



# Evaluation Summary



International  
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## *Time-Bound Programme - Urban Informal Economic Programme on Prevention and Elimination of the WFCL in the Urban Informal Economy of Dhaka Metropolitan Area- Final Evaluation*

### Quick Facts

<b>Countries:</b>	<i>Bangladesh</i>
<b>Final Evaluation:</b>	<i>01/2012</i>
<b>Evaluation Mode:</b>	<i>Independent</i>
<b>Administrative Office:</b>	<i>ILO/IPEC</i>
<b>Technical Office:</b>	<i>ILO/IPEC</i>
<b>Evaluation Manager:</b>	<i>ILO-IPEC/DED (Design, Evaluation and Documentation Section)</i>
<b>Evaluation Consultant(s):</b>	<i>Lotta Nycander (Team Leader) and Naushad Faiz</i>
<b>Project Code:</b>	<i>BGD/07/01/NET</i>
<b>Donor(s) &amp; Budget:</b>	<i>Netherlands - 10 million US\$</i>
<b>Keywords:</b>	<i>Urban Informal Economy; Child labour; Time Bound Programme</i>

### Background & Context

#### **Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure**

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has implemented a technical cooperation project in Bangladesh, entitled Urban Informal Economy (UIE) Project of Support to the National Time-Bound Programme towards the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Bangladesh. The Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands has

funded the project. A final evaluation was undertaken from December 2011 to January 2012.

#### **Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation**

The evaluation has been initiated in accordance with ILO's procedures for all technical cooperation projects and programmes. The specific purpose of the project evaluation is to draw lessons from experience gained during the reviewed period, and how these lessons can be applied in programming future activities, existing or planned ILO/IPEC interventions as well as in broader terms of action against child labour (CL) in Bangladesh, particularly in the context of the Time-Bound Programme (TBP) process.

In addition the evaluation should document potential good practices, lessons learned and models of interventions that were developed in the life cycle of this project. It should serve as an important information base for key stakeholders and decision-makers regarding any policy decisions for future subsequent activities in the country.

#### Scope

The final evaluation covers the whole project period, including all specific interventions in the form of Action Programmes implemented by local partners and other activities of the programme since the beginning of the programme. It focuses on the achievements of the project and its contribution to the overall national efforts to achieve the elimination of the targeted worst forms of child labour (WFCL). The link to the national TBP process in Bangladesh and specifically the possible link to proposed ILO/IPEC

activities in support of the TBP process are also considered.

### Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation methodology used in the assessment and evaluation process is described below:

1. Documentation Review.
2. Preparation of an inception report describing the methodology.
3. Briefing sections and interviews were held with key stakeholders.
4. The evaluation team has held meetings and discussion sessions that have included all stakeholder categories.
5. Focus groups were also organized which proved to be useful in providing interpretations of available quantitative and qualitative data.
6. A brief questionnaire was disseminated to the project staff, in addition to discussions, meetings and interviews in which they participated.
7. E-mail correspondence was used to supplement the information gathered. "Skype" calls were used in interviews, not only with ILO HQ staff and the development partner, but also with relevant external key persons who have been involved in the project.
8. A Stakeholder Workshop/Meeting was organized at the ILO Country Office on 28 December 2011 to present the objectives of the evaluation, the activities that had been undertaken and to present some preliminary findings

### Main Findings & Conclusions

1. The UIE Project should be seen as a pilot initiative involving ILO support to the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) to incorporate the issue of CL into its trade licensing system, in turn monitored by DCC tax officers and community-based surveillance groups. Various educational and community mobilization models, based on a previous IPEC project in Dhaka have been adapted to the new project, as well as awareness-raising techniques and capacity building at all stakeholder levels.
2. The evaluation has assessed that, as a result of the project interventions, knowledge has increased on CL in the urban informal economy, and capacity has increased among national and municipal stakeholders – **these are immediate objective**

**(IO) 1 and 6 that were reached through the project.** Policy work and attempts to influence national and local policies were also important components.

3. Furthermore, children were protected from hazardous work and prepared for formal primary/secondary education through non-formal education (NFE). Others were prepared for and placed in Decent Work arrangements through participation in Skills Development Training (SDT). Women/families were assisted to improve their social and economic security so that they would no longer depend on hazardous CL – **these are the four other IOs that the Project contributed to.**
4. The overriding conclusion is, thus, that the project has shown a high level of effort, and performed very well in many of its endeavours, when taking into account the very short time it had at hand, and when considering some complicated circumstances under which it operated, as described in the report.
5. The project faced significant delays of more than thirty months due to the prolonged discussions, procedures and insistence by the Ministry of Labour & Employment (MoLE) to incorporate the ILO project into the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) system after it had been approved, and the subsequent requirement to produce and endorse the GoB Technical Project Proposal (TPP). The delays in approving the selection criteria for the NGOs continued into 2008. Because of the late start up in delivering the planned services and reaching targets, the Project Steering Committee (PSC), DCC, donor, and ILO agreed to reduce the operational area substantially and subsequently the scope of activities.
6. The activities to provide services to the beneficiaries, such as removing children from hazardous work places, enrolling them in NFE and formal schools, and providing skills training, finally took off only in December 2009. This was almost three years after the project commencement date i.e. 1 January 2007. The project was eventually operational only in four out of the ten zones in Dhaka city, although the PSC had made the decision that it should be expanded to the remaining zones. Due to the apparent lack of progress, and because of changes in policies in the Netherlands that affected the educational sectors in

recipient countries, the donor reduced its overall financial commitment from US\$10,466,863 to US\$6,227,804.

7. As for meeting the objectives defined at the outset, the project could only be expected to *contribute* to the overall, development objective. Regarding reaching the IOs, the evaluation team has assessed that the outputs for the IO 1 (Policy and Model) were produced, as well as the ones for IO 6 (Capacity Building) – thus it can be concluded that at least two IOs (1 and 6), were fully met, while the others were partially met.
8. ILO, and the stakeholders of the UIE Project, should follow the developments and ensure that the DCC's issuance of the Office Order is not only interpreted by staff and traders/employers as a "recommendation" not to employ children in dangerous work environments – but that enforcement of some kind will materialize in order to have the desired effect.

## Recommendations

### Main recommendations and follow-up

#### *Recommendation 1*

ILO should review and consolidate its experience from all its implemented IPEC projects, and learn from many documented lessons on the importance of scaling down on its ambitions. ILO should avoid drawing complicated project structures with too many implementing agencies and too many objectives and outputs to be reached.

#### *Recommendation 2*

The ILO HQ and ILO country offices need to engage themselves more in negotiations with the Government about technical cooperation projects – even at an early stage in an informed and decisive way to avoid complications – as it seems that too much responsibility for this is on the shoulders of the Chief Technical Advisors (CTAs).

#### *Recommendation 3*

**3a)** GoB PSCs should have Terms of Reference that clearly outline the role of the Committee.

Alternatively, a Project *Advisory* Committee (PAC) may be formed;

**3b)** Civil society organizations should be invited to participate regularly in the PSCs, in particular if they are stakeholders/implementing agencies in the project. Other actors may be invited as observers if this is beneficial for a smoother operation of the project.

#### *Recommendation 4*

ILO projects should be more convincing in showing that there is a plan for gender mainstreaming at the onset, and this should already be described clearly at the drawing board – and be reflected in the Project Document and the log frame.

#### *Recommendation 5*

The ILO Country Office in Dhaka, as well as the constituents, should actively follow up on developments within MoLE. The implementing partners that played an essential role in the project, and in the previous IPEC project, also have a role in following up how the Ministry proceeds with CL issues. The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Project (which reportedly has child labourers among its target groups) has confirmed it has use for the educational materials/models among others, and these have already been made available to this project. Also, one of the project staff previously working in the UIE Project is now working for the TVET project – which may allow for some continuity and sharing of experience and knowledge from the UIE Project.

#### *Recommendation 6*

**6a)** ILO, and particularly ILO/IPEC, as well as the constituents and partners should monitor the developments regarding the above-mentioned issues and continue the dialogue with the MoLE on these issues;

**6b)** ILO should undertake a study to gauge the progress of the new MoLE CL eradication project;

**6c)** ILO should undertake an impact study/evaluation of the UIE Project within one year.

#### *Recommendation 7*

ILO should therefore explore the possibility to team up with UNICEF, and perhaps Save the Children in Bangladesh, for a joint initiative using conditional cash transfer (CCT) as a strategy to contribute to the eradication of CL.

### ***Recommendation 8***

All ILO projects should plan and implement phase out/or exit plans, and the national stakeholders as well as development partners/donors need to be aware and appreciate this, as well, when reviewing project documents for possible funding. In many cases, targets are chased to the very end, because of delayed start ups. As a result, project staff consider there is no time for any gradual phase out. However, other ILO projects could be used as models on how this can be done (Education and Skills Training for Youth Employment in Indonesia (EAST) project, Trafficking of Women and Children project in the Greater Mekong sub-region, are examples among others).

### **Important lessons learned**

#### ***Regarding its models and experience***

The documentation on Implementation Experience and Lessons Learned of the ILO/UIE Project is a good account and practice that could well be useful for other ILO/IPEC projects and for other organizations involved in tackling CL. It explains what was done and how, and what the challenges were – as well as assessing the innovations and their effectiveness, relevance, efficiency and sustainability of each strategy as perceived by the project staff and stakeholders.

#### ***Adopting a clear stand and keep to agreements***

An important lesson for ILO and the constituents when handling new ILO technical cooperation projects in Bangladesh is the importance of keeping to the original agreements, particularly in respect of project execution and management in order for implementation of activities not to be hampered.

#### ***Necessity to follow up and keep the momentum gained so far***

When the UIE Project ended, there were no new IPEC projects in the pipeline of support to the TBP. The GoB still has not formally recognized the TBP and the MoLE has not yet endorsed the National Plan of Action (NPA) and it is not known if, or when, it will be forwarded to the Cabinet for approval. A lot of conscious efforts have been made to ensure sustainability of systems and models developed under the project, in particular within the Government structures. There are many uncertainties regarding how the Government will use, maintain and/or develop these tools (Child Labour Unit (CLU), Caribbean Labour Market Information System (CLMIS), website) and whether or not the Policy will be enforced. This evaluation team is not convinced

that the MoLE is going to place sufficient efforts or resources in continuing the work started by the UIE project (the new MoLE revenue-funded project could be an exception, however, although in its third phase the MoLE has not yet recruited the implementing agencies and no work seems to have been done on the ground).

#### ***Phasing out and exit strategy***

According to this evaluation, the crucial point when the project should have prepared for a phase out was at the end of April 2011, after the 11th PSC had been held and the Ambassador clearly had stated that the Netherlands Government would not grant any extension. In this meeting it was confirmed that the utilization of the budget was very low, only 45 per cent (up from 37 per cent stated in the December 2010 meeting) had been utilized, with only 6-8 months to go.