



Evaluation Summary



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Combating the worst forms of child labour in Ecuador: Supporting the Time-Bound Programme- Final Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries:	<i>Dominican Republic</i>
Final evaluation:	11/2004
Evaluation Mode:	<i>Independent</i>
Administrative Office:	<i>DWT/CO-Beirut</i>
Technical Office:	<i>IPEC</i>
Evaluation Manager:	<i>name</i>
Evaluation Consultant(s):	<i>Marta Picado Mesén, Team leader - Martha Moncada, National Consultant.</i>
Project Code:	<i>ECU/05/50/USA</i>
Donor(s) & Budget :	<i>US DOL / USD 2 million</i>
Keywords:	<i>child labour</i>

Executive summary of the full report

The Government of Ecuador confirmed its commitment to eliminate child labour by initiating a time bound programme (TBP) against the worst forms of child labour in 2003. In order to support this initiative, the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour of the International Labour Organization (ILO-IPEC), with the support of the United States Department of Labor has implemented a technical cooperation project in order to strengthen the activities against child labour and its worst forms in cooperation with the Government of Ecuador, workers and employers organizations and civil society organizations. This document corresponds to the report of the expanded final evaluation of this Project, entitled “Combating the worst forms of child labour in Ecuador – Support to the time-bound programme for the elimination of the worst forms

of child labour in Ecuador (2003-2008)”. The evaluation was carried out in May and June 2008 by a team of independent consultants. As an expanded final evaluation it included a target group impact assessment study.

The Project started on 30 September 2003 (original Project) with a contribution of US \$2,013.146, from the United States Department of Labor (USDOL). Another US\$ 1,999,796 has been added to the budget through an addendum in June 2008. The Project has two immediate objectives:

1. The creation of a national legal and institutional environment which is favourable to the elimination of the WFCL.
2. The reduction of the incidence of certain prioritized WFCL, by means of direct action in selected regions of intervention.

The final evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is:

- To inform the key stakeholders, including governmental agencies and social partners in Ecuador as well as the donor, about the achievements from the mid-term evaluation until the final evaluation.
- To analyze the validity of the project design, in particular in the context of the country.
- To document and analyze the actions that have been taken in response to the recommendations and agreements made during the Project revision which took place instead of the second mid-term evaluation.
- To provide recommendations for the future.
- To analyse the good practices and lessons learned that have been obtained from the implementation of the Project that can contribute to institutional learning of the donor, the ILO, the governmental institutions, the workers and employers organisations, as well as of other institutions and organisations.

The methodology of the evaluation included a document review of material, including project documents, progress reports, reports of evaluations previously carried out, products of the activities of the Project and of its Action Programmes, and relevant materials of secondary sources. The evaluation also reflects field work to selected sites in which interviews have been conducted with national officials, trade unions, employers and other associated organisations as well as with local officials of areas in which direct Action Programmes have been carried out. The field work included visits to the action programmes that are implemented. At the end of the field work, a stakeholder workshop was carried out in which the results of the evaluation were communicated. An impact study on the target groups (children and families) has been carried out in the context of this evaluation and has been a major input to this report. This study looks at the impact on the quality of life of children and adolescents that has been achieved by the action programmes in the country between 2005 and 2008 in the context of the project of support to the Time-Bound Programme in Ecuador.

Conclusions

The design of the Project reflects an adequate knowledge of the subject and context. The project, in its design clearly presents the conception of the phenomenon of child labour and CSEC as a crime that needs to be sanctioned. Intervention strategies of inter-institutional and multidisciplinary character are put forward, with the purpose of achieving legal reforms, public awareness, institutional strengthening, prevention and integral and direct attention to child victims or children in risk of CSEC.

The two objectives of the Project, on the one hand, point to the strengthening of the institutional structure linked to the abolition of child labour and, on the other hand, to the implementation of direct action in selected regions and sectors with the purpose of preventing and eliminating child labour. The combination of these two dimensions has enriched the dynamics of the project and allowed the creation of processes and strategies that complemented the implementation of actions that otherwise might have suffered from a unilateral (narrow) focus.

The actions implemented for the prevention and withdrawal of children and adolescents from child labour and specifically CSEC have initiated a process of sensitization and capacity strengthening among officials of public and private institutions, NGOs and among the general public. The efforts have been important and of great relevance as they have constituted an essential starting point for building linkages of

cooperation for the investigation and the development of work processes. Notwithstanding these efforts, there is a need to continue this excellent work which, without any doubt, needs to be extended to other sectors and production branches, as well as other geographical areas in the country. The targets for direct beneficiaries (children and adolescents) have been exceeded, due to the high achievements in prevention. Until February 2008 the project had withdrawn 1673 children and prevented 5018 children; the targets for the whole project duration were 2120 withdrawn and 2880 prevented children.

The target group impact study observed positive changes with regard to conceptions of child labour and education among targeted children, adolescents and parents. Some important improvements were noted in the formal economy, such as the legalization of contracts, an increase in insurance coverage among employees, the payment of legal minimum wages and a reduction in exposure to risks. These changes were attributed to the existence of control systems and labour inspections. The employment of minors in domestic work, agriculture and informal commerce were still widespread. In the formal sectors, such as the flower and banana industries, there was an important decrease in the incidence of labour of persons of less than 15 years of age (e.g. in floriculture, there were practically no more children working below 15 years) and, above all, an improvement of working conditions for those who continue to work.

The implementation of the programme has enabled various governmental agencies, social and employers organisations to work hand in hand in the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, resulting in concrete achievements such as the declaration of the National Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour and the reform of the Penal Code with relation to the criminalization of human trafficking, adopted in 2004.

The management of the Project with an emphasis on sustainability has resulted in a practice in which the ILO left the leadership to local actors and rather held a role of facilitation and support through the technical team of the ILO. The decision to initiate the implementation of the Action Programmes after having reached progress in the institutional framework is also coherent with the criterion of sustainability.

Recommendations

The evaluation formulates a number of recommendations, for the Project and its partners on how to continue the efforts for the elimination of child labour in Ecuador as well as in other future interventions

of similar nature. The main forward-looking, strategic recommendations are:

- Continue to strengthen the strategies of income generation for families as a form to substitute the income generated through child labour and CSEC, by strengthening the capacities of adolescents, of families of children and adolescents at risk, by identifying alternatives of individual and collective self-employment, such as cooperatives, job fairs etc.
- The Ministry of Labour and Employment and the Ministry of Social Inclusion and Economy should continue to promote in the provinces, municipalities and communities, the strengthening of institutional coordination mechanisms: commissions, municipal councils, children's and adolescent's councils, committees, and roundtables for consultation among others, promoting their legitimacy in the institutional cultures and practices of participating entities and, if possible, their legal formalisation. This is the root cause of the fact that, despite progress in the legal area, there are still limitations to enforcement.
- The implementing agencies, within their monitoring activities, should continue the dynamics of exchanges of experiences among implementing agencies and other social organisations which have been initiated in the provinces with the support of the Project. It is opportune to spread the communication of the experiences to other provinces of the country, with the contribution of materials from ILO/IPEC and the public institutions.
- The progress in terms of legal reforms, creation of laws, harmonization of regulations, adoptions of decrees, with support of the Project, has to be communicated massively and shared with other agencies in other geographical areas of the country, by the ILO and the partner institutions.
- It is recommended to continue the processes of capacity building in order to communicate the legislative reforms (penal and process reforms) to judges, public advocates, attorneys, the national and provincial police and others, in order to facilitate the processes of denunciation, identification or detection and processing of cases.
- Until now, awareness campaigns have been carried out in a non-sustainable manner. It is necessary that future projects of national partner institutions ensure the continuity or permanence of the same.
- It is recommended to ILO/IPEC to motivate and advise the partner institutions so that they

systematically take certain measures before and after the massive awareness campaigns regarding the attitudes and the knowledge of certain target audiences of the Ecuadorian population in order to assess their impact.

- It is recommended that the partner institutions continue with the basic community experience of prevention, detection and attention to the population at risk and/or to victims. This should be done using participative methodologies, with a view to an attention of humanist and constructive nature.
- Provide follow-up to child and adolescent victims in order to ensure and document the withdrawal of this group from CSEC. In this way, the ultimate success of the Project can be ensured. Or, in case of difficulties, strategies should be advised to assist in their processes of family, educational and work reintegration as applicable.
- It is well known that the problem of CSEC and child labour has its roots in the situation of poverty, inequality and discrimination that an important part of society suffers. Now that national and local governments have undertaken obvious efforts to develop programmes of support and social assistance for the excluded groups where the problem of CSEC and child labour is present, the actions of this type of international cooperation projects have to be linked to government programmes in order to enhance the living conditions of the families of children and adolescents that are victims or at risk.