



Addressing the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Jordan

QUICK FACTS

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Administrative Office: ILO ROAS

Technical Office: ILO ROAS

Evaluation manager: Hiba Al Rifai

Evaluation consultant(s): Rani Khoury

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BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

<p>Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure</p>	<p>The project "Addressing the Worst Forms of Child Labour" JOR/20/52/NOR in Jordan is the successor or 2nd phase of a pilot project that addressed child labour in agriculture in Jordan. A multi-sectoral approach was utilized in the project based on the case management approach, with activities conducted in three locations in Jordan. The project mainly targeted Syrian families in Mafraq and Jordanian and Syrian families in the Jordan valley. The main goal of the project was to substantially reduce the incidence of the worst forms of child labour in the agriculture sector in Jordan. It sought to do so through (i) protecting at-risk and working children and improving their access to education, (ii) improving the economic security and work opportunities for families of children at risk and engaged in the worst forms of child labour, and (iii) enhancing local and national responses to child labour.</p>
<p>Present situation of the project</p>	<p>The project ended as of the end of August 2022</p>
<p>Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation</p>	<p>The purpose of this final evaluation is to assess the overall achievements of the project against its planned outcomes/objectives and outputs to generate lessons learned, best practices and recommendations. The evaluation investigated the relevance, design, efficiency, effectiveness, potential impact, sustainability, and management arrangements of the project, reflecting findings on the extent to which the project has achieved its stated objectives, produced the desired outputs, and realized proposed outcomes/objectives. The evaluation also identified strengths and weaknesses in the project design, strategy and implementation as well as lessons learned with recommendations. Furthermore, the evaluation touched upon cross cutting issues including gender equality, disability, social dialogue, environmental sustainability, and COVID 19. The evaluation covered the entire timeframe of the project, from November 2020 to August 2022. It looked at the project achievement at the level of each outcome, and took into consideration the project duration, existing resources and political, security, and environmental constraints.</p>
<p>Methodology of evaluation</p>	<p>This evaluation followed a mixed methods approach, relying on available information collected through the desk review and primary qualitative data collected through interviews with project stakeholders and focus</p>



group discussions with beneficiaries. Interviews were conducted with 22 key stakeholders (of which 45.5% were female) as well as four farm owners (all male). A total of nine focus group discussions were held with 69 beneficiary children, mothers, and fathers (of which 55% were females). Gender was mainstreamed throughout the methodology from inception to data collection to data analysis. A main limitation of the methodology was the difficulty in gathering a randomized sample of beneficiaries from the various farms to participate in the planned FGDs, but this was overcome through the substantial support provided by the ILO team in arranging for these FGDs and providing all related logistics. Another limitation was that the sample of the beneficiaries selected for the FGDs are not representative of the whole population given the resource constraints for this evaluation. However, in order to come up with representative findings, the evaluation employed a stratified random sampling process to ensure that voices are heard from across all beneficiary groups, including women

**MAIN
FINDINGS &
CONCLUSIONS**

The project was found to be highly relevant to the needs and priorities of Jordan. The project document contained a thorough analysis of the phenomenon of child labour in Jordan, utilizing a number of studies and reports on the issue. The project was found to be in line with the national plans and strategies as well as with ILO's DWCP (2018-2022) and the ILO P&B (2018-2019)(2020-2021). The project came at a crucial time for this sector in Jordan, coinciding with a new national framework to address child labour, new regulations for agricultural workers, and a gradual shift of focus by the MoSD towards the case management approach in the social services it provides. The evaluation has found that gender was prioritized in the project, through tailoring a number of activities exclusively for females, with a number of activities focusing on strengthening the role of women in families and communities. The project was also found to have responded to the priorities of the donor as specified in the grant scheme rules from which funds were withdrawn. Moreover, the project strived to provide a timely and relevant response to the needs of beneficiaries during the context of COVID-19, but such a timely and relevant response could not be achieved across all project components (especially the education extracurricular component). The project was found to be somewhat relevant to the needs of beneficiaries who indicated that their priority is to enjoy an improved level of economic



security rather than a higher level of awareness.

The design of the project was significantly altered prior to beginning implementation to accommodate the donor's decision to provide only half of the requested funding. The redesign process dropped one of the project's locations as well as dropping new sectors that the design had planned to engage with. Moreover, around two thirds of activities and two outputs were removed, while maintaining the same outcomes and objectives. The evaluation has found that this rapid redesign process, in the absence of the design's original author, has adversely impacted the logic and coherence of the project, and made the amended project design appear to be too ambitious and vague in the eyes of stakeholders. Other than factors associated with the design amendments, all stakeholders agreed that trying to tackle the complex problem of child labour within a period of less than 1 year is a futile process. Because of this, and due to the gap between the two phases of the project, the 2nd phase ended up working with the same beneficiaries as the first phase, and the target selection remained valid in this case. However, one group that is heavily involved in the issue of child labour in farms, namely the 'Shawish', could have been better targeted in the project.

The project team and partners adapted implementation of the 2nd phase of the project based on lessons from the 1st phase, especially regarding the provision of vocational training and the increased focus placed on women and PWDs. The project design's assumptions and targets were deemed to be realistic, and an extensive risk analysis was conducted in the design phase of the project, especially on risks associated with the COVID crisis. However, mitigation measures were not adequate or not followed through during implementation to overcome challenges faced regarding the repercussions of COVID and the lack of cooperation by some farm owners. A design readjustment along with a budget revision was successfully made by the project team during implementation to utilize idle project funds that were previously earmarked for a CTA to expand the scope of work of implementing partners, since a CTA could not be recruited to the project due to the project's time constraints and delays faced during the beginning of implementation.



The design of the project was found to have explicitly taken into account the issue of gender equality through a dedicated section on 'gender mainstreaming'. With regards to disability, the project was based on the case management approach through which PWDs are referred safely to the relevant organizations, but no specific mention of disability was made in the project document. Furthermore, the project document made no mention of environmental sustainability or social dialogue.

Some measures that were taken during implementation have helped raise the efficiency of the project, including the aforementioned budget revision which made use of idle project funds. Another example is utilizing local CBOs for the provision of certified vocational training courses to beneficiaries which provided a higher value-for-money than working with VTC centres, and ensured a higher attendance rate from beneficiaries given the closer distance to their residence. Furthermore, it should be stressed that the project undertook a competitive bidding process for the selection of implementing partners, rather than resorting to direct contracting. ILO procedures and guidelines with this regard were followed, thereby ensuring an efficient use of funds allocated to implementing partners.

Nevertheless, the project faced a number of prolonged delays that adversely impacted the efficiency of the project, especially given the already limited timeline of the project. The first major delay of more than three months occurred at the beginning of the project due to a delay in recruiting staff for the project. Another main delay concerned the budget revision request, which took more than two months to be approved by ROAS. Yet another delay was caused by a lengthy approval process by Jordanian authorities regarding the extracurricular education component of the project. These delays, which were mostly outside the control of the project team, have inevitably translated into a loss of efficiency of the project.

The project was found to have partially achieved its outputs and outcomes. The effectiveness of the project was enhanced through its approach of working with and building the capacities of NGOs and CBOs and working within the national framework through supporting



national actors and processes. On the other hand, the effectiveness of the project was adversely impacted by the series of delays that occurred during implementation, in addition to the limited time and financial resource of the project. The COVID pandemic also impacted the effectiveness of some parts of the project.

Only one of the project's outcomes was found to be fully achieved. In specific, the project was successful in achieving the outcome related to enhancing local and national responses to child labour. On the national level, the project opted to work within the national framework and has contributed to updating a number of SOPs in the national case management system, with pilot field visits conducted jointly with MoL and MoSD to pilot these SOPs and the overall case management approach. The project also built the capacity of relevant officials from these organizations in a number of capacity building sessions. Furthermore, the project successfully provided technical support in a number of areas including the development of a 'light working tasks' list for children aged 16-18 working in agriculture, and the integration of child labour issues in the agricultural workers survey implemented periodically by the Department of Statistics. Further, a number of awareness raising activities and capacity building sessions were implemented by the project to raise local awareness and knowledge among school staff and the general local population on the issue of child labour.

The project's two other outcomes were partially achieved. While the project has helped protect at-risk or working children through its various activities, it did little to improve access to education outside of the awareness and psycho-social support sessions provided to parents and children. Furthermore, the project managed to provide certified vocational trainings to 60 beneficiaries residing in two of the project's three locations, meaning beneficiaries in one location did not receive any direct vocational training from the project as the team could not find a suitable CBO to offer vocational training in the project's location in the Jordan valley. While these trainings have helped build basic skills for some beneficiaries, one-off trainings, without any subsequent support, are deemed to be inadequate to meet the outcome of improving families' economic security and job opportunities.



The project was found to have effectively responded to the identified needs and expectations of females during implementation, with dedicated sessions to empower women to play a larger role in their communities and families. Also, self-defence classes were provided to girls after discovering that sexual harassment is prevalent in the environments in which children reside inside or nearby farms. The project also developed and implemented awareness sessions on gender-based violence for women, men, boys and girls, which resulted in some women coming forward with abuse reports to the implementing partner which is specialized in dealing with GBV cases. The project also organized a campaign to celebrate International Women's day. All these activities are seen to advance gender equality in the communities in which they were implemented and came in response to identified needs.

The project was also found to have effectively responded to the identified needs of children with disabilities, which is an unexpected positive outcome of the project. This included case management sessions for parents of children with disabilities focusing on parenting skills needed to deal with such children and mechanism of supporting them to be committed to education.. Moreover, the project included a specialized training for the staff of the project's implementing partner on the concept of disability, its identification, and mechanisms for dealing with such cases, including referral processes and procedures.

The project was effective in coordinating with different stakeholders mainly through the Child Labour Task Force which consists of a number of ministries, NGOs, and international partners relevant to the issue of child labour. Periodic meetings between the taskforce members has contributed to improving coordination between stakeholders and avoiding duplication. Close coordination with UN partners is considered a main strength of the project. Another main strength was the project's involvement of MoSD as a main player, after having been uninvolved in the 1st phase of the project. In fact, an unexpected positive outcome of the project was bringing the Ministries of Labour and Social Development closer together on child labour issues.

Having said that, the project could have done more to work and

coordinate with employer representatives, who were absent from this project. A main challenge faced by the project was the lack of cooperation by some farm owners, which could have been averted had the project worked with higher level representatives of farm owners. Moreover, the 'shawish' has been found to play a major role in the recruitment of Syrian workers (whole families including children) for the various farms. In many cases, the shawish is the one who manages workers' issues on the farms, and not the farm owners.

The project's activities resulted in a higher capacity and enhanced knowledge of various national and local stakeholders, despite not being able to complete all of its planned capacity building activities. A series of capacity building sessions were carried out to wide range of stakeholders including MoSD staff, MoL staff, IFH staff, NCFA staff, UNHCR, UNICEF and local CBOs. During these training sessions, staff from the various organizations were able to enhance their knowledge on the issue of child labour and how to deal with child labour cases, especially through the case management approach in addition to clarifying coordination mechanisms between involved entities. Nevertheless, the project was not able to institutionalize or scale up the case management approach at the MoSD, and the case management system remained with implementing partners and CBOs. Therefore, the project had little impact on the national framework, but had contributed to strengthening national structures and mechanisms through its trainings and piloting the modified SOPs on the ground with concerned stakeholders.

The evaluation found a number of sustainable features in the project, including its extensive work through local implementing partners and CBOs and its work on enhancing the knowledge and awareness of school personnel on how to deal with child labour cases. Furthermore, government stakeholders (mainly MoL and MoSD) were found to be committed to continue working on combating child labour. The Ministry of Labour indicated that it is committed to carry out inspections on farms based on the new regulation approved in May of 2021 and enforced one year later aiming to safeguard decent working conditions for agricultural workers. And since the project has contributed to supporting the Ministry in enforcing the legislation, it can be deduced that the project has helped garner the commitment of



the Ministry in the fight against child labour in the agriculture sector. The MoSD was also found to be committed to continue working on developing the case management approach in dealing with child labour, but it expressed its need for support and capacity building to enable it to continue progressing in this area.

An important strength of the project was its contribution to deepening the relationship between the two main government stakeholders concerned with child labour, MoL and MoSD. This closer relationship contributes to a more effective national system and structure in dealing with child labour issues. And in turn, a more effective government structure in this area contributes to the sustainability of project results beyond the timeframe of the project, and enhances the commitment of both moving forward.

With regards to the skill training provided to families, a main sustainable feature has been the provision of physical capital for trained participants. Beneficiaries who were trained on sewing and embroidery were provided with sewing material and those who were trained on caring for animals received livestock. But while many components of the project were found to be sustainable as shown above, the project's contribution to its main objective of substantially reducing child labour in agriculture could have been more sustainable as the evaluation found that withdrawn children were not committed to return to schools.

The work team was composed of a national officer and a field coordinator only, despite that the original design of the project had intended to recruit a CTA. The absence of a CTA meant that there was an increased demand for technical backstopping from HQ and ROAS, and the project effectively communicated with and received technical backstopping from both HQ and ROAS. Having said that, the administrative support received from ROAS could have been more responsive as some of the project's delays were caused by internal processes and policies in the ILO ROAS. A main strength of the project is its utilization of local skills, both in terms of the project team and in terms of the implementing partners carrying out the project activities. The project was completely managed by a national coordinator who established solid partnerships in the project and reached out to important stakeholders. Moreover, the project relied extensively on its

two implementing partners to deliver project activities, who were selected based on their extensive experience working with local communities inside the project's locations. In spite of this, there was considerable support and capacity building from the ILO to these partners that took significant time and investment.

Conclusions:

- The project was found to be highly relevant to national needs and to donor priorities, and somewhat relevant to beneficiary priorities.
- Gender and PWDs was prioritized during implementation with a number of activities catering exclusively for females and PWDs contributing to advancing gender equality and the principle of leaving no one behind, and responding to identified needs during implementation through an adaptive flexibility of the project.
- A rapid redesign process conducted immediately before implementation has nonetheless adversely impacted the logic and coherence of the project's strategies and structures, and made the amended project design appear to be too ambitious and lacking in clarity in the eyes of stakeholders.
- Despite numerous delays that were outside the control of the project team (e.g. COVID), the project took some measures during implementation that have helped raise the efficiency of the project.
- Overall, the project was found to be effective in achieving one of the project's outcomes, and partially effective in achieving the remaining two.
- The project was effective in coordinating with different stakeholders, but implementation could have benefitted from working and coordinating with employer representatives.
- The project's contribution in bringing together the Ministries of Labour and Social Development to work on child labour issues was considered to be one of the project's unexpected positive outcomes and an emerging good practice.
- The project's activities resulted in a higher capacity and enhanced knowledge of a wide range of national and local stakeholders.

- The evaluation found a number of sustainable features in the project, including working extensively through local players, who had their capacities built throughout this project, in addition to the work done to enhance the knowledge and awareness of school personnel on child labour issues, as well as the provision of vocational training to family members of children.
- Government stakeholders were found to be committed to continue working to combat child labour, but expressed the need for further support.
- The project was found to have received adequate technical support from HQ and ROAS, but administrative support could have been more responsive.
- A main strength of the project was its utilization of local skills, both in terms of the composition of the project team and in terms of the implementing partners carrying out the project activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

Recommendations

- Engage with ILO constituents in future projects, especially employer representatives.
- Ensure that the final design of any project maintains a logical and coherent structure, and adheres to management arrangements as stipulated in the design.
- Ensure that projects receive adequate, timely, and responsive administrative support.
- Build the capacity of MoSD to enable it to assume its leading role in combating child labour and in other social protection issues.
- Remedial education should be a main component of any future project addressing child labour.
- Focus on improving the economic security and social mobility of families of working children .
- Engage with the 'Shawish' as a main target group in future projects addressing child labour
- Consider a more comprehensive project when addressing child labour, with a longer timeframe, and if possible, to be jointly implemented with other UN agencies

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to further enhance coordination among ILO projects in Jordan
Main lessons learned and good practices	<p>Lessons Learned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The rapid redesign process that took place right before implementation, in the absence of the design's original author, substantially reduced the scope of the project while maintaining almost the same results framework, thereby distorting the original logic and coherence of the project design, and leading to an over ambitious project that lacked clarity.• The project's lack of engagement with employer representatives translated into a difficulty in working with individual farm owners and obtaining the cooperation of each in this project• ILO's internal processes and policies led to considerable delays during project implementation and led a significant gap between the 1st and 2nd phases of the project, which ultimately adversely affected project performance, especially given the short duration of the project.• Changing behaviours and attitudes takes place over many years and cannot be done in a short timeframe of one year. Also, any project that seeks to commit children to education has to be at least carried out for one full academic year. <p>Emerging Good Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• While not being part of the original design, the project focused on children with disability during implementation, given their high share in the communities in which the project operated, thereby upholding the principal of 'leaving no one behind'• The project was found to be very responsive to the identified needs and priorities of women and girls during implementation, through developing a range of activities that were not part of the design of the project. Such adaptive responsiveness to gender issues contributes to advancing gender equality within communities in which the project operated.