

# The Music Against Child Labour Competition: Fostering Awareness and Action through Music

*by Jeunesses Musicales International*



**International  
Labour  
Organization**



The Music Against Child Labour competition was launched on February 3rd 2021 as a joint initiative of Jeunesses Musicales International and the International Labour Organization, with the aim of harnessing the power of music to help combat child labour which affects 152 million children, nearly 1 in 10 children worldwide.

The competition called upon musicians of all genres to submit songs and take a stand against child labour by raising awareness of the consequences of child labour all over the world, and inspiring governments, stakeholders and communities to take action. The first edition of the contest takes place with the support of the CLEAR Cotton project (co-funded by the European Commission and implemented by the ILO in collaboration with the FAO) in the framework of the UN International Year for the elimination of child labour 2021.

Over 200 musicians from 50 different countries submitted their songs in one of three categories: a global category for all

artists; a grassroots category for music projects involving children affected by (or at risk of) child labour; and a CLEAR Cotton project category for national competitions run in Burkina Faso, Mali, Pakistan and Peru, where the CLEAR Cotton project works with partners to combat child labour and forced labour in the cotton, textile and garment value chains.

## Unique Entries

- 211 Musicians
- 52 Countries

## Categories

- 62 in Clear Cotton
- 136 in Global
- 18 in Grassroots

## Geography

- 39 from South America
- 28 from Europe
- 13 from North/Central America
- 72 from Africa
- 63 from Asia
- 1 from Oceania

JMI has specifically partnered local organisations in Burkina Faso (Ateliers Silmandé), Mali (Ecole de Kirina), Pakistan (The Little Art Association) and Peru (SIMCCAP, the Union of Musicians, Composers and Singers of Peru) as part of the competition's CLEAR Cotton category. The partnership with grassroots organisations and ILO focal points helped in reaching out to several musicians at local and national levels. They also provided opportunities to raise awareness of the impact of child labour in the cotton industry in these countries. The final winners, one for each global category and one for each CLEAR Cotton country, have now been selected by a panel of technical and music experts. The celebrity jury

included multi-award winning musicians A.R. Rahman, Laura Pausini, Ralph Johnson (Earth, Wind & Fire), Juan Diego Florez and Lokua Kanza. Entries were judged on musical quality, the relevance of the message, song originality, and the inclusion of a positive call to action. The official announcement of the winners took place in June, on the occasion of the 2021 World Day against Child Labour event during the ILO's International Labour Conference. The competition awarded a cash prize to all winners and provided them with the opportunity to professionally record a digital live performance to be broadcast during the international event organised by ILO.

The Music Against Child Labour competition is part of the MACL Initiative, launched in 2013 by the ILO, JM International, and the International Federation of Musicians (FIM), together with renowned musicians and key partners from the world of music. The initiative has two key aims: raising awareness of child labour through music and empowering children, including those formerly in child labour, through music.

### Competition Winners Revealed!

- Global Category: Bernice Pitroipa (Burkina Faso)
- Grassroots Category: Music Crossroads Academy Zimbabwe (MCAZ)
- Clear Cotton Category: Benewend (Burkina Faso), Virginie Dembélé (Mali), Ahmed Faraz (Pakistan) and José Zevallos del Carpio (Peru).

*With member organisations in 61 countries, **Jeunesses Musicales International** is a global network that provides young people and children with opportunities to develop through music across all boundaries. Open to all genres, for 75 years JMI has been "Making a difference through music," harnessing the power of music to bridge social, geographical and cultural*

*divides, creating an international platform for intercultural dialogue. Email: mail@jmi.net*

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