

# Child Labour in Africa

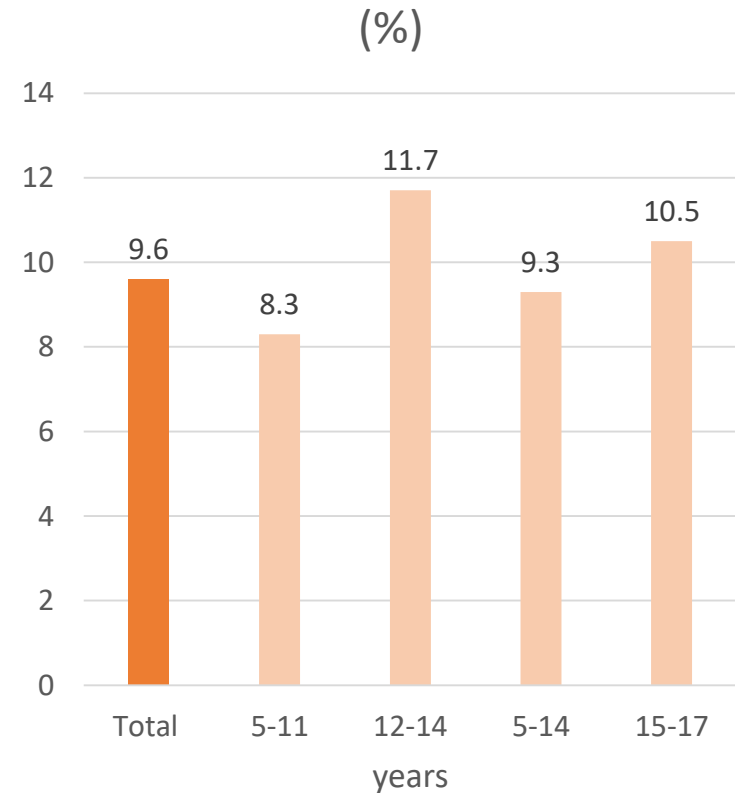
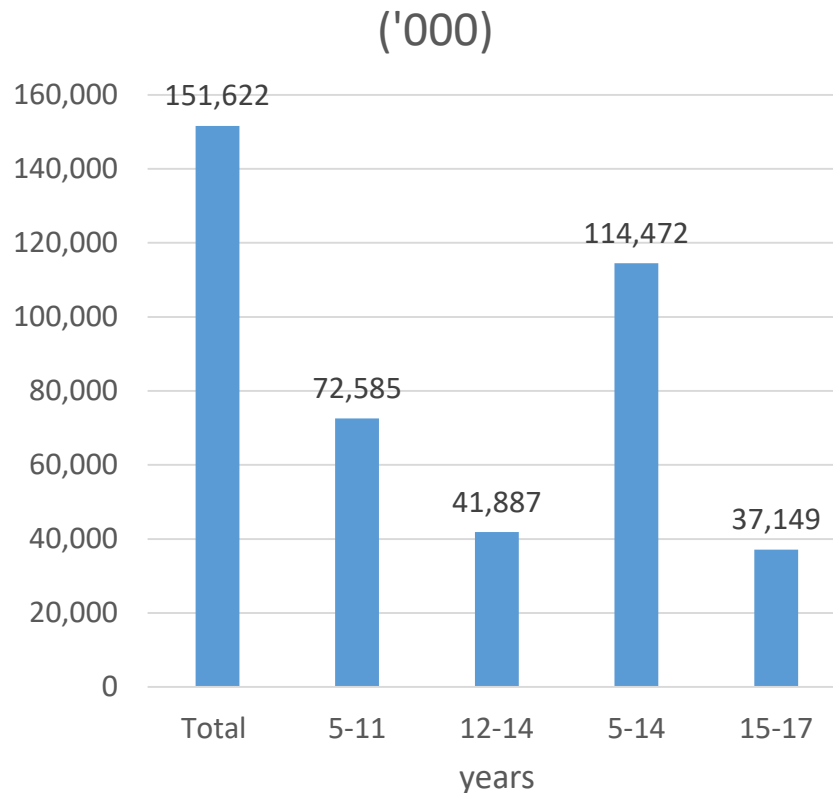
Research and Evaluation unit

Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Branch



Children's involvement in child labour remains an **important policy concern**.

In 2016, an estimated population of 151.6 million children aged 5-17 , or 9.6 percent of the world population of children, were in child labour

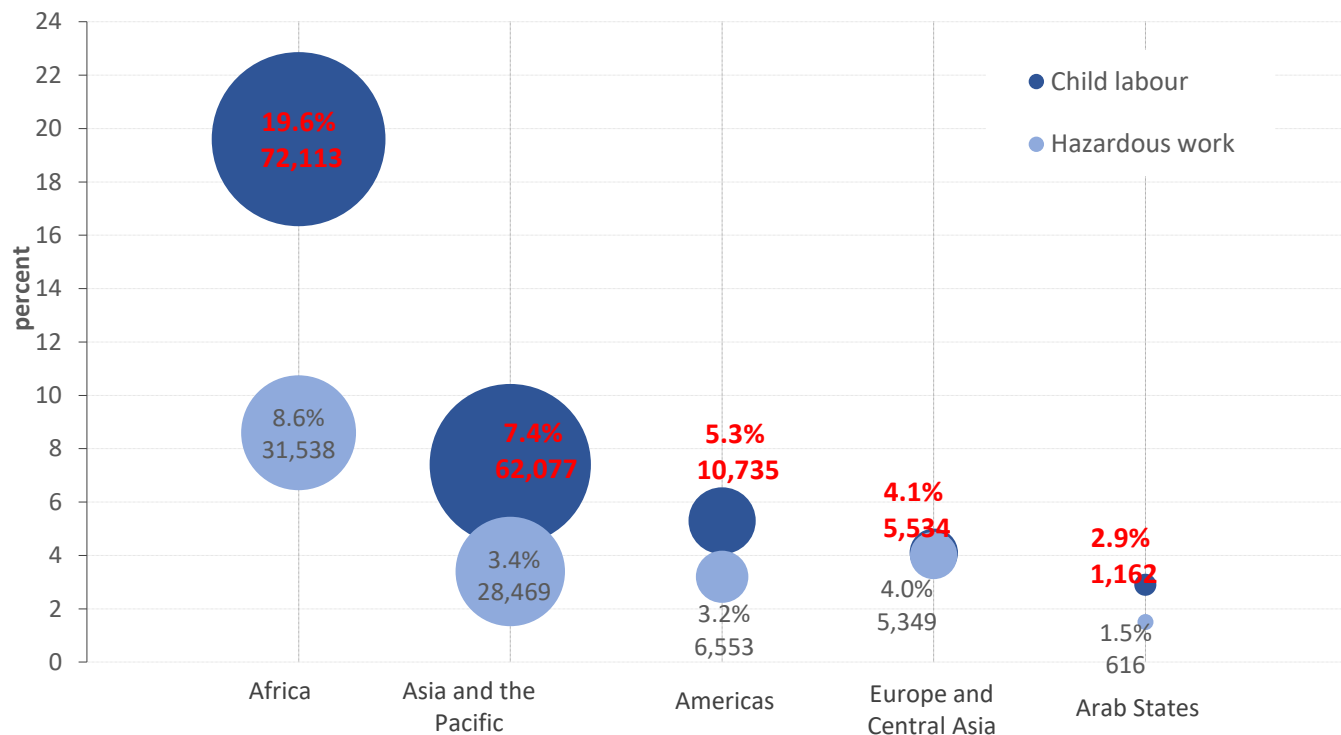




About 20 percent of all African children are involved in child labour.

A proportion more than twice as high as any other region

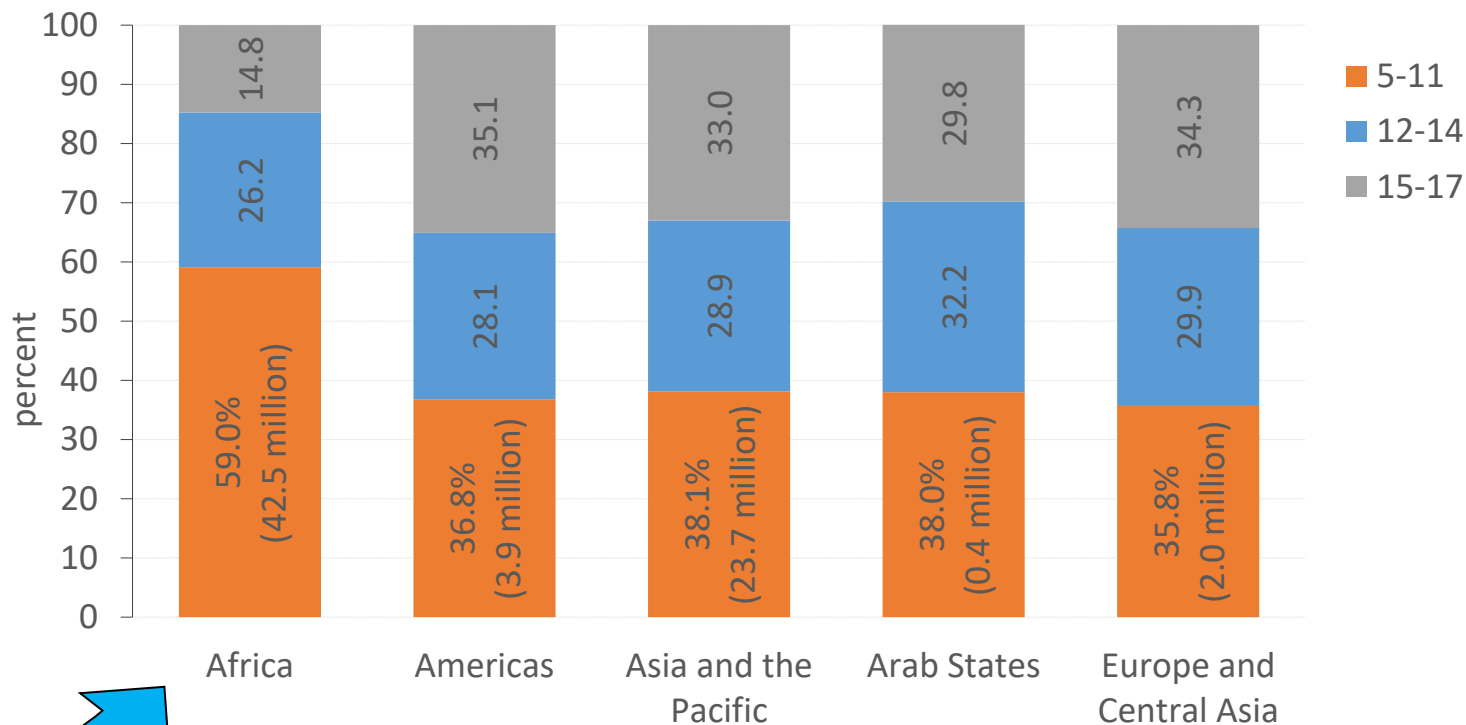
Percentage and number (in thousands) of children in child labour and hazardous work, 5–17 years age group, by region, 2016



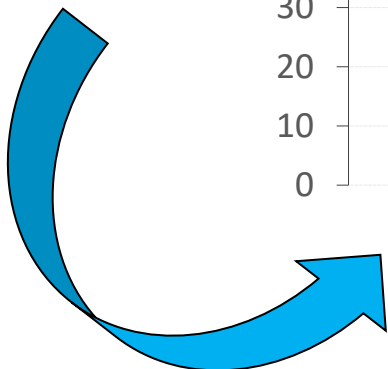


The predominance of young children in the child labour population is especially pronounced in Africa

Children's involvement in child labour, by age range and region



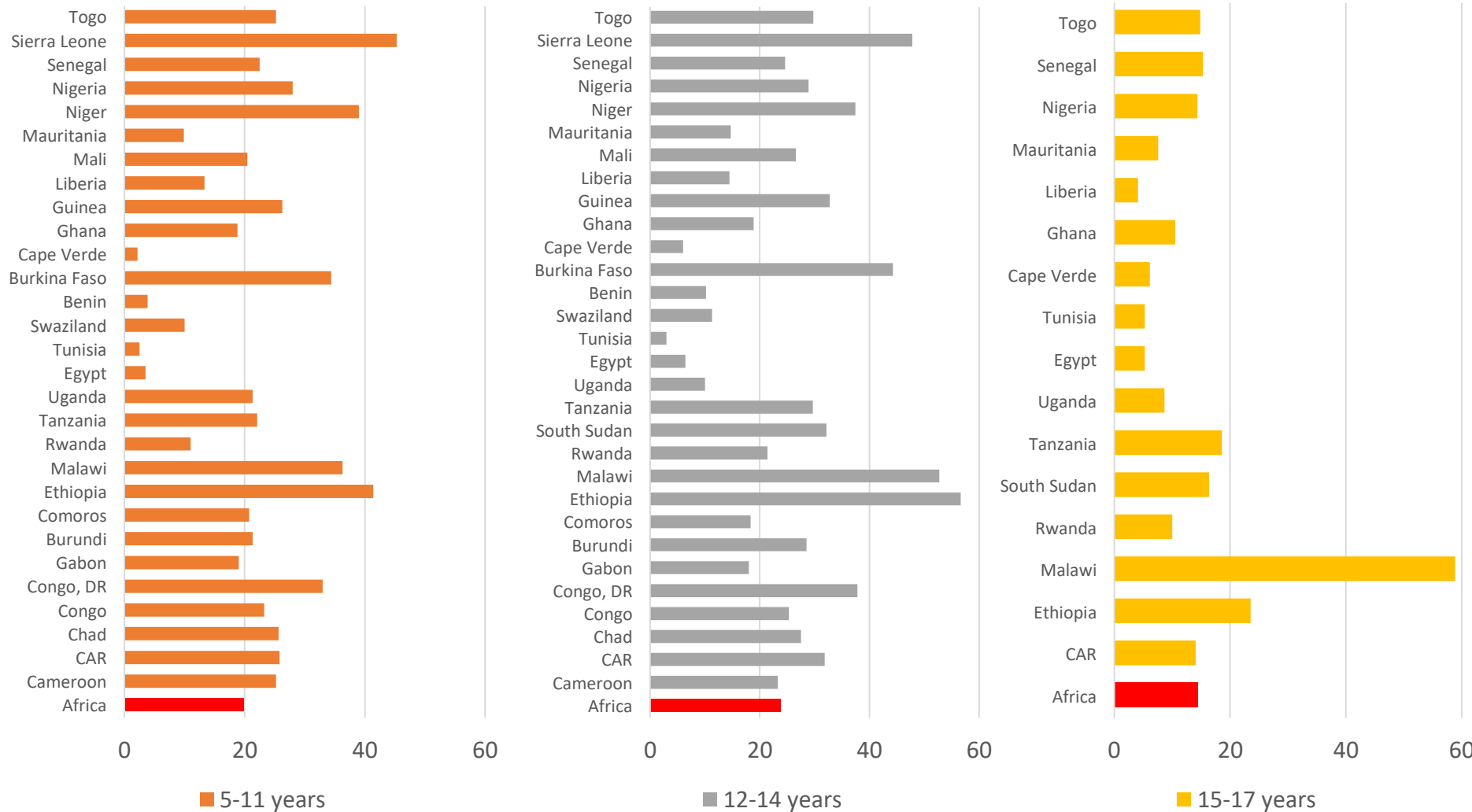
Three out of every five children in child labour are aged 5-11 years





Involvement in child labour is much higher for young children in almost all countries

## Child labour by age group

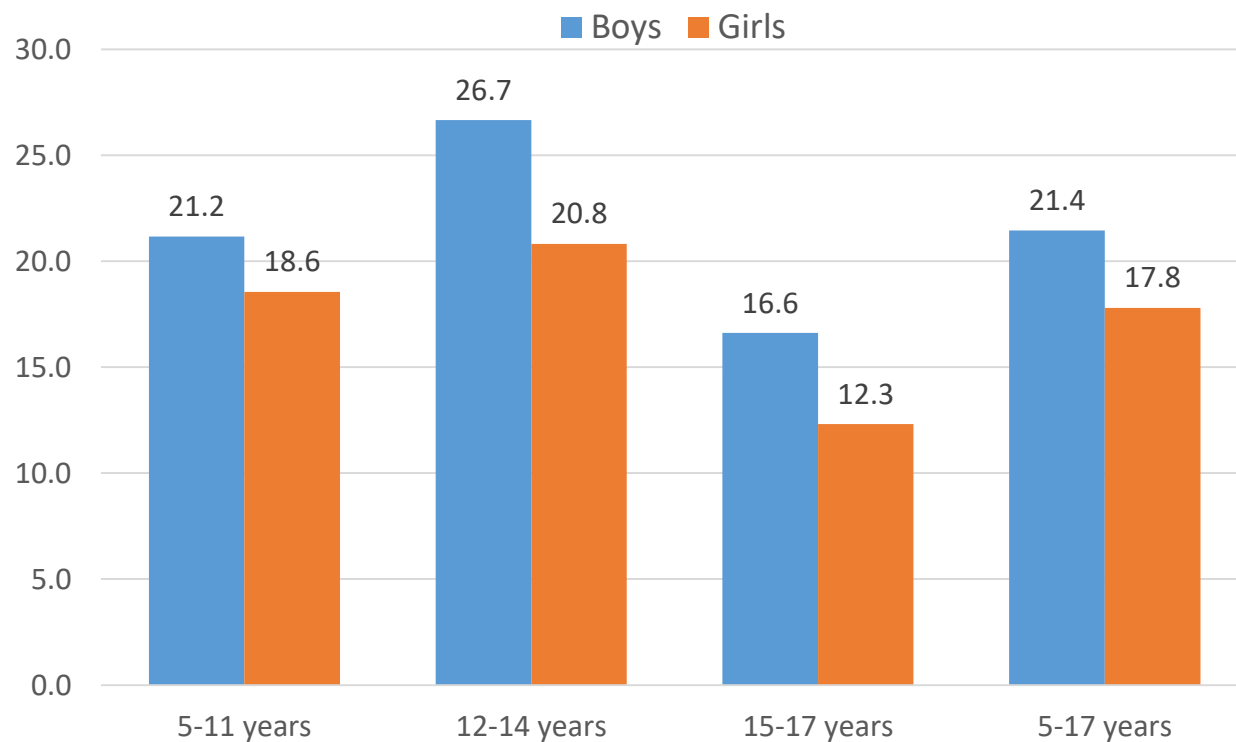


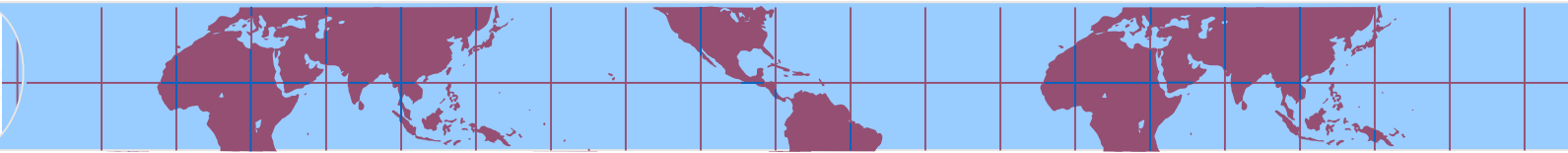


Gender considerations are important.

The percentage of boys in child labour exceed that of girls at any age.

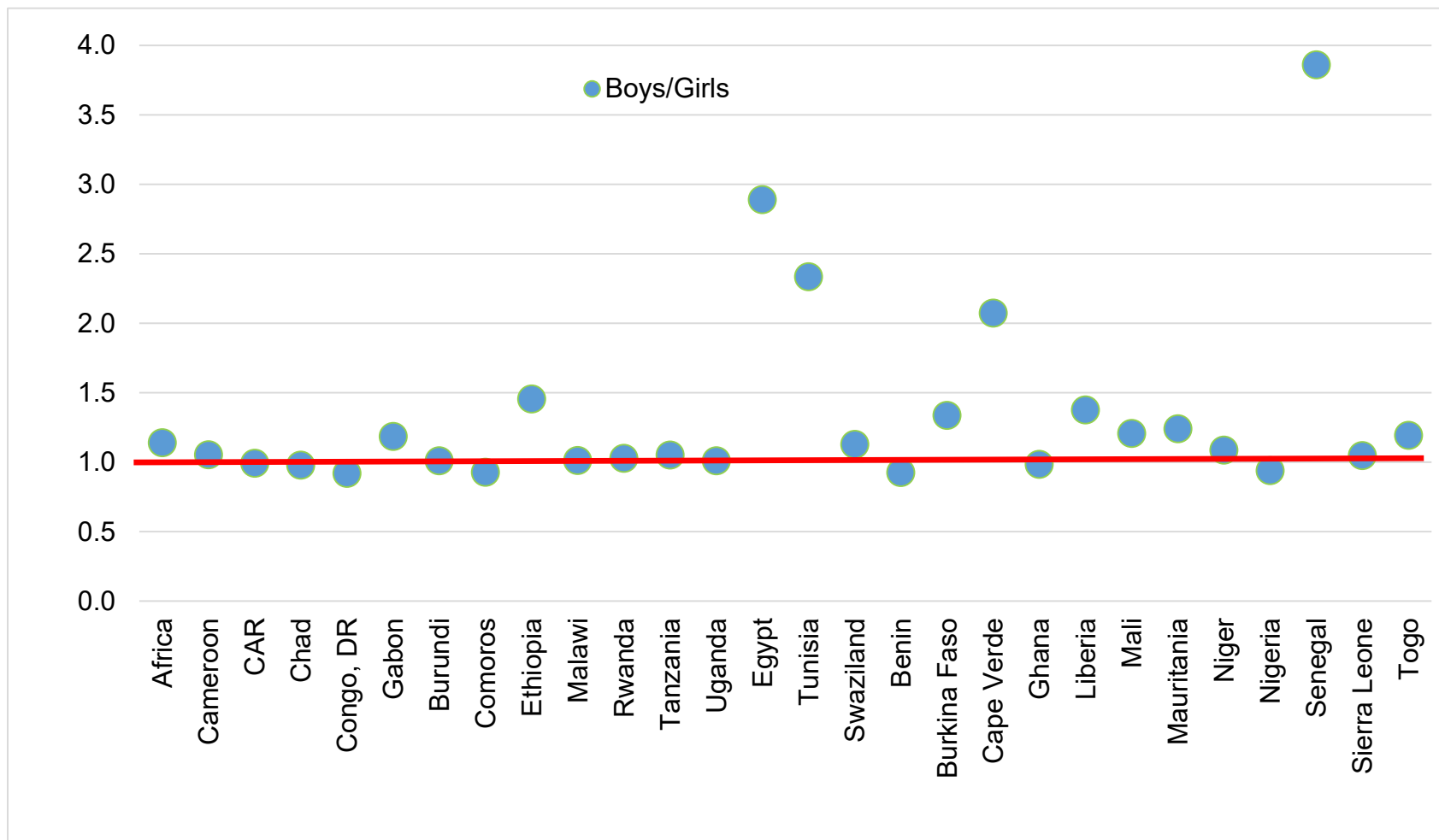
### Child labour in Africa, by age group and sex





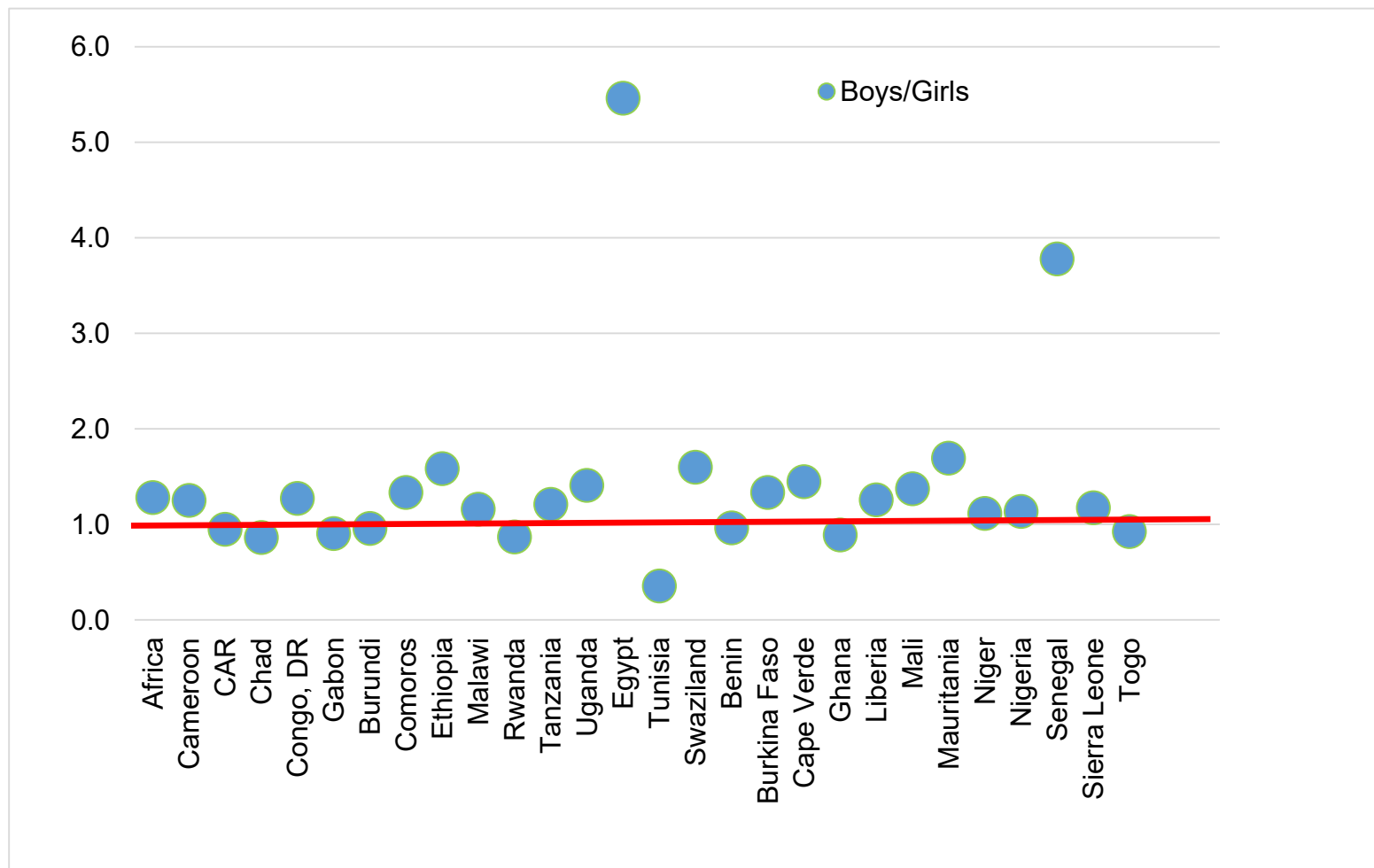
The share of boys in child labour exceeds that of females in almost all countries

Relative risk. Children in Child Labour (age 5-11), by country and sex





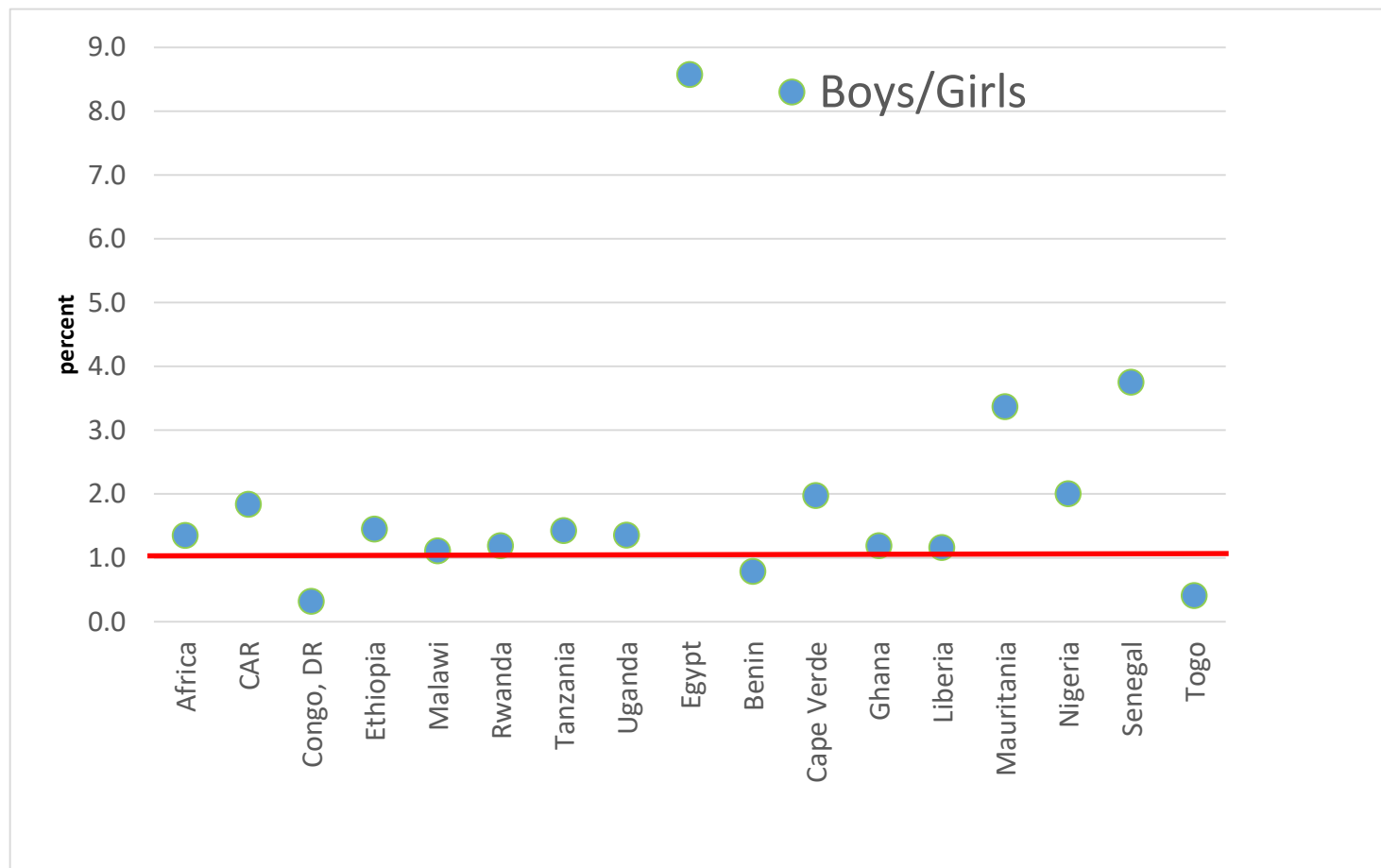
## Children in Child Labour (age 12-14), by country and sex

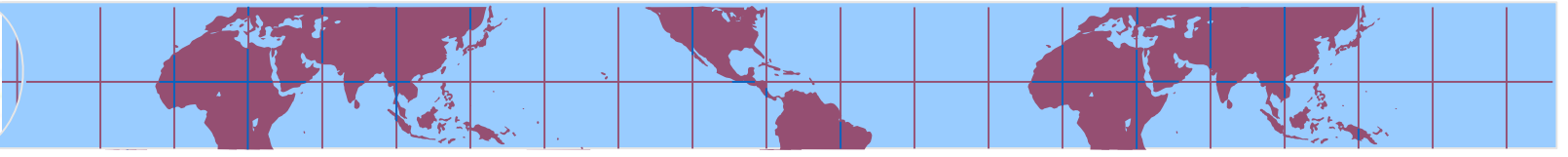






## Children in Child Labour (age 15-17), by country and sex





## Characteristics of children in child labour



Information on the various characteristics of children in child labour is necessary for understanding children's workplace reality and their role in the labour force.

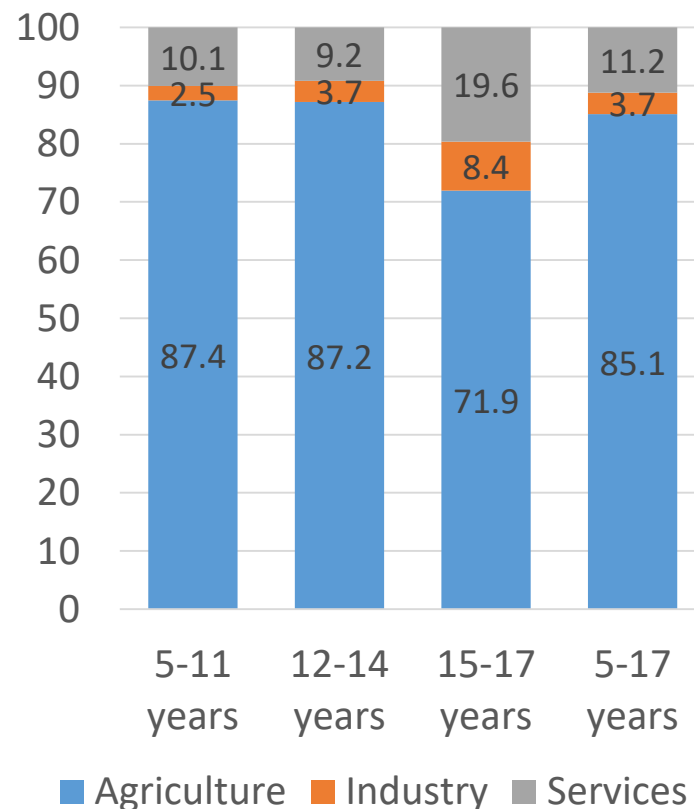
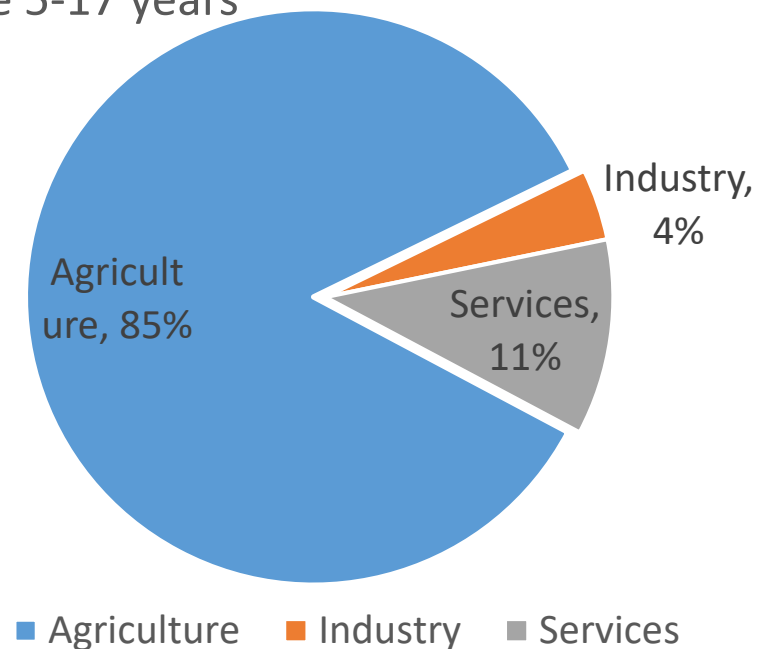
- A breakdown of children in child labour by **sector of employment** and by **status in employment** help to provide a standardised picture of where children are concentrated and additional insights into how child labour is carried out.
- average working hours provide an indirect indication of the possible health and educational consequences of children's work.



## Child Labour in Africa is concentrated overwhelmingly in the agriculture sector

Distribution of children in child labour by sector of employment

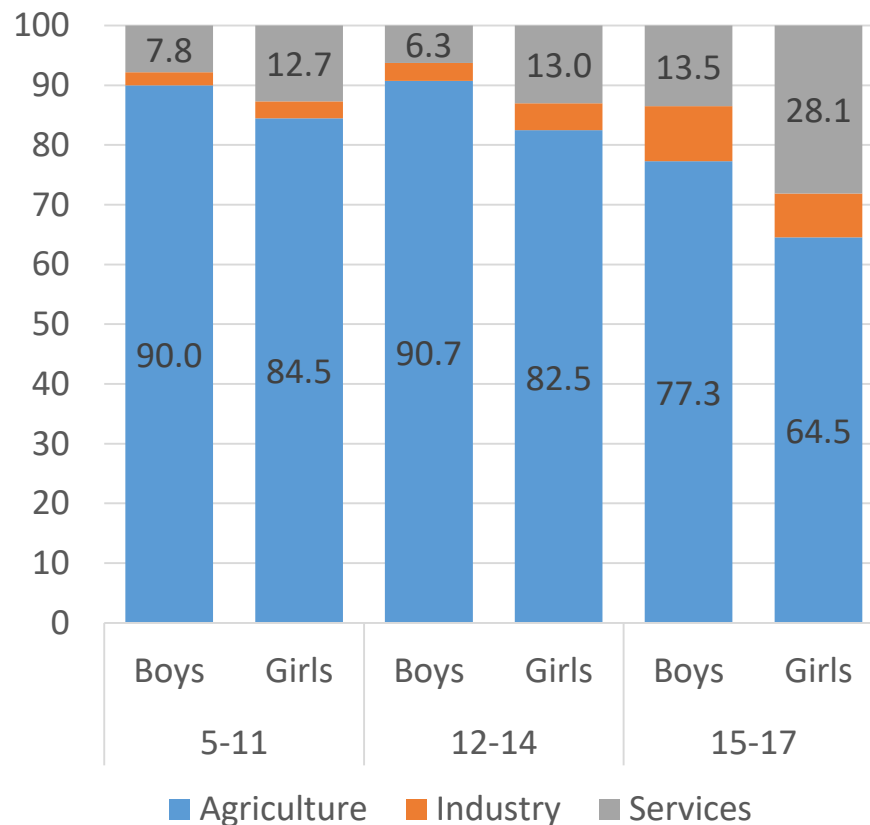
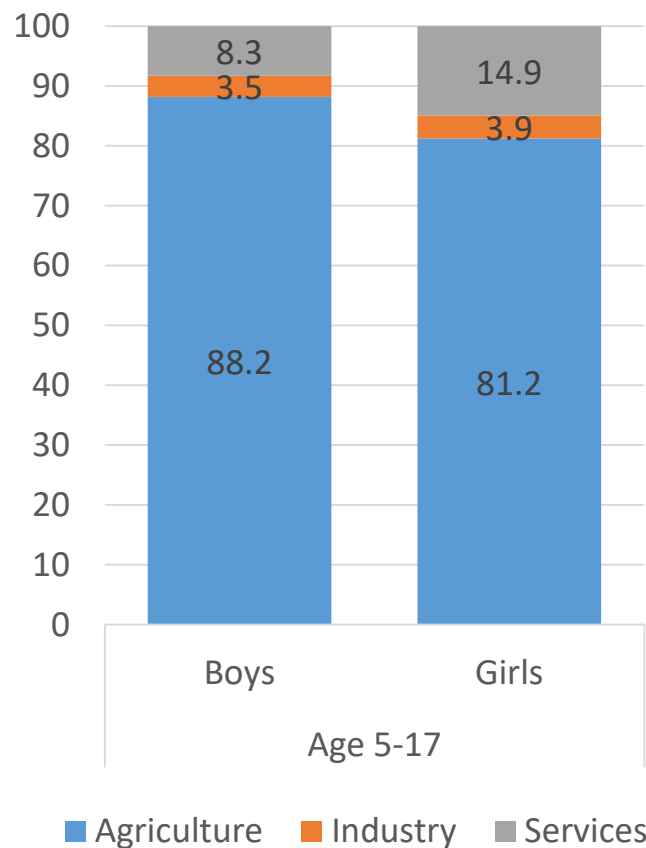
Age 5-17 years





As children grow older, involvement in agriculture slightly decreases in favor of a shift towards the service sector (especially for girls).

Distribution of children in child labour by sector of employment, age and sex



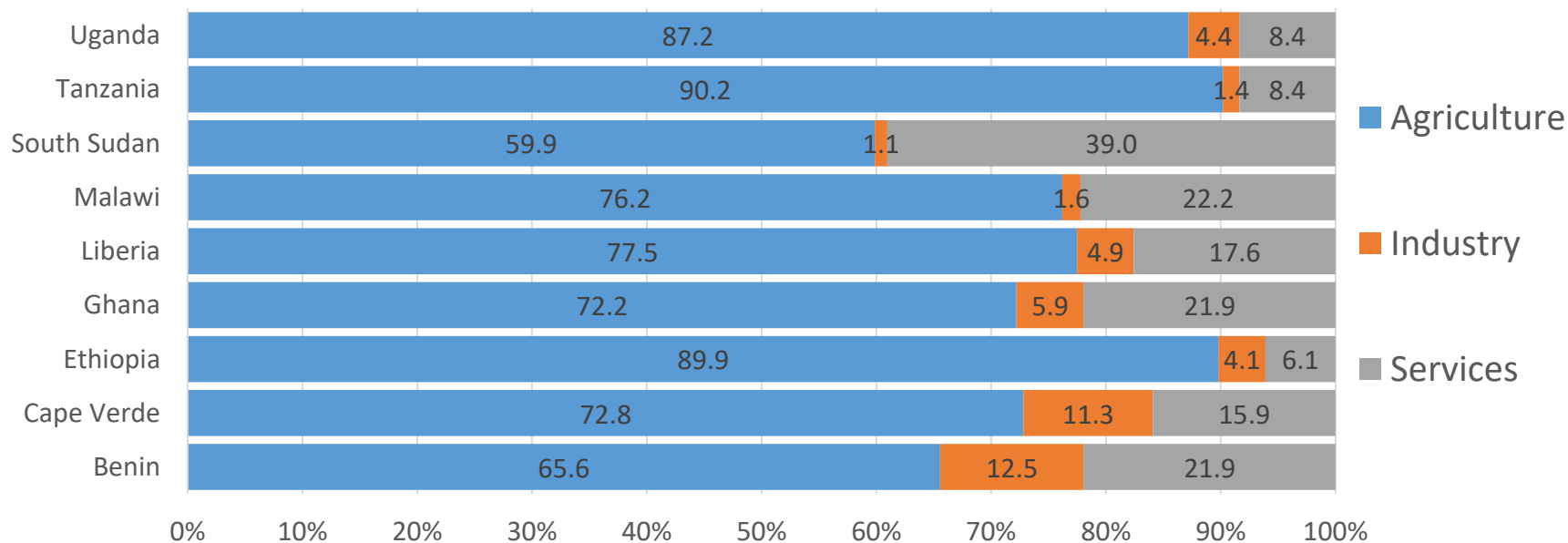


Little variation by country.

Children in child labour are involved mainly in the agriculture sector, followed by services.

Only a small share of children in child labour is involved in the industry sector

Distribution of children aged 5-17 in child labour by sector of employment and country



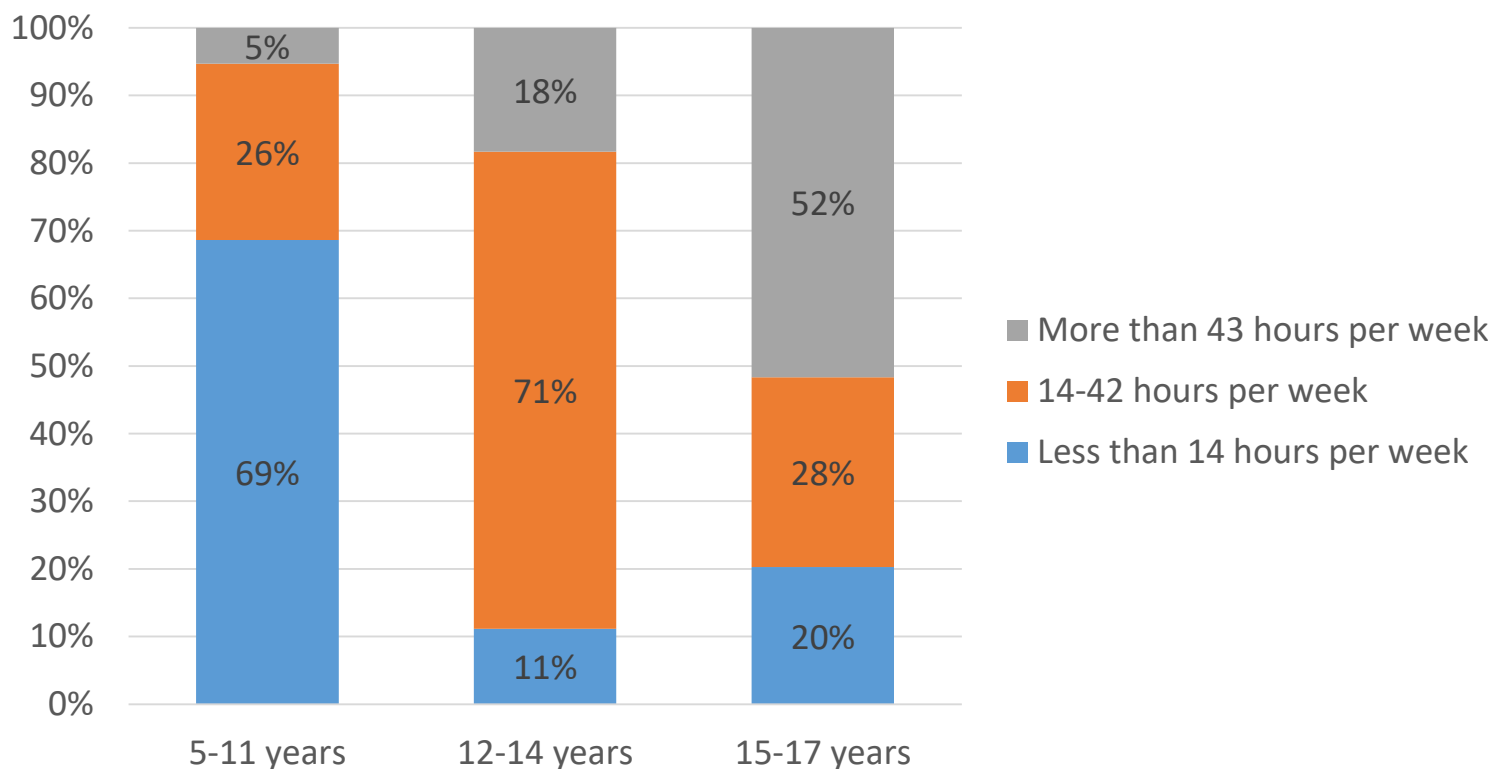
Note: South Sudan age 10-17; Benin age 6-17



Work intensity increases with the age of children.

However, a not negligible share of the young 5-11 years old children log an average of more than 14 hours per week in child labour.

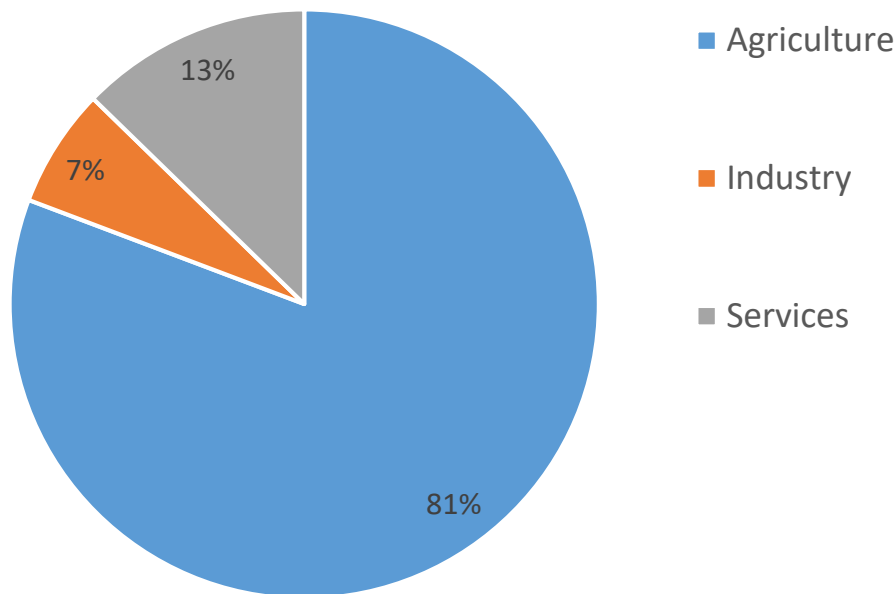
Distribution of children in child labour by working hours categories



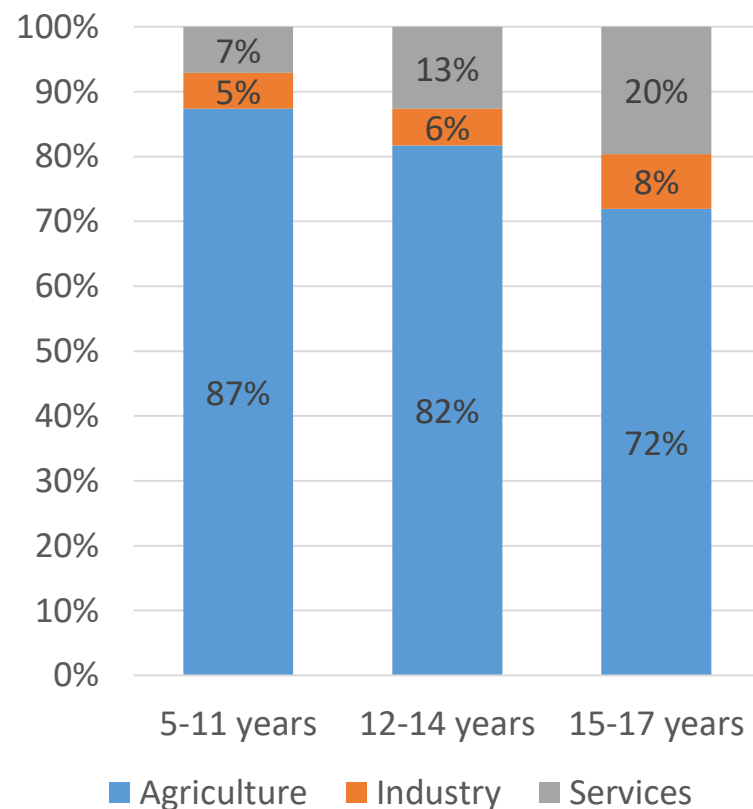


More than 80% of children involved in hazardous activities are found in the agriculture sector.

Hazardous work by Sector of employment



Hazardous work by Sector of employment and age group



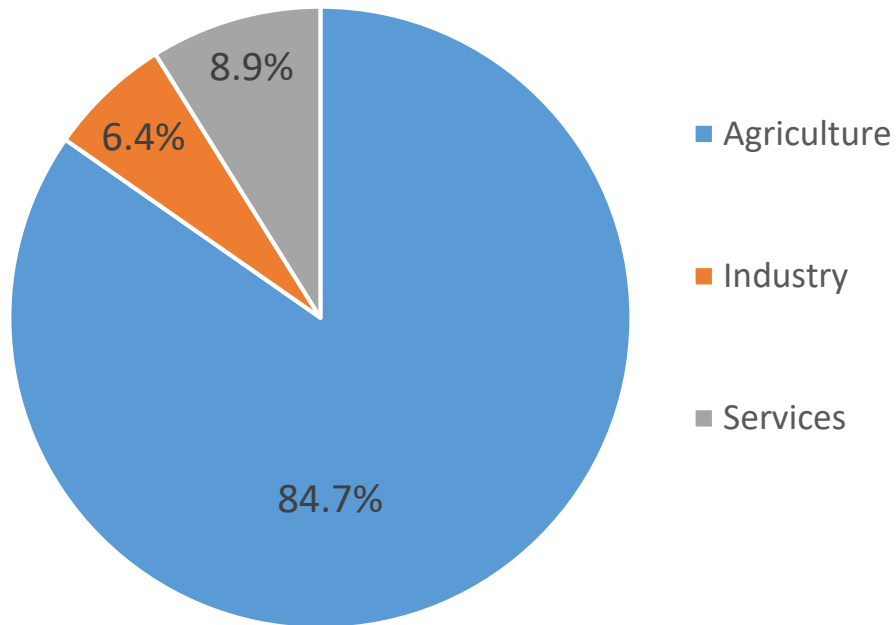




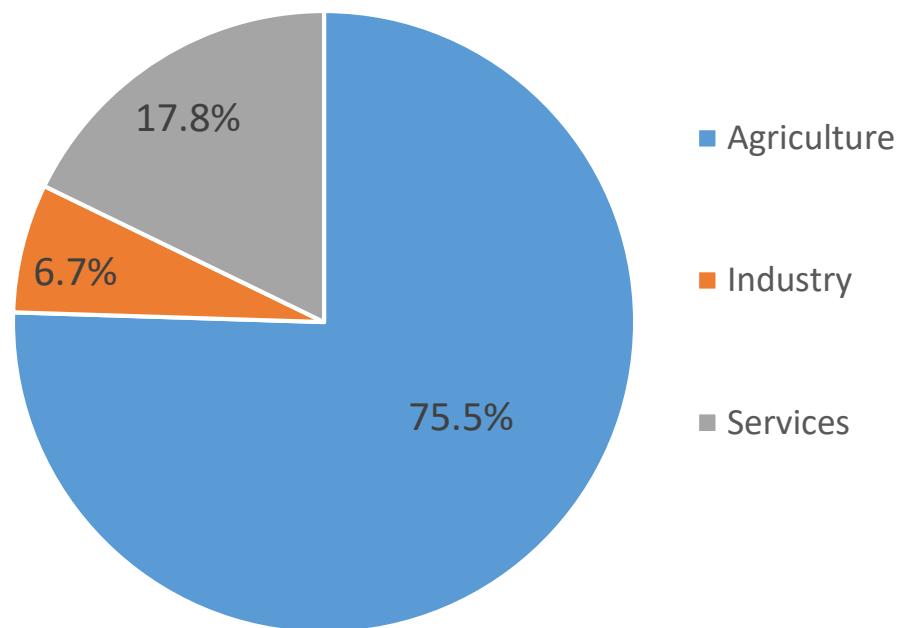
Girls are more likely than boys to be involved in hazardous activities in the service sector.

### Hazardous work by Sector of employment and gender

Boys



Girls

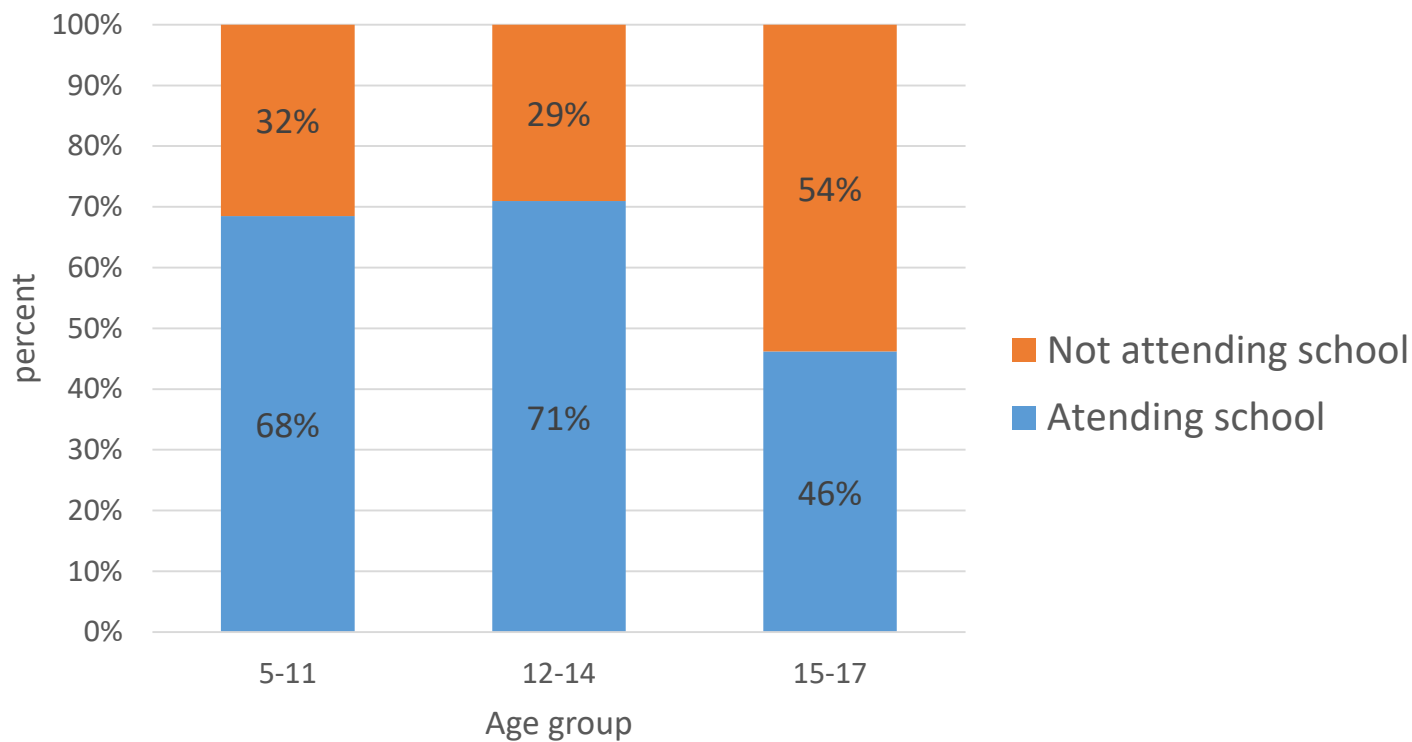


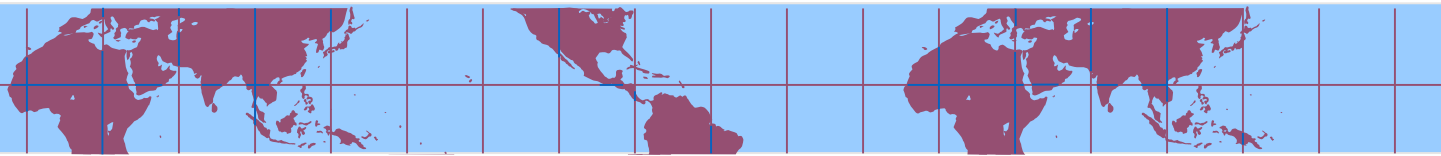


## Child labour interferes with education

More than 50 percent of children aged 15-17 in child labour do not attend school.

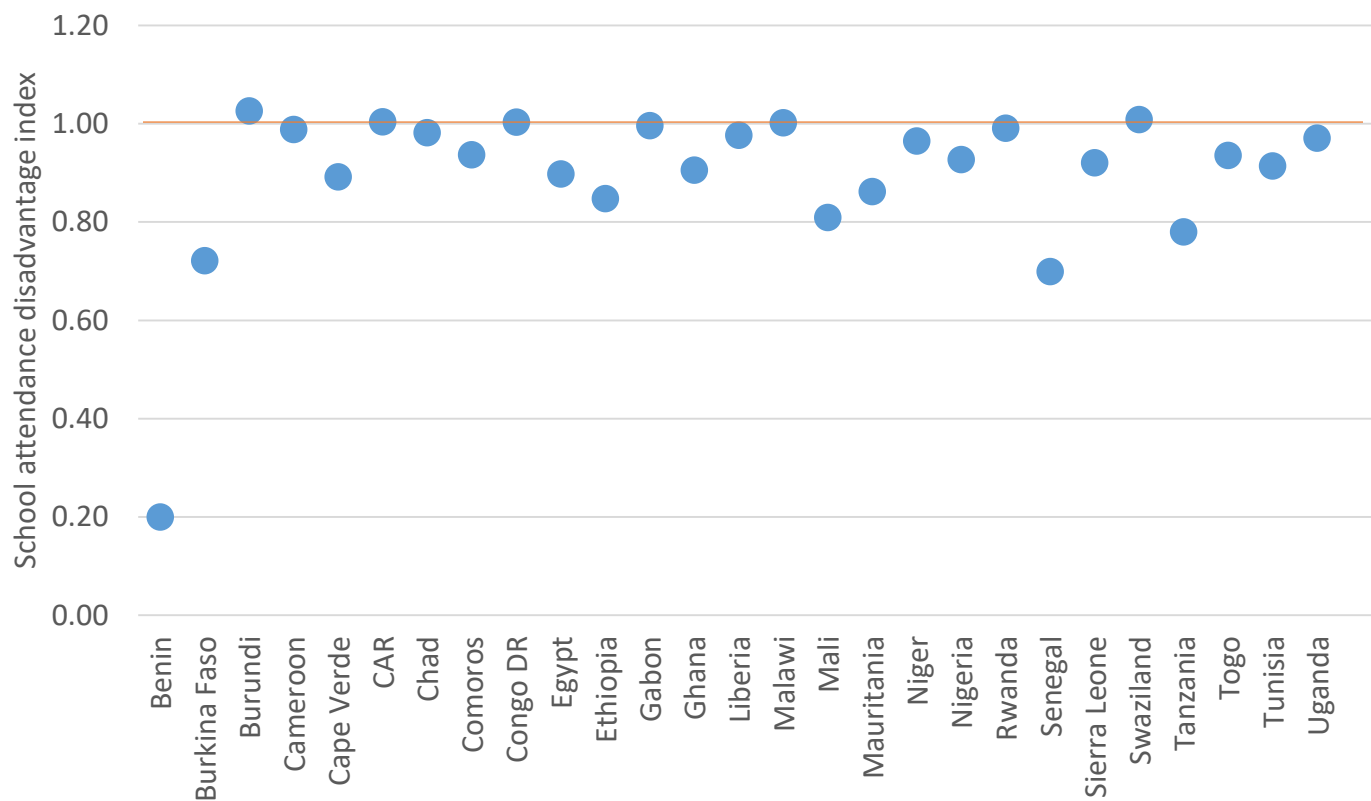
Children in child labour by school attendance status





## School attendance disadvantage of children in child labour, age 7-14 year

Children in child labour are disadvantaged in terms of their ability to attend school in almost all countries

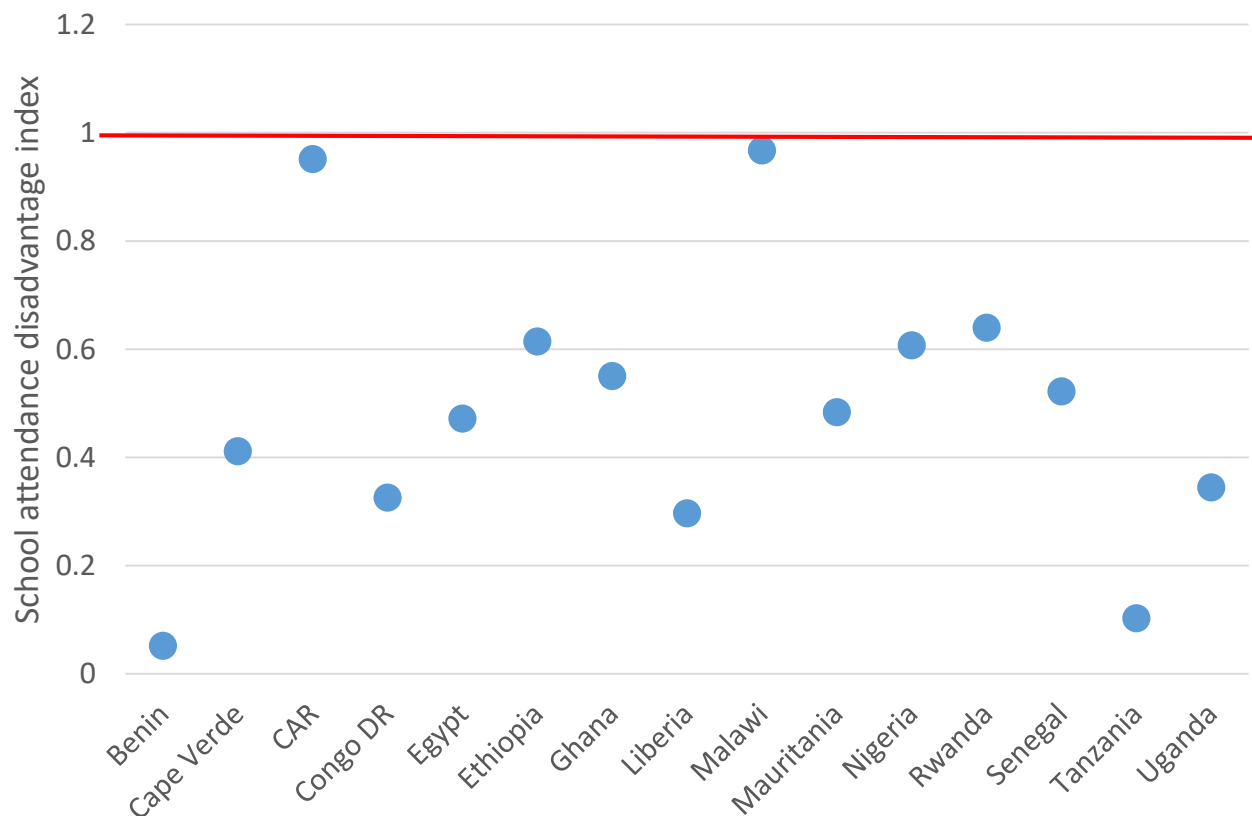


$$\text{Disadvantage index} = \frac{\text{School attendance rate of children in child labour}}{\text{School attendance rate of children not in child labour}}$$



## School attendance disadvantage of children in child labour, age 15-17 year

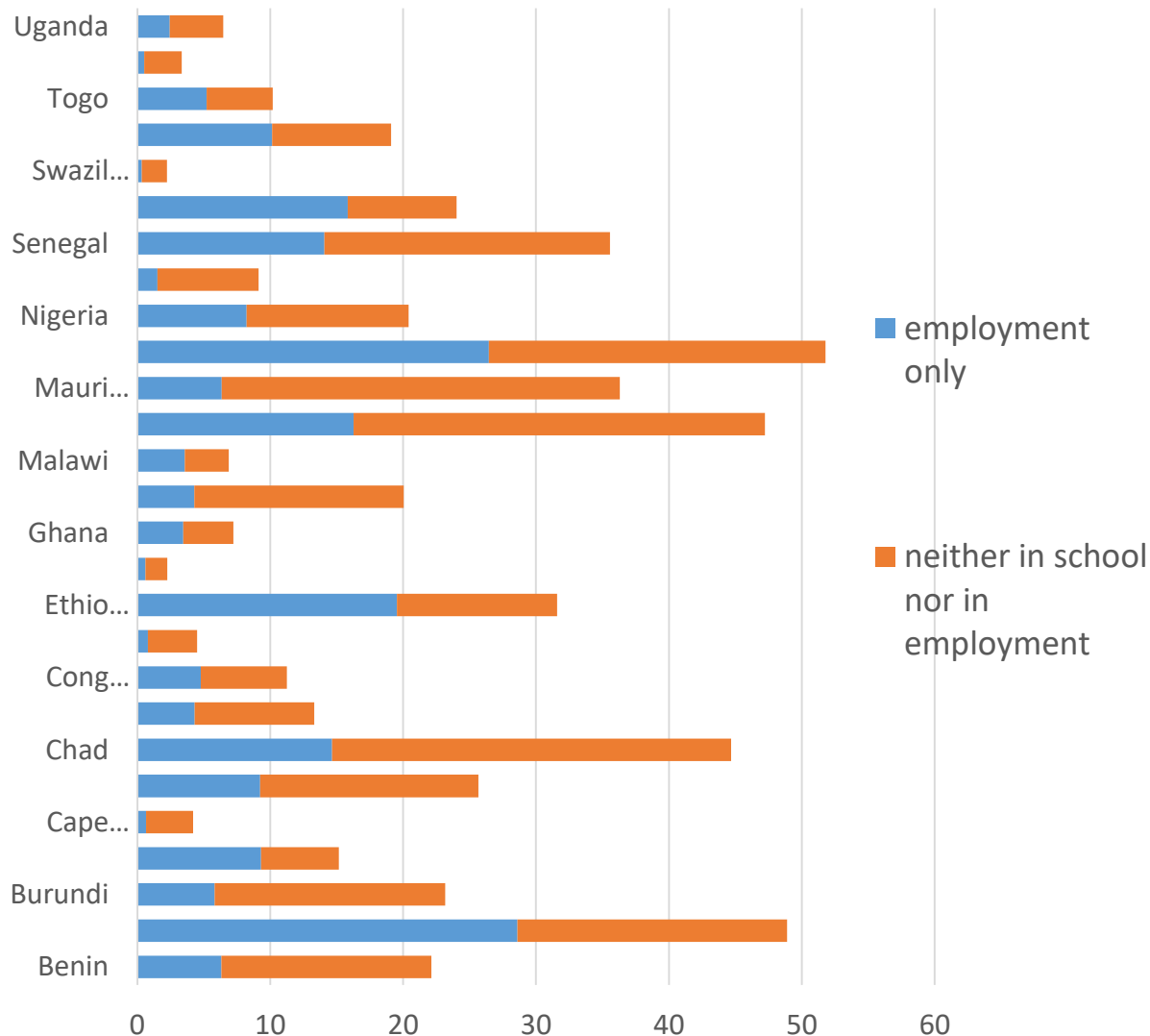
Children in child labour are disadvantaged in terms of their ability to attend school in all countries



$$\text{Disadvantage index} = \frac{\text{School attendance rate of children in child labour}}{\text{School attendance rate of children not in child labour}}$$



## Children out of school by activity status, age 7-14 years



A large share of children is out-of-school

Most of the children are neither in school nor in employment



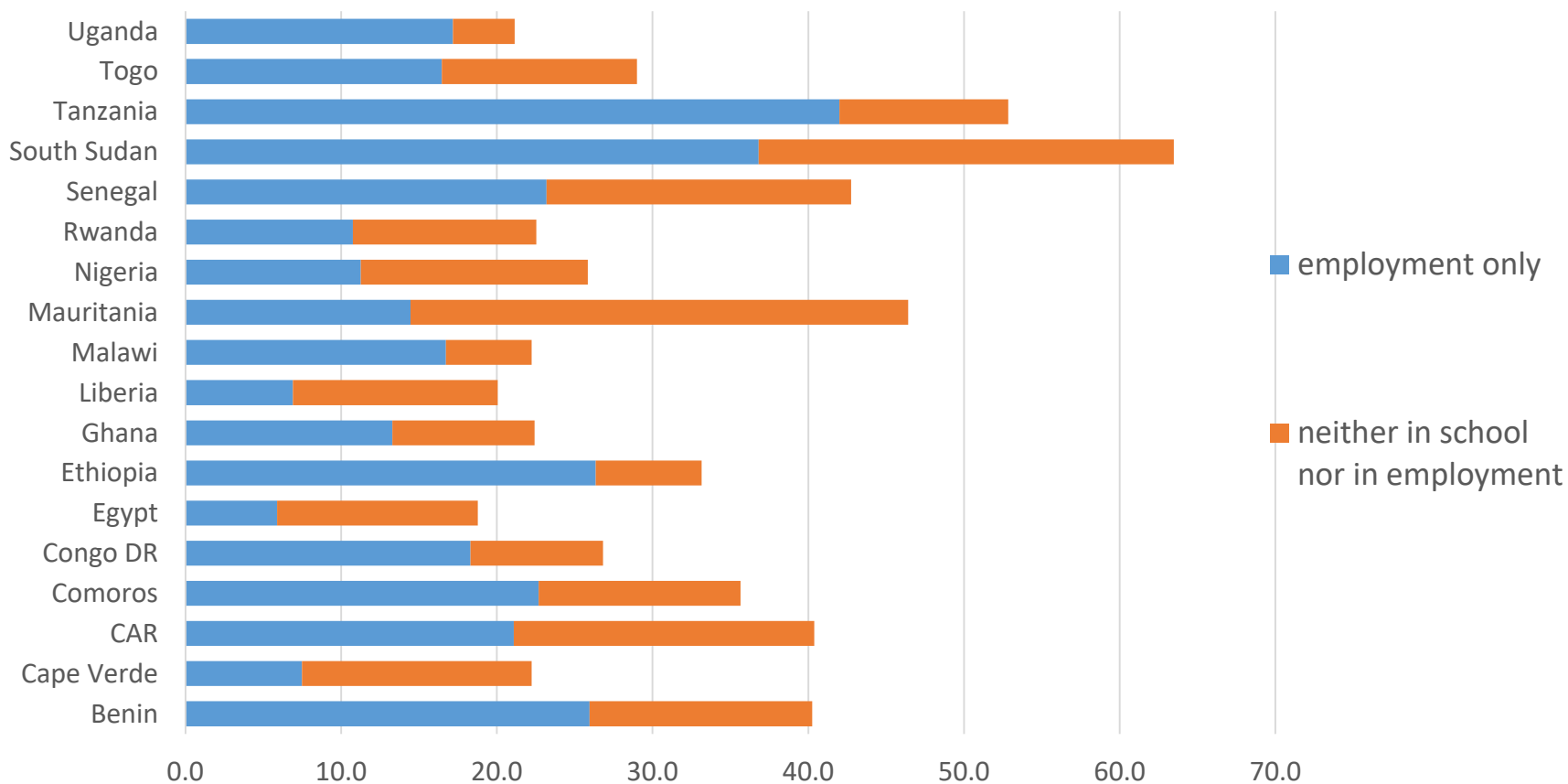
The group of children neither in employment nor in school is also of a particular concern:

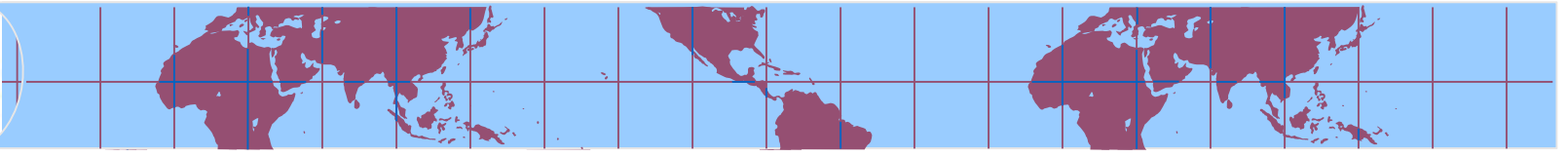
They can be sometimes even more disadvantaged than their working counterparts, benefiting neither from school nor from the learning by doing offered by some forms of work



Not surprisingly the share of children in child labour out of school increases with the age

### Children out of school by activity status, age 15-17 years



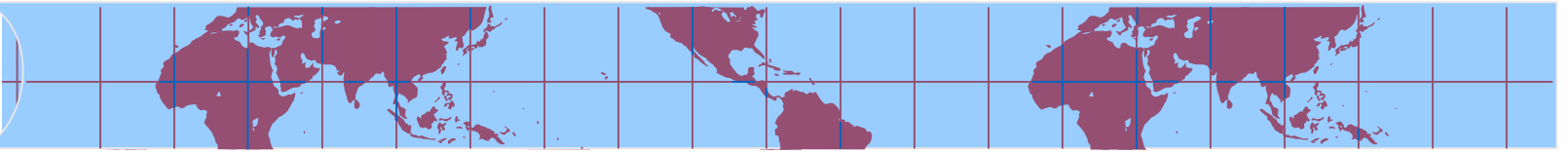


## Factors associated with child labour





In addition to gender, age and schooling factors, there are other country specific factors that influence the involvement of children in child labour.



## **Poverty and child labour**

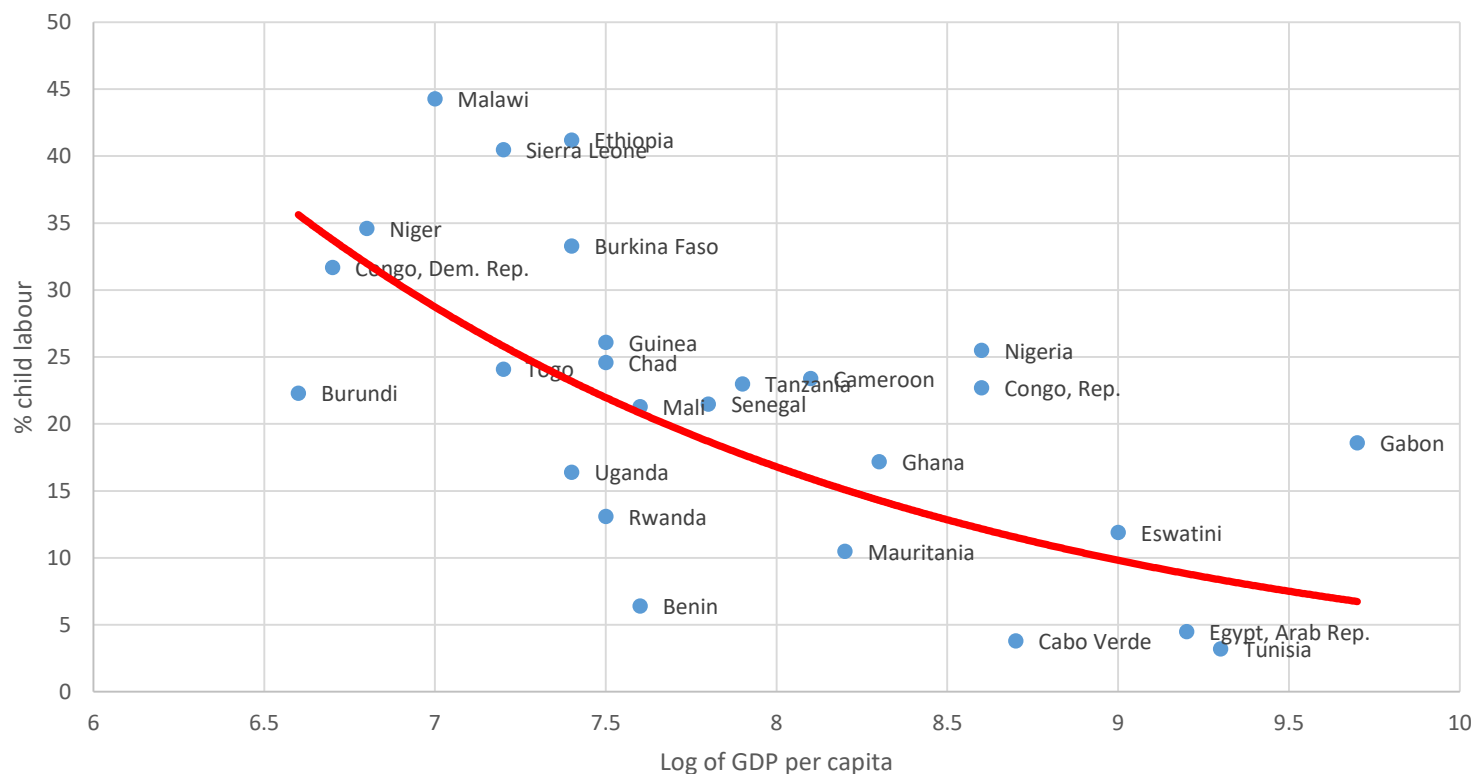
Poverty is almost always associated with child labour , but poverty is not necessarily the main cause of child labour

- Poverty and child labour may be jointly determined
- Reducing poverty to reduce child labour might prove difficult if growth prospect are limited
- Reducing child labour can help addressing poverty



## Children from poorer countries are more likely to be involved in child labour

Child labour and GDP per capita (latest available years). Africa





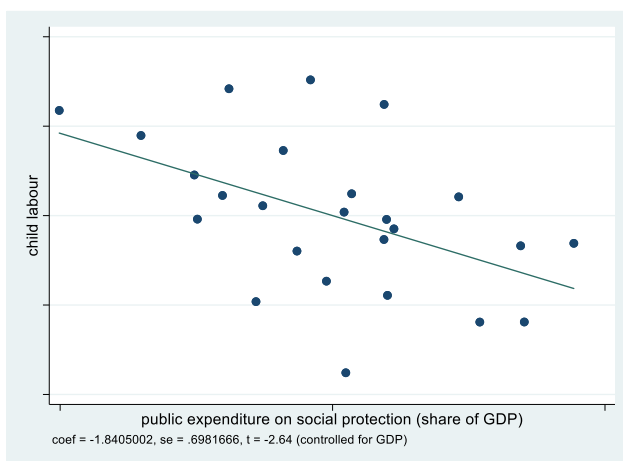
As illustrated in the previous Figure, levels of child labour are low relative to national income in some countries while in others the opposite is true

The existence of countries doing better with fewer resources suggests significant scope for policy intervention against child labour

For example, Government investment in social protection may play an additional important role in reducing child labour

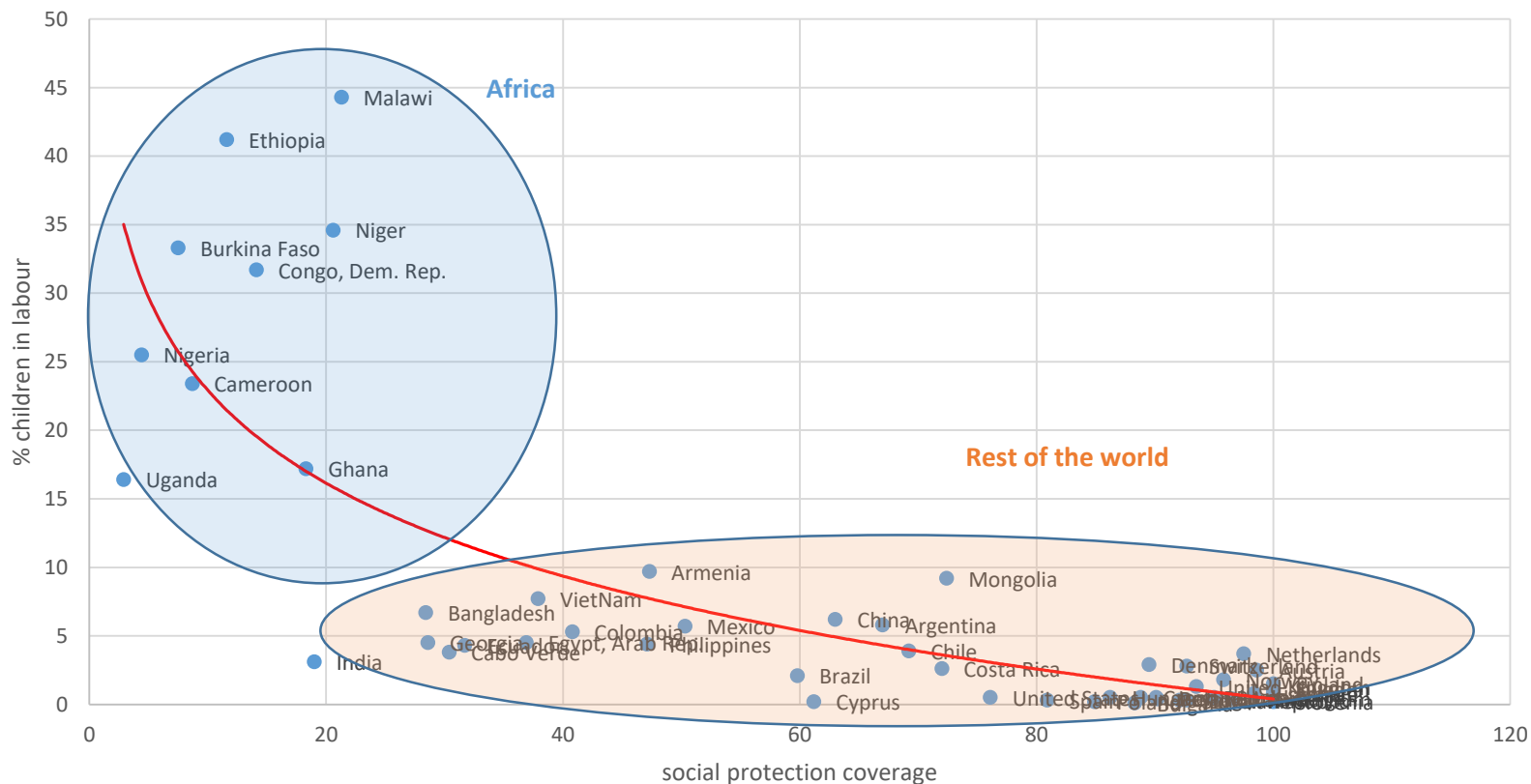


## Child labour and public expenditure on social protection in Africa. Regression results controlling for GDP



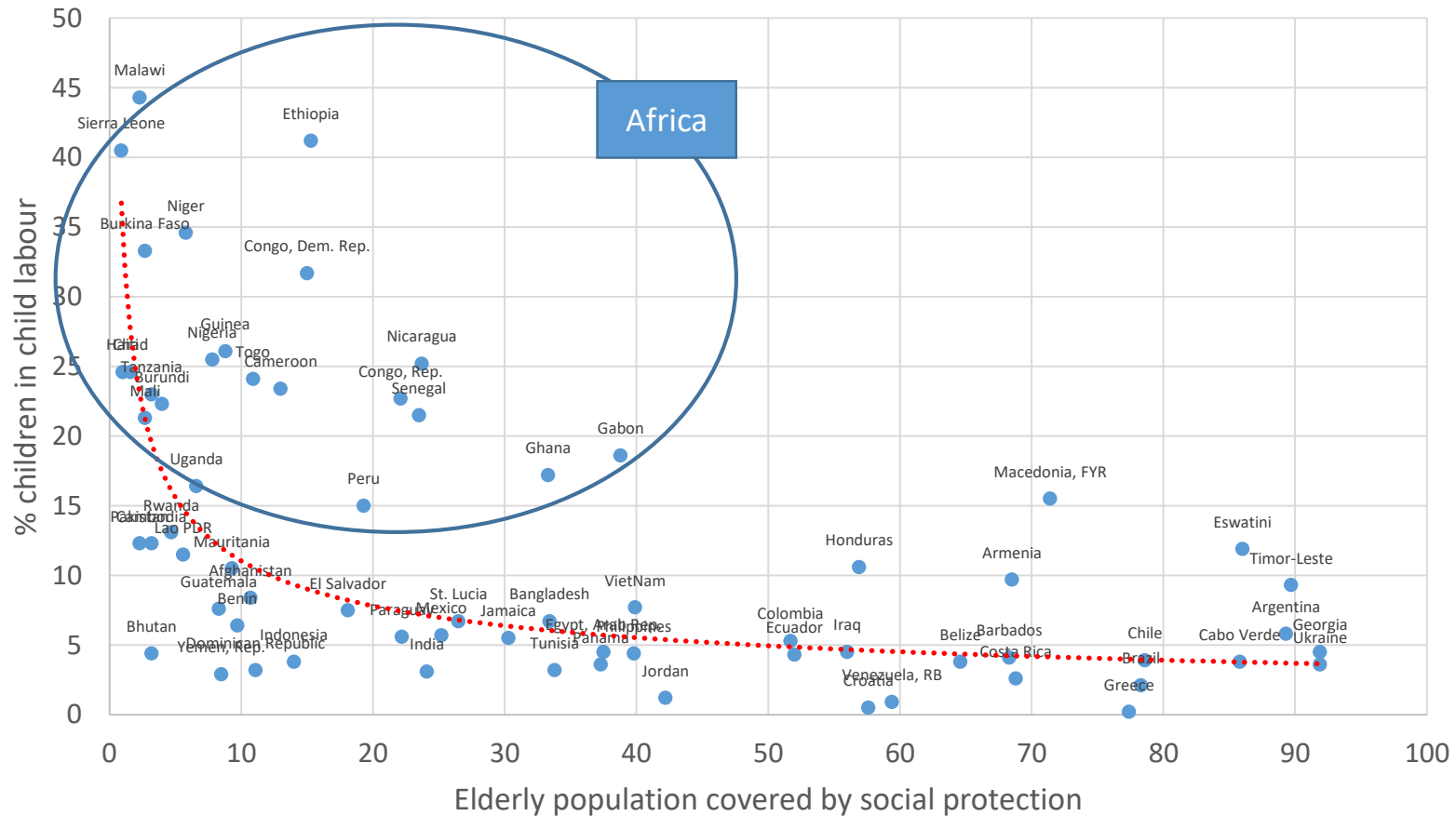
Countries with a higher social protection coverage show lower level of child labour

## Child labour and social protection coverage



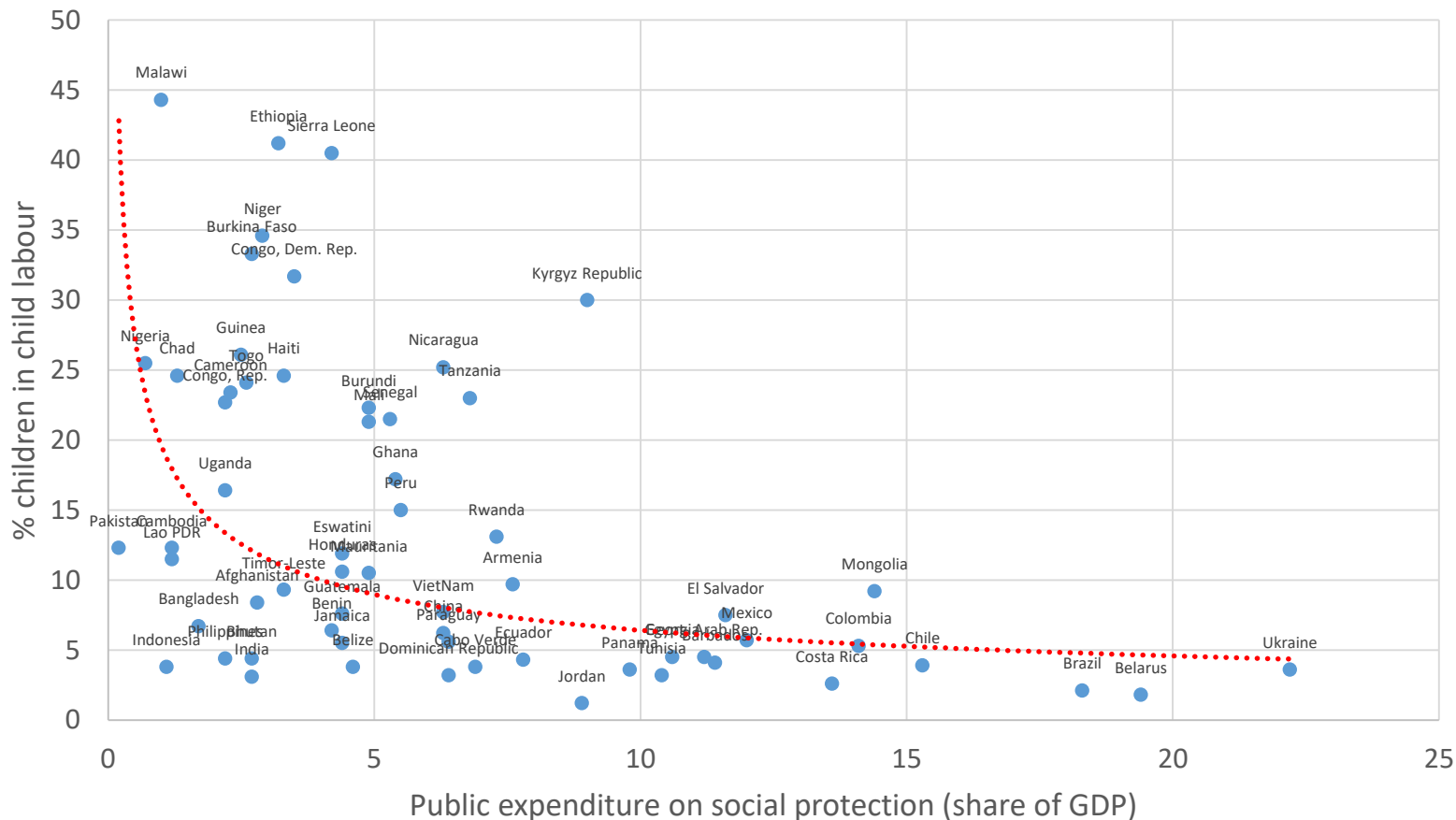
Note: SDG indicator 1.3.1 (a): Proportion of the total population receiving benefits at least under one of the contingencies (contributory or non-contributory benefit). ILO Social protection database

## Child labour and elderly population covered by social protection schemes



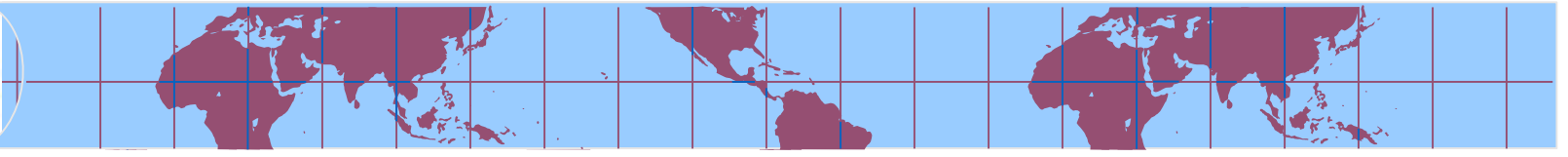
Elderly population covered by social protection - Proportion of older persons receiving a pension: Ratio of persons above statutory retirement age receiving an old-age pension to persons above statutory retirement age (including contributory and non-contributory)

## Child labour and public expenditure on social protection (as a share of GDP)

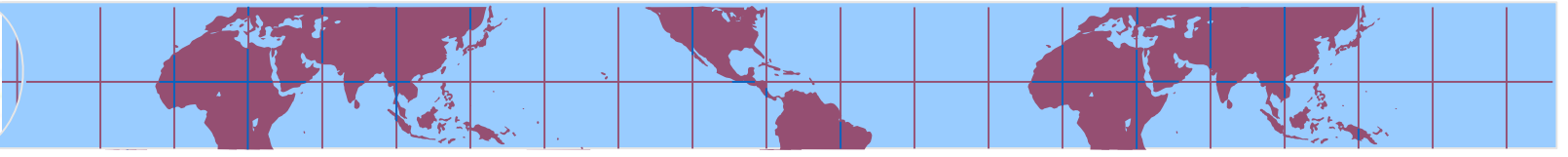


Elderly population covered by social protection - Proportion of older persons receiving a pension: Ratio of persons above statutory retirement age receiving an old-age pension to persons above statutory retirement age (including contributory and non-contributory)





# Child Labour and youth employment outcome

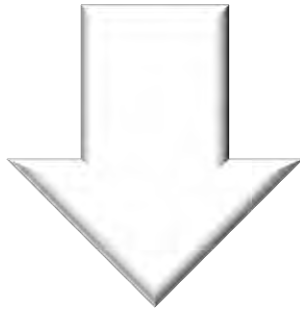


## CHILD LABOUR AND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Efforts to provide young people with quality employment opportunities also cannot be divorced from efforts to combat child labour



# The link between child labour and youth employment operates in both directions.

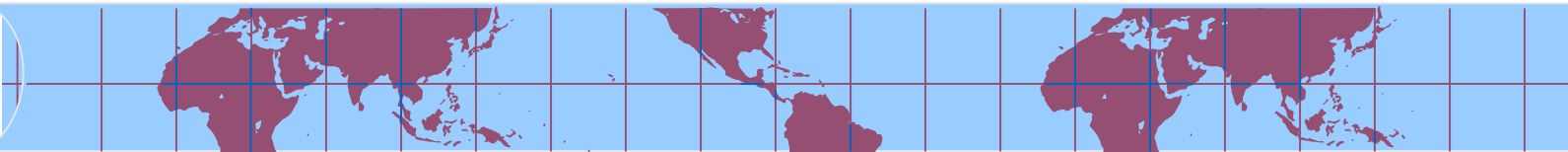


Child labour prevents children from acquiring the human capital necessary for gainful employment as young people



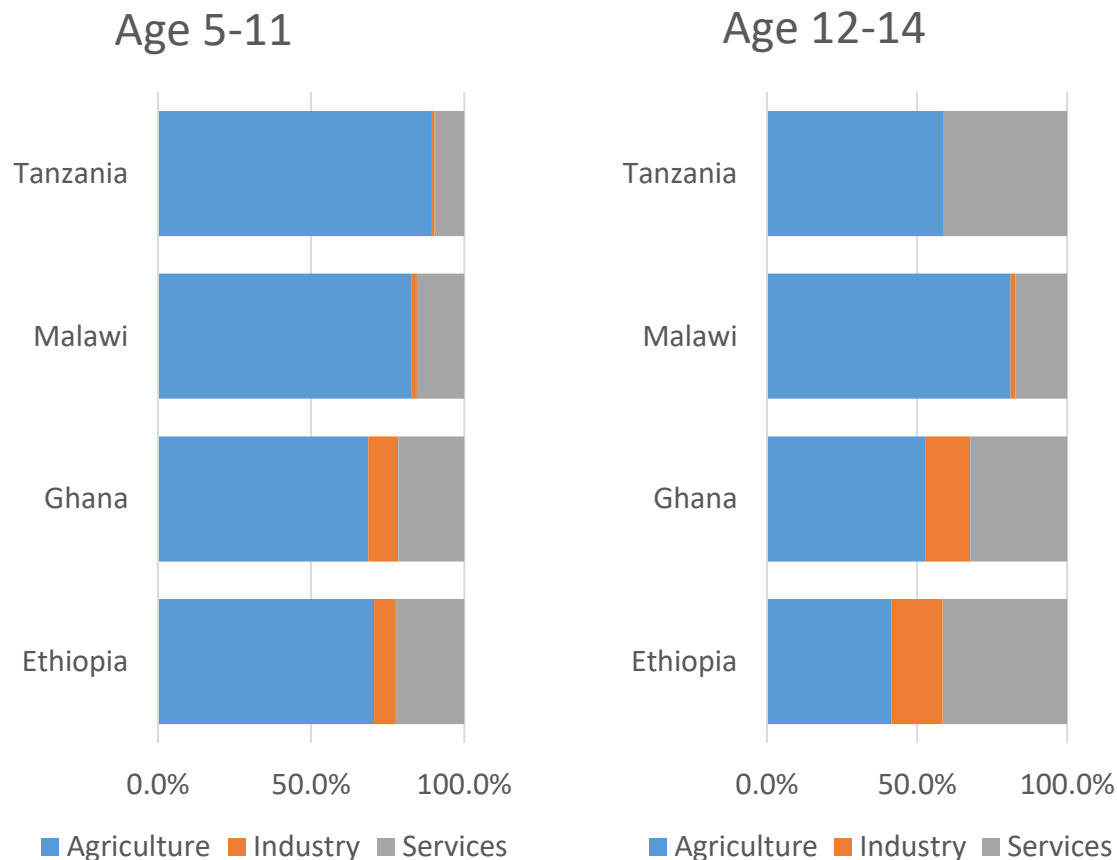
In the face of poor youth employment prospects, parents may have little incentive to invest in their children's schooling, and instead send their children to work prematurely





The sectoral composition of working youth differs considerably by the age they started to work.

- Youth who started to work at a very young age (5-11 years) are more likely to work in agriculture;
- Youth who started to work after the age of 12 and below the minimum age are more likely to work in the service sector;



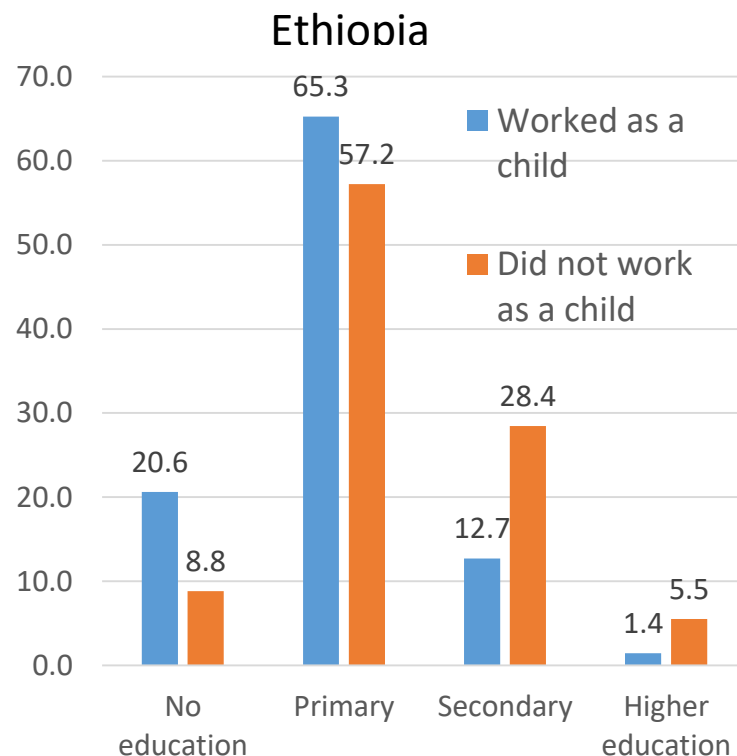
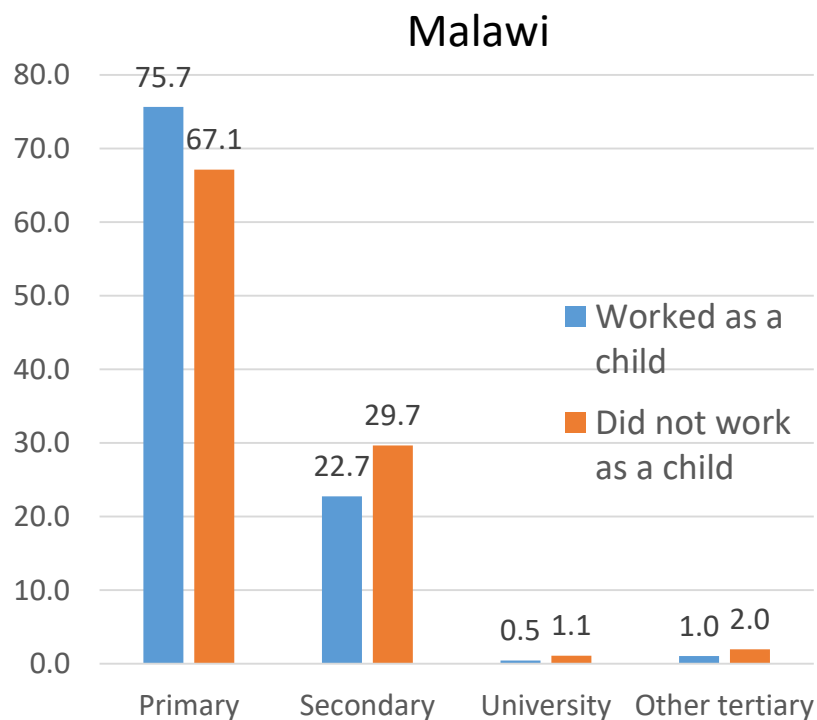


The difficulties young persons face in accessing decent work often originate in child labour and compromised education.



Youth who did not work as a child are more likely to enter the labour market with higher level of human capital compared to those youth who did work as a child

### Child labour and youth educational attainment



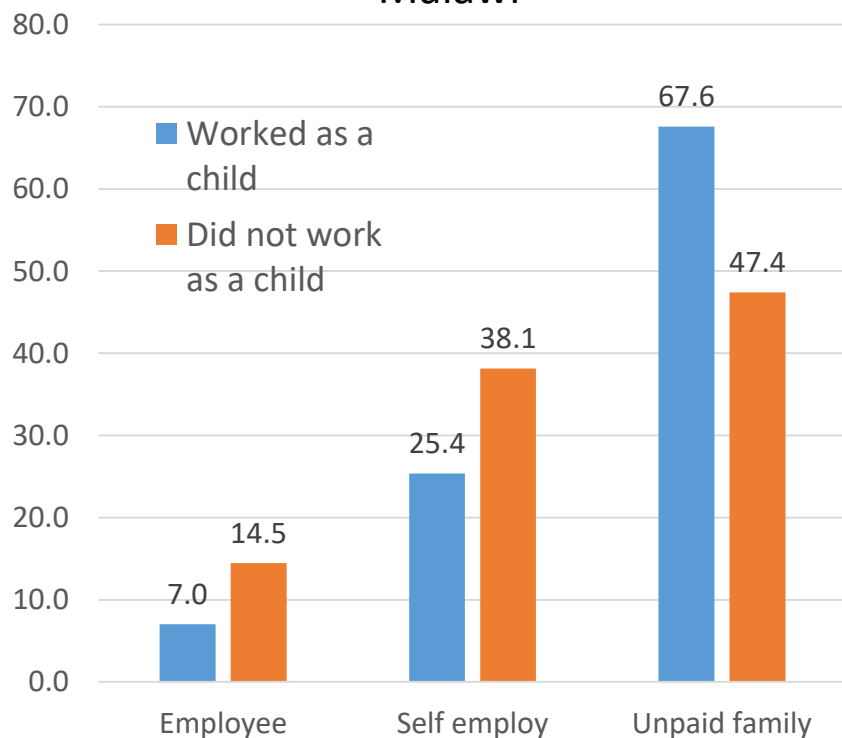
Notes: *worked as a child* refers to young persons that started working prior to the age of 14 years; *did not work as a child* refers to young people that starting working after the age of 14 years.



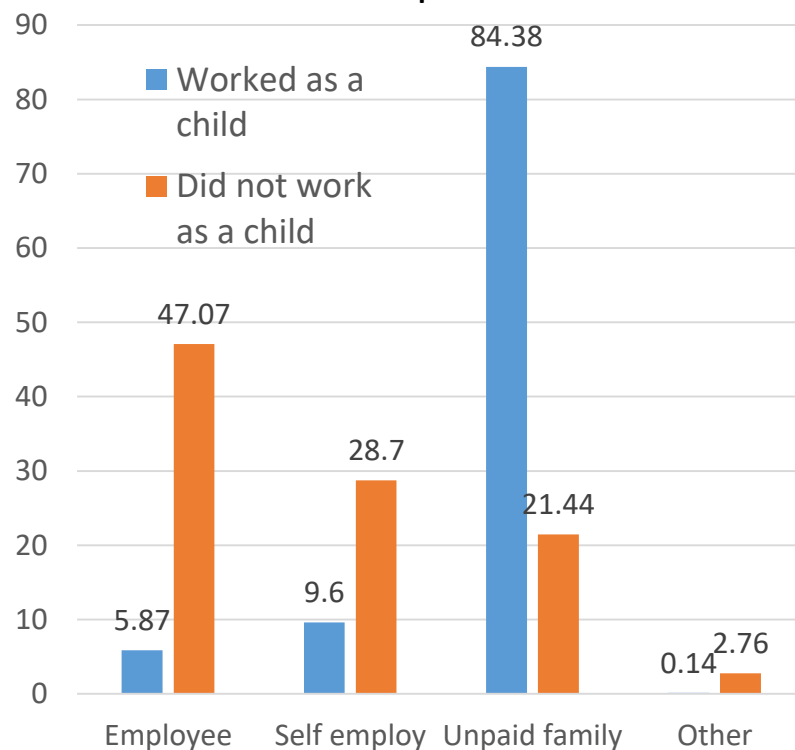
Youth who did not work as a child are more likely to work as wage employee or self employed

### Child labour and youth status in employment

Malawi



Ethiopia





Youth who did not work as a child are more likely to have higher earnings

### Child labour and youth earnings quintile, Malawi

