



Facilitating the transition from street to school through mobile schools (Romania)



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BACKGROUND

In parallel with the IPEC action programme in Iasi county, the Mobile Schools Project was implemented from April 2005 to December 2006 by Save the Children's Iasi branch, and also formed part of the European Union's PHARE programme.

The mobile school is an educational instrument designed for street children, who are at high risk of being economically exploited. It offers the possibility of working with groups of street children from various marginalized areas of the city and the adjacent villages. The mobile school was used as an instrument for attracting a large number of children that provided the mobile school team with the opportunity to establish a first contact with children and assess their situation and vulnerability.

The ultimate aim of the Mobile School Project is to ensure children's right to education.

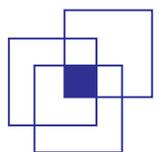
ACTION

The Mobile School Project is equipped with mobile boards that are tied together, which can be folded and used very easily in different kinds of spaces. In this way, activities for promoting and respecting children's rights can be carried out, due to the fact that the instruments are very easily transported and assembled. The methods and techniques used include interactive role playing, socializing games, brainstorming, lectures and debates, which all aimed at stimulating children's active participation. The advantage of the Project is the fact that it can reach isolated communities and that it is based on the children's active involvement in the prevention programmes that are being developed. The Project can help shape skills and abilities that support the child's school and social integration.

The educational package was developed to serve children of various levels of education and adjusted to meet the street children's needs. This instrument is adaptable both technically and pedagogically to the various levels of education of these children. The children will learn how to write, read and count, providing them with the opportunity to make up for their educational gaps. The educational package also covers various life skills issues (including drug abuse, sexual transmitted diseases, contraceptives and juvenile delinquency) so that the children realize the dangers of living in the streets and also learn about their rights.

The next step was to attract the most vulnerable children, suspected to be victims of trafficking and/or exploitation, to the Educational Centre run by Save the Children. Here services are provided according to the needs identified, such as the reduction of time spent on the streets and an increase of time spent under adult supervision. In parallel, the Educational Centre team focused on building a trusting relationship with children and their families, aiming at reducing their vulnerability and promoting social and school reintegration.

Good practice





Pictures from www.mobileschools.org.

ACHIEVEMENTS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Out of the total number of direct beneficiaries of the IPEC action programme, 45 children (27 girls and 18 boys) were identified in the most disadvantaged areas of Iasi. Out of these 45 children, 21 were prevented from being exploited/trafficked and 24 were withdrawn from child labour, including trafficking. They gradually became involved in the activities of the Educational Centre, where they benefited from not only educational activities, but also various support services (counselling services, legal counselling, health care, nutrition, provision of clothes and uniforms, and hygiene products) according to the Individual Plan of Intervention, which was based on the initial evaluation.

SUSTAINABILITY

The Mobile School Project provides a unique service, in the sense that it focuses meeting the special needs of children on the streets and from marginalized communities where children are working instead of going to school. The activities of the Project are conducted in such a way as to maintain the children's interest while simultaneously offering them the chance to see the available alternatives to life in the streets. Children have the opportunity to discover their rights by themselves. They are able to realize that they can perform certain tasks, for which they are respected by the people around them, and that they deserve this respect. The activities carried out within the Project increase children's self-esteem, emotional stability and strength, which will lead to their gradual integration into society.

LESSONS LEARNED

Experience proved that the interventions which imply a forced "separation" of the child from the street environment are not effective in long-run. The Mobile School Project gradually prepares the children for integration into the family environment, other care institutions and the school system by supporting their skills development and providing them with information that will help the children make conscious decisions regarding their futures.

NECESSARY CONDITIONS

This model can be replicated subsequently in other counties where street children are involved in the worst forms of child labour.

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Good practice on data collection (Global)

BACKGROUND

IPEC, through its Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC), assists countries in the collection, documentation, processing and analysis of child labour relevant data. The data, however, does not include specific information on forced and bonded child labour. In 2005, ILO's Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour (SAP-FL) published the first global estimate of the number of persons in forced labour. Of the minimum estimated 12.3 million victims, 40-50 percent are thought to be children and youth under 18 years. Growing international concern about forced labour and human trafficking has prompted ILO Member States to work closely with the Office in order to obtain reliable information on:

- the extent of forced labour of adults and children at national level;
- the forms that it takes (including the means of coercion and type of exploitation), and
- the profile of victims.

ACTION

As a first step, ILO developed indicators of trafficking for forced labour by applying the Delphi methodology. The Delphi methodology allowed selected experts to express their opinion on what these key indicators should be, and also to react to the opinions of the others.

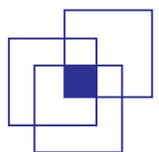
This research was implemented in 2008 in the context of a joint European Commission-ILO Project, under the supervision of a steering committee composed of experts from the European Commission, International Labour Office, International Organisation for Migration (IOM), University of Tilburg, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA).

As a next step, ILO identified a number of countries which were interested in testing the methodology and carrying out national surveys. In each country, a methodology was developed to adapt the Delphi indicators to the national context. Workshops were held to discuss the research and sampling methods which could be used. The surveys were implemented in close collaboration with national statistical offices.

ACHIEVEMENTS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- National workshops to design national sets of indicators of forced labour were held in Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Nepal, Niger, Ecuador, Guatemala, Bangladesh, and Paraguay.
- Questionnaires and sampling methods were designed in close collaboration with national statistical offices, and staff members were trained on the use of the methodology.
- The following surveys were implemented:
 - 3 surveys for assessing forced labour among migrant workers;
 - 2 surveys for assessing traditional forms of forced labour of both adults and children;

Good practice



A collaborative effort by
International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)
and its partners

- special modules were added to existing surveys to assess forced labour of children and/or adults in 3 countries;
- 3 surveys for assessing forced labour only of children.

SUSTAINABILITY

An important aspect was to involve national statistical offices in order to ensure sustainability. Staff members were trained on the use of the methodology and supported by national consultants. Wherever they existed, national commissions (on child labour, forced labour or human trafficking) participated in the whole process, including the design and follow-up of the survey. National stakeholders were also involved in the development and use of forced labour indicators. Close collaboration with policy makers was essential to ensure acceptance of results and their subsequent use in decision making.

LESSONS LEARNED

It was understood from the outset that forced labour is difficult to measure because of its frequently hidden nature. Most victims never complain, either because they do not recognize themselves as victims or because they have no access to organisations that could help them. We have learned that it is possible to survey forced labour, including of children, by using methodologies that capture information on specific indicators. It was essential to carefully prepare the ground, in particular to build consensus on a set of indicators and to carefully define the target population.

NECESSARY CONDITIONS

The most important condition is to secure political support for carrying out the surveys. Forced labour is a sensitive issue in most countries. There are significant gaps between the estimated number of victims of forced labour and those identified by law enforcement authorities. Therefore, it is necessary to involve all stakeholders in the design of the survey in order to target the most prevalent forms of forced labour, to ensure the correct use of indicators and to survey the right areas in each country. It is also paramount to work with senior statisticians given the complex nature of the subject. Capacity building of national stakeholders is a necessary condition to ensure the successful implementation of surveys.

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