



Evaluation Summary



International
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Support to the Cambodian National Plan of Action on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour: A Time-Bound Approach - Final Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries/Regions:	<i>Cambodia</i>
Final Evaluation:	<i>05/2009</i>
Evaluation Mode:	<i>Independent</i>
Administrative Office:	<i>DWT/CO-Beirut</i>
Technical Office:	<i>IPEC</i>
Evaluation Manager:	<i>ILO-IPEC's Design, Evaluation and Documentation Section (DED)</i>
Evaluation Consultant(s):	<i>Team Leader: Sandy Wark - Team members: Melvin Angelo Diaz, Sok Somith, Surveyist: Dr. Ranjan Tapas Dash</i>
Project Code:	<i>CMB/04/51/USA</i>
Donor(s) & Budget:	<i>USDOL: Child Labor Program (US\$ 4'750'000)</i>
Keywords:	<i>Child Labour</i>

Background & Context

The expanded final evaluation covered the United States Department of Labour (USDOL)-funded International Labour Organization/International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO/IPEC) Project of Support to the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL) in Cambodia and focused broadly on identifying its contributions to and impact on national efforts to achieve the elimination of WFCL. It was conducted by an independent evaluation team in March 2009, with preparatory activities in February 2009. The ILO/IPEC Project,

“Support to the Cambodian National Plan of Action on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour: A Time-Bound Approach”, also known as the Project of Support to the National Action Plan (PoS NAP) has the following three immediate objectives:

Immediate Objective 1: By the end of the project, national and provincial policy frameworks and implementation capacity to combat WFCL will have been strengthened.

Immediate Objective 2: By the end of the project, key stakeholders and networks at all levels will have been mobilized effectively to combat WFCL.

Immediate Objective 3: By the end of the project, integrated, effective and sustainable responses to combat WFCL are in place in selected provinces and can serve as pilot models for Cambodia.

Present Situation of the Project

Project activities were diverse and included:

- Technical inputs to policy- and law-makers for strengthening the national and provincial policy and legal framework to combat CL;
- Assistance including training and material procurement to build the management and organizational capacity of relevant Cambodian actors and institutions to contribute to the elimination of the WFCL;
- Efforts to expand knowledge, raise awareness and mobilize key persons, ILO tripartite partners (government, labour organizations and employers’

associations), civil society and the public at large against CL; and

- Support for the design and implementation of replicable, scalable and sustainable models of direct action for the withdrawal and rehabilitation or prevention of children from engaging in the WFCL in priority sectors and regions.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The project delivered both quantitatively and qualitatively to national efforts to achieve the elimination of WFCL as spelt out in its National Plan of Action (NPA) WFCL. The project succeeded in developing models for action in numerous key areas identified in the NPA that are replicable and scalable by the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC). Furthermore, the project contributed to building the necessary capacity at both the national, provincial and local level to make replication feasible.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation of the ILO/IPEC PoS NPA was an Expanded Final Evaluation (EFE). An EFE combines a target group impact survey and final evaluation and is based around a set of core areas of achievement or suggested aspects to be used across all final evaluations for NPA/Time-Bound Programme (TBP) projects of support. EFE are essentially evaluations with one or a number of complementary target-group impact surveys that allow for more in-depth quantitative and quality impact assessments of the project in identified areas and in the context of broader and longer-term impact. The EFE for the PoS NPA consisted of three components: a policy impact assessment conducted by the evaluation team leader; a direct beneficiary impact survey conducted by a university research group guided by the evaluation team leader who participated in in-country preparation and design activities during the week of 9–13 February and final evaluation field visits and stakeholder workshops conducted by a three-person final evaluation team (two international and one national) during the period 16–30 March.

Main Findings & Conclusions

The project design was comprehensive and relevant to the national context and to the core mandates of ILO/IPEC. However, planned policy-related interventions were concentrated in the labour sector

which may have limited stronger linkages with other sector initiatives that are essential for the success of the NPA.

Interventions to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MLVT) were well executed by ILO/IPEC. Of particular importance to project success and long-term sustainability was strengthening provincial labour-office capacity to raise awareness of the problem of CL, to lead and coordinate initiatives to combat WFCL in their province, and to establish child labour monitoring systems (CLMS) at the community and enterprise level through inspection and training of community monitors.

The PoS NPA has been highly successful in achieving the outputs related to labour policy and legal frameworks and relatively successful on issues related to enforcement as set out in the Phase I project plan. Key achievements include ratification of C. 182, validation of the NPA to eliminate the WFCL, and the passage of six *prakas* (ministerial order) regulating living and working conditions – including children’s work – in hazardous sectors.

The scope of the project supporting awareness raising has been wide and well-targeted. It has enlisted government officials, trade unions and employers, elected representatives, civil society leaders, school directors and teachers, village chiefs, parents and children. However, according to stakeholder feedback, a critical mass of public opinion has not been reached and additional awareness-raising campaigns and activities are needed.

Project efforts to increase what is known about CL in Cambodia, in particular within the framework of its collaboration with Understanding Children’s Work (UCW), has delivered consistent and relevant information about the causes, conditions and results of CL in the Kingdom. The research conducted or supported by the project has been both action- and policy-oriented and has engaged national research institutions in CL concerns.

The mobilization of trade unions, employers’ associations, and a civil society network in combating CL was strategically an important action taken by the project. It has had some results to date and has the potential to produce more significant results in the future.

Overall, the impact of the project on the work status of targeted children was good. Given the poverty and vulnerability of its target population, it is a very good result that nearly 80 per cent of children under the age of 15 are not working in the targeted sectors about one year after the close of project programmes.

The project-supported Community Learning Centre (CLC) model is a replicable and scalable strategy for offering children currently out of school an opportunity to get back into the formal education system. Once a CLC is established in a community, it is possible for other actors in the community, including labour inspectors and community CL monitors to refer children to the centres.

The provision of skills training by the project as a means to withdraw older children from WFCL was largely effective. There is room for refining the intervention in Phase II, especially by improving linkages with youth employment initiatives and adapting existing materials and expertise within ILO.

The project's collaboration with Promoting Women's Entrepreneurship Development and Gender Equality (WEDGE) and the use of Self-Help Groups (SHG) to encourage savings and raise incomes as a means to support poor families to send their children to school was very effective. Collaboration with WEDGE added significant value to the project. It is an example of effective collaboration with another ILO programme and the benefits of creating stronger linkages between ILO programmes within a country.

Community CL monitors assured community-level follow up with project direct beneficiaries and collected data for the direct beneficiary monitoring and reporting system (DBMR) required by the donor. The same individuals displayed potential to play an important role in detecting children engaged in WFCL in their communities and facilitating their access to appropriate education and social services.

Low turnover and apparent high levels of motivation and cohesiveness among the project management team members should contribute positively to Phase II of the current project since most of the current team will continue to work on Phase II. The current project team only features one woman in an administrative position and in the absence of the contribution by WEDGE, the presence of female project staff in field activities would be weak.

The cost of project interventions per child was comparatively low by ILO/IPEC standards. According to project partners, the actual cost was in some cases higher when leveraged resources are taken into consideration. This was especially true in regards to the cost of project interventions related to skills training.

Because slow disbursements can be very detrimental to the quality and timeliness of direct action programmes (DAP), it is important to find ways to overcome partners' difficulties in assuring proper reporting.

Although there are good examples of ILO/IPEC collaboration with other actors engaged in combating CL in Cambodia, project management seemed conservative about seeking collaboration with other actors outside the parameters established in the project action plan. Staying focused on delivering the results promised in the project document is a good thing and bore consistent results. However, because of its position as an international programme playing a leadership role in setting standards and establishing models of intervention for the elimination of child labour (ECL), ILO/IPEC is mandated to engage with other actors working on the same question to the extent that its resources permit.

The translation and localization of Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (SCREAM) manuals and their introduction to ILO/IPEC partners through training of trainers is an excellent foundation for using the methodology more directly in Phase II activities to reinforce child participation approaches.

Recommendations

1. In line with TBP guidelines and in order to develop a more integrated and comprehensive approach to the implementation of the NPA, ILO/IPEC should strengthen links between CL-related policy work and APs and education, orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and poverty reduction development aid and programmes.
2. In Phase II, ILO/IPEC should work with the MLVT Department of Child Labour to assure that core CL training (knowledge of the issue, the NPA, role of the

provincial office) should be extended to all MLVT provincial offices.

3. In Phase II, ILO/IPEC should capitalize on the validated NPA and decrees and focus efforts on the application of national policies at the provincial and communal levels. Also, ILO/IPEC should assist the MLVT to develop its strategy for leveraging additional donor resources for the implementation of the NPA.

4. Awareness-raising interventions should be improved (details in full report).

5. There are identified WFCL sectors where there is still a dearth of information on the conditions of working children and which merit additional investigation in Phase II of the project. In addition, national statistics on the prevalence of WFCL should be updated.

6. The project should build interventions more directly around the economic interests of employers and workers to eliminate CL, rather than focusing primarily on social responsibility programmes.

7. The success of project interventions varied from sector to sector. The reasons for the apparent success in some sectors merit further investigation.

8. The project should advocate to the Ministry of Education to budget for the extension of the CLC model broadly as an important means to achieve its goal of Education for All by 2015.

9. Either within the Phase II project or as a separate ILO programme, ILO should provide technical assistance to the MLVT to develop its capacity to assure that out-of-school youth may access skills training.

10. The recently-developed “Decent Work Country Strategy” provides an excellent framework for addressing ILO core areas that contribute directly and indirectly to combating CL. The collaboration with the ILO/WEDGE, Better Factories Project and Workers’ Education Programme under Phase I should serve as models in Phase II to seek strong synergies with other ILO programmes.

11. The good practice of engaging union leaders, teachers, SHG members and local authorities, including village chiefs, in community CL monitoring

activities should be continued in Phase II. Project management should reconsider paying community CL monitors using project funds since this practice is unlikely to be sustainable post project.

12. Increasing the number of women in project management should be an important consideration when hiring new staff in Phase II.

13. There is a trade-off between minimizing project investments in direct services to targeted children and families and maximizing the benefits to the latter. However, since the number of child labourers is large in Cambodia and national resources for combating CL limited, it is necessary to identify interventions with the greatest impact in terms of withdrawal and prevention at the lowest cost. The evaluator is not suggesting that the project “found” this magic number, but by limiting project contributions per child, the models that were tested had, on the whole, the virtue of matching more closely what would be possible for partners to replicate without project resources. Therefore, although stakeholders express their wish for an increase in the Phase II budget, this should be resisted by project management.

14. Project management should reconsider the requirement that progress reports be submitted in English and evaluate if this is sufficient to improve the efficiency of progress reporting and associated fund disbursements.

15. In Phase II, the project should have an intentional strategy for seeking collaboration with other actors working on similar issues. In particular, both Winrock and ILO/IPEC stand to profit from each other’s experiences and should follow through on their commitment to collaborate on joint initiatives.

16. To expand the use of the SCREAM methodology, interested members of the CSNACL, many of which have youth-focused activities, should be trained to use SCREAM materials in their activities with youth.

More details are available in the full report.