



# Evaluation Summary



International  
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## *Programme of Support to the National Time-Bound Programme on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Vietnam – Midterm Evaluation*

*(Report is also available in Spanish and Vietnamese)*

### Quick Facts

<b>Countries:</b>	<i>Vietnam</i>
<b>Midterm Evaluation:</b>	<i>11/2012</i>
<b>Evaluation Mode:</b>	<i>Independent</i>
<b>Administrative Office:</b>	<i>DWT/CO-Hanoi</i>
<b>Technical Office:</b>	<i>ILO/IPEC</i>
<b>Evaluation Manager:</b>	<i>ILO/IPEC-DED</i>
<b>Evaluation Consultant(s):</b>	<i>Ruth Bowen and Nguyen Kim Anh</i>
<b>Project Code:</b>	<i>VIE/08/06/SPA</i>
<b>Donor(s) &amp; Budget:</b>	<i>Spain/AECID (US\$ 3,424,023)</i>
<b>Keywords:</b>	<i>Child labour; Time bound programme</i>

### Background & Context

#### Summary of the project purpose, logic

The mid-term evaluation (MTE) of the “Programme of Support to the National Time-Bound Programme on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour” in Vietnam, implemented by the International Labour Organization’s International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO/IPEC) was carried out by an independent consultant team in September and October 2012. The project is funded by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) from December 2008 to December 2013,

including a 12-month no-cost extension. The project budget is 2,500,000 Euros (US\$3,424,023). The project partner is the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA), with the Bureau of Child Protection and Care (BCPC) assigned as the focal point.

The project’s development objective is to contribute to the prevention and progressive elimination of child labour (ECL) in Vietnam through supporting the national time-bound programme on elimination of the worst forms of child labour (EWFCL). The project seeks to achieve this goal through three immediate objectives (IO):

- (1) At the end of the project, the national knowledge base on CL and its worst forms will have been improved.
- (2) At the end of the project, national policy frameworks and the capacity of national institutions to eradicate WFCL will have been strengthened.
- (3) At the end of the project, integrated intervention models aimed at reducing WFCL in four target provinces will have been developed, implemented and documented, and will be ready for replication. The number of target provinces was increased to five under project implementation.

The project operates at national level to build an enabling environment for addressing CL and implements direct action programmes (DAP) in the provinces of Dong Nai, Ninh Binh, Quang Nam, Lao Cai and Hanoi. Under its direct action component, the project targets 5,000 children for withdrawal and prevention from CL through the provision of education and non-educational services.

The MTE evaluation addresses issues of design and relevance, management, implementation progress and achievement of the objectives, sustainability, potential impact and lessons learned, and provides recommendations for the current project and future projects. The scope of the evaluation includes all project activities from the beginning to the time of the evaluation.

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

The scope of the evaluation includes a review and assessment of all the activities carried out under the project until the time of the evaluation. The evaluation is intended to assess the achievements of the project toward reaching its targets and objectives as outlined in the project document. It is expected to provide stakeholders with an assessment and guidance towards enhancing project performance in the remainder of the project. At the time of the evaluation the project had been underway for more than half its duration since the appointment of the Chief Technical Advisor in December 2009 and the approval of the project by the Government of Vietnam in March 2010.

More specifically, the evaluation is expected to address issues of project design, implementation, management, lessons learned and replicability, and to provide recommendations for the current and future projects.

The purpose of the MTE, as stated in the Terms of Reference (ToR), are as follows:

1. To review the ongoing progress and performance of the programme (extent to which IOs have been achieved and outputs delivered).
2. To examine the likelihood of the programme achieving its objectives.
3. To examine the nature and magnitude of constraints, the factors affecting programme implementation and provide an analysis of factors contributing to the programme's achievements.
4. To make recommendations for the remaining period of the programme towards achievement of objectives.
5. To identify lessons learned and emerging potential good practices.

### **Methodology of evaluation**

The evaluation was carried out by an external consultant team comprising a Team Leader and a National Consultant (both of them independent of any organizations directly related to the project). The team was supported by an interpreter. The evaluation was managed by the Employment Impact Assessment (EIA) section of ILO/IPEC.

The evaluation was carried out through the following steps:

1. Review of project documents and reports and other documentation by the evaluation consultants, development of the methodology, development of the field itinerary and briefings with ILO staff and the donor (17 to 26 September 2012).
2. Consultations and interviews with key stakeholders in Hanoi and three provinces in Vietnam (24 September to 19 October 2012).
3. National Stakeholders' Workshop (22 October 2012).
4. Preparation of a draft report and to be later circulated to key stakeholders (12 November 2012).
5. Preparation of the final evaluation report considering comments provided by the key stakeholders (January 2013).

## **Main Findings & Conclusions**

In the evolution and design of the project, the thorough stakeholder consultation and planning phase leading up to the project design has paid off in terms of a relevant set of strategies and strong ownership by national and provincial partners. The sharing of information about project initiatives among national partners and vertically could be stronger, as highlighted by stakeholders at the national workshop.

The evaluation observed that the project predominantly addresses rural and semi-rural forms of CL in its DAPs, and has not focused on other forms of urban CL, especially given the slow progress and smaller scale of the Hanoi Action Programme (AP). This represents a gap in the pilot models that have

been tested, and a potential aspect for future projects to address.

While the project design itself is ambitious as far as the staffing and financial resources are concerned, the project team has managed to initiate and support a very wide range of activities in a relatively short time. Steady progress in implementation has been made across the components. The majority of the intended outputs have been delivered according to schedule, or at least are likely to be completed within the life of the project.

In terms of effectiveness, the project is making a substantial contribution to the knowledge base, through research and surveys supported or facilitated by the project. The results of the first national CL survey once available, will offer a key opportunity for the project to support strategic analysis towards ongoing research and programming.

The project and partners have put considerable effort into helping to build an enabling environment through capacity and policy improvements. Chief among the project's policy contributions are the revision to the Labour Code provisions on adolescent workers and the listing of forms of hazardous work for children that will come into effect next year. With regard to the national programme to eliminate CL, the BCPC is committed to lead the development of a stand-alone national plan of action on CL, one of the project's key intended results.

Drawing on an early analysis of knowledge and attitudes on CL among stakeholders, the project has developed and provided training on understanding CL to a wide range of constituents. In support of national awareness on CL, the annual World Day Against Child Labour (WDACL) events and innovative strategies such as a national photo competition have attracted high participation and media coverage.

Concerning capacity in enforcement and identifying CL, the project has supported a training package designed for labour inspectors, police and other duty bearers. However, funding constraints mean that assistance to roll out training through core trainers is beyond the scope of the current project. The project is contributing to the development and piloting of the national child protection system, which is led by UNICEF. However, piloting a CL monitoring system on the ground has been delayed by the slow progress in rolling out the child protection system as a whole.

Under the DAP the commitment and leadership on the part of provinces, the Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (DoLISA) has brought steady progress in most of the sites. As a way of building sustainable interventions the evaluation commends the approach of implementing the direct supports through existing government staff at local levels. The staff understands the local systems and will continue to work in the localities. Nevertheless, the workload involved in introducing new practices and monitoring them is very demanding, and the evaluation team concluded that full-time secondment of government staff would have been more effective. This may not be possible in this project but should be considered for future projects. In addition, the MTE consultations led to the conclusion that the resources required to establish new initiatives and help them become effective, are sometimes beyond those of existing local programmes, and some direct supports are required, such as livelihood grants, even in a technical capacity project. The project has made adjustments of this nature, but resources appear constrained to provide more extensive communications materials that are seen as lacking by the implementers.

Changing parents' attitudes appears to be a key factor to eliminating CL in Vietnam, especially when better-off families also engage their children in traditional crafts. The available evidence suggests that strategies to influence and support parents to change their practices needs to be more intensive. The consultations indicated that teachers, along with collaborators like Women's Union staff have the potential to play an important role in parent outreach and counselling.

In terms of fully implementing the models, proving their worth and documenting for replication, the APs are making steady progress, but some of the direct supports to children and families are just beginning in some provinces. This may mean a short time of implementation for some initiatives in order to base the assessment of effectiveness of the models, especially in Hanoi where implementation was delayed.

### Recommendations

The evaluation puts forward a number of recommendations in Section VIII of the report. Most of these involve suggestions to enhance the achievements of the project. The recommendations that are considered priorities for the project to successfully meet its objectives are listed here:

1. Exit strategy: Following the MTE the project management should prioritize the development of a detailed exit strategy, including plans for sustaining initiatives at both national and provincial AP level. At provincial level this should include plans for the process of assessing, documenting and sharing models nationally.

2. Assessment and documentation of provincial models: To promote the likelihood of sustainability and replication of the models the project management should give priority to bringing forward the schedule for consolidation and documentation of the models, including a process of assessing which models or elements are to be recommended for replication and expansion.

3. The national plan of action on child labour: It is recommended that the project management advance discussions with the BCPC towards developing the national plan of action on CL at the earliest opportunity following the MTE, rather than waiting until the national CL survey results are fully analysed. This will be necessary to ensure that as much time as possible is devoted to completing the plan, within the life of the project. The evaluation supports the project plan for a budget revision to support this process to ensure that workshops and other forms of discussion can be held.

4. Follow-up to national child labour survey: To the project management and IPEC HQ, it is recommended that following the release of the national CL survey data analysis by the Institute of Labour Science and Social Affairs (ILSSA), the project should provide technical support to more in-depth and strategic analysis of the results and implications for further studies, regarding some issues such as school-to-work transition, urban-rural dimensions of CL, geographical hot spots, gender and migrant CL dimensions. This could be enhanced through technical support from the Understanding Children's Work (UCW) project, implemented jointly by IPEC, the World Bank and UNICEF.

5.

6. Hanoi action programme: The Hanoi action programme is facing a major challenge to achieve its outputs and objectives at a quality level within the remaining timeframe. It is recommended that the project management together with DoLISA in Hanoi, closely monitor progress in the coming months, and at the earliest opportunity, such as the first quarter of 2013, assess the activities and outputs that can

realistically be achieved within the remaining months, and which of them should be dropped (if any). This will enable sufficient time for budget to be reallocated to other activities if necessary.

7. Monitoring and evaluation: To the project management and IPEC HQ it is recommended that the project together with the HQ Desk Officer review the monitoring and evaluation framework, and especially the performance indicators for IO 2, and introduce revised indicators as necessary. The project should also consider the feasibility of conducting selected studies of impact on national stakeholder capacity.

## **Important lessons learned**

### 1. Design and relevance

- Project scope, especially the number of provincial APs, needs to be considered and balanced according to the resources available. This project would have benefited from a smaller number of provinces.
- Sufficient attention needs to be given to design of the M&E framework represented in the logical framework to the development of practical and measurable indicators.

### 2. Project management effectiveness and efficiency

- The MTE consultations found that provision of sufficient financial and human resources to establish effective intervention models (e.g. support for livelihood start-ups) is sometimes required beyond the resources of existing local institutions even in a technical capacity-building project.

### 3. Effectiveness of direct action intervention approaches and tools

- Sufficient time is needed to implement APs. A minimum of two years, and livelihood initiatives need to be developed simultaneously with other interventions to enable their benefits to be realized within the project lifespan.
- As a means of influencing parents' behaviour, livelihood improvement alone is insufficient without effective communications resulting in awareness of the harmful effects of allowing their children to engage in long hours of work.