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► Good practices, emerging strategies and lessons learned from the ILO ENHANCE* Project

*Enhancing National Capacity to Prevent and Reduce Child Labour in Viet Nam



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► Acronyms

CEC	Continuing Education Centre
CPTPP	Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership
CTTS	Centre for Technology Transfer and Services
DCA	Department of Child Affairs
DOET	Department of Education and Training (Provincial)
DOLISA	Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
DVET	Department of Vocational Education and Training
ENHANCE	Technical Support for Enhancing National Capacity to Prevent and Reduce Child Labour in Vietnam
EVFTA	EU Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
HCMC	Ho Chi Minh City
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPEC	International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour
IPL	Institute of Public Policy and Law
KAB	Know About Business
KAP	Knowledge Attitudes and Practices
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Development
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
MOLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
NCLS	National Child Labour Survey
NPA	National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Reduction of Child Labour
UNICEF	United Nations Fund for Children
USDOL	United States Department of Labour
SCC	Saigon Children's Charity
SCREAM	Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (ILO training package)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SHAPE/SEA	Strengthening Human Rights and Peace Research and Education in ASEAN/Southeast Asia
TICNA	Technical Institutional Capacity Needs Assessment
TOT	Training of Trainers
VCA	Vietnam Cooperative Alliance
VCCI	Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry
VGCL	Vietnam General Confederation of Labour
VND	Viet Nam Dong
VNU- LS	Viet Nam National University- school of Law
WDACL	World Day Against Child Labour

1. Executive summary

Viet Nam has ratified core ILO conventions on child labour and made international commitments to tackle child labour in line with requirements of new generation Free Trade Agreements (FTAs). As a pathfinder country for Global Alliance 8.7, Viet Nam has committed to accelerating progress towards Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8.7. To translate these commitments into action, Viet Nam implemented its first National Plan of Action on the Prevention and Reduction of Child Labour from 2016-2020, and has since developed and initiated the process of implementing the second programme for the 2021-2025 period, with a vision to 2030. Since 2015, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has been supporting Viet Nam in these efforts through the US Department of Labour (USDOL) funded Project, Technical Support for Enhancing National Capacity to Prevent and Reduce Child Labour in Viet Nam (ENHANCE). Implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Labour Invalids and social affairs (MOLISA), the project implements nationwide capacity building support and awareness raising activities, alongside direct interventions in three target provinces. This report documents the good practices and lessons learned from the project to date, in addition to emerging strategies with potential for further development and improvement in the extension phase. Key findings are summarised below.

I) Good Practices and lessons learned

Support to develop, implement and evaluate the NPAs through targeted capacity building

The Project has progressed hand in hand with the two NPAs. The close alignment of the Project's capacity building objectives with the programmes contributes to the relevance and effectiveness of interventions. Multisectoral collaboration has also been key to the success of capacity building efforts, with the engagement of workers' and employers' organisations, Viet Nam Cooperative Alliance, relevant government departments and ministries, as well as child protection staff at community level. The project has both directly and indirectly contributed to NPA objectives through the development of communication and capacity-building resources and testing strategies for direct interventions. Notably, the Project has supported the development and implementation of a comprehensive training package entitled Understanding Child Labour (UCL), which has been disseminated through TOT training for key stakeholders implementing the NPA in all 63 provinces in Viet Nam.

The comprehensive training package, with content related to a range of sectors, enhances understanding of the causes and consequences of child labour, as well as the legal framework in place to prevent it, and improves capacity to plan and implement activities to combat child labour. The UCL training package can be easily adapted, reproduced and replicated in diverse settings. The state budget has been used to replicate and roll out UCL training across non-project provinces, significantly contributing to sustainability and national ownership of capacity building. Widespread TOT training has facilitated the creation of a national pool of master trainers in all 63 provinces capable of delivering training and building capacity at lower levels and within different sectors. To date, 1,110 staff members of key institutions at provincial, district and commune level have been trained on child labour, and 656 NPA implementers and MOLISA staff members have been trained to implement and supervise the programme.

However, limited resources are currently available for replication training at lower levels. Therefore, integrating UCL content into broader trainings and programmes is recommended. Moreover, follow up support and refresher training for TOT participants is key to ensuring that replication training is successful.

The Project has also provided technical support to monitor and evaluate the programmes, supporting DCA to develop a set of standardised Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) tools. The tools were pre-tested in three provinces and cities prior to finalisation, and used to conduct training for DOLISA and district labour staff from all 63 provinces, promoting the use of the tools nationwide for integration into the existing child protection system. The comprehensive M&E framework enabled provinces to report on their progress and identify challenges across all aspects of the programme. However, human resource constraints and delays weakened the reliability of data used to monitor the first NPA. To address these challenges, efforts are ongoing to simplify, reduce and streamline indicators for the second NPA. As the first NPA closed, the project supported an independent evaluation of the programme, the results of which were used to inform the development of the second NPA. The project has been supporting DCA to review and update the existing M&E indicators and tools in line with the new programme and provide further M&E training for provincial DOLISAs nationwide.

Promoting academic engagement and regional experience sharing to drive education and research on child labour

Academics and universities are well placed to carry out sustainable education and research activities on child labour, but this opportunity has not been fully explored in Viet Nam. As such, the project partnered with Viet Nam National University (VNU) to organize a regional academic conference on child labour; and to develop a textbook and module on child labour for the Master's in Human rights at VNU Law School (VNU-LS). To develop and implement the conference, the Project collaborated with VNU-LS, and the regional programme, Strengthening Human Rights and Peace Research and Education in ASEAN/Southeast Asia (SHAPE/SEA). Strong collaboration between partners was crucial to the success of the event. The conference lasted for two days, involving two plenary key note sessions and five panels on thematic issues related to child labour. Over 130 scholars, advocates, practitioners, government officials and representatives from ASEAN bodies, ILO, UN, civil society organizations and the private sector in ASEAN participated to share knowledge and experiences on child labour. Following the event, a conference proceedings booklet was published in English and Vietnamese with the inclusion of 18 selected papers, for dissemination to relevant Government ministries and agencies, NGOs, universities and academics in Viet Nam and throughout the region.

The event was an opportunity for academics to discuss issues on child labour relevant to South East Asia, promoting South - South cooperation and contributing to regional documents and practical initiatives on child labour, with a goal to increase knowledge and research on the issue to promote policy reforms in the region. The online conference platform facilitated participation from international academics in a cost-effective manner. However, the format of online conferences can lead to online fatigue, and can be less appealing than in person conferences. A more creative way of triggering interest and the inclusion of diversified media such as documentaries would motivate widespread participation from the academic community and other sectors. Publication of papers is also an incentive for academics to participate in such events.

Developing the textbook was a more lengthy process, taking around 1.5 years from inception to finalization and requiring multiple rounds of feedback from various stakeholders, in addition to two pilot teaching sessions. Following a review of existing training and legislation child's rights

and child labour, VNU-LS and the Institute for Policy and Law (IPL) collaborated to develop the textbook. The comprehensive textbook explores child labour from both an international and national perspective, covering practical and theoretical aspects of the issue. The textbook is now in use as part of the Master's in Human Rights at VNU, which is used to teach a dedicated module on child labour. Previously, some child labour content was introduced on the course, but there wasn't a good quality or comprehensive textbook available in Vietnamese to explore the topic in enough depth. The textbook is also being used as a reference source on the bachelor's programme in Human Rights, and is available for use by other universities in Viet Nam. This is expected to contribute to increased capacity to undertake research on child labour at universities across the country.

SCREAM: Transforming perceptions of child labour through participant-led awareness raising

To strengthen community level awareness raising, the Project has implemented the Programme, Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (SCREAM) – an education and social mobilization initiative developed by the ILO International Programme of the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) to raise awareness on child's rights and child labour. The SCREAM methodology is arts based, involving drama, creative writing, music and visual arts, which has proven a powerful medium to engage and inform target audiences and promote social change within communities. The approach promotes two-way communication between participants and trainers, inviting target audiences to take the lead in the awareness raising process and personally engage with the issue of child labour, as opposed to passively receiving information. This makes complex, sensitive topics more accessible, promoting meaningful attitude changes.

After adapting the SCREAM package to a Vietnamese context, a SCREAM TOT was organized for key officials from various sectors across the project provinces to establish a pool of master trainers. Trainers went on to replicate training in Project provinces for district and commune level DOLISA and DOET officials, teachers, social workers and youth union and cooperative members. The flexibility of the SCREAM package means that it can be adapted to a variety of organisational settings, sectors and target audiences, including, but not limited to children. Due to the success of the SCREAM approach, the Project is supporting MOLISA and VCA to expand the pool of SCREAM trainers to non-project provinces, enabling the Government to integrate the SCREAM approach into the NPA.

To date, 182 SCREAM awareness raising events on child labour in target communities and schools have been conducted, integrated into extra curricula activities at secondary schools, summer camps for beneficiary children, community events, trainings and workshops, activities, with the participation of thousands of children, parents, local officials, workers and enterprise representatives. However, due to state budget limitations, it can be challenging to implement SCREAM as a separate activity, and allocating time at schools can be difficult. As such, mainstreaming the SCREAM methodology into other awareness raising and training activities may be necessary, with additional financial resources mobilised to replicate standalone SCREAM activities. In schools, close collaboration between school leaders, teachers, district officials, DOET and DOLISA staff is key to the success of implementing SCREAM effectively.

World Day Against Child Labour: Galvanizing public support to tackle child labour through mass media communication

To enhance public engagement with the issue of child labour in Viet Nam, the Project has supported the development of annual World Day Against Child Labour (WDACL) campaigns,

informed by results from Knowledge Attitudes and Practice (KAP) surveys and a media assessment. This evidence base has ensured that targeted messages address knowledge gaps and that communication channels are appropriate to reach different groups. The project has engaged MOLISA to take on a coordinating role in preparing for WDACL campaigns, while mobilizing and forging partnerships with other ministries and associations, UN agencies and NGOs. Utilising the Government's wide broadcasting network to reach diverse audiences, National and provincial television and radio channels have been used to disseminate messages, in addition to popular social media platforms. To develop campaigns, ENHANCE has worked closely with the MOLISA/DCA communications centre in order to strengthen national capacity to plan and to develop communication activities on child labour, with a goal to contribute to the success of the communications component of the NPAs.

To date, six annual campaigns have been organized with support from the Project, each of which has been organised around globally defined themes. The effectiveness of various communications channels largely depend on the target audience. As such, products and activities for each campaign have been diverse, including competitions, physical displays, animated thematic clips, short documentaries and televised talkshows, social media posts with celebrity engagement, print media and online journalism, panel discussions, SCREAM events, community forums and community loudspeaker messages. In addition to social media platforms, mobile messaging proved to be extremely effective during COVID-19. Mass media communication on child labour is key to reaching broad audiences cost effectively, and media coverage of campaigns has been critical in sharing initiatives and mobilizing the participation of society.

According to results from the endline KAP survey, increased access to information on child labour has been evidenced, leading to improved understanding of the issue. Overall, the implementation of a comprehensive communication strategy has contributed to increasingly open dialogue about child labour among policy makers and the media in Viet Nam, promoting attitude and behaviour changes among key target groups and the general public. However, quality of communication at lower levels remains limited, particularly for communities in remote areas. As such, events and messages should be tailored to reach key target beneficiaries, with a focus on reaching vulnerable groups and households in remote areas. Collaboration with the Youth Union and the education sector is key to organising such community communication activities effectively.

Know About Business (KAB): Instilling the values of decent work and entrepreneurship to support school to work transitions and prevent child labour

To support students who do not progress onto high school with the skills to navigate school to work transitions, the project has supported MOET to implement the ILO Know About Business (KAB) curriculum. The Project's close collaboration with MOET to develop and implement the programme facilitates strong national ownership. KAB aims to promote awareness among young people on the opportunities and challenges of entrepreneurship, working in enterprises and self-employment, with a goal to reduce youth unemployment and prevent child labour. The KAB materials were adapted to a Vietnamese context, and detailed outlines of each module were developed for use at lower and upper secondary schools, and Continuing Education Centers (CECs). Students at CECs are important beneficiaries of the programme, many of whom are at a heightened risk of child labour.

Following a process of pre-testing and training among teachers in project sites, including a TOT for teachers from nine schools, the KAB curriculum was piloted in 16 schools in Hanoi and An Giang province. To date, 32 schools per project province have implemented the KAB curriculum

and/or other support for transition to work, targeted to students engaged in or at risk of child labour. The KAB teaching materials are now accessible online for teachers in all 63 provinces, and they can be broadly distributed at low cost. Due to the adaptability of the materials, it is possible to mainstream the programme into other subjects such as career guidance. The integration of KAB into the national curriculum is key to the programme's sustainability, contributing to gearing national curricula towards school to work transitions, thereby reducing the risk of child labour among early school leavers.

Although the curriculum is widely available for teachers in all 63 provinces, teacher training on KAB is currently limited to target provinces, meaning that many teachers may not feel confident to apply the curriculum or be aware of its use or objectives. Furthermore, because the curriculum is optional, uptake and implementation in schools in practice may be limited. Further training and awareness raising on KAB among teachers and related stakeholders is therefore key to ensure smooth implementation and widespread uptake of the programme.

Vocational training through Saigon Children's Charity: Supporting vulnerable youths to shape their own futures

A key direct intervention strategy of the project is the provision of vocational training for 14-17 year olds as a means of preventing child labour and withdrawing children from exploitative work. In HCMC, a NGO, Saigon Children's Charity (SCC) has partnered with the project to provide project beneficiaries with tailored careers guidance, vocational training and life skills coaching. Each child is assigned a dedicated social worker, who works closely with the student, their family and the training institution. Key steps for implementing effective support include: needs assessment; service provider mapping; home consultations; orientation and guidance to select training; follow up consultations and support; and career placement support. A case management system is crucial in order to follow up on specific cases, and the highly consultative process of careers counselling and follow up support in collaboration with social workers, training institutions and care-givers has been key to the effectiveness of the intervention.

However, building trust and convincing families of the benefits of training can take time. The high level of income insecurity among beneficiary households makes it challenging for families to prioritize education, particularly in the wake COVID-19. Challenges have also arisen for beneficiaries who live far from training centres. In this context, the provision of additional funds from SCC to provide children with essentials such as meals and bus travel, has supported students to remain in training in the face of financial hardship. Moreover, the project supported beneficiaries with emergency COVID-19 food packages. Follow-up consultations in collaboration with local authorities and skilled social workers have also been crucial in building trust and supporting families to better understand the benefits of training during challenging times. To support children who live far from vocational training institutions, the provision of informal vocational training opportunities through private enterprises may be considered. Moving forward, it is particularly important to reach migrant families without formal residency registration and children with disabilities, who are extremely vulnerable to child labour.

Animal husbandry cooperative group model: Tackling child labour through collective agricultural economic development.

In Hanoi, the project has collaborated with Hanoi Cooperative Alliance (HCA) to develop and implement agricultural livelihood models, due to its large network of cooperatives and members at the grassroots level. HCA collaborated with commune authorities to organize a rapid assessment on the livelihood demands of beneficiary households and the socio-economic situation of selected localities. In Trung Hoa commune, pig breeding was very prominent among

households until a swine epidemic in 2020 wiped out most of the livestock, significantly impacting on the income of households reliant on animal husbandry. Following consultations, a comprehensive intervention plan was developed in collaboration with local authorities and expert groups, in line with the capacities and requirements of the households and the development orientation of the commune.

A cooperative group model was developed to facilitate joint training, increased bargaining power and a framework for members to apply for loans and access microfinance should they wish to expand production. To support members, a commune support group and a technical support group were established, which have been crucial to the success and sustainability of the model. The technical support group provides support in disease prevention and awareness raising on sustainable farming techniques, and the commune group is responsible for monitoring the situation of cooperative members and connecting households with the technical support group. HCA enlisted a supplier to provide households with livestock, the cost of which was primarily covered by the project, with a 10 per cent contribution from households. Crucially, comprehensive training on disease prevention techniques and sustainable pig raising practices was provided to cooperative members, with regular visits from the technical expert facilitated to provide follow up support.

Following the success of the first cooperative group, the model was extended to a second cooperative group. In total, 27 households have benefited from the support, all of whom have earned income from production activities and used part of their income for further investment. All cooperative group members are now confident in the newly acquired pig farming methods, with sufficient knowledge on disease prevention and treatment and sustainable farming techniques. However, it can be challenging to convince households to follow new production processes closely, and it takes time for them to adjust to new approaches and behaviours. Raising high yielding pig breeds is also difficult for farmers, as they require more advanced technology and higher cost feed, which is challenging for households facing economic difficulties. In this context, close collaboration among participating stakeholders is key, with local authorities playing a crucial role in encouraging households to follow the technical support process.

ii) Emerging strategies and lessons learned

Guidelines on vocational training curriculum development and careers counselling: Ongoing efforts to improve the quality and provision of vocational training nationwide as a sustainable child labour prevention strategy

To contribute to improvements to vocational training and career guidance services in Viet Nam, the Project is collaborating with the Department of Vocational Training and Education (DVET) to develop and pilot Vocational Counselling Guidelines and Guidelines on the Development of Training Programmes and Curricula that meet Labour Market Needs.

The careers counselling guidelines have been pre-tested with over 30 vocational training schools and piloted at two institutions. Traditionally, the role of career counsellors in Viet Nam is limited to providing information, without collecting information on the preferences and capacities of participants. The guidelines promote a more holistic approach, whereby students are encouraged to carefully consider their goals and visit vocational training institutes in order to make informed decisions. The careers counselling guidelines are divided into two sections for use by teachers at schools, and for use of members of mass community organisations to reach out-of-school children. The tools for providing counselling to out of school children are yet to be

piloted in communities. To reach out of school children, the network of grassroots associations such as the Women's Union and Youth Union should be utilised, as well as Social Protection centres to reach the most vulnerable children. To facilitate uptake of the guidelines at schools, a strong linkage between vocational training institutes and the division of education and training is needed to convince schools and the training division about the usefulness of the new approach, which takes more time than the traditional approach. It is also essential to target students at schools who are unable to progress onto high school.

To pilot the guidelines on developing curricula in line with market demands, three short term training programmes were developed, two of which were piloted in Hanoi and Hoa Binh for a total of 43 trainees. In line with the guidelines, enterprises were involved at every stage of curriculum development, from selection of relevant skills for training; development of course content; verification of the programme; and the provision of feedback to improve the programme. This enables teachers to tailor the content of programmes to the specific needs of enterprises and sharpen the focus of course content, which saves time and resources for students, schools and enterprises, and enhances the employability of students. Following further piloting and training on the guidelines, the aim is for DVET to adopt the guidelines nationwide. To ensure that the guidelines are comprehensive, tools to align long term vocational training courses with market demands should also be included in the document. Once the guidelines are finalised, they are expected to enhance vocational training curricula and careers counselling across the country, to improve the life chances of young people engaged in or vulnerable to child labour.

Thien An school: Developing an approach to prevent child labour among highly vulnerable children through education support

Since 2019, the project has been supporting Thien An school in Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC), which provides tuition fee free primary education to its students, all of whom are extremely vulnerable to child labour, with many from migrant families. Following a thorough assessment of the needs of the school, students and parents in close collaboration with HCMC DOLISA, the Project implemented the provision of lunch for the students. This proved an effective strategy to keep children at the school throughout the day, which allows parents to continue working while their children are in a safe space, and ensures that children do not engage in child labour after class. It took time to convince parents of value of this support, with HCMC DOLISA and Thien An staff playing a crucial role in changing the mindset of households on child labour.

The focus is now on sustaining the provision of lunch, without project support. To this end, the Thien An model will be transferred to Binh Tan District to enhance district ownership in the process of consolidating the model. Once the support has been proven to be sustainable, the intention is to replicate the model in other districts to benefit high risk groups, such as children of industrial workers. To contribute to the sustainability of the Thien An model, the project supported the school to install a kitchen for the on-site preparation of lunch, and it was agreed that parents would contribute a small amount towards the cost, depending on their circumstances. However, due to the extremely precarious circumstances of families, particularly in the wake of COVID-19, the sustainability of this approach is not guaranteed. To address this, HCMC DOLISA has been active in mobilizing supplementary support from the private sector.

In addition to lunch support, the project has supported students with education supplies and health insurance cards. During the worst wave of COVID-19, direct support was provided to students and their families in the form of food and education aids, in collaboration with SCC. To enhance the capacity of the school, a library was established, and teachers benefited from

SCREAM training, following which several awareness raising events and activities were implemented for students and parents. Moreover, to incentivize former Thien An students to continue onto secondary education, the project enlisted SCC to identify the needs of 27 students who completed primary education at Thien An and transitioned to lower secondary school. On the basis of the assessment, students will be provided with learning tools and aids to improve the quality of their learning. Providing follow up support to former Thien An students is essential to ensuring continuity of support. To ensure that vulnerable migrant households can afford to keep their children in education, enhanced social protection and livelihood support is needed. Connecting such households with livelihood support in provinces of origin and supporting successful reintegration into communities, would contribute to addressing the root causes of rural to urban migration and associated risk of hazardous child labour.

Mango juice processing livelihood model: Experimenting with locally adapted and market responsive employment opportunities to tackle child labour

To stimulate local economic development and create employment opportunities for households with children engaged in or at risk of child labour, the Project has supported the development and implementation of a range of livelihood models in Hanoi and An Giang. In An Giang, the Project partnered with the Centre for Technology Transfer and Services (CTTS) to develop and implement livelihood models based on the findings and recommendations from a value chain analysis and assessment of local market demands. This approach ensured that models were in line with local economic development opportunities and needs. Close collaboration was facilitated between local government authorities at multiple levels, including Departments of Agriculture and Rural Development and Departments of Industry and Trade, which is key to developing and implementing models smoothly.

Among the models developed, a mango juice processing unit yielded promising initial results with potential for replication. A small rice producing cooperative was selected to participate in the intervention, with support to purchase equipment and the provision 6-7 months of training from CTTS. Participants received training not only on processing the product, but on production techniques, budget management, marketing, and production and business plans. The comprehensive technical support provided by CTTS has proven far more sustainable than financial backing alone. Following successful technical transfer and a pilot production phase, the cooperative was able to begin producing the product independently, enlisting project beneficiaries to supply raw materials and support production. Contracts were signed with two wholesale buyers and 14,000 cans of mango juice were sold, with the product selected by local authorities for certification under the One Commune One Product (OCOP) Programme. The model is easily replicable because investment capital is low and it is easy to control the quality of production. Moreover, there is potential to use the equipment to process other fruits.

However, due to a combination of the impacts of COVID-19, unstable consumption, the high market cost of the product, and the lack of a clear market for the product, the model was not as successful as anticipated and production was halted in April 2020 and has yet to resume. As a result, target families have not yet benefited from employment opportunities. The strength of this model therefore rests on its potential, as opposed to clear results at this stage. When considering replication, a longer implementation period should be facilitated to allow for more time to identify and assess markets for the product and ensure the sustainability of the model. In addition, marketing support, including E-commerce needs to be enhanced, and upgrades to equipment would be needed to process other fruits and mango varieties. To address the high cost of the product, adjustments to packaging may be considered, alongside measures to lower production costs.

2. Background

2.1. National context

As the first country in Asia and the second in the world to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), Viet Nam has a longstanding commitment to child protection. Notably, Viet Nam has ratified two ILO Fundamental Conventions relating to child labour, including Convention 138 (1973) on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and Convention 182 (1999) On Eliminating the Worst forms of Child Labour. In line with these conventions, the Government has made efforts to strengthen national legislation on child labour and implement a range of programmes contributing to, or directly related to child labour prevention. These efforts are reinforced by Viet Nam's commitment to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 8.7 to eradicate all forms of child labour, as demonstrated by the country's role as pathfinder country for Global Alliance 8.7. As Viet Nam integrates more deeply into the global economy, the Government has been active in signing a range of bilateral trade agreements, including the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and the Vietnam-EU Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA). Under the terms of such agreements, Viet Nam is obligated to comply with international labour standards, which compels businesses in Viet Nam to eliminate child labour from their supply chains, as a matter of urgency.

To ensure that these commitments are met, in 2016, the Prime Minister issued Decision 1023 to launch a National Plan of Action (NPA) to Prevent and Reduce Child Labour for the period 2016–2020, to mobilise resources and direct national efforts to combat child labour. Following the closure of the first programme, a second national programme has been developed and implemented for the period 2021–2025 with a vision to 2030, building on the successes of the previous programme and sustaining momentum towards SDG Target 8.7. Despite strong efforts to protect children from labour exploitation, findings from the latest national child labour survey (NCLS) in 2018 revealed an estimated 1,031,944 children engaged in child labour, accounting for 5.3 per cent of 5-17 year-olds in Viet Nam. The vast majority of these children are engaged in the informal economy within small-scale household enterprises, and concerningly, just over half of all children in child labour are working under hazardous conditions. Against this backdrop, the International Labour Organization (ILO) is continuing to support Viet Nam in its efforts to achieve SDG Target 8.7 and meet international commitments, ensuring that hard won gains in child labour prevention and reduction are not lost in the wake of COVID-19.

2.2. Objectives of the ILO ENHANCE Project

Since 2015, the ILO Project, Technical Support for Enhancing National Capacity to Prevent and Reduce Child Labour in Viet Nam (ENHANCE), has been assisting the Government to strengthen efforts to tackle child labour and implement its international commitments. With funding from the US Department of Labour (USDOL), the Project is implemented in partnership with the



Ministry of Labour Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) with its Department of Child Affairs (DCA) as focal point. The Project engages with a wide range of Government agencies, social partners, civil society stakeholders and local organisations, including workers, employers and business associations, local enterprises, schools, NGOs and research institutes. In addition to supporting national level awareness raising and capacity building efforts, the Project implements direct intervention models in 29 communes and wards of 12 districts of Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) and An Giang province. The Project's overall development objective is to build a comprehensive and efficient multi-stakeholder response for the prevention and reduction of child labour in Viet Nam. Placing capacity building for sustainable solutions at the heart of its interventions, the Project delivers interventions under three mutually reinforcing components to achieve the following interconnected objectives:

1. Capacity building (By the end of the Project the capacity of National stakeholders to identify, monitor and respond to child labour will have been strengthened).
2. Awareness raising (By the end of the Project, awareness of child labour, associated hazards and prohibitions against it will have been raised among all levels of society).
3. Direct interventions (By the end of the Project, intervention models for preventing and withdrawing child labour will have been implemented in Hanoi, An Giang and Ho Chi Minh City, and ready for replication elsewhere).

2.3. Good practice documentation rational and methodology

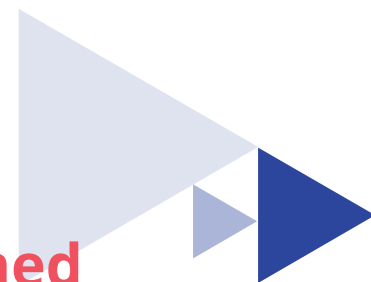
After more than seven years of operation, the ENHANCE Project is about to enter into an extended implementation period, during which, interventions and activities that have proven successful will be scaled up, lessons learned will be drawn on and implementation challenges will be addressed. This will ensure the sustainability of interventions beyond the scope of the Project and facilitate the successful handover of activities to the Government, post-ENHANCE. In order to support the development of interventions for the extended implementation period and share key successes and lessons learnt, ENHANCE has identified and documented a selection of seven good practices and accompanying lessons learned. Additionally, three emerging strategies with potential for further development have been documented, with an emphasis on lessons learned, next steps and solutions to overcome challenges during the extension phase.¹ The assessment was undertaken through a participatory, consultative approach, based on a mix of methodologies. A Desk review of project documentation ² was undertaken, followed by semi-structured interviews with partners, beneficiaries and implementing agencies in Project provinces between August- September 2020, and April - May 2022. An overview of preliminary findings was shared at a Project review workshop held in September 2020 to gather inputs and validate the selected good practices. Key criteria used for identifying good practices, in line with IPEC guidelines, are as follows:

- Innovation and creativity
- Efficacy/impact
- Replicability
- Sustainability
- Relevance
- Responsive and ethical
- Efficiency in implementation

The following section goes on to document the good practices, emerging strategies and lessons learned that were identified through this process.

1. The three emerging strategies have been identified and documented due to their potential for expansion, and to promote learning from the challenges encountered in their implementation. Despite successful features, the impacts of these activities are not yet tangible.

2. Documents reviewed include progress reports; research reports; meeting minutes and workshop notes; and presentations and reports from partners and implementing agencies.



3. Good practices and lessons learned

3.1. Transforming national plans and policies into action: Strengthening the capacity of National stakeholders to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate the NPA.

Background

At the outset of the Project, ENHANCE collaborated with MOLISA and UNICEF to secure the approval of the National Action Plan to prevent and reduce child labour (NPA) for the period 2016-2020 – the first national programme in Viet Nam focused exclusively on child labour. As the programme closed, the Project has supported the Government to develop and implement the second NPA for the period 2021-2025, with a vision to 2030, which was launched in December 2021. The first NPA encompassed two specific high-level objectives: 1) To raise awareness and strengthen capacity and responsibility of authorities and concerned agencies at all levels, as well as of employers, communities, parents and children themselves to tackle child labour and; 2) To provide timely intervention and support services to 100 per cent of children who are identified as engaged in child labour. Building on these objectives, the second programme has three core aims: to prevent and detect cases of child labour, and support and provide interventions for children engaged in and at risk of child labour; to raise awareness on child labour prevention and reduction; and to deliver training and capacity building on child labour prevention and reduction.

i) The initial challenge

In order to implement the national child labour programmes effectively, a range of technical and organizational capacities are required among related staff from provincial to grass-roots level. However, findings from a Technical Institutional Capacity Needs Assessment (TICNA) implemented at the outset of the Project indicated that, among the 28 key national agencies and organizations working on child labour in Viet Nam, very few had specific regulations on functions, duties and responsibilities directly or indirectly related to child labour. Furthermore, results found that the enforcement of child labour legislation and monitoring of child labour cases was limited due to an incomplete understanding of child labour among staff; insufficient regulations and management tools; and limited technical capacity in policy development and implementation.

ii) The response

To ensure the successful development and implementation of the two national programmes, the ENHANCE Project has sought to strengthen their implementation through the provision of technical support to MOLISA, as well as other key agencies and stakeholders implementing the NPA, including the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI); Viet Nam Cooperative Alliance (VCA); Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL); child protection staff; and law enforcement agencies, among others. To facilitate an effective and needs-responsive capacity-building plan, Project interventions were informed by findings from the TICNA, which identified capacity and knowledge gaps among stakeholders implementing the NPA. Capacity building activities implemented by the Project have been broad, ranging from support to develop annual and provincial action plans, developing training manuals for workers' and employers' organizations, and implement nationwide training for labour inspectors. To support the awareness raising and direct support components of the NPA, guidelines for implementing case-based support and child labour interventions have been developed and adopted nationally, and assistance has been provided to develop comprehensive awareness raising materials and support planning for communication campaigns. The project has both directly and indirectly contributed to NPA objectives through the development of communication and capacity-building resources and testing strategies for direct interventions. While project activities to support the NPAs are broad in scope, the following section focuses on some key aspects of the capacity building process directly related to the NPA.

iii) The process

Implementing the first NPA

- The first NPA was implemented by the Prime Minister on 16 June, 2016 under Decision No. 1023 QD-TTg, and launched during a workshop organised by ILO ENHANCE, UNICEF and the Bureau of Child Protection and Care in September, 2016. At the event, training was provided to participants from around 15 provinces/cities to support them to develop provincial Action Plans (PAPs) for their respective localities.
- Project support was provided to build the capacity of provincial local governments, especially DOLISAs, by strengthening the effectiveness and sustainability of the PAPs. Based on the PAPs, the project team worked very closely with DOLISAs to develop implementation agreements to support the efforts of provincial governments in tackling child labour.
- DOLISAs in the three project provinces reserved their own provincial contribution from the PAPs for assisting and supplementing the project's activities.

Understanding Child Labour (UCL) training to strengthen implementation

- To enhance the capacity of stakeholders developing and implementing PAPs and directing national level efforts, the Project worked with a consultant to develop a comprehensive training package on Understanding Child Labour (UCL), applicable for concerned staff and officials. Informed by findings from the TICNA, the training aims to enhance understanding of the causes and consequences of child labour and relevant national and international legislation, and to enhance capacity to plan and implement activities to combat child labour.

- The content of the package is extremely comprehensive, suited to diverse training contexts at grassroots level for staff directly involved in child protection issues. The training covers issues for stakeholders within varied fields such as education, gender, and policy making, as well as more general information related to theoretical and legal aspects of child labour, training methodologies and practical guidance on how to develop a plan of action, or conduct an assessment. The content was informed by ILO research, similar ILO training packages, national legislation and resources from the Human Rights Department of the Viet Nam National University.
- Prior to finalization, the UCL package underwent several rounds of feedback over the course of a year, and was finalized following subsequent consultation meetings with DCA, the MOLISA Project Management Unit and other relevant stakeholders. A TOT-cum pre-test training session was then conducted for 15 partners from the three project provinces. This was instrumental to the development of the UCL materials, gathering invaluable inputs from local experts and trainers from different fields.
- TOT training participants include officials from relevant technical departments of MOLISA; the University of Labour and Social Affairs; the Ministry of Education and training (MOET); VCCI; VCA; VGCL; the Viet Nam Women's Union; the Youth Union; the Viet Nam Association for Protection of Child's Rights, relevant NGOs and selected representatives from target provinces. By engaging stakeholders from diverse sectors, the goal is to develop a team of domestic experts in child labour prevention and reduction from varied professional backgrounds.
- In Project provinces, UCL training has been implemented by master trainers at provincial and district levels. Following the first round of training in the Project provinces, ENHANCE collaborated with DCA to provide additional TOT courses in Northern (Hanoi), central (Da Nang) and Southern (HCMC) Viet Nam, with budget contribution from the Government. The training sessions brought together a total of 88 officials from 15 selected agencies across all 63 provinces of the country, to build a national team of master trainers to go on to replicate training at lower levels across the country.

Key steps to implement UCL TOT training

- The UCL TOT training takes 8 days to deliver through two rounds, each lasting 4 days.
- During the first round, trainees are provided with the training content, following which a two-week break is observed for participants to return to their workplaces, review child labour related issues in their respective communities and apply learning from the training.
- During the second round of training, content on adult training methodologies is delivered. During this round, each participant is required to prepare and deliver a segment of the training package, following which they receive feedback and recommendations from trainers and peers.
- Through this process, master trainers are carefully selected from among participants to go on to conduct replication training for diverse stakeholders involved in NPA implementation at grassroots level.

Enhancing capacity to monitor and evaluate the NPA

- In addition to facilitating a shared and in depth understanding of child labour to enhance capacity to implement the NPA, the Project has provided technical support to monitor and evaluate NPA interventions. To this end, the Project has supported DCA to develop a set of standardised Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Indicators, data collection forms and mechanisms to facilitate data collection at grassroots level.
- The tools consist of a narrative reporting template and a set of 36 quantitative indicators corresponding to data on children and children at risk or engaged in child labour, and coverage of activities implemented in the communications, capacity building and direct intervention components of the NPA. A working mechanism was included for data collection from central to community levels.
- In order to test the feasibility and applicability of these tools, they were tested in three provinces and cities with varying demographics. Following finalization, the set of M&E tools were used to conduct three training courses for representatives from DOLISA and district labour staff from all 63 provinces and cities to promote their widespread use and integration into the existing child protection system.
- Towards the end of the first NPA, the ENHANCE Project supported MOLISA to evaluate its effectiveness through an independent evaluator. The evaluation assessed the extent to which the programme has achieved its stated objectives and expected results, while identifying supporting factors, and constraints. It also identified unexpected results of the programme; assessed the relevance of the programme design and implementation strategy and identified lessons learned and potential good practices. The results of the evaluation, which took place throughout March through to June 2020, informed the development of the second NPA for the period 2021 -2025.

Developing the second NPA and continuing implementation and monitoring support

- The second NPA, which was developed with technical support from the Project, was launched on 1 December 2021 through Decision No. 782/QĐ – TTg. In addition to being informed by NCLS 2018 survey results and lessons learned from the previous NPA, the programme is aligned with Viet Nam's roadmap for achieving SDG Target 8.7. The alignment of the NPA with the Target 8.7 roadmap will avoid the replication of efforts, sharpen the focus of interventions and align priorities and resources towards the same goal.
- The Project worked closely with DCA to finalize the logical framework for the NPA to enable tracking of results for each component objective as well as the high-level objectives.
- Since the launch of the second programme, the Project has been supporting ongoing capacity building efforts to ensure the effective implementation of the programme, including the provision of training to support provincial DOLISAs nationwide to develop their provincial programmes in line with the new programme's framework.
- In addition, the project has been collaborating with UNICEF to support DCA to review and update the existing M&E indicators to ensure they are practical and in line with outputs and activities of the new NPA. With support from the project, in April/May 2022, DCA organized training for provincial DCA staff to monitor and supervise the second NPA nationwide.



iv) Outcomes

- ▶ Widespread TOT training has facilitated the creation of a national pool of master trainers in all 63 provinces capable of delivering training and building capacity at lower levels.
- ▶ 1,110 staff members of key institutions at provincial, district and commune level have been trained on child labour, to date.
- ▶ 43 out of 63 provinces developed and implemented Provincial Action plans to combat child labour for the first NPA.
- ▶ 656 NPA implementers and MOLISA staff members have been trained to implement and supervise the programme, to date.
- ▶ The second NPA was developed and launched. The Project's support to conduct an external evaluation of the NPA in its final year of implementation was key to this process. Drawing on lessons learned and replicating the good practices from the previous phase of the programme will promote the sustainability and effectiveness of future child labour prevention strategies in Viet Nam, ensuring that Project support will be impactful post-ENHANCE.
- ▶ A comprehensive M&E framework was developed and implemented to monitor the progress of the NPA, which enabled provinces to report on their progress and identify challenges across all aspects of the programme.
- ▶ As a result of UCL training, implementing staff at multiple levels have a clear and shared understanding of what constitutes child labour, the capacity to train others, the capacity for coordination at each level and knowledge of how to refer identified children and families to support services.
- ▶ According to results from an endline Knowledge Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey³, staff and representatives of government agencies at all levels were able to provide information about the situation of child labour in their respective localities and management sectors. Moreover, they had a clear understanding about the causes of child labour, including economic factors as well as mechanisms and policies in place to address it.
- ▶ The UCL package, which has been highly appraised by trainers, trainees and evaluators, is available online and can be downloaded for free, providing a common resource for stakeholders in different fields, which can be used not only for training but also for disseminating information and awareness raising.

3. The endline KAP survey, initiated by the Project, was undertaken in 2019, one year after the baseline KAP survey.

“Awareness not only of MOLISA officials but policy makers has significantly improved due to UCL training, which has had both a direct and indirect impact on specific regulations. This is reflected in improved legislation, including the updated content related to child labour in the new labour code (2019), which includes clearer definitions and regulations which are more inclusive of the informal sector”.

Dang Hoa Nam, Director General of DCA



v) Successful characteristics

Relevance: The ENHANCE Project has progressed hand in hand with the NPA. The close alignment of the Project's capacity building objectives and activities with the NPA, based on the expressed needs of stakeholders, has enhanced the relevance and effectiveness of interventions.

Sustainability: The utilization of the state budget to replicate and roll out UCL training across non-project provinces has significantly strengthened the sustainability and national ownership of capacity building. Furthermore, the UCL training package has provided a highly sustainable resource in and of itself that can be adapted and utilised after the project ends. The M&E tools can also be utilised beyond the project's lifespan.

Replicability: The UCL training package has been specifically designed to be used as a flexible framework that can be reproduced and replicated in diverse settings, rather than a rigid syllabus, which makes it easy for trainers to replicate and adapt training content to different settings.

vi) Challenges

- There are limited resources and follow up training support for UCL TOT participants to implement replication training. Furthermore, the capacity of TOT participants to train others is varied, meaning that training is not consistently replicated at lower levels.
- UCL training has not been rolled out widely by TOT participants to non-DOLISA child protection officials at province, district and community levels.
- State budget constraints mean that the replication of UCL training has proven challenging at provincial level.
- The completion of the updated M&E system was delayed, meaning that the system was only applied once during the first NPA cycle in 2020, and therefore was not used in the monitoring process during the whole period.

- Many provinces found it challenging to collect the full range of M&E indicator data due to human resource constraints. The M&E system comprises a large set of indicators, corresponding to the specific objectives and activity contents of the programme. While this provides thorough coverage, the range of indicators is not feasible in terms of human resources available for data collection and analysis. Furthermore, limited hands-on M&E technical training weakened the reliability of data.
- Although available training on M&E was well-received, high staff turnover among participants reduces its impact and sustainability.

Recommendations

- Integrating UCL training content into broader trainings can address budget constraints and encourage more stakeholders to participate.
- Integrating UCL content into the capacity building activities of other programmes such as the poverty reduction programme will enhance sustainability of the training.
- Additional resources should be mobilised from enterprises and international organisations to supplement the state budget and support the replication of training. The child protection budget can also be utilised for replication training.
- Video training should be facilitated to share how training is replicated at local level.
- Master trainers should create an annual training plan to ensure that they reach a minimum number of officers in their jurisdiction. Motivation for change is key to success in this context.
- Simplify, reduce and streamline indicators for the second NPA (ongoing), to make data collection process less challenging for collaborators.
- Expand training for provincial officers on how to compile indicator data.

vii) Lessons learned

- Child labour is a complex problem, requiring holistic solutions with engagement from a wide range of stakeholders working in diverse fields. Strong multisectoral collaboration in capacity building is therefore key, with participation from workers' and employers' organisations, industry associations, relevant Government departments and ministries, as well as child protection staff, among others.
- The Viet Nam Cooperative Alliance (VCA) is an important target for capacity building due to the organisation's wide network of agricultural representatives and its connections with the informal sector.
- At community level, child protection committees play a key role in combatting child labour in the informal sector, and have a broad network and provincial level resources for training members.
- Follow up support and refresher training for TOT participants is key to ensuring that replication training is successful.

3.2. Promoting academic engagement and regional experience sharing on child labour to drive research

i) The initial challenge

Over the years there has been a lack of joint activities involving Viet Nam and other ASEAN countries to engage scholars and research agencies in the prevention of child labour in the region. There have also been limited efforts to share practical lessons learned, effective initiatives and models between countries in the region. Furthermore, at national level, there has been minimal engagement from the academic community on the issue of child labour, despite the fact that academics at universities in Viet Nam are in a prime position to carry out and sustainably maintain education and research activities on the elimination of child labour. As such, the involvement of academia in the field of child labour had not been fully explored, with child labour not extensively covered as a subject at universities in Viet Nam. A Master's in Human Rights at VNU – a longstanding programme that has been ongoing for over ten years – included some content on child labour and child's rights, but with no textbook on the topic for lecturers and students to reference.

ii) The response

To promote the active engagement of the academic community in child labour prevention efforts, both regionally and nationally, the project supported the Law School at Viet Nam National University (VNU LS) to organise an online international conference on child labour. The conference aimed to increase the participation of scholars and research agencies in the prevention of child labour in ASEAN countries, and provided participating scholars from Viet Nam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, and the Philippines with a platform to share their research and experiences. In parallel, to promote further learning and research on the issue nationally, the project has supported VNU LS to develop a text book and module on child rights and child labour to integrate into a longstanding Master's Programme on Human Rights.

iii) The process

Developing a platform to promote regional child labour research

- To develop and implement the conference, the Project collaborated with VNU LS, and the regional programme, Strengthening Human Rights and Peace Research and Education in ASEAN/Southeast Asia (SHAPE/SEA). SHAPE/SEA was selected for collaboration due to its expertise in building regional cooperation on human rights in academia, and its broad network of academic stakeholders in the region. VNU also has access to a pool of competent lecturers and academics who are experts in child labour. In addition, VNU has close partnerships with government agencies, civil society organizations, and international organizations, with extensive experience in organising and conducting academic research activities and conferences.
- The process of organizing the conference, from inception to delivery took around five months. The first step was to arrange a meeting with VNU, SHAPE/SEA and the project, to jointly develop a concept note for the conference and agree on themes and criteria for inclusion of papers. This led to a call for papers on child labour from researchers in the region.
- SHAPE/SEA was responsible for PR activities to solicit papers and call for applicants, with

a focus on ASEAN scholars, whereas VNU was responsible for soliciting participation from Vietnamese academics.

- To do so, a call for papers was posted on SHAPE/SEA and VNU websites and a conference webpage was established by SHAPE/SEA. Networks and mail lists of SHAPE/SEA and VNU were also utilized, along with twitter, Instagram and various social media networks to promote the conference.
- Around 30 submissions of abstracts were received and reviewed by the selection committee, which was comprised of experts from VNU and SHAPE/SEA. Following collation, review and ranking, around 24 abstracts were selected for inclusion in the conference.
- VNU coordinated with researchers and ENHANCE to develop guidelines for papers, and supported presenters to share their research. VNU also took on the role of addressing legal and administrative issues related to the conference, connecting stakeholders and managing the online platform.
- A further meeting was arranged between VNU, SHAPE/SEA and ENHANCE to discuss the programme of the conference, in addition to several bilateral discussions between VNU and SHAPE/SEA on technical aspects of the conference during the lead up to the event.
- After the agenda and format was finalized, the conference was implemented online over the course of two days. The conference, which was facilitated jointly by experts at VNU and SHAPE/SEA, involved two plenary key note sessions and five panels on vulnerability and child labour, child labour in different sectors, the impact of COVID-19 on child labour, and laws and policies related to child labour, respectively. Each presentation was followed by discussion, Q&A, and experience sharing among participants.
- Following its implementation, a post-conference meeting was held to discuss next steps, which included a thorough review of submitted papers.
- Following two rounds of peer review from experts in the field, final papers for inclusion in a conference proceedings booklet were selected and edited for publication.

Promoting academic education in child labour to promote learning and research at national level

- The Institute of Public Policy and Law (IPL) was selected to support VNU to develop the textbook on child's rights and child labour to align the curriculum of the Master's degree in Human Rights with key issues relevant to child labour.
- The process of developing the textbook took around 1.5 years from inception to finalization, beginning with a review of existing materials on child rights and child labour, in addition to international standards and the national legislative framework, along with other related documents and training materials to inform the textbook.
- On this basis, a detailed outline of the textbook was developed in consultation with relevant staff at VNU- LS. Based on the outline, IPL and VNU-LS members collaborated to develop the syllabus and the final textbook.
- The outline and concept paper were submitted to a committee comprised of five scholars, which was set up with the purpose of reviewing the draft. Once the concept was approved by the committee, the drafting process began.
- The draft went through three rounds of revisions in total. IPL shared the first draft with

ILO for review and inputs, on the basis of which, the textbook was revised and shared for further inputs.

- The VNU-LS team revised the textbook and delivered two pilot teaching sessions of two lessons to master's students. A faculty meeting was organized to thoroughly review the textbook following the pilot. Following further inputs from the ENHANCE Project and the committee, the textbook was finalized.
- Divided into two sections (on child's rights and child labour respectively), the content of the textbook explores child labour from both an international and national perspective, and covers both practical and theoretical aspects of child labour.

iv) Outcomes

- ▶ A two-day virtual conference entitled "Online Conference on Combating Child Labour in ASEAN/Southeast Asia" was successfully organized from 3-4 June 2021, with the participation of more than 130 scholars, advocates, practitioners, government officials and representatives from ASEAN bodies, ILO, UN, civil society organizations and the private sector in ASEAN to share knowledge and experiences on child labour. The unique conference provided a platform for academics to discuss issues on child labour relevant to South East Asia and contribute to regional documents on child labour.
- ▶ A conference proceedings booklet was published in English and Vietnamese with the inclusion of 18 selected papers for dissemination to relevant Government ministries and agencies, NGOs, universities and academics in Viet Nam and throughout the region.
- ▶ Seven papers were selected for publication in the *Lentera Hukum* (Journal of Legal Studies) - an academic journal established by the Human Rights Centre of the University of Jember, Indonesia.

"Not only were discussions on current trends and issues brought to the fore, existing frameworks were challenged, with concepts introduced that were novel to many of us, including child labour, agency and empowerment, which disrupts the idea of child labour being purely victim-centred. This has contributed to changing perceptions among participants, which will hopefully trigger broader policy discussions".

Joel Mark Baysa-Barredo, Programme director, SHAPE/SEA



- ▶ Comprehensive textbook on child labour developed and in use as part of the Master's in Human Rights at VNU, which is now used to teach a dedicated module on child labour, which is one among 15 topics explored in depth on the course.
- ▶ Previously, some child labour content was introduced on the course, but there wasn't a good quality or comprehensive textbook available in Vietnamese to explore the topic in enough depth. From late 2020, as a result of the textbook, additional content on the child's rights and child labour has been added to the curriculum.

"Before we had this textbook, the materials we used to teach content on child labour were not systematic, or up to date. Now it is compulsory to use the textbook for the programme, resulting in more comprehensive coverage of the topic of child labour. This has not only been useful for students, but also for teachers".

Nguyen Anh Duc, Coordinator at Law School, Vietnam National University (VNU- LS)

- ▶ The textbook is also being used as a reference source on the Bachelors programme in Human Rights.
- ▶ The textbook is now available for use throughout the country, and other universities in Viet Nam have requested a copy of the book so they can use it on their courses.

"The textbook is a turning point in involving academics in child labour. Previously, some individual scholars were talking about child labour but not to a great extent. The impact of the conference and the text book combined has increased the voice of academics in Viet Nam on child labour, which means that the government is now engaging us in developing laws on child labour. Previously there was some connection between policy and academia but this was very limited".

Vu Cong Giao, academic at VNU- LS

v) Successful characteristics

Sustainability: The textbook is a highly sustainable capacity building resource, which will be used on the VNU Master's programme for years to come, strengthening the curriculum on child labour, with potential for use at universities nationwide. This will contribute to increased capacity on child labour among academics and promote research on child labour, which has the potential to influence policy.

Innovation and creativity: The regional conference, which was the first of its kind to be hosted in Viet Nam, was a unique opportunity to bring together researchers in the region to share experiences and knowledge on child labour. Moreover, it was an opportunity to experiment with the use of an online conference platform, making use of the new normal conditions under COVID-19 to facilitate participation from international academics in a cost-effective manner.

vi) Challenges

- Time consuming process involved in gaining permission to organize the conference, which was more challenging due to the international scope of the event. VNU spent 3-4 months obtaining government permission to organize the event.

- The format of online conferences can lead to online fatigue, making it more challenging for facilitators to actively engage participants.
- Not as many academics submitted abstracts as anticipated, potentially due to the niche topic of child labour, and the online format of the conference - the prospect of travel makes such conferences more appealing to participants.
- Ensuring that the textbook was good quality was a long and complex process, requiring multiple rounds of feedback from various stakeholders.

Recommendations

- The inclusion of diversified multimedia materials (such as documentaries and visual media), would attract a wider range of participants from different fields within and outside of academia.
- Because of the online format of the conference necessitated by COVID-19, a more strategic and creative way of triggering interest in conferences is needed to incentivize and motivate widespread participation from the academic community, particularly as child labour is a niche topic. Publication of papers is an incentive for academics to participate.

vii) Lessons learned

- Academic research and learning can make important contributions to the fight against child labour. Engaging academic stakeholders in this endeavour is an opportunity to carry out education and research activities on the elimination of child labour in a sustainable manner, at nationwide scale.
- The conference was an opportunity to contribute to the development of practical lessons on effective initiatives and models to improve the effectiveness of child labour prevention through research and advocacy in Southeast Asia, as well as the expansion of multi-sectoral networks. It also encouraged increased discourse and more action on intersecting issues relevant to child labour.
- Developing frameworks on child's rights, designed by and for academics from the global south, is very important. As such, it is necessary to facilitate South-South cooperation opportunities, developed by and for stakeholders in the region, and create a space where frameworks and approaches to child labour can be developed by researchers working in countries where child labour is prevalent. Such initiatives enable academics to contribute to research on regionally specific issues related to child labour.
- Strong collaboration between partners (VNU, SHAPE/SEA and ENHANCE) is crucial to the successful implementation of events of this nature, especially given the international scope such events. In this context, it is important to establish a common understanding on how things should be done from the outset, and to solve conflicts of time and availability.
- Events of this nature have the potential to promote research on child labour, both within Viet Nam and regionally, with increased knowledge on the issue contributing to policy changes.

3.3. SCREAM: Transforming perceptions of child labour through participant-led awareness raising

i) The initial challenge

To identify barriers to behavioural and attitudinal changes related to child labour, the Project initiated a baseline KAP survey⁴ on child labour in 2017. Findings revealed significant knowledge gaps and inappropriate attitudes towards the issue. Notably, 47 per cent of 7-18 year olds had not encountered the term child labour before the survey, and only 10 per cent of household representatives confirmed local activities or programmes on child labour taking place during the previous year. Many children were unaware of their right to participate in decision making regarding their education or work opportunities, with 37.4 per cent of surveyed 11-18 year olds indicating that they thought their parents had the right to force them to work. Although many household representatives generally disapproved of child labour, inadequate knowledge on its impacts resulted in a significant proportion of respondents accepting child labour in cases of economic hardship, and widespread perceptions that it is natural for children to share financial burdens with their parents. Accordingly, only 7 per cent of 7-18 year olds indicated that they would report child labour to authorities and 25 per cent of household representatives said they would not take any action if they encountered a case of child labour. In this context, it is crucial to develop tailored awareness raising approaches that effectively reach target audiences at community level, and to empower children to speak out against labour exploitation.

ii) The response

To strengthen community level awareness raising, the Project has implemented the Programme, Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (SCREAM) for widespread uptake in schools and communities. SCREAM is an education and social mobilization initiative developed by ILO IPEC to raise awareness on child's rights and child labour, particularly among young people and community members. The SCREAM methodology is arts based, involving drama, creative writing, music and visual arts. Through these mediums, participants are empowered to convey messages on child labour to the wider community. The goal is to leverage the power of education and the arts to transform perceptions around child labour. Since its adaptation and adoption, SCREAM has been a key feature of the Project's awareness raising strategy.



iii) The Process

- In 2018, the Project collaborated with an external agency, MARKDC, and gathered inputs from MOLISA and MOET to review and adapt the SCREAM package to a Vietnamese context, reducing the original package from 14 to 11 modules. The NCLS 2012 provided

4. Key findings of the baseline KAP survey can be accessed here:

https://www.ilo.org/hanoi/Whatwedo/Publications/WCMS_730818/lang--en/index.htm

official data to use in the materials and the baseline KAP survey and media assessment helped to develop modules, messages and methods, and provided an evidence base for the methodology.

- Following finalisation of the package, a SCREAM TOT was organised with the participation of 26 officials from MOLISA, Departments of Labour Invalids and Social Affairs (DOLISAs), and Departments of Education and Training (DOETs), as well as representatives from VCCI, VGCL and VCA at national and provincial level, to establish a pool of master trainers across the project's three target provinces.
- Following the TOT, master trainers went on to deliver ongoing provincial SCREAM training courses in Project provinces for district and commune level DOLISA and DOET officials, teachers, social workers and youth union and cooperative members. Several trainings have also been implemented in non-project provinces in Northern and South Central Viet Nam.
- During SCREAM training sessions, participants are equipped with the skills to conduct engaging awareness raising activities using the SCREAM methodology and supported to develop plans for SCREAM activities in their localities.

Key steps for Implementing SCREAM at schools

- During training, teachers collaborate with trainers to develop SCREAM workplans for their school, through which appropriate activities and events are identified.
- Following training, DOLISAs work closely with schools and commune officials to provide inputs into work plans to ensure sure that they are in line with local level demands, issuing guidance on conducting SCREAM activities in terms of format and content.
- Once the workplan is complete, there is close collaboration between relevant stakeholders to organize SCREAM events, with the involvement of district and commune level DOETs. Official letters are sent to relevant authorities and direct meetings are organized with officials and school leaders to discuss implementation of the workplans, including how to select students and how to make time for SCREAM events.
- Students who are engaged in or at risk of child labour are selected to participate in the SCREAM activities.
- Teachers deliver SCREAM content and prepare students for events outside of class hours, with support from DOET or DOLISA officials. This is often arranged during breaktimes, during after school clubs, or at monthly community sessions, depending on the schedules of students and teachers. Students can be divided into groups to receive instructions during different time slots.
- Progress against the workplan is reported regularly to the people's committee and schools prepare for SCREAM events under the committee's supervision and guidance, with district level officials attending rehearsals for added support.
- Typically 2-3 events are arranged, with the attendance and participation of the entire school, local officials, and parents, where possible. Activities take the form of roleplays, presentations, quizzes, performances, games, and collage and drawing activities.



SCREAM in action

Students at Phú Nghĩa School in Hanoi showcased the effectiveness of the SCREAM approach. During a SCREAM event in the school yard, a series of three plays written by the students were performed on the topic of child labour, evidencing an understanding of the importance of speaking out against child labour, the impact of dropping out of school early, and the role of poverty in driving child labour. After the performances, students took part in a quiz on child labour followed by three student led presentations on the topic, which demonstrated the capacity of children to clearly express the impacts of child labour to their peers with confidence and conviction. According to Oanh, a teacher at Phú Nghĩa School who was trained to deliver SCREAM, “we’re now confident that students are able to explain the impacts of child labour, and the legal regulations against it to their families and caregivers”. The thing that is uniquely effective about the SCREAM approach, she goes on, is that “it promotes the active participation of students, as opposed to the one way transmission of information. When children acquire a deeper understanding of child labour, this in turn influences the mind sets of their families and caregivers”, she explains.



iv) Outcomes

To date:

- ▶ 182 SCREAM awareness raising events on child labour in target communities and schools have been conducted, integrated into extra curricula activities at lower and upper secondary schools, summer camps for beneficiary children, community events, trainings and workshops, activities, with the participation of thousands of children, parents, local officials, workers and enterprise representatives.

- ▶ Over 1000 officials and teachers across the three project provinces have been trained to deliver the SCREAM methodology.
- ▶ Results of the 2019 endline KAP survey revealed positive changes to the KAP of household representatives and children in comparison to the baseline survey, which was undertaken prior to SCREAM implementation. Specifically:
 - > Surveyed children demonstrated sound knowledge on child labour related issues, with over 90 per cent of respondents aware of their rights, and the rate of correct/appropriate responses increasing sharply. For example, support for the statement: Your parents can decide everything you do, decreased from 48.6 per cent to 37.5 per cent, and the acknowledgement of a child's right to study until grade 9 increased by 5 percentage points.
 - > The percentage of 11-18 year olds in agreement with the statement, parents have the right to tell their children to work and earn a living for themselves and for their families, decreased by 9.3 percentage points compared to the baseline survey (from 37.4 per cent to 28.2 per cent).
 - > The percentage of 7-18 year olds who did not accept a hypothetical case of child labour more than doubled, increasing from 20.5 per cent to 52.1 per cent.
 - > When asked how they would respond if they witnessed cases of children working illegally in their community, 18.5 per cent of household representatives said that they would directly discourage the employer from hiring a child, compared to 12.6 per cent of respondents in the baseline survey.

"I used to see my friends working and didn't realise that this was child labour. Now I feel they shouldn't be participating in this kind of work and I'm able to talk to them about it".

Nguyễn Minh Trang, student participant in SCREAM event at Trung Hoa school, Hanoi.

- ▶ Due to the success of the SCREAM approach, the ENHANCE Project is supporting MOLISA and VCA to expand the pool of SCREAM trainers to non-project provinces, including 17 Northern provinces, and 28 northern and south center provinces. This will enable the Government to integrate the SCREAM approach into the upcoming NPA and continue to replicate SCREAM activities nationwide after the project ends.

"In the past, drop outs have been an issue. Many students work during the summer holidays and after school in family bamboo and rattan weaving enterprises. Since SCREAM activities have been implemented, I have noticed a reduction in drop out rates. Families whose children work now pay more attention to working hours, and better understand the need for their children to have leisure time".

Nguyễn Thị Bích Hạnh, teacher and SCREAM facilitator at Trung Hoa school, Hanoi.

- ▶ Several district officials and teachers have anecdotally reported a reduction in school drop-out rates as a result of SCREAM activities and resulting changes to the attitudes of parents and students.



v) Successful characteristics

Replicability: The flexibility of the SCREAM package means that it can be adapted to a variety of organisational settings, sectors and target audiences. It is applicable not only in schools for children, but can be tailored to parents at community events, at national level events, and for local officials, enterprise representatives and child protection staff during trainings and workshops. It is also possible to apply the SCREAM approach to other topics and issues.

Innovation and creativity: Equipping participants with the tools to convey messages on child labour via artistic expression has proven a powerful medium to engage and inform target audiences and promote social change within communities.

Efficacy/impact: A major advantage of SCREAM training is that it promotes two-way communication between participants and trainers, inviting target audiences to take the lead in the awareness raising process and personally engage with the issue of child labour, as opposed to passively receiving information. Two-way, peer-to-peer communication considerably strengthens the impact of the message for participants and makes complex, sensitive topics more accessible, promoting meaningful attitude changes.



vi) Challenges

- School teachers have busy schedules and preparing students for SCREAM events is time consuming, so it is challenging to find time to allocate to SCREAM at schools.
- Parents are often unable to find the time to attend SCREAM events at schools.
- Due to state budget limitations, it can be a challenge to implement SCREAM as a separate activity.

Recommendations

- Because of time limitations for teachers, mobilizing their time effectively is key; Integrating SCREAM activities into other school events and subjects may address this.
- Schools may allocate a portion of the regular school budget to provide teachers with overtime allowance for this work.
- To reach parents, particularly those with children engaged in or at risk of child labour, SCREAM activities should be integrated into community events that specifically target this group.
- Mainstreaming the SCREAM methodology into other awareness raising and training activities can enhance the sustainability of the approach. Additional financial support should also be mobilised to replicate standalone SCREAM activities effectively.

vii) Lessons learned

- Facilitating two-way, participant led communication significantly strengthens the impact of awareness raising, particularly at community level and among children and young people.
- Engaging young people in the global campaign against child labour and recognizing them as agents of change promotes a culture of respect for children's rights within schools, families and communities.
- Close collaboration between school leaders, teachers, district officials, DOET and DOLISA staff is key to the success of implementing SCREAM effectively in schools.

3.4. World Day Against Child Labour: Galvanizing public support to tackle child labour through mass media communication

i) The initial challenge

Social media engagement in Viet Nam, and indeed the world over, is on the rise, particularly among young people, while television remains the most popular communication channel among most age groups in the country. However, according to a media assessment⁵ conducted by the Project, which involved an analysis of mass media messaging in Viet Nam from July 2015 to October 2016, child labour has been largely off the social media agenda in recent years. Furthermore, televised content on child labour was found to be limited and tended to be integrated into general news programmes and reports, with no content entirely dedicated to the issue. It was also found that specific information on the impacts and drivers of child labour were not explored, nor were there any discussions on how to counter it. Responsibility tended to be placed on government authorities, implying that there is little or nothing to be done by individuals or communities to promote change. According to the baseline KAP survey, only 38 per cent of children and 50 per cent of household representatives had encountered programmes, reports or online content related to child labour prior to the survey. Overall, findings indicated that a combination of limited knowledge on child labour and a lack of attention paid to child labour among the general public has promoted inaction on the issue.

5. The media assessment report can be accessed here:

https://www.ilo.org/hanoi/Whatwedo/Publications/WCMS_712455/lang--en/index.htm

ii) The response

Launched by the ILO in 2002, World Day Against Child Labour (WDACL) is observed annually across the globe on 12 June, bringing together governments, employers' and workers' organizations and civil society, as well as millions of people from around the world to promote the growing global movement against child labour. Each year is organised around a different theme to highlight the plight of children in child labour and to communicate solutions. The Project has utilised WDACL as a powerful advocacy tool to enhance public engagement with the issue. To this end, ENHANCE has collaborated with the MOLISA Communications Centre, in partnership with tripartite partners, relevant government ministries and civil society stakeholders, to utilise varied communication channels to develop targeted messages as part of annual campaigns. Messages, content and communications channels have been informed by findings of the baseline KAP survey and media assessment to ensure that identified knowledge gaps are addressed, and appropriate communications channels are utilised.

iii) The process

- Since 2016, WDACL has been marked in Viet Nam by high profile mass communications campaigns, each of which has been organised around globally defined themes, including supply chains; health and safety; natural disasters; agriculture; COVID-19; and the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour.
- The project has engaged MOLISA to take on a coordinating role in preparing for WDACL campaigns, while mobilizing and forging partnerships with UNICEF, UNESCO, Save the Children, Plan International, World Vision, MOET, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Ministry of Public Security, the Youth Union and VCCI.
- In particular, the Project has collaborated closely with the Centre for Communication at MOLISA to organise campaigns, utilising the Government's wide broadcasting network to reach diverse audiences. National and provincial television and radio channels have been used to disseminate messages, in addition to popular social media platforms.
- High profile public events at National and Provincial level, as well as policy-oriented forums and workshops with high media coverage have been organised for various campaigns, to reach to diverse sections of society at multiple levels.
- Throughout the process of developing campaigns, the ENHANCE Project has worked closely with DCA communications staff to provide inputs and systematically monitor efforts, to ensure the quality of messages and communication materials.
- Products and activities for each campaign have been varied, including competitions, physical displays, animated thematic clips, short documentaries and televised talkshows, social media posts with celebrity engagement, print media and online journalism, panel discussions, SCREAM events, community forums and community loudspeaker messages.
- A high level of media engagement and press coverage of campaigns has been facilitated, particularly during the WDACL 2019 campaign, during which a media writing competition on child labour was launched to mobilise the participation of journalists.

iv) Outcomes

The implementation of a comprehensive communication strategy has contributed to increasingly open dialogue about child labour among policy makers and the media, to promote awareness and attitudes and behaviour changes among other key target groups and the public.

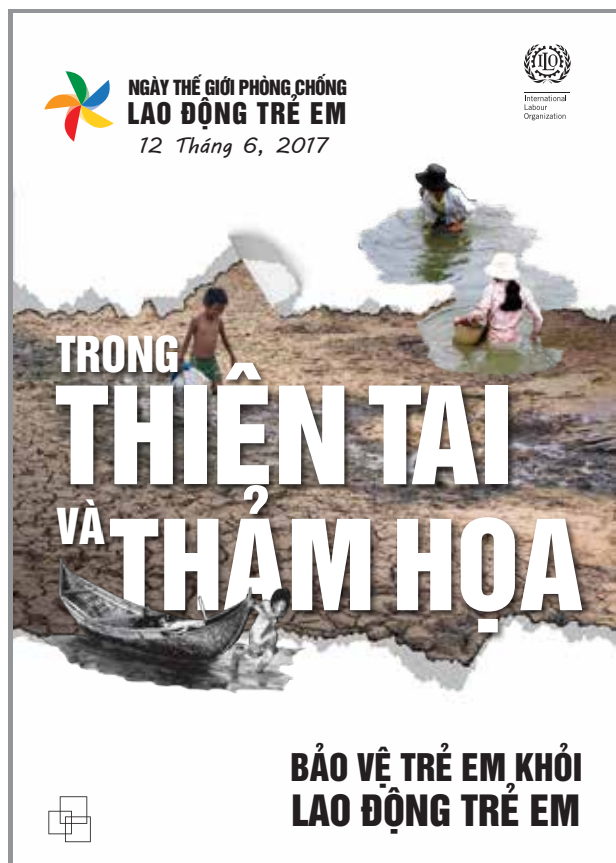
To date, six annual campaigns have been organized with support from the Project, the details of which are as follows:

WDACL 2016 (Child labour and supply chains):

- ▶ Two TV programmes reporting on child labour in supply chains were broadcast on two National television channels, “For Children” and “Daily life”. In addition, a short animation was produced on the issue of child labour in supply chains, which was aired seven times, attracting an estimated 900,000 viewers. The clip was also shared widely on Facebook by a range of influential local celebrities in June and July, attracting over 4,800 likes. The full version of the video clip on You Tube had 33,744 views and the 30 second version had 13,529 views by 31 July 2016. Overall, an estimated one million Vietnamese viewers were reached by the campaign. The campaign animation can be viewed here:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TEeIe0ccRqo>



WDACL 2017 (Child labour and natural disasters):

- ▶ A video clip, radio clip and short documentary were produced to highlight the heightened vulnerability of children to child labour in the context of climate change and natural disasters. As well as being shown at an awareness-raising workshop, the clips were aired on VTV and provincial television and radio stations more than 250 times, reaching approximately 3.4 million viewers. In parallel, a high level workshop on the issue was arranged with the participation of more than 20 national media outlets. The video clip can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4m4rzAqCAk>

WDACL 2018 (Child labour and health & safety):

- An animated video clip and an audio clip were produced to raise awareness on hazardous child labour. The animation was aired 217 times and the radio clip was aired 81 times on national and provincial television and radio stations. In addition to the clips, National and provincial channels aired Two 30-minute television programmes specifically dedicated to the issue of child labour and a National Forum entitled “Generation Safe and Healthy” was organized in Hanoi on 25 June 2018. Overall, the campaign reached over 5 million viewers and listeners nationwide. The televised programme on child labour and health and safety issues can be viewed here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHAvYmQzu0o&feature=emb_title



WDACL 2019 (Child labour in agriculture):

- A 90 second animated clip was aired 600 times on VTV and other channels across 63 provinces, a radio message was broadcast 220 times on VOV1, VOV Traffic and Voice of Vietnam and a loudspeaker message was broadcast in project wards and communes. In addition, two programmes on child labour prevention, lasting 30 minutes each, aired on An Giang Television and Ho Chi Minh City Television. A media writing competition on child labour was also launched to mobilise the engagement of the media. 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 against child labour. Over 100 entries from 70 press agencies were received, including a diverse range of print and online news stories, as well as radio and television broadcasts. Reaching around 7 million viewers and listeners in total, the campaign demonstrated an unprecedented reach not seen before in previous national World Day campaigns. The animated clip developed for the campaign can be viewed here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1vMTRZjiR0Q&feature=emb_title

WDACL 2020 (Child labour and COVID-19):

- ▶ A livestreamed panel discussion on the topic of child labour and COVID-19 reached an estimated 25,800 viewers via the webpages of ILO, the 111 child protection hotline and UNICEF, and the event was widely reported in various newspapers, television and radio stations, and social media platforms. Two additional news reports were televised on national television channels, and An Giang DOLISA hosted a provincial talk show on the topic which was broadcast on An Giang television. To supplement this, messages were displayed on public buses and LCD screens on buildings in crowded public spaces throughout HCMC and Hanoi, with over 1 million views per week estimated. The livestreamed panel discussion can be viewed here:

<https://www.facebook.com/VitreemVTV1/videos/672326666955645>



WDACL 2021 (International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour):

- ▶ The 2021 campaign was utilised to mark 2021 as the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour. To this end, a social media campaign on child labour was carried via the ILO Facebook page to promote action against child labour throughout the year. In June 2021, during the Week of Action (10 - 17 June), a high volume of posts was shared. A game on child labour was organized to promote engagement, which reached an audience of nearly 210,000. Furthermore, celebrity influencers were mobilized to strengthen the impact of the campaign. The campaign also included a story shared in a social community group to attract further engagement. In addition to sharing facts on child labour and the increased risk of child labour resulting from COVID-19, information was shared on the NPA for the period 2021- 2025 and the latest global estimates on child labour were disseminated. The campaign reached an audience of around 1,083,000 in total. In addition, messages via mobile loudspeakers were organized in An Giang on the occasion of WDACL.

During the build up to WDACL, on 27 April 2021, the project supported the launch of Viet Nam's music against child labour song competition, which attracted 88 entries from 68 musicians from across the country. The project collaborated with MOLISA, the Viet Nam Musicians' Association, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Save the Children International, and Good Neighbors International to launch the initiative. In December 2021, during an awarding ceremony, two first prizes were awarded to winning songs, which are expected to provide powerful advocacy tools in the campaign against child labour in Viet Nam.



- ▶ According to results from the endline KAP survey conducted in 2019, increased access to information on child labour has been evidenced since the baseline KAP survey. Specifically:
 - > 47.1 per cent of children reported having heard or watched a programme related to child labour, which increased from 38.4 per cent in 2018.
 - > 30.5 per cent of children indicated that they had not encountered the term “child labour” before the survey, which decreased from 47.3 per cent in 2018.
 - > The proportion of media and communication agency staff who reported never having covered the topic of child labour before decreased from 17.4 per cent in 2018 to 10.4 per cent in 2019.

v) Successful characteristics

Efficacy/impact: Over the course of the Project's life cycle, WDACL campaigns have become more successful in terms of reach, with audience numbers and views on both social media and via physical displays rising exponentially for every campaign.⁶

Sustainability: The close collaboration between the Project team and MOLISA/DCA communications centre to plan and conduct WDACL campaigns has strengthened the capacity of the Government to develop communication plans and activities with a particular focus on child labour issues; this has benefited the implementation of the NPA and will contribute to the success of the communications component of the second NPA.

Relevance: The evidence base provided by the KAP survey and media assessment has enhanced the relevance and effectiveness of messages targeted to specific groups, ensuring that

6. Although the reach and scope of in person events were affected during COVID-19, a high level of engagement was achieved thanks to online activities and physical displays and message boards in public places.

messages address knowledge gaps and that communication channels are appropriate to reach different groups.

vi) Challenges

- Quality of communication at lower levels remains limited. Although materials and communication products have been distributed within communities, messages often fail to reach vulnerable groups most in need, particularly in remote areas.
- Due to COVID-19, which has intensified the risk of child labour, community level awareness raising on the risks of child labour is more important than ever, but it was more challenging to organise face to face communications activities during the pandemic.

Recommendations

- Events and messages should be tailored to reach key target beneficiaries such as migrant households, children who have dropped out of school and parents with children at risk of child labour, with a focus on reaching households in remote areas.
- In addition to social media platforms, mobile messaging has proven to be extremely effective during COVID-19, which can be integrated into upcoming communication campaigns.

vii) Lessons learned

- Mass media communication on child labour is key to reaching broad audiences cost effectively. In particular, the use of the Government broadcasting network to air communications clips has significantly reduced the cost of campaigns.
- The media plays a key role in sharing initiatives and mobilizing the participation of society in the prevention and reduction of child labour by shining a spotlight on the issue, with the ability to reach and influence not only community members, but officials and policy makers.
- Print and online journalism lends an official voice to campaigns that can promote debates on regulations related to child labour. Therefore, training for journalists and reporters on child labour is essential to promote ethical and effective reporting on the complex issue.
- Collaboration with the Youth Union and the education sector is key to organising community communication activities effectively.
- Effective communications channels depend on the audience. For example, for officials, workshops and dialogues are most appropriate, whereas for parents, community activities with the integration of SCREAM methods are highly effective.
- Communication approaches and channels need to be diverse, combining mass media channels with more traditional face-to-face awareness raising approaches and community events with a high level of media coverage.
- Research is crucial to developing tailored messages. The endline KAP survey will therefore provide useful inputs into upcoming campaigns.

3.5. Know About Business (KAB): Instilling the values of decent work and entrepreneurship to support school to work transitions and prevent child labour

i) The initial challenge

In Viet Nam, children who do not progress onto upper secondary school or formal higher education are at high risk of labour exploitation. As the latest NCLS findings indicate, child labour is most prevalent among 15–17-year-olds, who are most at risk of falling into hazardous child labour. According to the findings of a 2017 ILO school to work transition survey,⁷ Vietnamese youths face many challenges when negotiating their transition to work, especially in cases of low educational attainment. The wide gap between education and learners' needs and interests, household economic burdens and the prevalence of informal work were identified as key factors driving young people to leave school early and take up low quality work. In this context, there is a need to prepare such students with skills to identify appropriate vocational and entrepreneurship opportunities, manage their finances and gain an insight into the workings of responsible enterprises, before they enter the labour market.

ii) The response

In light of these challenges, over the last decade, the Government has significantly stepped up efforts to promote the integration and mainstreaming of vocational skills into national curricula. In this context, MOET requested the ILO to support entrepreneurship education through the development and integration of the ILO Know About Business (KAB) curriculum into the national education system. In use since the 1990s and implemented in over 50 countries, KAB is a training methodology and curriculum developed by the ILO which aims to promote awareness among young people on the opportunities and challenges of entrepreneurship, working in enterprises and self-employment, as well as their role in shaping their own future and contributing to their country's economic and social development. The KAB approach is interactive and learner-centred, applying a participatory methodology of teaching and materials, and the package has been specifically designed for adaptation to the varying requirements of national curricula so that it can be implemented through existing educational structures. The goal is to strengthen the capacities of governments and tripartite constituents in providing entrepreneurship education to reduce youth unemployment and labour exploitation.

iii) The process

- At the outset of the Project, a situation analysis on entrepreneurship education in Viet Nam was undertaken to inform the adaptation of KAB materials to a Vietnamese context.
- Detailed outlines of each module were developed by the Department of Continuing Education in collaboration with Department of Secondary Education, the Viet Nam Education Science Institute of MOET and the Pedagogic University, with co-financing from the ILO Office in Viet Nam and MOET, with technical support from ILO ENHANCE.
- Two sets of KAB training materials were developed, including one set for lower secondary level and another set for higher secondary level and Continuing Education Centers (CECs).
- A pre-test training course was organized by MOET for 60 secondary school and CEC teachers. Following, this, three KAB Training sessions for teachers were held in the three project provinces with the participation of 198 teachers from lower and upper secondary schools in the project sites.

7. The survey was implemented as an outcome of the Work4Youth (W4Y) project, a partnership between the ILO and The MasterCard Foundation, to assess labour market trends for young people aged 15-29 in Viet Nam. Findings can be accessed here: https://www.ilo.org/hanoi/Whatwedo/Publications/WCMS_541516/lang-en/index.htm

- Following a TOT on KAB for teachers from 9 secondary schools in Hanoi, 4 schools were selected to develop sample lesson plans. The roll out of the KAB curriculum was then piloted among 1,910 students, including beneficiary children and other groups in six lower secondary schools in four districts of Hanoi. KAB has also been piloted and implemented in 9 secondary schools and 1 upper secondary school in An Giang.
- For grades 6-9, the programme is integrated into the curriculum and at upper secondary level, KAB is an optional topic for teachers to integrate as they choose into other subjects.

KAB in action

Cao Kim Vàng is among one of 120 vulnerable children at Khanh Hoa Junior High School in An Giang who participated in the KAB curriculum. The 14-year-old started work to support her family at a household shoe workshop at age 12. Her father does not currently have a steady job and her mother is a farm labourer. During the KAB course, Vang learnt about business start-ups, started to identify future career prospects and was also taught about age-appropriate work. Fortunately, Vang no longer works to produce shoes but supports her family by making postcards, which she much prefers. Vang wants to continue studying for as long as she can and when she finishes school, she would like to go on to start her own tourism business – an aspiration that was re-enforced by her experience of the KAB curriculum.



According to teachers at Khanh Hoa school, the students who participated in the programme, all of whom are either engaged in or at risk of child labour, grew exponentially in confidence through the course, which involved group work, games and roleplays. Due to the success of the course, Teachers at Vang's school plan to integrate KAB into their monthly career guidance sessions. According to Do Van Hoang Giang, a teacher Khanh Hoa Junior High school, "It is easy to access, integrate and adapt the materials into other classes, as we can pick and choose materials from the course content. Activities are practical and not too theory heavy, with engaging games and roleplays, which the students really enjoy. This makes career orientation activities easier for teachers to deliver and more engaging for students". As a result, the school has integrated some KAB approaches and activities into broader school events and classes.

iv) Outcomes

- To date, 32 schools per project province have implemented the KAB curriculum and/or other support for transition to work. The course has been specifically targeted to students engaged in or at risk of child labour at these schools.

- The Vietnamese version of the KAB training and teaching content has been uploaded online so that educators in lower and upper secondary schools in all 63 provinces, as well as teachers at continuing education centres, can access materials and implement KAB as an elective subject.
- Due to the flexibility and adaptability of the materials, there is potential to mainstream the programme into other subjects such as career guidance, which is currently very theory heavy.
- The programme has contributed to gearing national curricula towards school to work transitions, promoting a better understanding of functions and operations of enterprises and stronger positive and adaptive behavioural attitudes to the world of work among students. This has the potential to strengthen child labour prevention efforts by reducing the risk of labour exploitation among school leavers. More broadly, KAB contributes to the promotion of the values of decent work and the development of the future labour force in Viet Nam.

v) Successful characteristics

Sustainability: KAB does not require the development of any new structures to support its implementation as it is delivered through existing educational centres and institutions. The integration of KAB into the national curriculum is key to the programme's sustainability, and the Project's close collaboration with MOET to develop and implement the programme facilitates strong national ownership, particularly in light of MOET's financial contribution.

Efficiency and implementation: Because the KAB teaching materials are accessible online they can be broadly distributed at low cost and require limited use of technology, meaning that minimal curriculum development funds are required in implementing the programme. Furthermore, teachers who are trained to deliver the KAB curriculum belong to the national educational system, thereby delivering the KAB programme within their existing teaching schedules, which reduces implementation costs.

vi) Challenges

- Although the curriculum is widely available for teachers in all 63 provinces, teacher training on KAB is currently limited to target provinces, meaning that many teachers across the country may not feel confident to apply the curriculum or be aware of its use or objectives.
- Because the curriculum is optional, uptake and implementation in schools in practice may be limited.

Recommendations

- Further training on KAB and its use should be implemented outside of project provinces.
- Support to adapt the curriculum to better suit the CEC environment would be beneficial, targeting students with difficulties who are particularly vulnerable to child labour. At CECs, there are currently 2 choices of either language or a practical skill. KAB is therefore a good option to promote in this context.

vii) Lessons learned

- The flexibility of the KAB curriculum lends itself to integration into other sessions, such as career orientation classes.
- Training and awareness raising on KAB among teachers and related stakeholders is key to promoting understanding of KAB and its objectives, to ensure smooth implementation and widespread uptake of the programme.
- Students at CECs are important beneficiaries of the programme, many of whom are in special circumstances, without the means to progress onto formal higher education and therefore at a heightened risk of child labour.

3.6 Vocational training through Saigon Children's Charity: Supporting vulnerable youths to shape their own futures

i) The initial challenge

According to findings from the ENHANCE Project baseline survey, more than 72 per cent of children engaged in child labour in the project sites were not in schooling at the time of the survey, and among those engaged in child labour, nearly 90 per cent were undertaking unskilled or low-skilled jobs. Among those engaged in hazardous child labour, nearly 70 per cent were aged 15 –17, highlighting the high risk among young people in this age group not in formal education. For such groups, alternative opportunities must be in place to ensure that they do not fall into exploitative work with limited opportunities for social mobility. Children without an education who start work too early in life are more likely to have to settle for low paid, unskilled jobs as adults and miss out on crucial opportunities to gain the necessary skills to progress on to decent work. This in turn makes such children more likely as adults to have to put their own children to work to supplement their incomes, generating a vicious cycle of child labour and poverty. This not only impacts individuals, families and communities, it depresses the country's labour productivity and prosperity on a broader scale.

ii) The response

In this context, the ENHANCE Project has collaborated with service providers in project provinces to facilitate the provision of vocational training opportunities for 14-17 year olds, based on identified needs of beneficiaries and market demands in target localities. In addition to preventing child labour and withdrawing vulnerable young people from exploitative working conditions, the provision of high quality vocational training is intended to ensure the development of a skilled future workforce.



iii) The process

- In 2017, the project conducted rapid assessments in project provinces in close collaboration with DOLISAs and vocational training institutions to identify the vocational skills training needs of targeted children, aged 14-17. The assessment identified marketable vocational skills suited to each target group; mapped local vocational training service providers and identified opportunities for collaboration with service providers.
- In HCMC, local NGO, Saigon Children's Charity (SCC) was selected to assess the needs of children and households and refer them to the training institutions that best match their educational levels and abilities. Established in 1992 and operating in 10 provinces across Viet Nam, SCC draws on rich experience in providing vulnerable children with careers counselling, life skills coaching and vocational training, through its highly successful "Getting ready for Work" programme.
- Following a survey of 18 local vocational training institutions in HCMC, eight were selected for collaboration, and beneficiaries were identified in collaboration with HCMC DOLISA, as well as through SCC social worker visits to communities. Many of the children supported by SCC and the Project are from migrant families and all are living under extremely vulnerable circumstances.
- Through SCC, tailored careers counselling is provided before a student chooses a course, and visits to schools and training institutions are arranged so that beneficiaries can explore their options and decide for themselves on a course that is best for them. Students are encouraged to choose a first and second choice, in case they are unhappy with their initial decision.
- SCC maintains close collaboration with parents and caregivers throughout the entire process to ensure support from family members. The specific circumstances and challenges faced by families are assessed regularly on a case-by-case basis, with each child assigned a dedicated social worker.
- After their needs, abilities and preferences are assessed through careers counselling with SCC social workers, students are enrolled onto appropriate courses at local vocational training colleges and continuing education centres across the city.
- A range of short 3-6 month courses are available for 16-17 year olds, in addition to longer 2-3 year programmes integrated with basic schooling and continuing education courses for 14-15 year olds. Common vocational training courses include, air conditioning maintenance, motorbike repair, hair styling, manicuring, culinary arts and barista skills.
- In addition to receiving training at selected institutions, SCC provides students with regular life skills sessions, through which students acquire soft skills to prepare them for future employment, such as teamwork and communication skills.
- SCC social workers continue to provide support to students and their families, not just throughout the career consultation process, but also post-enrollment. SCC social workers work very closely with beneficiaries to understand their family situation so that they can provide additional support such as bus tickets, learning materials and lunch allowance for students if needed. They also monitor students closely via social media networks and apps which are used to keep in regular contact with students and parents, in addition to home visits and phone calls.

- Close collaboration with training institutions is also maintained throughout to follow up on and monitor progress and attendance of individual students. If students find that a course is not suitable for them once they have enrolled, or they struggle to attend due to external difficulties, the SCC team identifies the challenge and provides timely support.
- SCC and collaborating training institutions closely support students to find decent work opportunities post-training. Because the project is part of SCC's broader "Getting Ready for Work" programme, there is a wide network of employers to draw from, and a system of professional contacts has already been established for internships and career placements.



Key steps for implementing effective vocational training support

- Needs assessment: Identification of target group and assessment of vocational skills training needs in line with labour market demands in the locality.
- Service provider mapping: Mapping of nearby vocational training institutions and local businesses to identify opportunities for collaboration.
- Home consultations: Assignment of a case worker to each beneficiary and home visits to consult with target children and their families on their needs, capabilities, circumstances and preferences for training.
- Orientation and selection: Visits with target beneficiaries and case workers to selected vocational training institutions or businesses to facilitate the selection of a first and second choice for training.
- Follow up support: Maintenance of case management system throughout vocational training, with assigned social workers following up on progress, attendance and family circumstances, to ensure that additional support can be provided if required (such as travel funds, learning tools, and so on). Regular communication through social media channels and phone calls, and close contact with course leaders and teachers.
- Career placement support: Facilitation of attendance at careers fairs, career orientation sessions and life skills sessions throughout duration of course, and establishment of connections with local businesses for potential placement opportunities, in collaboration with training institutions.

General education support in action

Tran Thi Bich Tuyen lives with her parents, three older sisters and younger brother in a small rented room in Tan Binh District, Ho Chi Minh City. When Tuyen's younger brother was diagnosed with a heart problem, the family had to sell their house in the countryside and leave their hometown to pay for his treatment. To make ends meet, Tuyen's parents sell lottery tickets and vegetables on the city's busy streets. Given the family's financial struggles, it seemed likely that Tuyen would also have to drop out of school as her older sisters did. However, the family was approached by local authorities who connected them with SCC who assessed Tuyen's educational needs. Due to her age and education level, Tuyen was referred to a continuing education centre to complete her general schooling on a two year programme on literacy, maths and science, with her school fees and bus travel covered by ENHANCE. Despite having to work part time to support her family, Tuyen is excelling academically, and she recently won an award from her school. Her dream is to become a designer, and she is also considering teaching. To help Tuyen narrow down her future career options SCC provides career orientation and guidance. She also attends life skills training once a month where she builds communication and teamwork skills. Tuyen hopes to continue studying to gain the knowledge and skills she needs to secure a better life for her family.



Long term vocational training in action

Truong Tan Lap became an orphan at age 14 when his mother passed away from cancer. He now lives with his 88-year-old grandmother in a small one-room house in Ho Chi Minh City. Lap is now 16, and most of his friends have gone on to study at high school. However, unable to afford the school fees, continuing with formal education was not an option for Lap. In the summer of 2019, Lap was approached by a commune official and connected with SCC. With the project covering his school fees, Lap is currently studying a three-year IT course at Ly Tu College. In addition to learning computer skills during the week, on Sundays he attends life skills training. After classes, which start at 7 A.M., Lap returns home to cook for himself and his grandmother and usually spends two to three hours studying at home. In addition to this, he works part time at a restaurant for three days a week, enabling him to contribute to the income of his small family. "Unlike my friends who

continued with high school, my schedule at college allows me the flexibility to work and earn money in my spare time”, he explains.

Lap has a clear vision for his future and hopes to go into web design. He is also considering attending university in the future. “If it weren’t for the training, I wouldn’t have enough skills to consider this kind of future”, he says. Visibly beaming with pride at her grandson’s achievements, Lap’s grandmother expresses her relief that he has been able to continue his education so that he can go on to better himself. “Now I know that when I am no longer around, Lap will be able to be independent”, she says.



Short term vocational training in action

At the age of 17, Nguyễn Sơn Tâm completed 6-month culinary course at Saigon Tourist training centre with support from SCC and the project. “Having a professional qualification has changed my life. I now feel in control of my future”, he says. Although he enjoyed school, the teenager had to drop out early to support his family. Before he was connected with SCC through DOLISA, Tam worked full time in the service industry from 11am-11pm. Since enrolling in vocational training, Tam no longer undertakes this heavy work, but supports his mother with odd jobs such as preparing chili sauce or working at household workshops outside of school hours for just a few hours a day.

Saigon Tourist training centre, where Tam was trained, has been collaborating with SCC since 2018. The training institution currently has over 40 SCC students enrolled, for whom tuition fees have been reduced by the school. So far, retention rates have been high, with only two SCC students dropping out, one of whom intends to return. “Some of the SCC students are shy and require a lot of encouragement and it is hard for them to balance work and study which may cause them to skip classes”, explains the head teacher. To help support the students, the school and their teachers collaborate closely with SCC to monitor attendance and to communicate any problems students encounter via a dedicated member of staff who has been assigned to look out for their needs.

The school belongs to Saigon tourist group and has a wide network of more than 66 companies who provide employment opportunities and internships to students. The school also hosts regular job fairs and events with prospective employers and has a dedicated job placement

department which supports students for up to 2 years after graduation, during which time they can return to the school and seek support to find employment. With support from SCC and Saigon Tourism training centre, Tam has now secured a position as a chef.



iv) Outcomes

- ▶ To date, 289 children at risk of or engaged in child labour in HCMC have been supported by SCC and the Project to undertake training.
- ▶ The highly consultative process of careers counselling and follow up support in collaboration with social workers, training institutions and care-givers, ensures that beneficiaries are enrolled on a course that is right for them, and appropriate support is provided; this has yielded extremely high retention rates among SCC beneficiaries.
- ▶ Students have been provided with the skills and professional contacts to access decent employment opportunities to prevent them from falling into exploitative situations after they finish training.
- ▶ Emergency support in the form of food packages and learning tools were provided to beneficiaries during the fourth wave of COVID-19.

v) Successful characteristics

Efficacy/impact: Close collaboration between SCC, social workers, care-givers, training institutions and teachers has been key to the effectiveness of the intervention. In particular, the trusted partnership between SCC and vocational training schools, built on a strong technical understanding of child-focused programming, helps to maintain flexibility and responsiveness of both sides which in turn enables any implementation issues to be addressed in a timely manner.

Sustainability: The provision of post training support provided to help beneficiaries find professional placements through SCC's wide network of employers, promotes sustainable outcomes for beneficiaries and their families.

Responsive and ethical: Active engagement of child beneficiaries in the process of training selection empowers them with a sense of ownership and self-determinacy, and ensures that training is responsive to the needs, interests and desires of participants.

vi) Challenges

- It can be difficult to approach vulnerable families and gain their trust, or arrange a time when all family members are present for consultations.
- Although many families are keen for their children to attend training, the high level of income insecurity among beneficiary households means it is challenging for families to prioritize education over the short-term income gains of child labour. Many families of beneficiaries faced desperate situations as a result of COVID-19, increasing the risk of children dropping out of school.
- During the fourth wave of COVID-19, between April and October 2021, students had to switch to remote learning, which impacted the quality of students learning.
- Not all districts have nearby training centres. In one district, for example, 50 beneficiaries were identified but only two were supported, one of whom dropped out, because it was too time consuming and difficult for them to travel to the closest training centre.
- For students enrolled on long term courses, it may be challenging to ensure continuity of support after the project ends.

Recommendations

- Facilitate several follow up consultations with households in collaboration with local authorities and skilled social workers to convince families of the benefits of training.
- Increase the provision of informal vocational training through private enterprises to support children who are unable to travel to training institutions.

vii) Lessons learned

- Close collaboration with parents, children, local authorities, vocational training centres and teachers is key to supporting students to stay in training.
- A case management system is crucial in order to follow up on specific cases.
- It is important to target and support migrant families without formal residency registration, who are more difficult to reach and enroll, and extremely vulnerable to child labour. Out of school children with disabilities are also key beneficiaries to target moving forward.
- Co funding is very important to ensuring the sustainability of the intervention. The provision of additional funds from SCC to provide children with essentials such as meals and bus travel, supports students to remain in training in the face of financial hardship.
- Flexibility and a fast response to emergency situations is critical. Emergency support was not in the original plan, but this was adapted quickly to facilitate the provision of emergency food packages for beneficiaries. This swift response was facilitated through close collaboration between ENHANCE, local authorities, suppliers and SCC.

3.7 Animal husbandry cooperative group model: Promoting agricultural production and sustainable livelihood opportunities to tackle child labour through collective economic development.

i) The initial challenge

In addition to the issue of population density resulting from urban to rural migration, with migrant families, along with their children, seeking work in urban centres, COVID-19 has led to job losses and decreased incomes in big cities, making the livelihoods of poor and near poor households even more unstable. These factors contribute to the risk of an increase in child labour in urban areas. However, compared to An Giang, in Hanoi a limited number of household beneficiaries were able to receive livelihood support during the first phase of the project due to time constraints and coordination challenges.

ii) The response

To maintain and expand the livelihood results achieved in Hanoi during the previous period, and to develop new livelihood models suited to the evolving needs of beneficiary households in Hanoi, a rapid assessment of the socio-economic situation and needs for livelihood support was carried out by Hanoi Cooperative Alliance (HCA) and Vietnam Rural Industries Research and Development Institute (VIRI) in October 2020. Based on the results, a series of livelihood activities were developed, including a support package for business development to add value to products from selected communes; the provision of household financial management skills; a vegetable cultivation model in Huong Ngai commune; and an animal husbandry cooperative group model in Trung Hoa commune (Chuong My district). The latter model has yielded particularly promising initial results with potential for replication, the details of which are elaborated below.

Local context

Trung Hoa is a purely agricultural commune in Chuong My district, Hanoi, comprising 2,551 households at the time of the assessment, among which 23 households are identified as poor and 79 households are classified as near poor. Livestock contributes 70 per cent of the commune's agricultural economy, with pig breeding constituting a longstanding livelihood strategy for many households in the locality. However, in 2020, a swine epidemic reduced the number of sows in the commune from more than 3000 to just 269, significantly impacting on the income of households reliant on animal husbandry.

iii) The process

- As a first step, HCA collaborated with commune authorities to organize the rapid assessment on the livelihood demands of beneficiary households and the socio-economic situation of Trung Hoa commune. Based on the results of the assessment, needs for livelihood improvement were identified via consultations with beneficiary households to discuss the proposed activities. On this basis, a support plan was developed taking into account the demands of households in relation to the

development orientation of the commune. In line with the implementation plan, HCA developed a partnership with the People's Committees of Trung Hoa commune.

- HCA and local authorities directly visited households to review their living conditions and circumstances, to identify if they met the requirements and conditions for pig raising. HCA collaborated with an expert to prepare an assessment report of the current situation of households. Most families had raised pigs before, but used traditional techniques, and had no experience of technical support or experience sharing with other farming households.
- Based on the findings, HCA recommended the establishment of a cooperative group model, to facilitate added support and a stronger voice among members when bargaining with buyers. In order to operate the cooperative and support members, two groups were established, namely a commune support group and a technical support group.
- The technical support group is comprised of HCA, a district technical expert hired by HCA, and a commune veterinarian. The commune veterinarian acts as the first point of contact, who can contact the district expert as needed. The role of the technical support group is to assist with vaccinations and medications and to gradually raise awareness and change the behaviour of households in relation to the technical process of disease prevention, which must be strictly followed in order to be effective.
- The role of the commune support group, comprised of the commune level child protection officer and the commune vice chairman, is to monitor the situation of members and connect households with the technical support group, playing a key role in resolving challenges.
- Cooperative members received a one-day hands on training session from the technical expert on disease prevention and pig raising before receiving the livestock.
- HCA worked with the supplier to provide piglets and sows to households in two batches. Beneficiary households provided a 10 per cent contribution to the cost of livestock, with the remaining funding allocated by the project.
- After households received the livestock, the technical expert provided training during three important stages of the pig raising process. Training content includes the introduction of good practices in raising pigs in line with VietGap standards, preparation of the pigsty and pig feed, raising sows and caring for piglets, and conducting biosecurity measures and disease prevention, among other topics.
- In addition to the training, the technical expert periodically visits households around twice a month to check the progress of the livestock, and ensure that the households are implementing the steps needed to follow biosecurity measures. The expert is in regular contact with commune officials to report abnormalities. The commune veterinarian also visits the households around once a week, seeking technical support from the district expert if needed.
- All participating beneficiary households received training not only on technical knowledge of pig farming, but also budget management, improving environment and sanitation for animal husbandry and on how to prepare production and business plans. These soft skills and knowledge are considered equally important to the household production activities.

iv) Outcomes

- ▶ Two animal husbandry cooperative groups have been successfully established, comprising a total of 27 beneficiary households. In November 2021, following the success of the first husbandry cooperative group in Trung Hoa commune, the project supported the establishment of the second animal husbandry group.
- ▶ Households used to rely on traditional methods to raise pigs, which meant that livestock was vulnerable to disease. Technical training has changed households' perceptions on traditional farming techniques, alerting them to the importance of sustainable livestock production, food safety and hygiene, and biosecurity measures.
- ▶ So far, 100 per cent of members of both cooperative groups have earned income from production activities and used part of their income for further investment. Improvement of knowledge of families on child labour implemented during the first phase of the project, combined with the economic impacts of the livelihood model directly benefit children of households.
- ▶ All members of Trung Hoa cooperative groups are now confident in the newly acquired pig farming methods, with sufficient knowledge on prevention and treatment of disease, requiring minimal support from technical groups.
- ▶ 100 per cent of beneficiary households were engaged in pig farming prior to the intervention, but most had lost their livestock due to the swine disease in 2020, and therefore halted production activities. Through comprehensive technical support, including training on disease prevention and vaccines, and support to purchase livestock, households have regained confidence to invest in pig farming, engaging in sustainable techniques to minimize economic losses.
- ▶ Prior to training, farmers did not keep records or calculate specific profits and losses. Through the training they received, households have been supported on how to calculate profits, and manage and adjust the breeding process accordingly.
- ▶ In the past, households purchased breeding stock through traders or went to the market to buy piglets to raise. Livestock from such sources are prone to health problems. Since receiving livestock from the project, farmers have seen the benefits of investing in pigs from a reputable supplier.



Livelihood support in action

Nguyen Thi Hoan lives in a small village on the outskirts of Hanoi with her four children, including three girls aged 18, 16 and 9, and a boy, aged 7. Hoan's husband passed away in 2016 leaving her as the sole breadwinner for the family. To make ends meet over the years, Hoan has divided her time between rattan and bamboo weaving, making rice wine and pig raising. In 2020, not only was the single mother faced with the impacts of COVID-19, she also lost her livestock to a widespread swine disease, depriving her of her main source of income. In September of 2021, the project stepped in, providing Hoan with two piglets and one sow, along with the provision of technical training on disease prevention and sustainable breeding techniques. As a result, Hoan has gained the confidence and capital to reinvest into pig farming. After 7 months of raising the pigs with support from the technical expert, Hoan was able to sell the pigs to a local butcher, and subsequently purchased seven more pigs, which are currently thriving thanks to the new techniques she learned during training.

"The income I earn from pig raising makes it much easier for me to pay for my childrens' schooling, which is very costly at the beginning of the school year. In the past, I had to take out a loan to cover these costs", she explains. In addition to tuition fees, the cost of books, uniforms, school lunches and other learning tools places a significant financial burden on the single mother, who is keen for her children to have a brighter future. Hoan's oldest daughter is currently enrolled on her second semester of an accountancy course, which Hoan hopes will enable her to find decent employment nearby the family after she graduates. "I don't want my children to work as pig farmers; I want them to find better jobs with stable incomes", Hoan explains. In addition to the livelihood support Hoan has received from the project, she has also benefitted from community awareness raising organized through the project, which has given her a better understanding of child labour and the long term benefits of education. Although Hoan's older daughters help her with rattan weaving for a few hours a day, she is keen for her children to be able to prioritize their education. "Because of the awareness raising events I attended, and the technical training I've received, I now want to expand my pig farming activities so I can invest more in my childrens' education", she explains.



v) Successful characteristics

Sustainability: Increased awareness on disease prevention and treatment among participating households is a sustainable feature of the model, encouraging households to invest in farming activities in the long term, regaining confidence after losing their livestock to disease in the past.

Furthermore, the cooperative group model strengthens the sustainability of the model by facilitating joint training and a shared platform to share experiences and knowledge; enabling members to purchase animal feed in bulk, at a discounted rate; allowing informal information sharing about prices among members, increasing bargaining power; and making it easier for households to apply for loans and access microfinance institutions due to their involvement in a cooperative framework. Members are made aware of these benefits, should they wish to expand production.

Replicability: The model has already shown promising signs of potential for replication. Following the success of the first cooperative group, the model was successfully expanded to another cooperative group.

Efficacy/impact: All targeted households participating in the animal husbandry groups have earned income from supported production activities and used part of their income for further investment, which is expected to directly benefit the children of households.



vi) Challenges

- The cooperative group approach to livelihood support, which requires beneficiaries to work together, learn and share experiences initially faced challenges as households could not see the benefits of the cooperative group model. Therefore, a holistic approach is needed to encourage households to voluntarily participate in collective production.
- Even after training, awareness of new procedures takes time, and cooperative members require regular and timely monitoring and support from the technical and support group to prevent them from reverting to less sustainable methods. It can be challenging to convince households to follow new production processes closely, and it takes time for them to adjust to new approaches and behaviours.

- Raising high yielding pig breeds is difficult for farmers, as they require more advanced technology and higher quality feed, which is challenging for households facing economic difficulties.
- Different households have different conditions for raising pigs, and some have limited land and infrastructure, creating challenges for support groups. Additionally, households live far from one another, requiring travel from experts.

viii) **Lessons learned**

- It is crucial for commune authorities to collaborate with HCA in every step, including selecting household beneficiaries, and preparing the work plan to ensure it is in line with household demands and the orientation for economic development of commune.
- A comprehensive intervention plan, developed in collaboration with local authorities and expert groups, in line with the capacities and requirements of the households is key to smooth implementation.
- Flexibility in the consultation process with beneficiary households is needed, due to different households' perceptions and capacities. A responsible and committed leader of the cooperative group should be selected to represent the group as a whole.
- The established support groups, which facilitated regular monthly technical visits and support from commune authorities, played an important role in the monitoring and implementation of livelihood support, significantly contributing to sustainability.
- Local authorities play a crucial role in encouraging households to follow the technical support process, and HCA works to ensure sustainable livelihood development at commune level.
- The selection of an appropriate partner to implement the livelihood model is an important factor. HCA was selected by the project to implement this model as it has a large network of cooperatives and members at the grassroots level, as well as a good relationship with farmers and local authorities. This was extremely helpful during COVID-19 restrictions, as local collaborators were able to support cooperative members in spite of social distancing measures.
- Close collaboration among participating stakeholders is key, ensuring that all partners are aware of respective roles in the support process and have a shared approach from the outset. The establishment of a partnership with the People's Committees of the commune to support targeted households, is also of crucial importance.
- A high level of responsibility and commitment among collaborating commune staff is needed in order to provide adequate support to households.
- It is important to select a reputable supplier, with fully vaccinated livestock with a clear origin, in accordance with regulations. It is also important to choose the right time to deliver the livestock, in line with the weather and climate, as a contribution to disease prevention.



4. Emerging strategies and lessons learned

4.1. Guidelines on vocational training curriculum development and careers counselling: Ongoing efforts to improve the quality and provision of vocational training nationwide as a sustainable child labour prevention strategy.

i) The initial challenge

Providing careers counselling and vocational training to vulnerable young people is a well-established strategy to combat child labour. However, children in difficult circumstances are at high risk of dropping out of training courses and resorting to precarious, low skilled work to meet immediate livelihood needs. In this context, effective careers counselling is crucial to ensuring that such children are matched with opportunities that meet their needs, capacities and preferences, with a clear understanding of the opportunities available to them, and the long-term value of training. Simultaneously, vocational training programmes must be closely connected to the demands of local enterprises, to ensure that students are able to find decent employment after training, which in turn promotes higher retention levels. However, there is currently no guidance in place for providing careers counselling to vulnerable and out of school children; and the content of training programmes tends to be broad in scope, with no instructions for vocational schools on how to tailor training curricula to local market demands.

ii) The response

To address this gap and ensure that careers counselling and training is responsive to the needs of beneficiaries and the demands of local markets, the project is collaborating with the Department of Vocational Training and Education (DVET) to develop and pilot two separate but connected sets of guidelines, namely Vocational Counselling Guidelines; and Guidelines on the Development of Training Programmes and Curricula that meet Labour Market Needs.

iii) The ongoing process

- A national consultant has been recruited to develop and refine the two sets of guidelines in collaboration with DVET and the project, with inputs from training institutions and businesses.
- During the development phase, DVET gathered inputs from vocational schools and a validation workshop was held with the attendance of 43 participants including DOLISA staff, representatives of vocational schools, DVET, and ILO.

Careers counselling guidelines

- The careers counselling guidelines are divided into two sections which use different tools for different settings: one section caters to students in school without the means to progress on to higher education; and the other section is intended for out-of-school children. The guidelines for counselling out of school children are intended to be used by members of mass organisations such as the Women's Union and the youth union, whereas the guidelines for children in school are for use of teachers.

- To date, the guidelines for children in school were pre-tested with over 30 vocational training schools. The schools conducted activities such as multiple choice tests, counselling seminars and vocational counselling fairs for 1,080 secondary school students.
- For a more in-depth evaluation of the quality and suitability of the document, two vocational schools (HCMC Vocational College and An Giang Economic and Technical College) were selected to pilot the guidelines, and the schools developed plans and assigned staff to participate in the counselling and recruiting process.⁸
- Direct feedback on the process was collected from students, and the guidelines include a tool to elicit feedback from parents/care-givers. Efforts are underway to set up a feedback system for those implementing the guidelines, including schools, teachers and mass organisations.

Key steps for implementing needs-driven careers counselling in schools

- Step 1: The vocational institute contacts local secondary high schools and shares the careers counselling guidelines with them to convince the schools of the value of the process. Upon agreement from the school, the vocational training teacher introduces the guidelines to the teachers responsible for careers counselling at the school.
- Step 2: The careers counselling focal point from the vocational school visits the secondary or high school, ideally during an event held for students at ninth grade. Every secondary school plans for a careers event in Feb and March, which is when students decide if they will attend high school or a vocational training school. During the event, in line with the guidelines, students are asked to fill out an aptitude test and a form detailing their capacities and future goals.
- Step 3 (adapted): At HCMC vocational school, the form was sent to students prior to the event and filled out via google forms. This provides careers counsellors with prior information of the students' needs and capacities. During the event, students' responses were discussed and counsellors reconfirmed whether students agreed with their responses.
- Step 4: In line with the guidelines, the parents of students attend a meeting, where they fill out a form on their understanding of the interests and capacities of their children and what kind of career they expect for them.
- Step 5: The responses of parents and students are then compared to develop final results.
- Step 6: Students are then Invited to the vocational training school, during which an overview of the courses and faculties is provided. During the visit, the students are provided with the application form to register their interest in their selected course.

8. Due to obstacles related to COVID-19, the careers counselling guidelines have not yet been piloted for out of school children.

Guidelines for short term vocational training curriculum development

- In order to pilot the guidelines on the Development of Training Programmes and Curricula that meet Labour Market Needs, an executive board was established to develop training programmes for three pilot occupations: air conditioning installation and maintenance; poultry farming and disease prevention techniques; and pangasius aquaculture techniques. Seminars assessing existing elementary vocational training programmes for selected occupations were held to inform curriculum development.
- To support the development of training content in line with market demands, a survey of training needs and competency requirements for the selected occupations was conducted with the participation of 40 enterprises and 400 workers. This step, which involves enterprises in curriculum development, is a key feature of the guidelines.
- The prolonged COVID-19 related school closures in the southern provinces of Viet Nam caused delays in delivering the pilot training. To ensure the progress of the pilot training programme in the context of the pandemic, a third vocational school in the north, namely Hoa Binh College of Economics and Technology, was selected to take part in the pilot programme.
- HCMC Vocational Training College was able to adopt an online and offline blended mode after several months of school closures, and the Hoa Binh College of Economics and Technology has been able to carry out offline training, while An Giang Technical and Economics secondary school has not yet been able to organize the training.

Key steps to align curricula with market demands

In line with the guidelines, enterprises are involved at every stage of the process of curriculum development:

Selection: The first step is a needs survey for local enterprises, the results of which inform the selection of relevant skills to focus on, in line with the needs of the market. This eliminates skills from the curriculum that are not needed.

Development: Enterprises are not only involved in selecting skills, but also provide inputs on the latest processes and technologies to include in training.

Verification: After supporting schools to select and develop course content, enterprises support the validation of the course through the accreditation process. In line with the guidelines, the appraisal counsel must have a technical expert from a relevant enterprise on the board.

Feedback: Following completion of the course and hiring of trainees, enterprises are engaged to provide feedback on the relevance and quality of the programme, which can then be further adapted and updated as needed.

Next steps

- An evaluation workshop will be held with the involvement of the three⁹ vocational training institutions to assess the effectiveness and practical relevance of the two piloted vocational training programmes. Comments will be collected from vocational training institutions and enterprises to revise these two materials with support from the Project.
- Feedback on the courses will be collected from trainees after one month, three months and six months after course completion, and then after two years through the traceable feedback system used at schools.
- Further piloting of both sets of guidelines will be implemented. For the careers counselling guidelines, the tools need to be tested in communities for out of school children in order to assess their effectiveness.
- TOT training on the guidelines and their use will be organised for key resource persons involved in curriculum development and careers counselling across the country. Following this, training at lower levels will be conducted by TOT participants. This will ensure that the guidelines can be used by DVET for further dissemination and roll out via the DVET vocational school system nation-wide.
- Plans to provide further support to DVET are under discussion, with a goal to develop a more comprehensive manual on developing training curricula, with the inclusion of guidelines for long-term training, as well as short term training.

iv) Preliminary outcomes and anticipated impacts

- Development of two draft sets of guidelines on 1) the development of vocational training curricula that meet market demands; and 2) the implementation of effective careers counselling.
- Two vocational training programmes developed and piloted in line with the first set of guidelines, and careers counselling process piloted at 30 schools in line with the second set of guidelines.
- The guidelines on curriculum development have impacted the approach to short term programme development at the selected institutions. By implementing a survey on the needs of enterprises prior to developing the course modules, teachers can tailor the content of programmes to the specific needs of local enterprises, which is hoped to enhance the employability of students.

"By enabling us to adjust programmes in line with the demands of enterprises, the guidelines have promoted greater flexibility in curriculum development, as opposed to following a pre-determined framework. Based on the results of the survey, most production facilities needed disease prevention techniques and vaccination skills, so we tailored the content of the course to focus on this. Now we have an understanding of the specific demands of the market, the programme has a stronger focus, as opposed to incorporating broad content like other courses".

Animal husbandry trainer at Hoa Binh college.

9. Although the vocational school in An Giang did not complete the pilot training programme due to COVID-19, the institution participated in several important steps of the process.

- It is anticipated that students who recently completed the pilot training programmes will go on to secure employment with local enterprises in relevant sectors. This will be a key measure of the success of the guidelines.

“Content is traditionally informed by experts and scientists, who are not practitioners. As such, they tend to overlook the curriculum and teach everything rather than focus on the important topics. It is therefore likely that there will be unnecessary skills taught on programmes, which prolongs the duration and leaves less time for practice during the course. The new approach to curriculum development therefore saves time for students, saves resources for schools and saves time for enterprises”.

Nguyen Huong Tra, consultant recruited to develop the guidelines

- The guidelines on careers counselling are expected to impact the approach to careers guidance at the selected institutions. In line with the traditional approach to careers counselling typically applied, the role of careers counsellors is only to provide information, without collecting any information from students on their needs and capacities, whereas the guidelines promote a two-way approach.

“By following the process aligned with the guidelines, the school is able to collect information related to students and their expectations so that we can effectively consult them. As for the students, they learn more about their capacities and are encouraged to think about their plans and goals so they can make an informed decision about their choice. The career doesn't select the student, the student selects the career”.

Phan Vu Nguyen Khuong, head of training department at HCMC Vocational College.

- Plans are in place to roll out the guidelines nationwide to improve the quality of vocational training and guidance across the country, with a goal to contribute to the provision of viable opportunities for children engaged in or at risk of child labour who cannot progress onto high school or higher education.

v) Successful characteristics

Replicability: The successful piloting of the guidelines on curriculum development at two different institutions for diverse courses is testament to the flexibility and replicability of the documents, which can be adapted to institutions with different characteristics, and to develop diverse training programmes. Similarly, the approach to vocational counselling promoted by the guidelines can be implemented in varying contexts, including at both secondary and high schools, and within communities for out of school children. However, the latter is yet to be piloted.

Sustainability: When adopted by DVET nationwide, the guidelines are expected to lead to significant improvements to vocational training curricula and careers counselling across the country, which is anticipated to improve the life chances of young people engaged in or vulnerable to child labour, contributing to sustainable child labour prevention efforts.

Relevance: Involving enterprises in the development of short-term vocational training programmes, as stipulated in the guidelines, will ensure that the content of training courses can be adapted to meet local market demands, enhancing the relevance of vocational training to the benefit of both students and enterprises.



vi) Challenges

- It proved a challenge to convince schools and the training division about the usefulness of the guidelines on vocational counselling, as the new approach takes more time. As such, finding a convenient time for the schools and students is difficult. During dedicated careers events, many institutions visit the schools at the same time.
- It is difficult to reach out of school children, who are most vulnerable to child labour. COVID-19 created additional obstacles, which made it impossible to pilot the careers counselling guidelines in communities as initially planned.

Recommendations

- Asking students to fill out and submit forms prior to counselling sessions, as was implemented in HCMC, can save time during the careers counselling process at schools.
- It is most effective to use careers counselling guidelines to provide consultations to students at secondary school as opposed to high school, as secondary school students are about to graduate and decide whether or not to attend vocational training or high school.
- To expand the reach to out-of-school children, careers counsellors should visit Social Protection centres where they can be connected with highly vulnerable children, with support from local authorities. To refine this approach, piloting the guidelines in communities is needed.

vii) Lessons learned

- Vocational training institutes need to create a strong linkage with the division of education and training so that they can introduce the guidelines to schools in a convincing manner.
- When implementing careers counselling outside of schools, it is necessary to take advantage of the network of associations at grassroots level, such as Women's Unions, Youth Unions and farmers associations, which are best placed to reach out of school children. With training, production facilities can also play a key role in this process.
- The engagement of local enterprises in curriculum development sharpens the focus of

course content, which is particularly important for short term programmes which typically only last for three to six months.

- It is important to balance immediate needs for livelihood development among vulnerable groups with longer term career development opportunities. The provision of short term targeted vocational training can be supplemented by on by on-the-job training or longer term courses after trainees have secured employment.
- In this context, guidelines for developing long term training should also be made available, to ensure that long term training is equally relevant to demands of local enterprises.

4.2. Thien An school: Developing an approach to prevent child labour among highly vulnerable children through education support.

i) The initial challenge

In Tan Binh district of HCMC, the majority of residents are migrant households from neighbouring rural provinces, and many lack official registration in HCMC, making it difficult for them to access social services. Children from these households are extremely vulnerable to child labour, with many supporting their parents to sell lottery tickets on the street to supplement the household income. Many of these children attend Thien An primary school, which is managed by the local church, and offers tuition free-education to all its students. However, because of the extremely difficult circumstances of families, it can be challenging for the school to convince families of the long-term value of education over the short term gains of child labour.

ii) The response

Since 2019, the project has been supporting Thien An school through the provision of learning tools, lunch and kitchen facilities, and the implementation of awareness raising activities for teachers, students and parents. The project is also providing in kind education support to students after they graduate from Thien An school, with a goal to incentivize their continued education at secondary level.

iii) The ongoing process

- As a first step, HCMC DOLISA initiated meetings with the management board of Thien An to assess the school's needs and capacities. On this basis, the management board submitted an application for support from DOLISA.
- Following discussions between HCMC DOLISA and ILO ENHANCE, the project organised meetings and consultation workshops with the school that aimed to understand the current situation of childrens' parents and care givers and clarify their needs for support.
- Based on results of the consultations, it was agreed that the Project would support the school with the provision of lunch for the students, with a goal to incentivise parents to keep their children at the school throughout the day, and prevent the engagement of students in child labour outside of school hours.
- To ensure the success of this approach, three meetings were facilitated with parents, in an effort to convince them to keep their children at the school for the full day, with the provision of lunch. The first two meetings involved the school and parents, and the third meeting involved ILO ENHANCE. During the third meeting, the students' parents signed a commitment to keep their children at the school for the full day, and out of child labour.

- In addition to the provision of lunch, the project supported the students with education supplies in the form of textbooks, notebooks, pens, calculators, and school bags, as well as health insurance cards. In addition, a school library was created.
- To support awareness raising on child labour, a representative of the school attended a SCREAM TOT, and trained the teachers on the approach, following which, several SCREAM events and activities have been arranged at the school.
- During the worst wave of COVID-19, direct support was provided to students and their families in the form of food and education aids, in collaboration with SCC.
- In the third phase, the focus has been on sustaining the provision of lunch, without project support. To this end, the Thien An model will be transferred to Binh Tan District to enhance district ownership in the process of consolidating the model. HCMC DOLISA has put forward a proposal on Thien An sustainability which will be taken into account for the extension phase.
- To this end, a meeting was facilitated with parents, and it was decided that families would contribute a maximum of VND 5000 (approximately US\$0.20) to the lunch depending on their circumstances, with families in particularly difficult circumstances exempt. The remaining VND 15,000 (approximately US\$0.65) needed for the lunch is paid for by the school and private sector support mobilized by HCMC DOLISA. To reduce costs, the school now hires a chef who prepares the lunch on site, following the provision of kitchen facilities from the project.
- During the third phase, SCC has collaborated with the project to identify the educational needs of 27 children who completed primary education at Thien An school and smoothly transitioned to lower secondary school at Tran Quoc Toan school. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the consultation process was undertaken remotely.
- Based on the results of the assessment, it was determined that students required study desks and chairs, anti-glare lights, and bookshelves to improve their study areas, to improve the quality of their learning. The project is going to directly purchase the education materials and is collaborating with HCMC DOLISA and SCC to facilitate delivery and hand-over to the targeted children.



iv) Preliminary outcomes and anticipated impacts

- 217 children at Thien An school provided with in kind education support, which has contributed to encouraging and supporting students to remain in education.

- Awareness of child labour raised through SCREAM events and regular meetings with parents, during which commitments to keep children in education were secured from parents and care givers. Notably, On 25 April, an awareness raising event was conducted at Thien An with the participation of 214 parents, care givers and relatives of children. The event was also an opportunity for Thien An staff to encourage children to return to school.

"In my opinion, the most successful aspect of the support provided has been that we have been able to raise awareness among parents, who now understand the importance of allowing their children to continue education. Initially, some parents refused support because she didn't want their children to stay at school but wanted them to support the family after morning classes. Meetings facilitated by HCMC DOLISA and the project were an opportunity to raise awareness on child labour".

Nguyễn Thị Thảo, Thien An school management board member

- Provision of lunch provided for nine months by the project, and handover of support to district initiated.
- When supported with lunch, students remained at the school for the full day, which prevented them from engaging in child labour in the afternoon.
- 13 essential Kitchen facilities provided by the project to support lunch provision, and contributions from parents and private sector mobilized to maintain the support without project contributions.
- Learning culture of school improved through school library with more than 1,020 book titles.
- Vulnerable students and families provided with emergency COVID-19 support package, worth VND 1,500,000 (approximately US\$65) each, comprising essential foods such as noodles, canned foods and cooking oil, along with other necessities intended to improve the nutrition, health and living conditions of children.



Education support in action

At just 8 years old, Le Van Huynh takes care of the household chores and cooks dinner for himself, his 7-year-old brother and his father, Trinh, who works as a construction worker. Huynh's mother left the family shortly after they arrived in Ho Chi Minh City where they had moved from the countryside in search of a better life. With their mother no longer with them, Huynh's father was unable to make ends meet and struggling to take care of his two sons. In order to survive, the single father had to send the young boys to work selling lottery tickets on the streets to supplement the family's small income.

No longer able to cope and desperate for his sons to be able to attend school, Trinh eventually sought support from Thien An School. To facilitate the boys' enrolment, the ENHANCE Project agreed to extend the provision of free lunch, health insurance cards and learning tools to an additional two students. For the boys' father, their enrolment at Thien An marked a new beginning for the family. "The children were so happy after their first day of school that they cried", he says. Now looking to the future with hope, Trinh wants his sons to have access to the

opportunities he never had. “When they’re grown, I want my boys to be able to choose a life for themselves and to have a stable income so that they can be independent”, says the construction worker. “Learning is very important for their future”, he adds.

8-year-old Huynh, has been studying literacy and arithmetic, and loves to draw. Like most of the students, his favourite time of day is lunchtime, when he sits down with his friends to enjoy his main meal of the day. He no longer has to sell lottery tickets, though he still helps with household chores, visits the market and cooks dinner for the family while his father works. When asked if he might have a future as a chef, he smiles and nods in agreement.



v) Successful characteristics

Replicability: Potential for replication will be discussed following transfer to Binh Tan district local authorities for state management. Once the support has been proven to be sustainable, the intention is to transfer to other districts to benefit other high risk groups, such as children of industrial workers.

Efficacy/impact: The provision of lunch has proven to be an effective means of keeping children at the school throughout the afternoon, which reduces the financial burden of households, allows parents to continue working while their children are in a safe space, and ensures that students do not engage in child labour after classes.



vi) Challenges

- Families of students face extremely difficult circumstances, particularly following COVID-19. This makes it difficult for them to contribute even a small amount to the provision of lunch. Moreover, support mobilized from the private sector is irregular and provided on an ad hoc basis. As such, the sustainability of this support is not yet guaranteed.
- It is difficult for parents to attend meetings and awareness raising events, because this results in a loss of income for them.

- Due to COVID-19, many families were forced to return to their hometowns and withdraw their children from the school. It is also a significant financial burden for families to send their children to secondary school after they graduate from Thien An.

Recommendations

- Explore options to connect migrant households with livelihood support in provinces of origin to support successful reintegration into communities and local schools, with a goal to address root causes of rural to urban migration and associated risk of hazardous child labour.
- Continue to coordinate with local authorities to identify sustainable sources of funding for maintaining lunch provision.
- Collaborate with the local education sector to assess the quality of education provision at the school during end of year examination period to identify further needs for capacity building support at the school.

vii) Lessons learned

- Changing the mindsets of households on child labour is essential. It took time to convince parents of the benefits of keeping children at school for the full day. HCMC DOLISA and Thien An staff played a very important role in helping families to understand the value of the support. The strong dedication of school staff and regular communication with parents is therefore key to awareness raising efforts.
- To encourage parents and caregivers to attend awareness raising events and meetings, it is essential to compensate them for their time.
- Alongside awareness raising, migrant households are in urgent need of livelihood support and increased social protection, which is key to ensuring that they can keep their children in education and out of child labour.
- Reliance on Project support alone cannot guarantee the sustainability of the model. The provision of kitchen facilities and securing contributions from households is a good step in the right direction, but further resource mobilization from local sectors and agencies will be needed to maintain the support in the long term.
- Following up with former Thien An students and supporting their transfer to lower secondary school is crucial to ensuring continuity of support.

4.3. Mango juice processing livelihood model: Experimenting with locally adapted and market responsive employment opportunities to tackle child labour

i) The initial challenge

For families faced with financial hardship, limited employment opportunities and inadequate social protection, child labour is a common coping strategy. Accordingly, the ENHANCE Project baseline survey found that more than 80 per cent of children and minors engaging in work in

project sites were doing so to generate income for themselves or for their families. In An Giang in particular, there was a strong trend of children and minors migrating to large cities and industrial zones to visit their families, to work, or to live with their families at the time of the survey, suggesting a lack of livelihood opportunities for households in the locality.

ii) The response

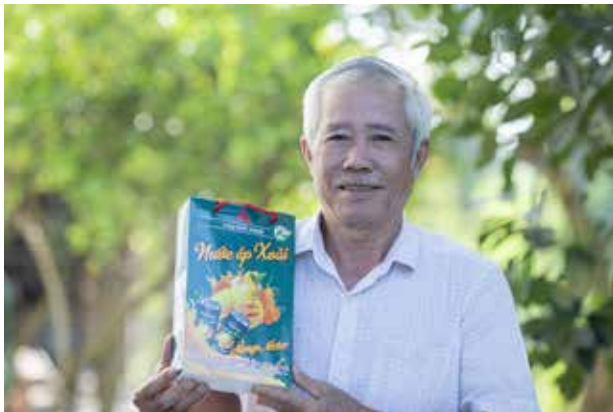
In 2017, the Project initiated two Value Chain Analyses in Hanoi and An Giang to prepare detailed intervention strategies for improving the livelihoods of beneficiary households in target localities. Results from the analysis formed the basis for developing livelihood models tailored to local demands and the needs and capacities of beneficiary families. The goal is to stimulate local economic development and create employment opportunities for parents with children engaged in or at risk of child labour.

iii) The process

- The Project selected the Centre for Technology Transfer and Services (CTTS), a research institute at Can Tho University, as implementing agency to develop and implement livelihood models in An Giang, in collaboration with district level DOLISAs and Departments of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARDs).
- CTTS was chosen due to its proven expertise in supporting livelihoods in the region through agricultural research, socioeconomic development consulting, technical transfer, product distribution and marketing support. In collaboration with local enterprises and local Government, CTTS has supported the production and distribution of over 300 products from 14 retailers around the Mekong Delta region. Furthermore, CTTS is an official member of the regional Value Chain Capacity Building Network (VCB-N) in the Asia-Pacific Region.
- To initiate the value chain analysis, CTTS shared a technical proposal and survey tools with the Project for technical comments and inputs and undertook a desk study to provide an overview of agriculture and fishery activities in project communes. 10 products for potential development were surveyed and consultations were held with local stakeholders¹⁰ and beneficiary households. The goal was to ascertain if the selected products were in line with market demands, gain an understanding of local livelihood needs and review existing opportunities.
- A value chain analysis was undertaken to assess three key value chains (Mango, chilli, edamame), which demonstrated the strengths and weaknesses of each value chain in project communes and districts and provided recommendations on how to improve the livelihoods of the project households. The study explored opportunities to mobilize financial and technical support to enhance and add value to the production and consumption of the selected commodities.

10. Provincial level participants: Leaders of Departments and sectors; DOLISA, Center of Agricultural/aquaculture Extension; Women's Union, Youth Union; An Giang Fishery Association; Ethnic Minority Committee; Labour Unions and Cooperatives. District level participants: Leaders of Departments, agencies, and centres of 4 project districts; DOLISA; Center of Agricultural/aquaculture Extension; Women's Union; Youth Union; Ethnic Minority Committees. Communal level participants: chairmen/vice chairmen of 9 Communal People's Committees.

- Based on the findings and recommendations from the value chain analysis and local market demands, a series of livelihood models were developed, including a spray irrigation system for chilli, abalone mushroom production and mud free eel farming and a mango juice processing unit. Edamame, which was originally selected, was replaced, due to shifting demands and agricultural practices in the area over time.
- Most notably, the mango juice processing model yielded promising initial results with potential for replication. The Value chain analysis revealed that, while the production of mangos is on the rise, the export market for mangos is unstable, with a risk of supply exceeding demand. However, the profitability of mango production in the locality is high, with the potential to contribute to enhanced livelihoods of households and create job opportunities and income sources for the local labourers involved in stages of the mango value chain.
- Creating value-added products from mangos was therefore proposed to contribute to a reduced need for labour migration to nearby cities, by improving incomes of participating households.
- It was determined that small local mangos varieties that are not suitable for export can be used for juice processing, enabling local farmers to sell surplus produce that would otherwise go to waste.
- CTTS collaborated with the An Giang Department of Industry and Trade to conduct the intervention, with support from the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to coordinate the supply of mangos.
- Cho Moi cooperative was chosen among 30 potential beneficiaries to participate in the intervention after expressing a strong commitment to the venture. Before committing to the model, cooperative members participated in consultations on livelihood opportunities and a study tour to visit similar mango juice processing units.
- After the cooperative purchased equipment for juice processing with support from project, CTTS provided 6-7 months of training, during which cooperative members and workers from beneficiary households acquired techniques for processing the product and operating the machinery. To ensure that the quality of the juice met required standards, a technical specialist at CTTS stepped in to oversee production for three months. Following successful technical transfer and a pilot production phase, the cooperative began juice production in October 2019.
- Packaging design for the product was overseen by CTTS, and marketing support was facilitated through local authorities to help connect the cooperative with wholesalers. The product was introduced in office buildings, at schools, trade fairs and in local stores for promotion purposes.
- The cooperative committed to purchasing materials for juice production from local farmers with children engaged in or at risk of child labour, and hiring employees from target beneficiary families to support production.
- Participating beneficiary households received training not only on processing the product, but on production techniques, budget management, marketing, value chains and how to prepare production and business plans.



Key steps for implementing locally adapted livelihood interventions

- Identification of target households with children engaged in or at risk of child labour, and beneficiary business households/communes to participate in livelihood intervention, in collaboration with local authorities.
- Surveys and consultations with provincial representatives, commune officials and target households to identify and select commodities with high market demand in the locality, identifying status of production and consumption, and involvement of children and minors in value chain stages.
- In depth value chain analysis of selected commodities (including field surveys, consultations and interviews) to identify market actors and their functions in each value chain (including input actors, production households, collectors, wholesalers, processors and commercial enterprises).
- SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges) analysis of each stage in the chain to identify potential solutions to strengthen value chains and add value to commodities to improve livelihoods for target group.
- Development of framework on intervention plan, based on analysis results, outlining proposed livelihood activities and identifying roles of local departments, sectors, agencies and organizations in promoting and supporting interventions.
- Consultations with production households/communes to identify intervention preferences and capacity for participation, ensuring selected beneficiaries demonstrate a high level of commitment and desire for long-term investment.
- Selection of raw materials and development of necessary equipment for intervention.
- Provision of technical transfer to beneficiaries, including training for participating households on production techniques, financial management and marketing as appropriate.
- Pilot production phase, with close supervision from technical experts, ensuring beneficiaries are able to self-manage production successfully.
- Provision of marketing/packaging support and introduction of product into the market in collaboration with relevant authorities and private sector stakeholders.

iv) Preliminary outcomes and anticipated impacts

- ▶ Contracts were signed with two wholesale buyers and 14,000 cans of mango juice were sold between October 2019 and April 2020. However, production halted after this date.¹¹
- ▶ The product was selected by local authorities to be certified under the One Commune One Product (OCOP) Programme, which has the potential to attract a broad range of retailers and e-commerce suppliers.
- ▶ Mango juice production in the locality has the potential to enhance incomes for cooperative members and stimulate local job creation for households with children engaged in or at risk of child labour.
- ▶ The model has the potential to encourage (well off) households to invest in similar businesses, creating more jobs for households engaged in mango farming and agricultural labour, which are common livelihood strategies in the locality.
- ▶ 24 target beneficiaries were contracted by the cooperative to produce the raw materials and 10 families were hired to support the processing. When the unit is functioning at full capacity, beneficiary households are typically able to work for a maximum of 6 months a year harvesting mangos and processing the juice.

"A casual labourer can only earn around US\$40- 85 per month, but through working at the mango juice processing facility, workers can earn up to US\$210 per month. I hope that local families will be able to enhance their incomes through our venture so that they can keep their children in school. We hope to eventually resume and expand production so we can provide opportunities to community members in need".

Tran Van Ban, Cho Moi cooperative sales manager

- ▶ In addition to benefiting from income generating opportunities, participating beneficiaries can acquire enhanced technical skills and awareness through training, increasing their employability.

Livelihood support in action

Liem is a local mango farmer who lives with his wife and grandson. Liem's grandson supports him on the farm, though the family work hard to keep the 16-year old in school. Their small farm has 20 mango trees which is hard work for the grandfather to maintain alone. Despite the labour intensive nature of mango farming, mangos are sold at a low cost, at around 5000 Vietnamese Dong (around 22 cents) per kilogram, which fluctuates regularly. This makes it difficult for the family to secure a dependable income. Liem currently sells to a local distributor, but the price is not guaranteed. Because his family is on a DOLISA list of vulnerable households, he was connected with Cho Moi cooperative as an opportunity to increase the family's income. He hopes that in the future, this partnership will make his income more stable so that he can continue to support the education of his grandson.

11. This is discussed in more depth below.



Mai, whose husband passed away three years ago, is a single mother of 11 children, ranging from 9 to 31 years of age. Mai's 17-year-old daughter works selling milk and her 14-year-old son has recently dropped out of school, but her 11 and 9-year-old are still in education. In total, seven family members currently reside in the family home, which was built through the provision of loans from local authorities. To support the family, Mai works on an ad hoc basis as a rice farming labourer and she also provides cleaning services when she can. Local authorities put her in contact with the cooperative, who offered both her and her 17-year-old daughter an opportunity to work at the mango juice processing unit. Unfortunately, due to decreased production caused by COVID-19, Mai's employment with the cooperative has been put on hold. However, she hopes that once she begins work again, this will provide her with enhanced income security so that she can keep her youngest children in school and pay off her loans.

v) Successful characteristics

Replicability: With further development, this model has potential for replication because investment capital is low and it is easy to control the quality of production, which usually requires high input costs. Moreover, with additional technical support, there is potential to use the equipment to process other fruits as well as mango.

Relevance: The value chain analysis approach ensured that the intervention was developed in line with local economic development opportunities and orientations.

vi) Challenges

- Due to the impacts of COVID-19, the cooperative was unable to sell as much produce as anticipated and production was halted in April 2020. As a result, target families have not yet benefited from employment opportunities and the impacts of the model on child labour prevention cannot be fully assessed. The strength of this model therefore rests on its potential for further development and replication, as opposed to clear results at this stage.
- The product has not been competitive on local markets due to the high cost of the product compared with other local products. The impacts of COVID-19 exacerbated this issue, making it challenging to identify new buyers and markets.
- Unstable consumption of agriculture produce in general and of mango produce in particular, due to lack of inter-departmental and sectoral coordination in An Giang has been an ongoing issue, despite the fact that there is an overall Government framework (Degree 98/2018/NĐ-CP) that aims at promoting this process.

- The processing equipment was not as versatile as expected, so it is only possible to process one specific variety of mango.
- When identifying the products for livelihood models it was challenging to accommodate different interest groups with different needs. Furthermore, many farming households shifted their engagement to other crops as per the agricultural sector's policy on shifting agriculture structures. This resulted in a lower number of households registering for project livelihood support than expected.

Recommendations

- If replicated, a longer implementation period should be facilitated to refine the product and processing equipment.
- Further support is needed to successfully identify and thoroughly assess viable markets for the product and ensure the sustainability of the model in the long term.
- In response to COVID-19 setbacks, marketing support needs to be enhanced. In particular, branching out into E-commerce with support from CTTS, could contribute to enhancing sales.
- Further support and equipment upgrades would be needed for the cooperative to process other fruits and mango varieties in the future.
- The high cost of producing the product can be reduced by adjustments to packaging, which currently requires costly materials. Redesigning packaging using lower cost materials would reduce production costs, enabling the cooperative to lower the market price of the product.
- The introduction of solar energy at the processing unit could also serve to lower production costs and enhance the financial sustainability of the model in the future. These adjustments would require further financial and technical support.

vii) Lessons learned

- A comprehensive value chain analysis approach is key to ensuring that models are developed in line with economic activities and conditions in the locality and socio-economic development plans of districts.
- Extensive market research and support is crucial, with buyers and markets identified at an early stage.
- Identifying beneficiaries with enough space for production, the financial capacity to invest in the model, and a high level of commitment is very important to ensuring the success of the model.
- The provision of effective technical transfer is crucial to sustainability of livelihood interventions; financial support alone is far less effective.
- Close collaboration between local government authorities at commune, ward, district and city levels, including Departments of Agriculture and Rural Development and Departments of Industry and Trade, is key to developing and implementing the model smoothly.

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