In recent years, global progress towards ending child labour has stalled. A staggering 160 million children were estimated to be in engaged in child labour at the start of 2020. The COVID crisis is expected to worsen this situation amid school closures and strained public and household finances. Leading Minds Online asks how we can get progress back on track and promote proven measures to reduce child labour.

Social protection is critical - but is not a silver bullet
Reduction poverty through social protection has been shown to reduce child labour, but not all programmes are created equal. Three key criteria for successful social protection are: broad family coverage; benefits adequate to meet family needs; and regular, predictable payments. Diversifying household income and using technological innovations can also reduce child labour.

Be wary of unintended effects
Some programmes to end child labour may instead incentivize it. For example, as social protection allows households to own a business or expand their farm, children may be brought into work, including into hazardous activities. Closely monitoring and adapting programmes can help avoid unintended impacts.

Back to school - especially for those most vulnerable
School closures and inadequate access to online learning may be pushing students towards work. Returning and keeping children in school through adaptive teaching approaches is critical to addressing child labour.

What the experts say | COVID and Children

LEADING MINDS ONLINE | 24 JUNE 2021

In recent years, global progress towards ending child labour has stalled. A staggering 160 million children were estimated to be in engaged in child labour at the start of 2020. The COVID crisis is expected to worsen this situation amid school closures and strained public and household finances. Leading Minds Online asks how we can get progress back on track and promote proven measures to reduce child labour.

Social protection is critical - but is not a silver bullet
Reduction poverty through social protection has been shown to reduce child labour, but not all programmes are created equal. Three key criteria for successful social protection are: broad family coverage; benefits adequate to meet family needs; and regular, predictable payments. Diversifying household income and using technological innovations can also reduce child labour.

Be wary of unintended effects
Some programmes to end child labour may instead incentivize it. For example, as social protection allows households to own a business or expand their farm, children may be brought into work, including into hazardous activities. Closely monitoring and adapting programmes can help avoid unintended impacts.

Back to school - especially for those most vulnerable
School closures and inadequate access to online learning may be pushing students towards work. Returning and keeping children in school through adaptive teaching approaches is critical to addressing child labour.

#LEADINGMINDS