

In This Issue: * **EVENTS AND AWARENESS RAISING** * Experience Sharing Workshop; Experiences shared; SCREAM activities; Journalist award. * **DIRECT INTERVENTIONS** * Activities with VIRI & VIETCRAFT; Agricultural livelihood models; vocational skills counselling and training, a closer look at needs assessments. * **CAPACITY BUILDING** * Training on NCLS 2018 report; Workshop for refining Target 8.7 roadmap. * **OTHER UPDATES AND UPCOMING ACTIVITIES** * Revised Labour Code; Child labour free certification scheme; upcoming activities: Documentation of good practices and lessons learnt; NCLS 2018 report; endline surveys, ongoing awareness raising & capacity building, Collaboration with National University Law school.

EVENTS AND AWARENESS RAISING

Experience Sharing Workshop

The ENHANCE project, which is due to end in June 2020, has been in operation for almost four years now and has amassed an array of success stories and lessons learnt along the way. To share these experiences and take stock of the project's progress over the years, a multistakeholder workshop was organized on 18 and 19 September 2019 in Da Nang City. The two day experience sharing workshop gathered some 135 participants from MoLISA; USDOL; Hanoi, An Giang and Ho Chi Minh DoLISA's and DoET's; VGCL; VASEP; VCCI; Can Tho University; Vietcraft; VIRI; Saigon Children's Charity; representatives from 15 non-project provinces and cities; social organisations; schools; commune officials and ILO experts. In addition to sharing the successes of the project, implementation challenges were also discussed in order to ensure sustainable and effective outcomes over the coming months. In addition to presentations from key stakeholders, participatory round table discussions and interactive Q&A sessions were facilitated to ensure a high level of engagement from participants.





Experiences shared: Some highlights

Making a difference at Thien An School

Speaking on behalf of Thien An School (HCM City) during a roundtable discussion, a teacher explained that 60 percent of children at the school do not have to pay tuition fees, and that, thanks to project support, these children have been provided with free lunch and school supplies. Highlighting the challenges faced by disadvantaged students from predominantly migrant backgrounds, she noted the poverty of parents' who rely on sending their children to work to make ends meet by selling lottery tickets on the street. To illustrate this challenge, she recounted an experience with a mother who committed to send her children to school, but took them out of education shortly after so that they could work. After repeated negotiations between her and the school, the mother agreed to keep the youngest child at school. The Children who were sent to work, she explained, would often come to the school to ask for lunch. After further persuasion from the school, the mother eventually decided to send her other two children back to education. The experience shared by this participant highlights the dedication of staff at Thien An school and the importance of close communication with parents.

Vietcraft: Enhancing skills and livelihoods

Vice President of Vietcraft, Mr Le Ba Ngoc, gave an engaging presentation on the organisation's collaborative activities with the project. In cooperation with ENHANCE, Vietcraft works to upgrade the skills of disadvantaged handicraft workers through advanced training to produce high end, value added products. Focusing on rattan and bamboo products during his presentation, he explained that Vietcraft support 60 households working within this value chain alone. Emphasizing the importance of a household centred approach, whereby the needs of individual families are carefully assessed, it was explained that 6 training packages for 6 different women were developed and tailored to individual demands. Through such an approach, participants are placed at the heart of training. The process of Identifying target markets and target products, he explained, is based on the interests and capabilities of participants, as well as on market demand for the product. In addition to training, Vietcraft provides direct links to buyers, which cuts out the middle man and enhances incomes from the products.



Trailing the Labour Engagement Tool (LET)

Representative from the US Department of Labour, Shelley Stinelli, gave an informative presentation introducing participants to the LET. The LET, she explained, aims to identify relevant efforts, responsible partners, key stakeholders, next steps and a timeframe for action, under different categories such as research, legal framework, policy efforts, programming, industry efforts and monitoring. She noted that the tool can be adapted and used by governments, provincial leaders, and other stakeholders as a way to organise information about past and ongoing efforts in order to identify gaps and next steps that can be taken to prevent child labour. In order to give participants a practical insight into the tool, they were asked to apply the framework to two international case studies before applying these insights to a Vietnamese context. The interactive presentation actively engaged all the participants and gave them a clear understanding of how the LET works in practice.



SCREAM Events

SCREAM (Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media) is an educational programme designed to raise awareness among young people about children's rights, with a focus on child labour. The methodology is arts based, involving drama, creative writing, music and visual arts, through which young people are encouraged to convey messages on child rights to the wider community. To adapt the SCREAM package to a Vietnamese context, NGO, MARCDC, has worked with the project to adjust the content to make the modules more relevant and accessible.

Since the revision of the package, the project has been supporting SCREAM training for teachers across the country. Thus far, An Giang DoET has trained 22 teachers and Hanoi has trained 37. Following the training, DoET-led SCREAM activities have attracted 1,362 participants (1,240 school children, 85 teachers, 12 parents, and 25 education managers).

Due to the success of these events, plans have been initiated to deliver SCREAM training across all 63 provinces to officers from DoLISA, DoET, the Youth Union and Social Work Centres until the end of the project.



Journalist Award

In June 2019, a competition was launched to promote the engagement of the media with the issue of child labour and mobilise journalists and news outlets to shine a spotlight on the issue. The task for entrants was to produce an engaging piece to enhance understanding of child labour, share potential solutions and inspire communities to speak out and take action against child labour.

Over 100 entries from 70 press agencies were submitted, including a diverse range of print and online news stories, as well as radio and television broadcasts. Following a thorough review of each entry, the Department of Child Affairs, the Vietnam Journalists Association and the International Labour Organization selected a number of outstanding pieces. Selected works were chosen not only for their accuracy and clarity, but for their in-depth and multi-dimensional analysis of the issue and their representation of tangible solutions.

Overall, 16 prizes were awarded, including two second prizes, six third prizes and eight fourth prizes, though none of the entries were awarded first prize. The second prizes went to Vietnamnet journalists Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tranh and Nguyen Thi Thao for their story "Shattered life changing dreams of border children" and to the monthly Nhan Dan journalists – Ho Cuc Phuong, Phung Nguyen and Xuan Quynh – for their series of articles entitled "Preventing child labour".

The competition highlights the crucial role played by the media in communicating complex social issues to the general public in order to stimulate positive social change. Clear and engaging communication on child labour can catalyze positive changes to the attitudes of families and communities, which will eventually facilitate wider societal changes.



DIRECT INTERVENTIONS

Support for Handicraft Value Chain Models

Since the end of September, Vietcraft (Viet Nam Handicraft exporters Association) and VIRI (Vietnam Rural Industries Research and Development Institute) have provided 9 part-time training courses on upgraded craft skills in 5 identified value chains for 41 households and 51 beneficiary children in targeted areas throughout Hanoi. The goal is to enhance incomes through value added production techniques. Participating children are not only provided with craft skills but also arts knowledge. Training materials are tailored to labour market demands, as well as the skills, capabilities and interests of participating households, and a profile of each household was created prior to training in order to meet their needs. In addition to the provision of craft skills, marketing skills and links with buyers are provided. Awareness raising on conformity and compliance on child labour regulations and occupational safety and health was also integrated into training.



Development of Agricultural Livelihood Models

Since the project signed an implementation agreement with the Center of Technology Transfer & Services at Can Tho University (CTTS), a number of agricultural livelihood interventions have been successfully implemented to enhance the incomes of families with children at risk of engaging or engaged in child labour. So far, a mango juice processing unit has been received and tested by Cho Moi Agricultural Production and Services Collective, with production beginning in mid October 2019; 5 piloted models of spray irrigation for chili were established in the communes of My Phu and Khanh Hoa in Chau Phu district and training on production techniques for chilli, mango and edamame has been delivered, along with support with budget management, marketing and business planning. The results of these interventions will be assessed during the first quarter of 2020.

Vocational Skills Counselling and Training

In Ho Chi Minh, 2 career counselling sessions were conducted by Sai Gon Childrens Charity (SCC) in 2 districts with the participation of 41 targeted children, with an aim to help children understand their strengths, weaknesses, and family circumstances before deciding on vocational training options. SCC also conducted two training sessions on communication and teamwork skills and attitudes in the workplace for 39 targeted children. Awareness of child labour is now on the list of soft skills that must be provided to children who receive scholarships from SCC.

As of the end of September 2019, An Giang University's Research Center of Social Science and Humanities (RCSSH) conducted counselling sessions for 422 14-17 year olds. The counselling revealed a greater need than anticipated, with 106 children indicating an interest in Education and Vocational training. In collaboration with An Giang DoLISAs, RCSSH will profile these children and take the next steps.

In Hanoi, vocational counselling sessions were carried out by VIRI over the summer, and VIRI has since been working with REACH Vocational Training Centers, and Hoa Sua vocational school to develop specific plans and materials to guide appropriate vocational training admission. The provision of full-time vocational training to project beneficiaries will be carried out from October 2019.

Educational Needs assessments:

A Closer Look



On 8 November, members from the project team paid a visit to Huong Ngai School in Hanoi, to better understand the needs of students from three schools in the area. Around 80 students at primary and lower secondary school age attended the event, along with a handful of parents and family members. During the visit, the project's provincial coordinator gave a presentation to raise awareness on child labour and facilitated interactive discussions with students, inviting them to voice their opinions on the issue and share their own experiences. As part of the presentation, students viewed an animation on child labour in agriculture, and were actively engaged throughout. After the presentation, students and their family members completed a needs survey, indicating their requirements for educational support and the circumstances of their families. As a result of the assessment, the project will follow up with the provision of school supplies, and will arrange further assessments on livelihood support needs, with the involvement of children's families and care givers. Similar needs assessments in other districts are ongoing.



Know About Business (KAB) Curriculum

Following a TOT on KAB for teachers from 9 secondary schools in Hanoi, 4 schools were selected to develop sample lesson plans which were completed in August and are now ready to pilot. The roll out of the KAB curriculum was implemented in the 4 selected lower secondary schools in 4 districts of Hanoi throughout September and October 2019. The aim is to prepare students for the world of work well before they enter the labour market, to give them a head start in their working lives.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Training on Data Analysis and Report Writing for the National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2018

From 10-12 September 2019, a 3-day training session on data analysis and report writing for the National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2018 was delivered by an ILO expert. Participants included the ENHANCE project team and relevant staff of the General Statistics Office and MOLISA/ILSSA. Following the training, on 23 September, ILSSA submitted a detailed outline and work plan for the reporting work to the project, so that ILO can provide inputs to the report plan before it is drafted. The report is expected to be made available by the end of December 2019. Once completed, results from the survey will significantly impact future child labour prevention efforts by providing an up to date picture of the child labour situation in the country, which is key to developing effective interventions.

Workshop to Refine Alliance 8.7 Road Map

On 18 December, 2019, a workshop was held in Hanoi to gather inputs on the draft roadmap to achieve SDG Target 8.7 to eliminate child labour by 2025 and child trafficking and forced labour by 2030. As a pathfinder country for Alliance 8.7, the development of a clear roadmap to achieve this ambitious target is vital. Participants attending the workshop included Ms. Vu Thi Kim Hoa, Deputy Director of DCA; Ms. Nguyen Thi Mai Oanh, ENHANCE Project manager and Representatives from the US embassy, MoLISA, MOET, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Youth Union, the Women's Union, VCA, VASEP and Hanoi DoLISAs. Participants were divided into groups under the 4 identified key areas: Supply chains, agriculture, trafficking and migration and education. Following presentations and group discussions, valuable suggestions were made to improve the draft roadmap, which will soon be submitted to the National Committee of Child Affairs.

OTHER UPDATES AND UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Child Labour Free Certification Scheme

The project is supporting the development of an internationally recognized and credible child labour free certification scheme for enterprises to apply to products produced in Vietnam. The scheme will be piloted through the project's current livelihood interventions in An Giang and Hanoi in partnership with the Viet Nam Handicraft exporters Association (Vietcraft) and Vietnam Rural Industries Research and Development Institute (VIRI).

MOLISA will take the lead in overseeing the scheme's development in collaboration with ENHANCE, VCCI, VGCL and VCA. In addition, an external agency/team of consultants with expertise and experience in sustainability certifications will be hired to support the development of the scheme. The pilot scheme is expected to be completed in April 2020.

As well as fostering compliance with child labour standards, and facilitating the eradication of child labour throughout supply chains, the certification will enable businesses to target an important niche market in ethically produced products. Businesses in Vietnam, and the world over, have a significant role to play in eliminating child labour and ensuring compliance with free trade agreements.

Labour Code Revision

Since 2016, the ILO has been providing technical support to the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, workers and employers' organizations, and the National Assembly throughout the revision process of the Labour Code (LC).

Representing a landmark reform, the LC has now been revised to align more closely with international standards, facilitating an improved legal framework for employment relations, working conditions and representation of employers and workers. Following various inputs from the ENHANCE project, in collaboration with other ILO projects, the fifth edition of the LC (2019) now more clearly outlines work and workplaces that are prohibited for minor workers.

The LC 2019 has also been adapted to provide wider protection to workers without employment contracts in the informal sector, which is where most child labour takes place. Furthermore, the revised LC includes a requirement of certification that the health of under-15-year-old workers is suitable to the requirements of work undertaken. These reforms are expected to significantly contribute to the protection of working children and the prevention of child labour.

Upcoming activities

- * Documentation of Good Practices as the project nears its end.
- * ENHANCE Endline Survey to assess the overall contribution of the project to the prevention and elimination of child labour in Vietnam.
- * Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) Endline Survey to measure the impact of project activities on the knowledge, attitudes and practices of the project target groups.
- * Publication of National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2018 early next 2020.
- * Ongoing capacity building and awareness raising activities with target groups and partners, including VCCI, VCA, VASEP and VGCL.
- * Collaboration with School of Law at the National University to develop textbook and syllabus on child rights and child labour related issues.

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