



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation
Office

Trafficking and other forms of WFCL in Central and Eastern Europe - Final Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: *Europe Regional - Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine*

Final Evaluation: *12/2009*

Evaluation Mode: *Independent*

Administrative Office: *IPEC*

Technical Office: *IPEC*

Evaluation Consultant: *Stéphane Jeannet*

Project Code: *RER/06/50/USA*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The evaluator reached the conclusion that the project had been relatively well designed, although a proper baseline and/or needs-assessment should have been conducted. With regard to the validity of the project approach and strategies, and their potential to replicate, evidence shows positive indicators. There was however lack of clarity with regard to the magnitude of the trafficking phenomenon. During his missions, the consultant could only collect anecdotal direct evidence of actual cases of trafficking in the targeted locations. In contrast, the problem of child labour in all targeted countries was much more obvious to the observer. The relevance and effectiveness of the project would have benefitted from a clearer

analysis of the specific challenges faced by national and ethnic minorities.

2. The time frame for project implementation and the sequencing of project activities was logical but in some cases not realistic. Indeed, changing mentalities and fostering institutional and legal change requires relatively long time spans, particularly in transition countries where frequent political crises are likely to stall reforms. The most successful projects occurred in countries which had had the chance to benefit from successive ILO- IPEC projects over a sufficient time-span, such as Romania. In such cases, change was allowed to occur in a gradual and organic manner, as opposed to be rushed over a short period (which lessens chances of ownership and appropriation). Obviously, delays in initiating projects and gaps between the implementation of the Action Programmes (AP) including direct services planned in the two phases of the project had a noticeable negative impact on progress. Some organisations and stakeholders in the interim did manage to continue certain activities by themselves, albeit at a much lower level.

3. Although political and institutional instability was taken into consideration in the design of the project, the magnitude of such instability in the course of implementation could not have realistically been foreseen. In fact, elections, changes of/within governments, blockages within parliaments, high turnover of key personnel within administrations, restructuring of

government agencies, among other factors of disruption, clearly hampered the timely and efficient implementation of the projects in most targeted countries. The global financial crisis also had an impact on the situation of the targeted countries. The project nevertheless usually managed to deal with them in an appropriate manner.

4. The regional approach of the project presented, in balance, more advantages than disadvantages. The design of the project's sub-regional nature seemed to be logical, even if the contexts in the target countries were quite different. The major such difference is the membership of two countries in the European Union; it must be noted, however, that membership has so far not drastically had an impact on the phenomenon of WFCL in these countries; it has however provided access to a wider-ranging set of assistance packages. Contingent upon the availability of funds, the coordinators of the regional project could have created more opportunities for knowledge-sharing and coaching between countries. Although centralised coordination based in Bucharest made sense in terms of rationalisation of administrative and other procedures, it did also create an additional bureaucratic layer between the field and ILO headquarters, which in turn at times considerably slowed down processes such as approval of budgets. On the positive side, the centralisation of reporting had a positive impact on the standardisation and overall quality of the TPRs.

5. The project reached its quantitative targets in terms of direct beneficiaries – with the exception of Kosovo, which missed its target by 100, as well as the case of Romania, which exceeded its target. Use of ILO-IPEC tools by governmental agencies, trade unions, state service providers and NGOs in different projects and training programmes have been actively and successfully promoted by the project. The evaluator was generally impressed with the project's successes at the local level in raising awareness about child labour and in promoting social mobilization to address this issue. The majority of persons who had contact

with the project declared having changed their vision of child labour as a result of activities such as training on CLMS.

6. The CLMS concept, as it is promoted in the region, is likely to prove relevant to the establishment of referral systems for children involved in WFCL or at risk of entering WFCL. Whereas pilots have proved that the model was feasible at the local level, a number of other factors (e.g. political will, funding, etc.) must obviously be taken into consideration. The evaluator noted a generally good level of ownership of the LACs, with some individual members showing commitment beyond expectations, but also with some exception.

7. In most instances, the LACs allowed stakeholders to build bridges between the different entities, for instance between local authorities (e.g. social services and the police) and civil society organisations. The same was true for closer relations between teachers and parents. The project contributed to overcome the frequent initial resistance to work together. The evaluator was positively impressed by the results obtained by peer educators.

8. The evaluator determined that the effectiveness of the project's strategies to raise awareness, including the Supporting Children's Rights through Education, Arts and Media (SCREAM) methodology was generally good, and in some cases excellent.

9. The evaluator was generally impressed by the degree of expertise and commitment of the implementing agencies. This appears to be attributable to two factors: the selected agencies were well-established organisations or institutions with a solid track-record of working for the protection children; and/or they had been involved in phase I of the project, during which they had been thoroughly trained and had proved their ability to work to the satisfaction of ILO-IPEC.

10. The expected outputs were in the majority of cases delivered in a timely manner, with the

appropriate quantity and quality. In some cases where poverty was prevalent and social services were weak, it was made clear that educational services, in and of themselves, were not sufficient to achieve the project's objectives. As far as the evaluator could determine, the project made efficient use of resources and of the mechanisms in place for project monitoring. The Direct Beneficiary Monitoring and Reporting (DBMR) was perceived as process-oriented and its value-added was questioned, in particular because it did not build on information required in the TPR. The fact that it does not include software was also considered as a weak point. The capacity of the implementing agencies and other relevant partners to develop effective action against child labour was generally enhanced as a result of project activities.

11. The project managed in some countries to mainstream CLMS in a number of national strategies, laws, institutions and action plans. A strategy for sustainability of achievements was defined clearly at the design stage of the project, but it did not sufficiently take into account the differences in contexts in the targeted countries. This fact was compounded by the fact that the formulation of an exit strategy was in most cases left for the very last period of the project. In countries which had started activities with a considerable delay, such an approach did make sense in view of the short time-span of the projects. More generally, interlocutors at country-level felt uneasy about mentioning an exit strategy while the implementation of action programmes was at its peak.