



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
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Evaluation
Office

Pakistan Earthquake: Child Labour Response - Final Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries:	<i>Pakistan</i>
Final Evaluation:	<i>07/2011</i>
Evaluation Mode:	<i>Independent</i>
Administrative Office:	<i>ILO/IPEC</i>
Technical Office:	<i>ILO/IPEC</i>
Evaluation Manager:	<i>ILO-IPEC/DED</i>
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Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

This is the report of the independent final evaluation of the ILO/IPEC Pakistan Earthquake: Child Labour Response Project (PECLRP) developed after the October 2005 earthquake that hit north-western Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir AJK regions. PECLRP was implemented in the central earthquake-hit areas covering seven Union Councils of Balakot tehsil in the northern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – KPK, Pakistan, between 2006 and 2010. Funding for the project was provided by the United States Department of Labour (USDOL). The evaluation was conducted in Pakistan by a team of

two independent national consultants with no prior association to PECLRP.

PECLRP was a pilot project and a first-time intervention for ILO/IPEC to combat child labour (CL) in a disaster and emergency context. This final project evaluation was commissioned by ILO/IPEC/DED, IPEC Evaluation function and carried out with their technical support and with the logistical support of the project office in Islamabad, and with the support of the ILO sub-regional office in South Asia in New Delhi. Unforeseen security concerns delayed project start up with the eventual closing of the project activities prematurely in the original location of Balakot in May 2010. In the remaining one year, project activities were relocated to Muzaffarabad.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation was to make an assessment of the project as a whole including project design, strategy implementation and achievement of objectives. Issues of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, key lessons learned for future and potential good practices were also examined.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation commenced in Islamabad with an in-depth review of documents and reports and initial briefing sessions with ILO/IPEC/DED, the regional office in New Delhi and with relevant USDOL representatives in the United States via teleconference, the PECLR Project team, as well as the ILO Pakistan country-office officials in Islamabad. Stakeholder meetings in Islamabad were

followed by visits to Peshawar, the KPK provincial capital for meetings with implementing partners and related provincial departments for CL and disaster management. Subsequently field visits to project locations in Muzaffarabad and Balakot were carried out, ending with meetings at the district level in Mansehra. The team visited a total of 16 locations. The evaluation followed a mixed-methods approach for data collection using an evidence table – structured according to the key issues outlined in the Terms of Reference (TOR) – to organize and analyse feedback obtained from observations, document reviews, interviews and group discussions.

Preliminary findings and conclusions were presented at a Stakeholder Briefing Workshop to obtain feedback, boost ownership and foster learning among the stakeholders. Briefing sessions were held with ILO/IPEC/DED and Pakistan country office after the workshop. Feedback from the workshop was included in the draft report sent to ILO/IPEC/DED within two weeks.

Main Findings & Conclusions

1. The PECLR project was relevant and provided useful experience and learning for ILO to build upon and utilize in refining and defining its future strategies and posture as a player in the disaster and post disaster context in Pakistan and elsewhere. It provided a platform for ILO to understand how it can sharpen its robust CL skills and tailor them to meet post disaster context needs. It also afforded ILO the opportunity to develop an understanding of the many needs, nuances and dimensions of working in a humanitarian context – as disaster and post disaster situations demand a humanitarian response – which is different from the development intervention mode.

2. As a response to a specific disaster need, PECLRP was late in responding initially and missed acting on some of the needs as they arose immediately after the earthquake disaster. The project has left a light footprint in the target areas but not quite reached the level of developing sustainable ownership and developing capacity for momentum built to last.

3. Circumstances beyond the control of the project such as security concerns due to an escalation of the conflict situation in KPK stressed project

implementation and attainment of key objectives. In addition, project management offices were relocated three times and project activities were closed prematurely in Balakot. UN DSS security-related directives should be complied with.

4. Post disaster interventions are more effective if approached thematically in partnership with other actors who each bring their skills to jointly address a problem within its broader context. The PECLRP project designed as a pilot to specifically highlight CL prevention in post disaster emergency contexts however, was not embedded programmatically with other pressing child and socio-economic issues present in disaster, post disaster and complex emergencies, and was operating mostly in a silo.

5. Implementing partners for PECLRP had a good working knowledge of ILO aims, objectives and processes and senior staff are well versed in CL issues. Meetings with field staff showed varying degrees of relevant skills. While some staff was excellent in their understanding of the issues, and their ability to translate plans into action, other staff could benefit from capacity-building training.

Recommendations

Main recommendations and follow up

1. In line with a key lesson learned from PECLRP, ILO/IPEC should look ahead and plan to respond to addressing CL-related issues in disaster, post disaster and complex emergencies in Pakistan and elsewhere. Pakistan is the disaster hot spot and ILO/IPEC also has the opportunity to respond to pressing CL needs such as in the conflict-affected areas in FATA, KPK, or the flood-affected areas across the four provinces in the country.

2. To do so however, ILO/IPEC will have to make important decisions on its role as a leader in humanitarian response in emergencies and disasters. ILO would need to chalk out a strategic direction for its perceived emergency focus areas. This would include not compromising the humanitarian principles of independence, neutrality and impartiality during emergency response activities.

3. ILO/IPEC should have an overall emergency response section under which each country office

would prepare contingency plans and develop appropriate links with local actors and disaster-related stakeholders. Preparedness should also focus on Disaster Risk Reduction approaches for CL interventions. ILO/IPEC should open more communications with UNOCHA it being central to coordination in disaster and post disaster situations.

4. ILO/IPEC through country offices should actively scale up advocacy efforts with policy-makers, through leadership bodies such as the National Steering Committee for CL and disaster management authorities determined to infuse CL into disaster-related policies and resource mobilization. This will help in monitoring responses to CL issues.

5. The ILO media project should partner with ILO interventions in disaster contexts to create awareness and highlight CL concerns for a bolder impact.

6. As ILO is new to implementing interventions in post-disaster contexts, and PECLRP being a pilot initiative focused on learning for application in future programme and planning, a lesson-learned exercise on the process and future ILO role in emergency contexts should be held in Geneva in the upcoming months.

Important lessons learned

1. Future interventions

A first learning from PECLRP indicates that ILO can carry forward lessons learned through this pilot response for addressing CL issues within a disaster context. It can plan to locate itself in response to disasters in addressing CL where vulnerable children are not only provided non-formal education (NFE) and mainstreamed into schools, but follow-up interventions are put in place to ensure that these children remain in school, and that their families are sufficiently empowered and economically supported on a long-term basis to help prevent putting their children to work.

2. Robust exit strategies needed

Clearly articulated exit strategies supported by sustainability mechanisms should be robustly inbuilt in the project design. All implementing partners need to have a shared understanding of how to integrate sustainability in its activities to enable a successful phase out when exiting.

3. Programmatic linkages between local community and government are vital

One important lesson learned from PECLRP was that implementation works well where local communities and government work together in CL interventions. Joint involvement of local community and government in project strategies not only bolsters ownership but helps to develop a common understanding. This can lead to sustaining activities beyond the project duration.

To ensure such collaboration, future ILO/IPEC projects must ensure formal agreements between communities and line departments to ensure that effective mechanisms can be sustained at the community level to help prevent CL.

4. Capacity building is a long-term effort

Project design must reflect that institutional capacity building is not achieved over a short-term intervention such as the PECLRP. More than just one day trainings are required to enhance capacity of relevant government departments to address CL issues in post disaster emergencies. Long-term investments sequentially building upon advocacy, engaging in in-depth discussions, forging a common perspective on an issue, and integrating these as part of the government priority must be realized at the onset.

5. Empower families for economic uplift

Approaches for addressing CL without adequately empowering families for their economic uplift are not the most appropriate or effective strategy.

6. Need for timeliness and preparedness of response

Intervention in disaster emergencies has immediate needs and must be addressed as these needs arise.

7. Availability of data

In order to assess the impact the project has made in achieving its objectives, surveys for data collection must be part of contingency planning.

8. Synergies with other child-protection interventions required

Post disaster interventions addressing CL issues must approach CL as a broader issue, and must consider the vulnerabilities of children beyond withdrawal and

prevention from CL and be inclusive of child-protection issues. These would include child trafficking and child sexual trafficking. Future project interventions should place a greater emphasis on undertaking advocacy relevant to project objectives at the lower levels of government, and link this advocacy with policy interventions at the higher level to ensure that the required enabling environment is created for their interventions. This knowledge was also endorsed by stakeholders during the project evaluation workshop.

Good Practices

1. Mainstreaming earthquake-affected children into formal schools

Mainstreaming of children at risk and those currently involved in CL into formal government schools after receiving two years of NFE at the Rehabilitation Centres (RC) can be viewed as a flagship achievement of PECLRP. The formation of a Project Advisory Committee and the involvement of the Executive District Officer (Education) in PECLRP facilitated the mainstreaming process, which remains noteworthy for any similar future interventions. Replication must also factor in follow up to ensure that children mainstreamed into government schools do not drop out, and ensure the linkage of this mainstreaming activity with supplementary measures such as empowering families of vulnerable children to guarantee that their children can remain withdrawn or prevented from engaging in CL.

2. Leadership and entrepreneurial skills developed through PECLRP

Leadership and entrepreneurial skills developed by the community members through the PECLRP platform is a positive outcome of this intervention.

3. Community ownership of Rehabilitation Centres

Successful community mobilization reflected in the taking over of eight RCs by the community at the end of the project in Balakot was a good practice and contributed to bring awareness of CL issues to the forefront as a priority concern.