



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation
Office

Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Shrimp and Seafood Processing Areas of Thailand – Implementation Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries:	<i>Thailand</i>
Midterm Evaluation:	<i>10/2012</i>
Evaluation Mode:	<i>Independent</i>
Administrative Office:	<i>DWT/CO-Bangkok</i>
Technical Office:	<i>ILO/IPEC</i>
Evaluation Manager:	<i>ILO/IPEC-DED</i>
Evaluation Consultants:	<i>Mia Sorgenfrei (Leader) & Jan Boontinand</i>
Project Code:	<i>THA/10/50/USA</i>
Donor(s) & Budget:	<i>USDOL (US\$ 9,000,000)</i>
Keywords:	<i>Child labour; Youth employment</i>

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The ILO/IPEC project “Combating the worst forms of child labour in shrimp and seafood processing areas of Thailand” (2010-2014) is funded by the US Department of Labour with a budget of nine million dollars. The development objective of the project is “To eliminate child labour in shrimp producing and processing areas in Thailand while ensuring decent working conditions throughout the industry”. The project involves stakeholders from public, private and civil society sectors and includes activities such as awareness raising, capacity building, relationship

building, evidence-based policy influencing, and service provision through action programmes at national, provincial and local levels. Project management has adopted a flexible approach to project implementation with gradual strategic adjustments, taking into account factors such as the initial scepticism of Thailand’s government and the floods which have constituted major obstacles to implementation.

This development objective may on the surface appear to require separate solutions to two separate problems: child labour (CL) and poor working conditions. However, it is important to highlight that the elimination of child labour (ECL) is likely to take place through the combination of prevention of CL for children at risk and the withdrawal from the market place of children engaging in CL. A variety of different approaches need to be adopted at different levels (national, provincial and local) in order to facilitate these processes.

This logic is reflected in the project’s three Immediate Objectives (IO):

IO 1: Policy and implementation frameworks strengthened to protect the rights of Thai, migrant and stateless children in relation to labour, education, employment and social protection.

IO 2: Enterprises across the shrimp industry supply chain comply with national labour laws, with special emphasis on CL and forced labour, and institute good practices in working conditions.

IO 3: Area-based education, social protection and livelihoods services provided to migrant and Thai

children and their families in targeted shrimp industry areas.

The systemic nature of the project design and the phased approach to implementation has caused confusion among key stakeholders who have expressed concern about the perceived lack of strategic direction and project outcomes as well as the delayed activities. However, the facilitator assesses the project design to be highly relevant and appropriate, and suggests that the project sequencing consists of three phases:

1. Developing a shared stakeholder understanding of the problem.
2. Implementation of core project activities.
3. Consolidation and phase out.

The first phase should be seen as a preparation phase for implementation and can therefore only be expected to deliver on activities considered as preparatory.

Initial achievements during the first project phase include awareness raising of and trust building with key stakeholders, CL baseline surveys and industry mapping to locate CL in the supply chain and determine the profiles of the beneficiaries to be targeted in the second project phase, creation of a sector-specific hazardous CL list, and support for action programming to the five implementing NGO partners.

Following the stakeholder workshop, ILO/IPEC management and the US Department of Labour agreed on applying three lenses for strategic focus in the remaining project period: (a) concentrate on aspects of direct influence to project stakeholders in the shrimp and seafood processing industry, (b) build on the outcomes of the baseline study and pilot the good labour practice programme as an industry-based approach impacting directly on the shrimp and seafood processing supply chain, and (c) start immediate implementation of the action programmes.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The purpose of this project implementation review is to reinforce strategic focus, improve project performance and impact, ensure upward and downward accountability and stimulate learning through the facilitation of strategic consultation of key stakeholders to help analyse to what extent ongoing project implementation and management is effectively

leading to fulfilment of the project objectives. The project implementation review aims to facilitate analysis of the project design, implementation, outcomes and sustainability, and decision-making about the remaining project period, in order to improve delivery and increase sustainability. It brings the main stakeholders together to examine and discuss critical issues identified by the external facilitator through consultation with the stakeholders. If it is agreed that changes are required to the strategy or to the implementation process, these should be based on a common understanding among the stakeholders. Following the stakeholder review process, the facilitator will provide an overall assessment of the project implementation process and outcomes followed by recommendations about how to adjust the project strategy and implementation plan. These should be seen as complementary to the outcomes of the stakeholder review process. The findings and conclusions of the review will constitute the basis for decision-making by the US Department of Labour, national stakeholders, ILO/IPEC Geneva (ILO Headquarters), and project management in ILO/IPEC Thailand to adjust the project strategy and implementation plan.

Methodology of evaluation

- Individual interviews with key stakeholders, individually or in groups, before and during the field mission (including representatives from the US Department of Labour, staff from ILO/IPEC Geneva and Thailand, government officials from key ministries, and representatives from business associations);
- An internal ILO/IPEC project meeting (with the presence of a representative from the US Department of Labour);
- A focus group with NGOs acting as implementing partners of the action programmes;
- A stakeholder workshop with participation by all key stakeholders;
- A follow-up meeting for the principal decision-makers about the future project strategy and implementation, with revision of the existing logical framework established for the project;
- Production by the facilitator of a draft report reflecting the perspectives of the different stakeholders, synthesizing the Project Implementation Review (PIR) findings and conclusions and providing an independent assessment with recommendations.
- Integration of the comments for the draft report from the different stakeholders in the final report.

Main Findings & Conclusions

1. The facilitator invited the project manager and the representative from ILO/IPEC Geneva to share their impressions and reactions to the exchange of views and ideas which they had participated in throughout the day.

2. The project manager stated that the stakeholder review process had been useful, because it appeared to support the strategic direction in which the project was moving, but highlighted the need for strategic focus and realistic planning, and drew attention to specific issues that needed to be addressed as a priority.

3. The representative from ILO/IPEC Geneva highlighted that the group discussions clearly illustrated the connections between the three IOs which to some were difficult to grasp. He concluded that the stakeholder workshop takes on board the need expressed by stakeholders to speed up implementation and sharpen the strategic focus and provide an immediate response. Together with the ILO/IPEC project manager and the representative from the US Department of Labour, he had developed three new lenses for the three IOs:

- Under IO 1 they proposed to focus on aspects that are of direct influence to project stakeholders in the shrimp and seafood processing industry. The specific implications of this “lens” were to be worked out in a detailed management meeting that revised the project logical framework;
- Under IO 2 they proposed to build on the outcomes of the baseline study, and pilot the good labour practice programme as an industry-based approach concentrating on aspects with direct impact on CL in the shrimp and seafood processing supply chain;
- Under IO 3 they proposed to “lead with action” and get the Action Programmes going immediately, as they did not feel that the stakeholder review had provided any reasons or justification for major changes or renegotiations.

4. Finally, he emphasised the importance of focusing on what would achieve the greatest impact in the shortest time. Apart from starting the implementation immediately and documenting experiences from implementation in parallel, this meant transitioning into project phase three

(consolidation) which in his opinion would focus on knowledge development based on documented experiences, including model development (e.g. a model for combating CL in value chains) for replication and deriving lessons learned.

Recommendations

The facilitator recommends that project management aims to:

1. Maintain and Refine Strategic Focus: Project management maintains strategic focus, ensures realistic planning, and continuously makes the connection between the contributions from the project activities and the identified priority areas; good labour practice programme development; provision of an appropriate range of education and livelihood services; CL monitoring; documentation, analysis and conceptualization of good practice models.
2. Respond to Implementing Partner Concerns: Project management needs to provide the necessary support to implementing partners to enable them to deliver quality services to the planned number of beneficiaries within the project timeframe. Support also needs to be provided to enable them to effectively monitor the delivery and effect of these services.
3. Build capacity and Provide Support to Stakeholders: More strategic considerations need to be put into the types of capacity building and the thematic areas that ought to be proactively and specifically targeted for each stakeholder (or group of stakeholders) involved in the implementation. The principal capacity-building needs that were identified during the stakeholder review are beneficiary monitoring, service provision strategy and organizational development and resource mobilization for direct action implementing partners and capacity building for labour inspectors.
4. Respond to Stakeholder Priorities, Needs and Concerns: Project management needs to ensure that priorities of beneficiaries and stakeholders are responded to in a way that is compatible with the current project strategy, resources and capacity. This includes the specific needs of targeted beneficiaries, and the expressed needs of the

Department of Fisheries, the Ministry of Labour and of the Thai Frozen Foods Association (TFFA).

5. Include the Ministry of Education: Project management needs to place more emphasis on promoting the inclusion of the Ministry.
6. Integrate Learning in Project Implementation: The capturing of learning and good practices needs to be integrated into the project's way of working at the level of the implementing partners involved in service provision and at the level of private and public sector actors, who are likely to become involved in good labour practice development. It is important for all parties that are actively involved in implementation to initiate a process of regular documentation, recording of learning and development of good practice models from the beginning of the second project phase (implementation of core project activities).
7. Review Appropriateness of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System and Process: Project management needs to integrate monitoring and learning as part of the implementation process. The Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation System (CMES) will need to be revised in accordance with the revised logical framework that will be developed as an outcome of this PIR. It is recommended that an impact assessment of the project is factored into the evaluation process post-project, as the greatest impact of such a complex and systemic project is likely to materialize in the longer term. The intervention to be assessed by the impact evaluation (IE) should be decided based on a more detailed assessment of the needs of the beneficiaries. The IE should include a qualitative component.
8. Consolidate Impact for Long-Term Sustainability: Project management should consolidate the impact for sustainability by promoting:
(a) adherence of line ministries to the principles of good labour practice and the mission of eliminating CL, (b) organizational sustainability of implementing partners acting as drivers of the process, (c) the creation of local, active networks with representation by all key stakeholders, and (d) the establishment of good practice models that allow for replication and scale-up.