



Regional - Reporting accurately and effectively on child labour: An e-learning course for media



Responds to the following criteria

- ▶ Responsiveness
- ▶ Relevance
- ▶ Replicability
- ▶ Sustainability



Main stakeholders

Media outlets, journalists and communication specialists.

▶ Description

One of the ACCEL Africa project's activities was to train journalists to better communicate child labour issues and ensure that information is accurate, with a shared understanding of the main concepts and conventions, as well as to improve the quality and quantity of reporting of child labour. In this manner, a specialized training for journalists and communication specialists was prepared.

The e-learning course was developed and implemented by the International Training Centre (ITC) of the ILO, in collaboration with ACCEL Africa staff and global and regional media and communications experts. The e-learning course included sessions on international labour standards and the fundamental principles and rights at work with a view to preventing and eliminating child labour.

Because of COVID-19 restrictions, training could not take place on a face-to-face basis. Thus the e-learning course was adapted to an online format, run between 22 February and 15 April 2021. Participants included 31 journalists and communications officers from ministries of labour, employers' and workers' organizations, and representatives from other selected African countries, the African Union and sub-regional intergovernmental organizations.

Although training was initially intended to be offered in English only, French and Arabic were subsequently added at the request of ACCEL Africa staff, as communications and media professionals needed to produce communication

materials in their native languages. Training included the use of social media and WhatsApp to connect participants from the three language groups to instructors, who responded to queries and comments. The e-learning course was delivered by two trainers with extensive backgrounds in journalism and communications: one for English and French speakers, and the other for Arabic speakers. The e-learning course was based on prior knowledge in dealing with journalists and reporting on forced labour and fair recruitment processes through the ILO tool, [Reporting on Forced Labour and Fair Recruitment: An ILO Toolkit for Journalists](#).

COVID-19 restrictions meant that this was the first time a hybrid course on child labour reporting for media was conducted, with self-guided methods coupled with live webinars and group discussions. This made for a useful, responsive and relevant course suitable for journalists who usually cannot commit to all-day workshops.

Evaluations of the e-learning course were largely positive,¹ but the following challenges were noted: poor internet connectivity in some countries; the fast pace of work of journalists; absences due to COVID-19; and an inability to produce an article or news piece for publication within journalists' agencies. However, in spite of these challenges 81 per cent of participants completed the full course satisfactorily.

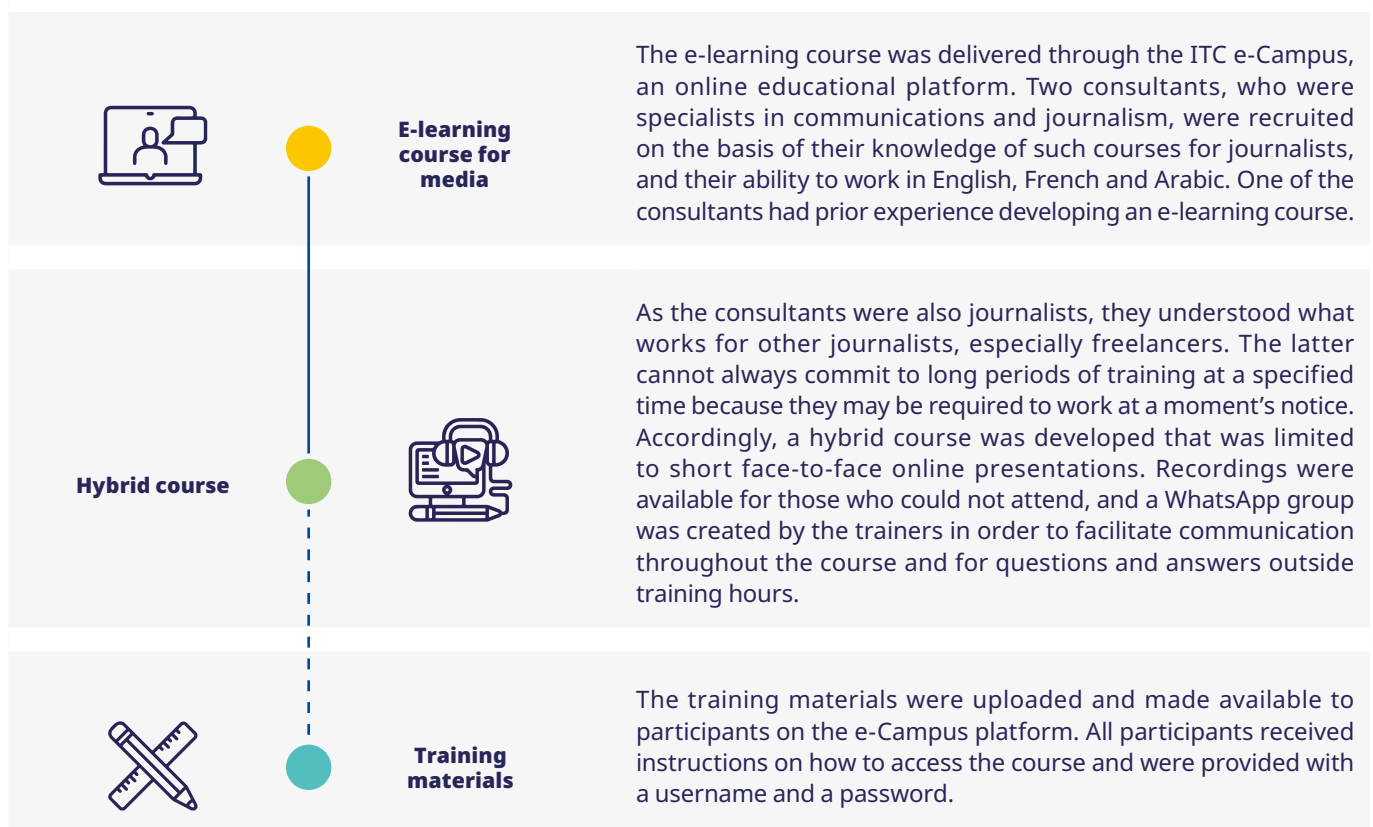
¹ The e-learning course was evaluated using a standard questionnaire adopted by the ITC-ILO. As per the ITC-ILO internal evaluation, the overall e-learning course quality was rated 4.48 out of 5 and content relevance was rated 4.52. The likeliness of applying what was learnt was rated 4.67 and the resource person's contribution scored 4.57. The preliminary information provided to participants could be improved (3.57).

To ensure the sustainability of the e-learning course results, after the training was completed, a self-guided course was developed further "[Self-guided course on reporting on child labour for media](#)". This self-guided course is freely available on ILO and ITC-ILO websites.

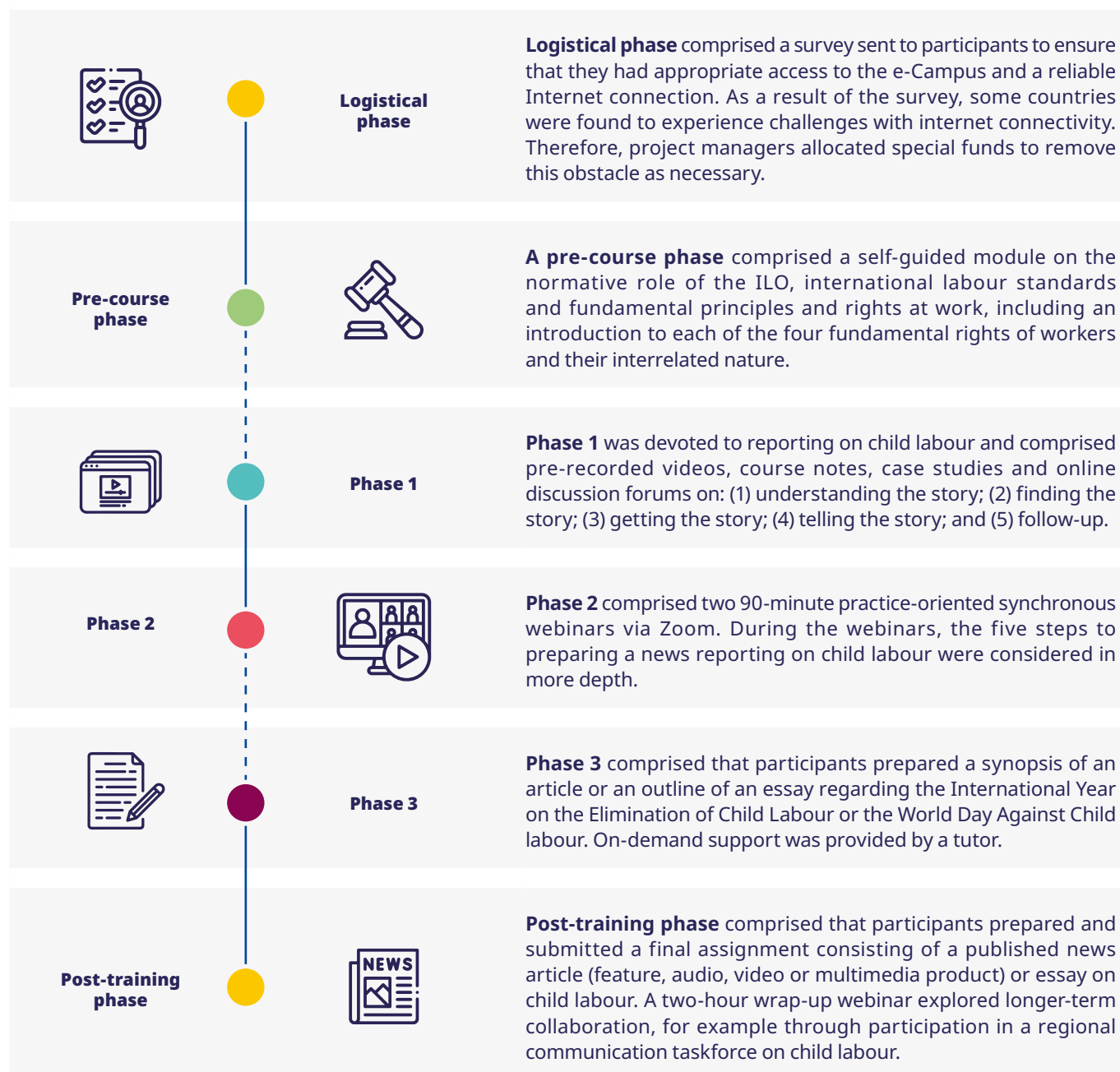
This course is promoted by ITC-ILO as the first such online self-guided course on reporting on child labour for media. The course considers the practicalities of preparing and producing a news article on child labour in a compelling

and ethical manner. Since its publication, 237 students have enrolled (globally) and 60 have received their certificates. In order to receive certification, a news article is required to be produced and accepted for publication by a relevant news agency or communications department. For the future, it was suggested by ITC-ILO that some kind of agreement would be made with the institutions that the communication officers or journalists come from to publish finalized news pieces (such as an article or documentary, among others).

► Process



Training consisted of five phases and a logistical phase to check internet connectivity:



► Enabling factors

Some of the enabling factors for this good practice included the following:

- 1 Individual countries already have a wide network of media outlets and journalists interested in covering child protection and child labour issues, especially in countries where child labour is obvious.
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In brief

Courses that are developed on the media coverage of child labour are rare. When delivered through a regional project such as ACCEL Africa, it is worthwhile to refine such courses and institutionalize them to run beyond the scope of the project. Moreover, it is also important to base them on previous experiences, leveraging experts with hands-on experience.