



# Evaluation Summary



International  
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## *Prevention and elimination of child labor in small-scale traditional mining in Colombia – Midterm evaluation*

### Quick Facts

<b>Countries:</b>	<i>Colombia</i>
<b>Midterm Evaluation:</b>	<i>2/2003</i>
<b>Evaluation Mode:</b>	<i>Independent</i>
<b>Administrative Office:</b>	<i>IPEC</i>
<b>Technical Office:</b>	<i>IPEC</i>
<b>Project Code:</b>	<i>COL/01/50/USA</i>
<b>Keywords:</b>	<i>child labour</i>

### Background & Context

This section summarizes the results of the interim (mid-term) evaluation of the Project for Prevention and Elimination of Child Labor in Small-Scale Traditional mining in Colombia. It was prepared by consultants belonging to the *Centro Internacional de Educación y Desarrollo Humano-CINDE* at the request of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour of the International Labour Organization (IPEC-ILO). The evaluation focuses on actions to encourage the withdrawal of children from work in small-scale traditional mining in the municipalities of Nemocón, Sogamoso, Muzo and Condoto. The selection of these municipalities was based on previous studies done in the country to establish the magnitude and characteristics of child labor in small-scale traditional mining of gold, emeralds and clay.

The evaluation analyzed both the national project and the action programs implemented in each municipality by non-governmental organizations, taking into consideration the following criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and administration / management. Indicators were

designed for each criterion. The evaluation, which could be defined as formative, obtained information “*in situ*” in each municipality through observation and interviews with key stakeholders of the action programs, including mayors, AP staff, public officials, families and children. Key stakeholders connected with the project at the national and sub-regional levels were also interviewed. These information-gathering strategies were complemented by a review of IPEC documents produced in Colombia.

The analysis of the information leads to the conclusion that the national project is relevant because it has raised the issue of the prevention and elimination of child labor in the small-scale traditional mining sector where children work under exploitative conditions. It is based on prior studies that documented critical points requiring immediate attention and includes appropriate strategies and lessons learned from other countries that underscore the importance of taking an integral approach to tackle the causes of the problem. Although child labor has been used in small-scale traditional mining in the country for many decades, only around 1995 did an intervention begin to address the problem in the coal-mining sector. With this project, as indicated, actions were expanded to small-scale mining of clay, emeralds and gold.

At the national level, the project has fulfilled its purpose, overcoming difficulties that have arisen during implementation. Despite limitations imposed by the political violence affecting some of the zones of intervention, the low levels of development in the municipalities and the lack of non-governmental organizations available to work on the issue in certain zones, the action programs generally began without major delays. At the municipal level, progress has focused on the identification and coordination with the various institutions involved in the issue, to gain their commitment to carrying out the action programs. Interviews with officials demonstrated that they have knowledge of the activities and awareness on the

issue. In addition, the mayors, the highest municipal authorities, have committed themselves to the program. In Nemocón and Sogamoso, especially, significant progress has been made in including the issue in the municipal development plans.

The accomplishments in the municipalities vary according to the areas. In Nemocón, the program has substantial visibility in the educational area, although there have been problems in adapting the pedagogical proposal to the characteristics of the target population. In Sogamoso, a great deal of work has been done in addressing the change of cultural attitudes among parents, because these have been identified as factors that can have a negative impact on the program. In Muzo, great efforts have been made in interinstitutional coordination. In Condoto, despite political instability, significant progress has been made in the area of health.

The priority placed on inter-institutional coordination has enabled the project and action programs to gain efficiency (relationship between the progress made and the use of allocated resources). Addressing the problem of child labor from each institution's perspective has allowed the action to be focused in an effective, integral way on the target population, leveraging actions and results and making the best use of the municipalities' limited resources. These synergies have increased the impact of the results.

With regard to sustainability, the transition towards a new administration in August 2002 and its decision to shut down MINERCOL has required the project coordination to take action to ensure the intervention's continuity. At the national level, arrangements were made to include the issue in the National Development Plan and in specific institutional agendas. A proposal was drawn up for inclusion in the Plan and presented to the relevant agencies, but the outcome of this process is still not certain. If it is not included, the project's sustainability will be affected. At the municipal level, taking into account the decentralization of public administration, arrangements have been made to include the issue in municipal development and sector-specific plans, with positive results. The fact that the mayors will remain in office until 2003 is also positive for continuity of the programs, ensuring that the agreements reached so far will be maintained.

With regard to project management, the national coordinating office has provided technical support, supervision and ongoing assistance for the programs, the implementing agencies and participating organizations. Periodic workshops have been held with action program coordinators designated by the

municipalities and the NGOs to train them in strategies for institution building, awareness raising, income generation, etc. Arrangements have also been made with national and municipal institutions to gain their commitment to preventing and eliminating child labor in small-scale traditional mining. This has made possible to achieve the planned goals within the set timeframes, and contributed to learning lessons and reinforcing the administration, organization and management of key stakeholders at various levels. Project activities are being carried out as planned, as reflected periodically in the progress reports submitted to IPEC and the donor.

The main conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation are:

1. As it was planned and implemented, the project and the action programs correspond to national and regional needs in relation to child labor in small-scale traditional mining. The priority placed on education as a strategy for withdrawing children from work leads us to focus on the need for additional emphasis in the area of pedagogic and curriculum development and adaptation to the real situation of children working in mining.
2. Income generation requires maturity on the part of organized groups, which need support so they can learn from the experiences in the various municipalities.
3. Institution building is a priority. It is being emphasized, and this must continue in order to ensure the project's sustainability. This may be the project's greatest challenge. It is necessary to work with agencies at the local level, seeking their empowerment and encouraging their interest so that when the period of NGO leadership ends, they can continue on their own, implementing actions that lead to the withdrawal of children from work and the prevention of their entry into the work force.
4. The importance of attitude change has been suggested by preliminary studies and underscored by experiences in other countries in the sub-region. If it is not explicitly addressed, long-term results may be less important than expected. It is clear that cultural patterns cannot be changed in one year, but work must at least begin with direct beneficiaries and institutions committed to the project. It may also be important to achieve greater participation by program beneficiaries in forming groups in which they can contribute to the programs, strengthening their personal development and democratic decision-making skills.