



Evaluation Summaries

Evaluation: Preventing trafficking in girls and young women for labour exploitation within China

Quick Facts

Countries: China
Mid-Term Evaluation: April 2007
Mode of Evaluation: Independent
Technical Area: Child Labour
Evaluation Management: ILO-IPEC Design, Evaluation and Documentation Section
Evaluation Team: Michael Midling, Shengkun Zhou
Project Start: 1 April 2004
Project End: 30 November 2008 (revised)
Project Code: CPR/04/P01/UKM
Donor: DFID (UK) GBP 3,075,000
Keywords: Child labour, Child trafficking

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The overall development objective of the project was to contribute to the elimination of labour exploitation of children and women, and in particular the trafficking in girls and young women in China.

Three specific project strategies were defined as follows:

- 1) The mobilization of key stakeholders and the development of a knowledge base on trafficking and exploitative labour practices;
- 2) The creation of models of direct assistance for migrant girls and young women; and
- 3) Contributing to the development of national and sub-national policy frameworks and implementation capacity for the prevention of trafficking and labour exploitation.

The project has its antecedents in an earlier project implemented under the auspices of ILO/IPEC. That project, the 'Greater Mekong Sub-regional Project to Combat Trafficking in Children and Women' (TICW), was implemented in 2000 in five countries in the Mekong river area. TICW project activities in China were conducted in Yunnan province and were implemented with the All-China Women's Federation (ACWF) acting as the lead Chinese organization.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The purpose of the mid-term evaluation was to:

- 1) Determine whether the objectives of the project were achieved by comparing the intended outputs with the actual outputs;
- 2) Review and analyze factors contributing to or hindering the project's success; and
- 3) Assess the overall outcomes of the project.

The evaluation also analyzes the strategies and models of intervention used, documents lessons learned and potential good practices, and provides recommendations on how to integrate these into planning processes and implementation of future ILO/IPEC activities in China. The evaluation is intended to serve as a learning tool for stakeholders involved in trafficking prevention programs, in particular in China.

Methodology of evaluation

An international and a national evaluator began by conducting a desk review of project materials and telephone interviews with ILO-Geneva staff. After the desk review and prior to site visits, the evaluators prepared an evaluation instrument outlining the key questions for the evaluation. Evaluators then met with project staff and key

partners in Beijing and conducted other telephone interviews with ILO regional and headquarters staff. For logistic and financial reasons, site visits were limited to Guangdong and Hunan. A stakeholder workshop was held at the end of the field visits and input was collected for the report.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Relevance of design to socio-economic context

From the time of the project conception through the present, the basic design of the project continues to be highly relevant in the Chinese context. Project designers correctly acknowledge both the positive contributions of migration to economic development as well as the social and economic problems that have accompanied large-scale migration.

Appropriateness of strategies

Drawing heavily on the experiences of the Mekong project, the project designers emphasized a process-based approach based on creating an enabling environment at the national and provincial levels within which direct service activities would be undertaken. They also outlined mechanisms for keeping higher-level stakeholders informed of the project, for participatory monitoring by girls and young women at-risk, and documentation of learning for replication and mainstreaming into policy frameworks. The project design also recognized the need to develop partnerships and advocates within the government and with influential mass organizations to strengthen its impact. To this end, the design encompasses both a multi-level and multi-sectoral strategy, as well as demonstrating coordination with a variety of other international and bilateral agencies and organizations and branches of the ILO.

Management implementation

Although the project encountered some initial difficulties during start-up - such as difficulties related to issues such as language barriers, the introduction of new management tools and processes, and the lack of data related to trafficking - in general, these problems were adequately addressed during the implementation period.

Planning instruments

The project adopted a planning structure using a hierarchy of four planning and management tools.

Logical frameworks are used as planning and management tools for internal project management; provincial or national programs and work plans are intended to guide project implementation; and small project plans are tools for planning and managing concrete activities. Each province has an action program on research, and these findings are intended to inform policy change at the provincial level. There are also action plans for coordination, mobilization and capacity building within each province, as well as outreach action plans that target girls through a particular set of interventions.

Monitoring, evaluation, and reporting

Small project reports and provincial reports are consolidated into biannual reports and the evaluators noted a high quality of documentation of project activities at all levels, and consistent progress in the documentation of learning in small projects describing specific processes and outcomes. Monitoring tools for measuring services to direct beneficiaries were also recently developed or modified, and these include a beneficiary card for each assisted girl; a baseline (zero) and end measurement form; and participatory monitoring tools.

Knowledge base, advocacy, and mobilization

Enhancing conceptual understanding of issues related to trafficking and labour exploitation and improving the knowledge base on trafficking through research were two key outputs of the project. Building conceptual clarity around broader definitions was initially difficult, but small projects financed through CP-TING have strongly contributed to building this greater understanding.

Direct assistance

The project has only recently begun delivering direct assistance to direct beneficiaries. Although the evaluators note some potentially promising practices, models are only beginning to emerge.

Institutional and policy framework

Many recent changes in policy are documented in the evaluation report that demonstrate greater awareness of the problems and risks associated with massive migration; including greater attention to the special needs of young girls with low education levels. CP-TING has contributed to practical understanding of the international definition within key ministries, and there is some likelihood that these concepts will be promoted for legislation in future years. Moreover, successive

drafts of the National Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking have increasingly recognized the labour exploitation dimensions, and the CP-TING project has helped to incorporate several aspects of trafficking prevention into the current draft document.

Inter-provincial collaboration

Because of its design, which targets both sending and receiving provinces, the project has contributed to the understanding that more inter-provincial cooperation is necessary to combat trafficking and promote safe migration for decent work for girls aged 16 and up and education for those under 16. Important efforts have been undertaken through regional bodies to establish a rights protection system for rural migrant workers, to abandon discriminative regulations on rural migrant workers, and to jointly establish a social security system for rural migrant workers.

Enhancement of capacity

The capacity of Women's Federation staff and some key implementing partners has been strengthened. There is now a better understanding of social development planning, process management and reporting. In particular, there is now a stronger understanding of logical framework-based planning and the documentation of learning in reporting.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Main recommendations and follow-up

Communication between program partners

Regular internal communication between the project's partners should be strengthened. Project managers need to proactively address issues as they arise, and managers need to proactively integrate the comments of provincial and local implementers into the planning process.

Coordination with international partners

The evaluation report recommends developing a rotating "roundtable" format to improve communication with international partners working on issues of migration, protection of women workers, and the prevention of trafficking.

Streamlining procedures and training for management

The evaluators noted excellent project documentation, but were concerned that management requirements could act as a potential

barrier to involvement of partners. The evaluation recommends a thorough participatory and consultative technical review of management procedures for future streamlining of these requirements, with the goal of continuing to ensure current levels of accountability and transparency while at the same time allowing for flexible implementation.

Awareness raising

The evaluators noted strong efforts in awareness raising and strong support from television and other media in getting project messages across. They suggest that these efforts continue and have suggested additional strategies for reaching wider audiences.

Education

The evaluation report recommends that the use of the project's pilot materials, which are currently used as part of safety education in one province be further expanded to include all of the areas covered by CP-TING and similar projects. Moreover, to expand the impact, the project should work with education bureaus and teacher training colleges to develop a train-the-trainer model to expand in-service and pre-service teacher training on issues related to trafficking, safe migration, and workplace protection.

Research

The evaluation recommends the dissemination of existing qualitative and quantitative research in a format that can serve the needs of policy makers and social organizations. Such research should include a systematic review of previously conducted research and other secondary data sources.

Direct services and technical backstopping

The project needs to devote more resources to strengthening direct services and developing replicable models through community centres, Women's Federation village level outreach, and schools. The project should develop mechanisms to engage provincial back-stoppers in more systematic ways and emphasis should be placed on developing a strengthened role for technical advisors in the development of outreach and social service models.

Engaging employers

In receiving provinces, these should include the development of corporate social responsibility activities and inclusion of employers in direct

service pilot projects. Continuing this approach with more employers can create a win-win situation for employers and employees.

Strengthening inter-provincial linkages

Project partners should seek to actively participate in regional dialogue. Further efforts should be made to support the formalization of currently informal labour bureau links between sending counties and receiving cities, emphasizing the potential contributions to safe and orderly migration for decent work and combating trafficking.

Strengthening national and provincial steering committees roles

Project staff should periodically review direct service activities with the steering committee in the form of data, learning papers and presentations. Sharing this information with key stakeholders can contribute to further emphasizing core messages, changing attitudes, and improving government policies. Steering committees should also seek more active collaboration from line agencies and should seek to further integrate skills training with anti-trafficking through this project.

More focused work on policy impacts at the national level

CP-TING should more closely work with key partners of Women's Federation, the National Working Committee for Children and Women, and the public security, labour and education ministries to monitor and follow up developments after the submission of the National Plan of Action for Anti-trafficking to the State Council. Further, the project should coordinate on a more formalized basis with international partners as well as National People's Congress and key ministries to conduct a series of activities aimed at policy impacts.

Important lessons learned

An important lesson for all partners was the need to work consistently to overcome substantial language barriers as well differences in cultural practices and management styles. Other important lessons include the need for systematic technical backstopping at various levels, streamlined planning tools and methods, and research methods that take into consideration the substantial obstacles to collecting data.

Emerging good practices

- “Government at the center” and the five-layer network: The project recognized the

government as a driving force for social change and used several approaches to encourage and strengthen this role. The project helped to construct an effective network spanning five administrative layers from the national level through provincial, municipal, county and community levels to deal with the issues of trafficking and migration of rural workers. This network approach links grassroots demonstration learning to higher level policy interventions to produce a converging force to combat trafficking.

- Bottom-up and open approach: The project used a bottom-up and open approach to promote involvement of project partners from grassroots to higher levels in developing project ideas and activities into action programs. This approach promoted a fit between activities and local situations and “ownership” of these activities among local implementation partners.
- Awareness raising and media coverage: This successfully contributed to the promotion of the project core messages. Although an important intervention in itself, it also played a key role in furthering other project activities, particularly in influencing policy. Wider areas were reached and students and parents reactions in interviews showed that the wide range of publicity and mobilization activities exceeded the expectations of project design.