



Evaluation Summaries

Evaluation: Program for the prevention and progressive elimination of child labour in small-scale traditional gold mining in South America Phase II

Quick Facts

Countries: Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru

Final Evaluation: March 2005

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

Technical Area: Child Labour

Evaluation Management: Rights and Standards Sector

Evaluation team: Regional evaluator

Project Start: September 2002

Project End: March 2005

Project Code: RLA/02/50/USA

Donor: United States (US\$ 1,617,170)

Keywords: child labour, small-scale mining, hazardous work, institution building, occupational safety, good practices, employer's organization, awareness raising, community participation, Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru

Background & Context

Project Background: The International Program for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) of the International Labour Organization (ILO) executed the "Program for the Prevention and Progressive Elimination of Child Labour in Small-Scale Gold Mining in South America" in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru.

The first phase of the program started on August 2000. Initially the project's execution would take two years. However, its duration and funding expanded to a second phase, which took place between September 2002 and

September 2004. The evaluation covers the second phase of the project.

The program's development objective was to contribute to the elimination of child labour (CL) in small-scale mining in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru. Its specific objectives were:

- 1) to raise awareness and mobilize key organizations in the three countries in support of the eradication of child work in small-scale mining,
- 2) to develop CL monitoring systems in the selected communities,
- 3) to implement replicable models for the prevention and withdrawal of children from dangerous CL in selected mining communities, and
- 4) to propagate these models.

The program had regional, national and local components. The regional components consisted of awareness and occupational health crosswise Action Programs (AP's). The national AP's were aimed at strengthening national organizations essential for fighting against child work in small-scale mining, and the local AP's were aimed at developing replicable models to intervene in mining communities.

Evaluation Context: The objectives of the evaluation were:

- To give account to the key actors, including the government agencies and counterpart organizations in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru, as well as to the donor,

of the project activities and its achievements.

- To analyze the experience in order to improve the future interventions specifically in the field of child work eradication in small-scale mining and CL in general.

In general, the evaluation presents relevant conclusions and recommendations based on the project's implementation experience and in relation with the proposed objectives. It has taken into consideration the intervention's effectiveness and efficiency, its effects on the target population, on the communities and on the three countries' and the Sub Andean Region's social and political environment, as well as the sustainability perspectives of the impact it generated.

Four research techniques were used to collect the information: documents analysis, semi-structured interviews, focus groups and observation.

Main Findings & Conclusions

The evaluation found that the program's design was a relevant, coherent and comprehensive social change proposal that responded to the complexity of the problem it endeavoured to solve. However, some of its objectives were inappropriately formulated as they overrated the achievements that could be accomplished in countries with a weak institutional development of their social policies.

The selection of the agencies in charge of executing the second phase AP's was adequate as all of them carried out their work professionally and efficiently. In the case of the NGO's that carried out the AP's at the mining communities' level their commitment and dedication to their work under very adverse conditions stands out.

The information collected during the evaluation permits the assertion that the relation between the outcomes accomplished and the invested resources throws a positive balance. At the regional level, the costs of the management and technical assistance actions

were within the international standards and were justified by the quantity and quality of the products prepared. On the other hand, the costs of the technical actions at the local level were even lower than the standard and its interventions were also of good quality and produced positive results.

The program achieved the following results: 1) to position within the countries an issue previously unknown, 2) to generate flexible intervention models that can be adapted to any mining community, 3) to build the NGO's capacities to tackle this issue and, 4) to take important steps toward establishing a public policy aimed at eradicating child labour in small-scale mining.

With regard to the direct beneficiaries, the program was able to withdraw 1365 children (90% of the target population) from mining work, and to prevent 3670 children (73% of the target) from entering it.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Recommendations:

The most important recommendation is to start a systematization process of the experiences in order to prepare material that can disseminate the knowledge that was obtained. It is suggested that a manual is prepared where, based on documents, instruments, software and materials produced by the APs are included and which other institutions can use in new projects. It would also be convenient to include the program's strategy, the basic definitions used, the methodology and instruments used to draw the base line, the materials to raise the children's and adults' awareness, and the monitoring software, among other essential elements. It is suggested that such manual makes a difference between the strategies used to fight CL in different age groups since, as analyzed, the problems and solutions differ when dealing with children under 14 or over 14. Finally, it is advisable to design practical transference mechanisms for such knowledge, that is, who, how and at what cost technical assistance can be offered to the institutions interested in replicating the experiences.

It is also recommended to perform an analysis of the regional and local indicators used in the program. Such analysis would enable to build an array of proven indicators to help in the programs' management.

Another recommendation is to continue financing specific aspects of the less mature experiences so that at some point they will actually become models such as the Santa Filomena and Bella Rica AP's.

Once the CL issue is introduced in the three countries' mining policies, it is convenient to progress in the identification of specific CL eradication activities that the ministries of mining could execute as part of their regular activities and using -their own resources.

It is recommended to analyze the capabilities the new child laws in Latin America give to the policy drafting and rights defence bodies in order to look for a rationale for community monitoring. Many of those laws promote decentralization and dispose municipal and local action to enforce the children's rights. These laws should be examined as a whole together with the labour regulations and, taking into account the social context of CL in small-scale mining, establish the best legal and institutional framework options for the monitoring.

Lessons Learned:

With regard to the program's design, the main lesson is that it is not convenient to aspire to generate sufficient capacity in the State toward the eradication of CL when the institutional conditions in the social sector are weak and the political context is unstable. Under these conditions, it is convenient to propose more modest but more attainable objectives.

The participation of the mining organizations in CL eradication tasks is a key aspect to achieve this objective and to give it sustainability. The initial relation with such organizations is established mainly through the improvement of technology and the organization for production as this constitutes the heart of their interests and concerns. Santa Filomena's experience has demonstrated that the activities for technology improvement

must be associated from the beginning with goals and actions aimed at eliminating CL from the mineral exploitation tasks. Additionally, the improvement of the health and educational services is also a concern of the mining organizations and an opening that makes it possible to introduce the CL issue in the communities' agenda. The work carried out in Bella Rica demonstrates that some mining organizations are capable of contributing substantially to the improvement of educational services and through that to contribute to the elimination of CL. ISAT's experience, on the other hand, shows that occupational health is another issue that concerns the mining organizations and that at the same time makes it possible to raise the CL issue in the community. In any case, the involvement of the mining organizations with the specific purpose, but not the only one, of eliminating CL, is the key to the project's development.

Given the great importance that the base line has for the execution of the APs, it was learned that the adequate resources, time and technical assistance must be available for its proper execution.

It was learned that the implementation of community child labour monitoring systems is complex and takes more time and effort than the program had calculated. With the experience acquired the coming programs can develop more efficient, effective and sustainable monitoring systems.

With regard to the awareness raising component, it was learned that the APs need to have a well supported communication strategy. Careful attention should be given to the relationship with the media as the experience has shown that they tend to transmit news that shock the public opinion and can therefore endanger the relation between the NGOs and the mining communities. The products prepared by Comunicadores Asociados are a good sample of the specific lessons learned in this field during the program's execution.