



# Evaluation Summary



International  
Labour  
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## *Learning from Experience: Distilling and Disseminating Lessons on WFCL - Final Evaluation*

### Quick Facts

<b>Countries:</b>	<i>Global</i>
<b>Final Evaluation:</b>	<i>06/2010</i>
<b>Evaluation Mode:</b>	<i>Independent</i>
<b>Administrative Office:</b>	<i>ILO/IPEC</i>
<b>Technical Office:</b>	<i>ILO/IPEC</i>
<b>Evaluation Manager:</b>	<i>ILO-IPEC/DED (Design, Evaluation and Documentation Section)</i>
<b>Evaluation Consultant:</b>	<i>Linda Stoddart</i>
<b>Project Code:</b>	<i>GLO/05/51/USA</i>
<b>Donor(s) &amp; Budget:</b>	<i>USDOL (US\$ 3 million)</i>
<b>Keywords:</b>	<i>Child Labour</i>

### Background & Context

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

The emphasis on managing information and knowledge has become pervasive in IPEC. There is a consensus amongst IPEC staff and stakeholders that the re-use of good practice and innovative approaches is fundamental to IPEC's work. The interviews and surveys carried out in connection with this strategic evaluation demonstrate an openness to share ideas, to collaborate and to discuss new initiatives that will have an impact. A significant finding is that staff rate opportunities to share (through workshops, meetings, training events and site visits) as one of the most effective ways of acquiring knowledge. There is a camaraderie and team approach; IPEC staff is a group

of committed experts and practitioners who believe in what they are doing and who are open to identifying new methods for reaching results. Several years before the Knowledge Project begun, initiatives had been launched to facilitate the access to information created by IPEC itself through the establishment of an IPEC database. Networks were formed to encourage the sharing of research and practice that was used in developing IPEC strategy. IPEC is "doing knowledge management", although many different approaches are being used. Staff has difficulty building information handling and knowledge sharing into their busy schedules, but it is not because they don't think that it's important.

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

The overall objective of the current strategic evaluation was to:

- Undertake a strategic review of IPEC work on knowledge building, management and sharing;
- Focus on the processes, tools and structures put in place rather than on the knowledge itself;
- Evaluate the specific contribution of the Knowledge Project;
- Formulate recommendations for a renewed strategy for consolidating and continuing participatory knowledge management work.

#### Methodology of evaluation

An effort was made to go beyond simply anecdotal evidence on determining the outcomes of the Knowledge Project and on IPEC knowledge practices, products and processes. An all-IPEC staff workshop held in November 2009 helped provide a picture of what IPEC staff believed were the key concerns.

Participants used a grid to identify the information and knowledge required to meet IPEC's objectives as well as the action to be taken and next steps. Next steps for collecting information included interviewing experts, practitioners, staff in headquarters and in the field (including other ILO staff outside IPEC) and partners in other organizations. Using an interview questionnaire, a total of 73 people were interviewed, 24 from the field. (See Annex 3 of the report for a copy of the interview questionnaire). Stakeholders in the field, in all regions, were also interviewed specifically concerning the catalyst effect of specific knowledge products and views on the usefulness of knowledge management to their work.

These interviews were followed by a Knowledge Survey sent out to a total of 420 all-IPEC staff, at headquarters and in the field: the response rate was 20 per cent. A previous Knowledge Survey undertaken in 2006–2007, provided a baseline for the 2010 survey. Both surveys covered knowledge management more generally focusing on IPEC's processes, information systems, and practices and how specific products and services influenced action by stakeholders; the 2010 survey was adapted slightly, following a consultative process, to include questions of particular interest on information systems. The results of these two surveys were compared. There was very little difference in the results of these two studies.

These two forms of data collection complemented one another. The objective of the interviews was to assess the overall impact of IPEC's knowledge management strategy and specifically knowledge products that had been developed, reviewing whether they served as a catalyst for action at the national and local level.

Examples of new policies, practices and initiatives were collected from constituents and a variety of stakeholders to provide evidence of the impact of specific outputs, highlighting policies, practice and innovative approaches that were developed as a result of IPEC knowledge products, services and expertise. Knowledge products generated by partners and constituents were also reviewed.

A great deal of emphasis has been placed over the period of the Knowledge Project (from 2005) on evaluating and assessing knowledge management processes. Reports and surveys show consistent views. There is no shortage of data and information on these issues. Respondents to the knowledge survey cite project evaluations as an effective knowledge

management method; 42 per cent highlight action programmes and project evaluations as a “very effective” method for capturing knowledge. How this knowledge is shared after it is collected is, however, one of the dilemmas for IPEC. This issue is further discussed in Part III of the report.

## Main Findings & Conclusions

**The Knowledge Project: created a foundation** and has focused IPEC's attention on the importance of organizing and using authoritative information and knowledge to encourage stakeholders to take action to prevent and eliminate child labour. The key achievements of the Knowledge Project are:

- **Creating a synthesis of information and knowledge**, especially through the development of resource kits and training materials. A number of these have served as a catalyst for further action in the field as seen in the case studies included in the report;
- **Improving the access to information** through the continued development of databases and other systems. Although much work needs to be carried out now to consolidate and integrate IPEC's systems, this work has provided a necessary and useful first step in creating a knowledge platform;
- **Promoting the concept that knowledge management is a core activity for IPEC and is a continuous and crucial activity** which should be embedded in everything IPEC does.

### Next steps: moving to concrete action and a coherent approach

A vision for knowledge management in IPEC already exists. The Knowledge Project has succeeded in building a consensus on the need for improved access to information and knowledge, and a positive organizational culture for knowledge sharing is prevalent. The building blocks are in place. What is now required is a roadmap to focus on concrete, visible outputs to resolve the following:

- consolidating information systems and identifying coherent content management methods;
- streamlining cumbersome processes;
- eliminating silos;

- ensuring that knowledge products produce specific outputs;
- championing collaboration in order to work toward better sharing of lessons learned;
- adopting new working methods to support the development of innovative products and services' stakeholders;
- minimizing the time spent searching for information and knowledge and improving information flows.

At this stage, expecting all IPEC staff to manage their own information and knowledge systematically, and contribute this in a useable form is unrealistic. Firstly, this approach leads to the use of many different, non-compatible ways of managing information and knowledge. Secondly, IPEC experts are not information professionals; information work cannot be a priority for them since their chief priority relates to their technical field and the network affiliated with this area. However, information-handling and knowledge-sharing guidelines would help facilitate building a more coherent approach.

## Conclusions

Establishing effective knowledge management practice requires an incremental approach. There is no quick fix. The Knowledge Project enhanced and encouraged the use of information and knowledge in IPEC's work and created a knowledge base as an essential first step. The next step is to ensure that this capacity is supported and further developed by providing dedicated expertise to this core function. Staff and stakeholders need to see real improvement in their **daily work** through the use of information and knowledge. Eventually IPEC will no longer view knowledge management as a distinct process. Ultimately, it will simply be part and parcel of how IPEC carries out its work. The foundation exists; dedicated resources and knowledge management expertise are required to move to the next step – visible concrete results.

## Recommendations

- Establish a small dedicated unit, **Strategy and Knowledge** reporting to the Director of IPEC headed by a **Chief Knowledge Officer**. This unit which would primarily have an advisory and clearing-house role should include one professional and two general service staff. It would

be responsible for: ensuring the use of common methods for managing information and knowledge, and oversee all information systems; establishing new approaches for enhancing internal and external information (intranet and web); leading a process to ensure a coherent approach for all IPEC knowledge products (particularly in relation to “brand” and dissemination); taking responsibility for the coordination of work on the preparation of IPEC strategy and workplan documents;

- Set up an IPEC internal communications tool – intranet – which would become the “one-stopshop” for all administrative and substantive information for staff. The intention would be similar to the ILO portal (“plone”) which is currently not being used by many staff. A newly-designed intranet would involve the integration of systems, ensuring that access is facilitated through improved search mechanisms and software applications, in coordination with ILO practice. There will be some overlap with IPEC's website; however the emphasis will be on content for collaboration;
- Rethink the process of developing knowledge products (including as outputs of projects) to ensure that their impact, the use by stakeholders, and how they would serve as catalysts for action is determined at the conceptualization phase. Involving partners and donors at the beginning of the process is fundamental to facilitating impact.

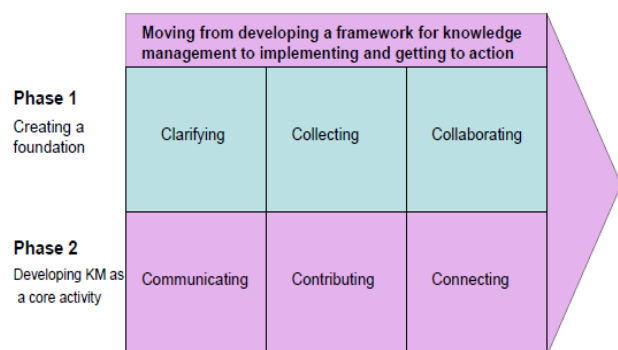
## Key lessons learned:

Knowledge work is a crucial and fundamental part of the work of IPEC. The Knowledge Project supported IPEC's capacity for the collection and dissemination process. It is clear from the results of both the interviews and the knowledge survey, that knowledge management is perceived as an essential activity that is core to IPEC's work. However, this is just the tip of the iceberg. Knowledge management needs to be managed by an information/knowledge professional who can ensure a coherent and user-friendly approach to information handling and who can coordinate on issues related to internal communications and collaboration. One of the key lessons learned is that knowledge management should be managed through both a codified approach focusing on access to information and a personalized approach focusing on collaboration. Knowledge management should be allocated adequate resources, and linked to IPEC's overall strategic objectives; it can no longer be managed as a project. Additional resources will be required, to ensure that the list of next steps becomes

a reality rather than a wish list. Detailed elements essential for implementation are covered in the recommendations in Part III of the report.

The Knowledge Project put into place a framework for knowledge management in IPEC. This was an essential and fundamental first step in creating a sustainable approach to this essential IPEC activity. The “knowledge value chain” below illustrates the process and the next phase in ensuring that knowledge management is institutionalized in IPEC and no longer seen as a discrete project. Over the last few years, the Knowledge Project promoted knowledge-sharing approaches, encouraged collaboration, built up IPEC databases of information to keep tabs on what was being produced, facilitated access to them, and produced authoritative and innovative resource kits. One significant factor that was revealed was the importance of clarifying how and where these products will be used.

### Getting to results: the knowledge value chain



As is illustrated above, the Knowledge Project acted as a catalyst to promote knowledge sharing by clarifying what this means; it reinforced the collection of publications produced by IPEC and in other organizations in order to ensure access to this body of information, it highlighted the need for collaboration and put mechanisms in place to motivate the process of sharing ideas amongst groups of experts and other stakeholders.

This part of the report is complemented by Annex 8, the Knowledge Project Output Table 2005-2010, that provides an overview of all of the outputs and activities of the project, giving a picture of how each activity built upon others.

The next phase of this work should focus on developing knowledge management as a core activity

within IPEC. The recommendations in the mid-term review, “*Learning from Experience: Distilling and Disseminating Lessons on WFCL*,” (GLO/05/51/USA, P.340.05.901.051), February 2008, also highlight this issue:

"IPEC should recognize the high degree of relevance of knowledge sharing and knowledge management to its raison d'être – and that such recognition requires a priority that may have implications for organization, responsibilities of at least some staff, and allocation of resources. While the project is still ongoing and in order to provide for continuity, IPEC should develop a strategy for integration of knowledge management as a core component of its modus operandi that at a minimum should provide for focal point/knowledge broker function(s)".

It also referred to knowledge-sharing gaps that became apparent as the project was implemented and as IPEC and knowledge-management approaches evolved since the project was formulated over five years ago:

"The project should move towards an open knowledge-sharing model for the balance of its tenure, with increased emphasis on facilitating and supporting use of what has been developed and in particular on facilitating multi-directional and horizontal sharing of tacit knowledge".

Reaching this objective will require better internal and external communication, encouraging participation and contributions from various partners and IPEC itself, recognizing these, and connecting people, processes and technology in an integrated process. Part III describes the elements required in this phase and what steps need to be taken to implement them effectively.