



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation
Office

Convergence Against Child Labour: Support for India's Model – Midterm Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries:	<i>India</i>
Midterm Evaluation:	<i>12/2012</i>
Evaluation Mode:	<i>Independent</i>
Administrative Office:	<i>DWT/CO-New Delhi</i>
Technical Office:	<i>ILO/IPEC</i>
Evaluation Manager:	<i>ILO/IPEC-DED</i>
Evaluation Consultants:	<i>Leader: Smita Premchander; Sandhya Kanneganti, Brajesh Pandey</i>
Project Code:	<i>IND/08/50/USA</i>
Donor & Budget:	<i>USDOL (US\$ 6,850,000)</i>
Keywords:	<i>Child labour</i>

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The Convergence Against Child Labour – Support for India's Model Project (The Convergence Project) is a pilot initiative of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE). The project aims at developing an operational framework for 'convergence' of the government resources available under different schemes and programmes to target the agenda of elimination of child labour (ECL) while addressing its root cause, i.e. poverty.

The activities of the project require focusing on child labour (CL), including children who were withdrawn

and those vulnerable to CL. The project also involves support to the families with vulnerability to child labour (FVCL) and families with child labour (FWCL) by ensuring that entitlements and welfare benefits from each ministry reach them. Given that families with low income are vulnerable to CL, they have both social protection and livelihood protection needs. The support that people in such a household require is manifold: the younger children need protected space, older ones need to have access to education. Vocational training skills are needed to enhance human capital and earning abilities, and job linkages, assets and credit are needed to get employment or self-employment. Access to entitlements and government welfare schemes for all these support services is the key objective of the Convergence Project.

The project is financed by the US Department of Labour (USDOL) and is being implemented in ten districts spread over five states. The project started on 30 September 2008 and is currently scheduled to end by 31 March 2013.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

1. Assess the achievement and progress so far in achieving the project objectives and to examine the likelihood of the objectives being achieved.
2. Examine current and proposed activities and make an assessment of their potential contribution to the implementation of the strategy and the overall outcomes, including strategic fit within the Government, ILO and IPEC.
3. Identify strategic lessons learned and recommendations put forward to be considered in further consultations with the stakeholders with regard to adjustment of strategies for the project as a whole as well as for its individual components.

4. Identify key issues in exit strategy and progress towards sustainability, including review plans for promoting long-term sustainability.
5. Provide recommendations for the remaining period of the project that will improve delivery and sustainability of outputs and objectives.
6. Review the ongoing documentation of the project implementation including the process for documenting the convergence model.
7. Identify emerging good practices and possible innovative approaches and other good practices and lessons learned.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation was carried out from October to December 2012. The evaluation process was highly consultative and included the following steps:

1. Detailed briefing of the evaluation team leader in Evaluation and Impact Assessment section of ILO/IPEC (ILO/IPEC-EIA-Geneva), and with USDOL through telephone conference.
2. Detailed briefing of the evaluation team by the Director, Deputy Director and National Project Manager (NPM) in ILO DWT/CO – New Delhi.
3. Desk review of the project documents.
4. Detailed presentation of the project by the NPM and the project team.
5. Consultations/interviews with key stakeholders.
6. Field visits to five states.
7. State-level stakeholder workshops in each state.
8. Stakeholder workshops at national level to share the findings of the evaluation.
9. A draft evaluation report was circulated to key stakeholders, and comments received were considered when finalising the report.

Main Findings & Conclusions

1. The project performance in this evaluation is to be assessed not only in terms of the activities undertaken, but also on the processes of convergence that it has been able to achieve and set into motion, and what are the lessons it contributes for convergence projects and projects working for ECL, in India and in other countries.
2. Evaluated from this perspective, the project has performed well on the education interventions, making alliances with the State's Department of Education, resulting in good absorption of children withdrawn and prevented from CL, into National

Child Labour Project (NCLP) schools and the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).

3. The vocational training programme is yet to complete its full cycle of interventions. It has already demonstrated highly-convergent processes, with highly-successful linkages forged with the Skills Development Initiative – Modular Employable Skills (SDI-MES) of the Director General of Employment and Training (DGET), with modifications proposed to the scheme to facilitate inclusion of families with prevalence of, and vulnerability to, CL.
4. The family linkages worked well for provision of job cards, health and life insurance. However, it has proved difficult to forge linkages with schemes where the eligibility criterion is a Below Poverty Line (BPL) card, which is controlled and notoriously difficult to obtain. The most significant success in linkages has been derived by providing membership to the target families, of the Building and other Construction Workers' Welfare Board (BoCW WB), an institution which is well-resourced and under the aegis of the State Labour Department.
5. The structures which are mandated to support and monitor the project have worked better at the district level, with the District Collector at the helm. At the state level, the project has worked through the State Project Steering Committee (SPSC) and the State Resource Centre (SRC), set up within the labour department, for which human and financial resources are assigned from the project. While they helped in pushing the ECL agenda forward by providing the required strategic focus and thrust and helped implement project activities, they are unlikely to sustain beyond the project period, unless the states are able to find resources for their active continuity. Some states like Jharkhand are exploring the possibility of positioning the SRC to function as the secretariat of the BoCW WB, a lesson that could be replicated by all other states as the BoCW WB is well resourced. While the project initiative rests with the Labour Department, the convergence with the Education Department, the DGET, and in some cases, with the Rural Development Department and Department of Industries, has worked to benefit the families.

6. A gap in project implementation has been the limited engagement of TUs and Employers' Associations, except as members of the SPSC and DLTF. The project has prepared tools for both these organizations although mainstreaming of the ECL agenda using these tools is yet to be achieved. EOs could have been engaged with informal-sector employers, but there is no visible evidence of this opportunity being explored actively.
7. The knowledge management initiatives of the project have enabled a national CL Knowledge Centre in the VVGNI (V. V. Giri National Labour Institute), and several studies have been conducted, and tools developed for capacity building. The Gender Community of practice of the UN Solution Exchange has collaborated with the project to produce compendiums of government schemes and organizations working for prevention and elimination of CL in the five project states. Taken together, the studies and tools, which have just been completed, are yet to be shared with the states and other stakeholders, and efforts are needed to use them.
8. The project has had critical delays between design and implementation, starting off the Action Programmes, and putting staff in key positions at district and state levels. Despite these, the project has speeded up implementation to move forward towards the target set. However, these factors have led to finances being utilized only to the extent of 55 per cent until the end of 2012.
9. In terms of convergence, much has been achieved, and the several challenges faced offer lessons not only for other countries where USDOL or ILO may like to develop similar projects, but more importantly, for ILO and other UN agencies in India, and for the Government of India. It will also be worthwhile if better convergence is ensured with convergence-related projects (GoI-UN), projects focusing on CL (UNICEF), and ICPS, the flagship scheme of the GoI focusing on child protection. The lessons of the project need to be shared with, and taken on board by the GoI, an initiative that the MoLE can develop next.
10. Finally, the project is being implemented in India at a time when the national government and civil society organizations are working towards rights-based approaches for child rights and child protection, as well as for livelihoods protection and

promotion. The project has provided the GoI and the ILO many lessons to influence policy and design of programmes aimed to prevent and eliminate CL.

Recommendations

1. The project should develop an exit strategy through a consultative process at the district; state and national level, involving all stakeholders.
2. The exit strategy could focus upon identification, documentation and validation of good practices (from project districts) that could be scaled up and replicated in other blocks in the district and other districts in the state.

Education-related interventions

3. At the district level, the project could develop a plan for scaling up the training of NCLP school teachers in life skills, in sensitive handling of the children, to retain them in schools and skills in motivating the community. The introduction of computer education, English teaching, counselling and the provision of a good library in every school, with a range of extra-curricular activities could be some additional methods that could boost the learning levels and motivation of children to attend school.
4. The ERCs (Education Resource Centre) that provide after-school support to the targeted children of NCLP schools should be integrated with the NCLP schools. This could be done through identifying one of the four NCLP school teachers as the Nodal Teacher for ERC and her/his work timings fixed after school hours.

Vocational Training

5. The DGET could consider mandating supplementary/additional training sessions for the target beneficiaries.
6. The capacities of the ITIs (Industrial Training Institute) need to be enhanced so as to be able to incubate self-employment projects of trainee groups.

Family Linkages

7. The exit strategy at the district level may focus on identifying key benefits to be linked to CL vulnerable families, follow-up actions required by the relevant departments and agreeing on the timeline to complete the same.

8. The project may also consider commissioning, during the project period, a study to address access issues, supplemented by state level and/or national workshops or meetings with the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)/National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) to find appropriate solutions to include families vulnerable to CL.

9: The BoCWWB should mainstream the process of linking families of CL (in both the categories, i.e. prevented and withdrawn) by issuing guidelines.

Resource and Activate the State Action Plans

10. At the state level, further facilitation may be provided to ensure that different departments include the Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour (SAP-FL) elements into their respective planning and budgeting processes and programme activities.

11. A joint administrative order (involving different departments such as Labour, Education, Women and Child Development and Rural Development) issued at the state level to the Collectors on how to ensure and measure convergence between these departments when ensuring support to CL families will go a long way in stabilizing the coordination and convergence mechanism on the ground level.

Sustaining State Resource Centre

12. As part of the exit strategy at the state level, discussions may be initiated on how the SRC will be resourced with funds and human resources so as to continue beyond the project period.

13. At the state level, the permanent structures like the Child Labour Commissions/state level Task Forces or Committees can play an important role in the strategy for scaling up and replicating the project processes.

Integration into National Review Mechanism

14. At the national level, the project's interventions that should be monitored in the five project states beyond the project period may be identified and integrated with the national review mechanism of the NCLP.

15. Findings of the research and capacity-building efforts supported by the project need to be shared with the decision-makers to gain an understanding of the grass-root situation regarding what works and what does not and to influence policy decisions positively.

16. Life-skills training, which has been found very useful, may be integrated formally in the SSA and NCLP programmes, translated into local languages, appropriately scaled up and an official monitoring system set up under the SSA and NCLP programmes.

Documenting Impact

17. Knowledge sharing about the piloting process of the convergence model should be substantially strengthened (details in full report).

Understanding Context

18. The findings of the Knowledge, Attitude and Perceptions (KAP) study need to be shared with the states and the district teams so as to build awareness among different stakeholders.

Working with Social Partners

19. The project can prepare strategies and have discussions with Trade Unions (TU)/Employers' organizations (EO) about some simple steps to mainstream the ECL agenda in these organizations.

Sharing Experience between Project States

20. An area of knowledge sharing that could still benefit the project before its close is the sharing of experience between the project states, especially between source and destination states in order to enable refinement of the state models, and enhance effectiveness of measures to stop CL and trafficking.

21. The persistence of CL, even in small numbers, in specific locations and sectors, is a matter of concern for a country committed to Decent Work conditions for its citizens. The primary need, therefore, is to ensure that the ECL is mainstreamed and highlighted as a national concern before the project is completed.

More details on lessons learned and good practices are available in the full report.