



# Evaluation Summary



International  
Labour  
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## *Support to the Development of National Action Plans in Sub-Saharan Africa through Policy Support, Research, Knowledge Building and Advocacy, in particular through Understanding Children's Work - Final Evaluation*

### Quick Facts

**Region:** *Sub-Saharan Africa*

**Final Evaluation:** *09/2011*

**Evaluation Mode:** *Independent*

**Administrative Office:** *ILO/IPEC*

**Technical Office:** *ILO/IPEC*

**Evaluation Manager:** *ILO-IPEC/DED (Design,  
Evaluation and Documentation Section)*

**Evaluation Consultant:** *Una Murray*

**Project Code:** *RAF/08/06/ITA*

**Donor(s) & Budget:** *Italy (US\$ 1'000'000)*

**Keywords:** *Child Labour; Time bound programme*

### Background & Context

#### Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The Italian-funded project RAF/08/06/ITA began in October 2008 and is ending in August 2011. Three no-cost extensions were obtained: from April 2010 to December 2010, from January 2011 to June 2011 and finally until August 2011.

The project's goal was to contribute towards strengthening policy responses to child labour (CL) in the Sub-Saharan Africa region by increasing the knowledge base of CL in selected countries, which in turn (along with other activities) should inform policy and support the development of national action plans (NAP) on the elimination of child labour (ECL). In parallel, the project aimed to strengthen national capacities for measuring the extent of CL in order to be able to monitor progress in its reduction.

Originally envisaged to be an 18-month project, no-cost extensions allowed the project to continue for 36 months. The Italian government provided US\$1,000,000 for this project: \$403,000 was allocated for the research component implemented by the Understanding Children's Work (UCW) programme; and \$440,000 was allocated to support the development of NAPs channelled through ILO/IPEC headquarters (but with national ILO programme staff support and support from two African-based ILO CL specialists). The balance of funds was for support costs and provisions for cost increases.

The key countries the project sought to support directly in their national planning on ECL were Cameroon, the Congo and Ethiopia. The UCW research component covered Cameroon, Mali, Rwanda, Senegal and Zambia, and a detailed global inter-agency report for the 2010 Global Child Labour Conference. Other UCW activities included technical reports and training of statisticians in Zambia.

Rather than ILO/IPEC providing full project support to the national development of *Time-Bound Programme* approaches, this project provided targeted support at particular entry points in the three countries Cameroon, the Congo and Ethiopia, and research collaboration for other sub-Saharan countries through UCW. The overall goal of the support was to contribute to the ECL through strengthening policy responses to CL and advocacy in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The reasoning behind the project was that the development of NAPs would be supported through research-based policy advice and targeted inputs.

The project had three immediate objectives (IO):

- improve the information base on CL and related issues;
- inform policies and action plans addressing CL;
- strengthen national capacity in measuring and monitoring CL.

The first objective was conceived to achieve a shared understanding of CL, so that a common basis for action against it could be agreed. The second objective was expected to help ensure that research outputs are translated into national actions that would impact upon the lives of child labourers through the development of NAPs in Cameroon, the Congo and Ethiopia. The third objective was to help promote systems for regular data collection, which could be used to guide policy and could be subsequently used to assess progress toward ECL.

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

This final evaluation documents the extent of project delivery against the IOs and expected outputs. The evaluation should provide all stakeholders with (a) a summary of what worked well, (b) what did not work so well and why, (c) the major constraints to national planning on CL in the context of the project support, and (d) recommendations for future direction.

The main purposes are to:

- assess the usefulness of the approach and its components for Africa;
- examine the likelihood of the project achieving its objectives;
- investigate the constraints and factors affecting implementation;

- analyse the factors contributing to the projects achievements.

The evaluation will also attempt to identify good practices that could possibly be replicated.

### **Methodology of evaluation**

- A desk review of relevant project documentation and other relevant publications;
- Preparation of ILO/IPEC standard evaluation instruments to document and analyse achievements of the project;
- Interviews - a list of all persons interviewed;
- Geneva visit for headquarters briefings;
- Interviews with relevant ILO/IPEC staff - a list of questions asked;
- Interviews with donor representatives in Ethiopia;
- Open-ended questionnaire (based on interview questions) sent to Ministry of Labour (MoL) representatives in Cameroon and the Congo;
- Visit to UCW in Rome and interviews with staff from this collaborating partner;
- Field visit to Ethiopia - interviews with ILO staff and project partners included employers' and workers' groups and the central statistics office;
- Telephone/"Skype" interviews with stakeholders involved in the project in Cameroon and the Congo, including ILO programme staff involved in both countries and two ILO CL specialists.

## **Main Findings & Conclusions**

The Italian-funded project filled a gap – to provide support to national planning processes and improve the knowledge base on CL. Overall the project approach was valid as the problems and needs that gave rise to the project in each of the three policy focus countries still exist.

On the whole, the approach and strategies undertaken in this project were considered to be valid by many who were interviewed, with potential for replication, provided adequate staff arrangements with suitable workload allocations are considered. Country-specific timeframes were put in place, and there are more field office inputs in project design. More emphasis on advocacy activities and building national capacities is required overall.

Cooperation between ILO/IPEC and UCW was considered good practice and such collaboration deepened during the project life span. Although UCW produced many quality knowledge-based outputs (IO 1), more focus can also be placed on the wider communication of research results. Linking with national research institutes or national universities is important to build capacity to research CL issues amongst local partners.

With regard to IO 2, collaborative strategies have been defined and planned for the completion of the NAP process in Cameroon, the Congo and Ethiopia. The expectation that partners will continue to work on the NAP from September 2011 is high for Ethiopia and medium for the Congo (although funding has been secured to complete the NAP formulation by November 2011) and medium for Cameroon. It is important to highlight that the three countries still have weak institutional and technical capacities for working on children's issues.

Funding for advocacy-related work, including for example, translating evidence-based information into 'easy to use' briefs to ensure attention by influential persons was lacking in this project. Nevertheless the follow up from the Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (SCREAM) training of trainers in the Congo is commendable, spanning further activities and a formalized SCREAM network.

The third IO – to improve national capacity in measuring and monitoring CL – produced the least tangible results.

Whilst it is stressed that short projects of this nature cannot realistically expect to achieve standard outputs – such as a high quality NAP – the policy support elements of the project were effective, given the allocated resources per country (US\$140,000 per country). ILO should urgently consider how they can measure their influence into policy-related change, as the impact of their policy-influencing work may be overlooked by donors and others.

## Recommendations

### Main recommendations and follow-up

#### Design

1. ILO/IPEC and UCW should include field staff in the design of similar projects.
2. ILO/IPEC and UCW should allow for a mapping exercise on national requirements (and national ability to lead policy formulation) prior to project formulation. Project timeframes may need to vary depending on the stage of 'buy-in' amongst key national actors. Due to the fact that policy processes around CL change takes time, are country specific, and not all countries will move at the same pace, country nuances should be better reflected in expected outcomes.
3. Ensure donors allow for the inclusion of funding for advocacy activities in parallel to policy support activities. UCW and IPEC could place a better focus on how the different policy-influencing approaches can work in tandem and complement each other. Evidence-based advice to support policy also requires public campaigns, advocacy, communications and diffusion tactics. These areas merit attention.

#### Management

4. ILO/IPEC should ensure there is clarity regarding staff time allocations, staff responsibilities and expectations, if designing a similar project. Indeed the different roles and responsibilities in IPEC HQ and ILO regional/field offices should be clarified. The *Roadmap Outcome Document* from the 2010 *Hague Global Child Labour Conference* defines broader stakeholder responsibilities and may be used to avoid role confusion.
5. Responses from some sections of IPEC in Geneva could be faster and communications between Geneva and field offices should improve. Set in place minimum time standards for replying to queries from the field.

#### Policy support

6. Continue to follow up on the NAP process with the three countries. Request that a short report be submitted to ILO/IPEC on the status of the NAP process by the end of 2011.
7. A mobile policy advisory or response unit in ILO/IPEC is an important strategy. A menu of support that can be provided by ILO/IPEC (for NAP process) should be developed. Carefully consider the profile of who should be part of such a unit. Map ILO staff's policy-related abilities and build capacities in

mainstreaming, networking and linking to joint donor programmes.

8. Consider (ILO) how policy advice work can be measured, and develop policy-change indicators in lieu of standard project-planning indicators.

9. In order to improve the impact and reach of policy support work on CL, IPEC could improve their communications strategy in order to define target-user groups with support resources.

#### **Country partners**

10. UCW/ILO/IPEC should consider how to develop/build more long-term relations/linkages with national research institutes/universities to sustain research components.

11. Ensure that all tripartite partners have relevant funding opportunities to implement CL activities, rather than focus exclusively on one partner.

12. Gender issues.

13. Consistent reminders for those organizing events or meetings to pay more attention to systematically giving women a voice are required for all partners.

#### **Knowledge management**

14. Better knowledge management is required within ILO/IPEC to ensure information is easily available to the public. Many of the excellent publications are unknown outside ILO/UCW. For example the dissemination of ILO/IPEC gender-sensitive CL materials more widely would be useful for partners.

15. A clear and simple ILO website could list in plain language the tools available for different aspects of policy support work on CL, with links to available tools and other knowledge products. 'User testing' for website visitors should help shift the emphasis to the end users.

#### **Important lessons learned**

- Many interviewed in the Congo and Ethiopia indicated that a district/provincial-level focus is required during NAP formulation to help ensure NAP implementation;
- Funds for a percentage of a project coordinator's time should be carefully considered in similar

future projects. Whether or not to fund a national facilitator or the percentage of a project coordinator's time funded by the project should be based on the actual NAP preparation/implementation stage in the country of focus and the level of expertise available in country, particularly the commitment of the MoL;

- It proved difficult to evaluate the impact of ILO policy advice and support. A key lesson is that standard project-planning indicators do not tell the full story when attempting to measure policy support work. New ways of measuring and evaluating policy impact and policy support work have not yet been reviewed by ILO.

#### **Good Practices**

- UCW and ILO collaboration and joint field missions, whereby UCW and ILO together feed into NAP formulation is a good practice and could be replicated in other countries. Although UCW is a joint ILO/UNICEF/World Bank project, UCW's primary focus is on research into children's work. UCW working directly with ILO/IPEC staff at the point where ILO/IPEC is supporting NAP formulation is good practice in terms of timing and coordination. On the one hand, UCW has an immediate focus for their research outputs and on the other hand, ILO/IPEC can use the UCW background studies to furnish evidence-based arguments in formal and informal meetings with tripartite partners. In addition, UCW has linkages to government bodies beyond the MoL, so in theory can bring other important governmental stakeholders and partners to the policy table, or at the very least obtain their endorsement of the CL problem;
- Employing a national facilitator with an office in the MoL's office for a certain percentage of project implementation time worked well in Ethiopia, and is a practice that can be replicated elsewhere (and is already a common ILO/IPEC practice);
- The formalization of the SCREAM Network in the Congo is an innovative practice and could potentially turn into a good practice depending on the effectiveness and impact of this Network in the future. Formalizing the Network implies that advocacy activities are likely to continue in some way over the medium term.