U.N Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) guide our policy on child labor. When it comes to legal aspects, we always:

- Follow the stricter law if more than one laws apply (e.g. local, country, regional and international).
- Require stakeholders, employees, interns, suppliers, partners and vendors to follow the stricter applicable laws and recognize children's rights. They must also require their own suppliers, subcontractors and stakeholders to do the same.

In this policy, we refer to "children" as people who are younger than 18 years of age. "Young children" are people younger than 14.

"Child labor" refers to work that deprives children of their childhood and affects their schooling, their potential and their dignity. It's work that's harmful to them mentally, physically and socially.

Policy elements

Young children

When it comes to young children (younger than 14), we don't want to stand in the way of their health, schooling or free time. That's why we don't and won't employ anyone younger than 15 years of age and require our subsidiaries to do the same, regardless of the country they're in.

We're also committed not to do business with any organization that employs children younger than 15. We'll include this condition in every contract we sign and reserve the right to break the contract without penalty if our stakeholder violates this condition and refuses to agree on or follow through with an elimination plan.

Legal exceptions

Agriculture. *Many laws make the distinction between agricultural and non-agricultural jobs. Agricultural job requirements for minors may be less strict, especially if a child works at a family-owned farm. In these cases, we'll follow the law when doing business with agricultural businesses and we'll make sure that children involved aren't placed in danger via regular audits and official documentation.*

Parental employment. We might occasionally work with family or family-owned businesses. Those families and their businesses are usually allowed to employ the owner's young children as long as the work isn't too hazardous (e.g. mining, manufacturing). We accept this regulation, but we'll still dissolve our contract if it comes to our attention that these children are exposed in danger or are working consistently during school hours.

Occasional work. Sometimes, parents bring their children to work to teach them skills and introduce them to a work environment. They may also hand them some tasks to complete (e.g. a painter may ask his child to help with a painting job he's taken). This is an acceptable practice, as long as it doesn't deprive children of school on a consistent basis or puts them in any danger. (For example, the painter shouldn't allow his son to inhale toxic paint or ask him to climb on scaffolding.)

Older children

When it comes to employing children who are older than 15, we'll always follow the local and international laws. As a general rule, these children can have a job, but they should never do work that jeopardizes their health and safety or affects their schooling and development.

With this rule in mind, we may employ children older than 15 for light work such as stocking shelves, being cashiers, delivering packages in short distances on bicycles, light cleaning duties etc. They will not use any heavy or dangerous equipment, chemicals or vehicles when working.

We'll determine their work hours and wage based on applicable laws. We won't employ children for more than the maximum weekly or daily hours allowed, by laws and regulations in countries where AfroLeadership has business.

These are mandatory conditions when forming partnerships or other business relationships. We'll refuse to do business with anyone who employs children of any age in hazardous or exhausting jobs or doesn't follow applicable laws on working hours or pay. We also expect them to communicate and enforce the no child labor policy to their own contractors.

Actions and Implementation

To make sure we enforce this policy and help eliminate child labor, we're committed to :

- Working with governments and other organizations to end child labor. We may sponsor or organize actions to educate communities, build schools or find ways to ensure children won't be forced to work to support their families.
- Educating our staff on youth work laws and show them how to report child labor if they see or suspect it.
- Requiring hiring managers and HR to avoid hiring minors under the legal age for working. We also expect them to know and follow this policy and laws on wages and hours for older children.
- Keeping and validating documentation verifying our employees' age after they're hired. If we discover that we've hired a minor under the age of 18, we'll review applicable laws and adjust working hours accordingly. If we need to let the child go, we'll assess their situation and make sure to provide for them to the best of our ability (e.g. pay him or her their would-be salary for a couple of months) when necessary.
- Communicating our no child labor policy to organizations we're connected with and ensure our contracts have the right stipulations.
- Auditing suppliers and partners (especially those in [industries with high child labor risk](#)) periodically to ensure they aren't involved in child labor, possibly with unannounced onsite visits too. We'll require them to provide us with an updated list of all their business locations at all times. If we discover hidden business sites that employ children, we'll dissolve our contract immediately.
- Demanding and monitoring an elimination plan in cases where suppliers discover child labor in their business. We'll also work together with the stakeholder to create plans to support children, keeping their best interests in mind, and make efforts to involve them and their families in the process.
- Employing or consulting with experts on topics like child labor, health and safety standards or corporate social responsibility.

Children's welfare is everyone's business

We want to grow and thrive as a business, but we're also committed to do good by the community we belong in. We ask all of our employees and partners to follow this policy, not just because we demand it as an organization, but because securing a bright future for children is everyone's duty.