



Evaluation Summaries

Supporting the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Kenya

Quick Facts

Countries: Kenya

Final Evaluation: May 2009

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

Technical Area: Child Labour

Evaluation Management: ILO-IPEC's Design, Evaluation and Documentation Section (DED)

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Project Code: KEN/04/50/USA

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Keywords: Child Labour, WFCL

labour including poverty, parents' literacy, displacement, family disintegration, HIV/AIDS, neglect, cultural attitudes towards the girl child, the fraying of the traditional safety net.

The PoS provided resources and technical assistance to upstream aspects—strengthening the enabling environment—and a downstream element—stimulating direct action to get children out of the worst forms of child labour and strengthening the government, NGO and community safety nets to protect and rescue children into the future. The programme was implemented in 10 districts and 5 towns; a total of 19 Implementing Partners (IPs) carried out some 24 Action Programmes and research.

Objectives included:

Upstream

- 1: Knowledge base to support action against WFCL expanded
- 2: Labour related legislation harmonized and capacity to enforce them strengthened
- 3: Relevant policies and programmes are linked and target the needs of children
- 6: Public awareness of the negative consequences of WFCL increased and stakeholders mobilized against WFCL.

Downstream

- 4: Effective model interventions to withdraw children from WFCL and to provide access to quality primary education and vocational training

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

At the time of the 1998/99 Integrated Labour Force Survey (ILFS) an estimated 1.3 million children were engaged in child labour in Kenya. The 2004 Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey found just over half that number in child labour, largely due to the introduction of free primary education and a number of years of positive economic growth in the country. The National Plan of Action, 2008 cites a range of causal factors for child

5: Vulnerable groups and families prone to WFCL are targeted for economic empowerment & community safety nets created.

Present situation of project

The project exceeded targets for preventing, withdrawing children from child labour and placing children in school or vocational training (over 25,000 children in all). Some individual families benefited from income-generating interventions. Awareness raising permeated the programme and is probably one of the project's most successful aspects. Child labour was mainstreamed into teacher training curricula and many schools were engaged in the programme.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

This report presents the findings of the Expanded Final Evaluation of the ILO/IPEC Project of Support to the Time Bound Programme (TBP/PoS) in Kenya. Kenya has a National Plan of Action which represents a comprehensive framework for the implementation of the Convention 182, which Kenya ratified in 2001. Between 2004-2009 the US Department of Labor provided \$5 million for the International Labour Organization's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO/IPEC) to provide technical assistance to the Government of Kenya in support of the National Plan of Action (NPA) for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation methodology consisted of an impact assessment study in the form of a repeat Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) study conducted in the context of the expanded final evaluation. Two independent consultants conducted this evaluation during the March/April, 2009 period. An evaluation consultant, based in the US led the team and a Kenyan national with deep experience in the child protection sector was the local expert.

Neither had worked for the ILO before. The team reviewed key documents ahead of the fieldwork. Key informants who were not based in Kenya were interviewed by phone. Unfortunately, a briefing with the Chief Technical Advisor was not possible as this official was no longer based in Kenya at the time of the evaluation. The original Geneva-based desk officer had also moved on. Field work (March 24-April 03) included meetings with ILO/IPEC project staff, a number of key informants in national ministries, officials participating in four District Child Labour Committees' (DCLCs) in target districts, managers and workers from 13 of the project's 19 Implementing Partners—NGOs, academic, and research organizations--as well as teachers, students, parents and others who were touched by or involved in the project.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Sequencing. Many of the downstream implementation activities were launched ahead of a focus on the policy environment. This was built into the design of the programme and driven by the demands on a small staff to juggle a large number of Action Programmes in order to meet targets. While the ILO/IPEC team ensured that child labour was appropriately included in the several relevant policies that were passed during the period of the PoS, the Child Labour Policy languished, leaving downstream activities without an important frame of reference.

Partnership. Related to this, and despite commitments in the National Plan of Action (draft, 2004; final 2008) and the project document to a cost share from the GoK, and strong recommendations from the Mid Term Evaluation, the Department of Child Labour in the Ministry of Labour was under resourced, under supported, and demonstrated weak leadership at the national level. MoL Permanent Secretaries changed four times over the life of the PoS.

Ownership. The architecture of the project may have inadvertently undermined ownership

and capacity building of the very national, district and local level multi-stakeholder structures it intended to strengthen. The Inter-ministerial Coordinating Council never met. The National Steering Committee—a critical multi stakeholder decision-making body—met only twice in a 4+ year period. ILO/IPEC sub contracted to NGO partners who were then better resourced than District Child Labour Committees, putting them in a much stronger decision-making position. DCLC’s suffer not only from lack of resources, but significant turnover and uneven mandates from the ministries to which the members report. Local Child Labour Committees were typically created by the project and dependent on volunteers.

Data. The Child Labour Monitoring System—a cornerstone of the TBP—never got off the ground due to a late start, an unfocused strategy, and lack of expertise on the team. Although Immediate Objective 4 calls for “model” downstream activities, the absence of an M&E framework resulted in little more than anecdotal evidence to validate “good practices”, falling short of a scalable model or series of models to inform national programming to address some of the complex child labour issues in various sectors. A number of rapid assessments were produced, but were not well designed or presented and the data was underutilized. The only impact data available to this evaluation was a KAP study which repeated an earlier “baseline” collected less than two years earlier.

Planning. While the Project document is clear about the respective roles and responsibilities of the key partners in this programme, the design process may have taken for granted the commitment of the MoL and the challenges that ultimately faced each partner and hindered full achievement of the meeting in particular the upstream objectives.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Main recommendations and follow-up

1. MoL should be compelled to finalize the National Child Labour Policy as a matter of urgency.
2. In a future PoS, prioritize the legal framework, including broad awareness raising before engaging in downstream roll out of child labour action programmes and further attention on enforcement.
3. If the MoL is the GoK lead on child labour, it needs to have adequate staff, ministerial support and authority to provide oversight and coordination of child labour activities in the country.
4. Empower DCLC’s with the mandate, skills, and resources to allow them to coordinate, monitor and provide oversight on all child labour activities in their district.
5. Revisit the expectations on LCLC members and build in appropriate forms of remuneration and recognition.
6. Long term initiatives that address fundamental issues—like poverty and abuse—require systemic and sustainable solutions. The NSC and DCLC’s should be encouraged to create links with agencies and programmes that can leverage consistent access to expertise. Such programmes include school feeding programmes, income generating programmes for vulnerable families, cash transfers for orphans and vulnerable families, secondary school bursary support, and psychosocial rehabilitation for children who have been abused on a long-term basis.
7. Safety net support for families that need welfare assistance (because there are no family members who are of legal working age who are able to provide for the family) should be distinguished from programming designed to boost employment or income generating options, for instance through skills training and/or IGA interventions.

8. Short, targeted programmes should be designed to *validate* scalable strategies not just achieve project-cycle targets.

9. A Child Labour Monitoring System remains an important cornerstone of the realization of a national programme. Three national databases offer opportunities to mainstream child labour monitoring.

10. In a future programme, ensure greater focus (and an evidence base) for strong strategies on children in commercial sexual exploitation (CSEC) and in the informal sector more broadly. These efforts should include psychosocial support.

11. Equip the Kenya Police force to carry out appropriate enforcement through in service training, mainstreaming into training curricula and participation on DCLC's.

Important lessons learned

In retrospect, as many observers commented that launching a range of individual action programmes without a clear political commitment from the MoL, engaged national structures, and a confirmed Child Labour policy to inform and drive these downstream activities put the cart before the horse. Sadly, this was the same strategy adopted in the predecessor commercial agriculture programme which similarly got overstretched in attempting to support action programmes in a range of sites while at the same time address national policy issues.

The project rested in some important ways on the idea that government employees and in particular community members would contribute their time and resources to identify children in dangerous working situations, report them to authorities and chip in for their schooling or sustenance. This kind of safety net support is traditionally most common in rural areas, but turned out to be an assumption that weakened the sustainability of the project. While in some cases local people were in

leadership roles that may have inclined or even mandated them socially, technically and financially to contribute (for instance with teachers, Chiefs, clergy, and CBO representatives), this was not always the case. Indeed, the assumption that volunteers would and will emerge in every setting to take the critical tasks forward is rather ironic given the repeated refrain in Nairobi and district offices from salaried government employees that they and their colleagues from other ministries were unable to even meet to talk about child labour issues without a financial incentive for doing so.

While many of the adults interviewed reported benefiting in the short term from these efforts, in many cases the structures or linkages necessary to continue to support these families was too short-lived to guarantee their sustainability. As discussed below, given a different programmatic framework, a more strategic approach would probably have been to engage with some of the many microenterprise agencies in Kenya to link vulnerable families that wanted to engage in business with a more reliable source of services and support.

ILO/IPEC worked with a technical committee, comprised of a subset of NSC members to review AP reports and deliberate on key issues. But ultimately the lack of a multi-ministerial forum at the national level impeded policy debate as well as strategic national level collaboration on issues related to WFCL.

The evaluation team can only hypothesize that if the partnership with Implementing Partners had been inverted—giving DCLC's resources to manage and outsource activities to local NGOs as appropriate—the result might have been different.

Without a unified framework for analysis or a common set of variables, the PoS' ability to offer an evidence base to support a *model* for combating the WFCL in specific sectors remains anecdotal.

Many of the partner schools reached by the PoS are government schools that receive the lion's share of MoE support. Kenya's non-formal schools cater to the children from very poor backgrounds often living in informal settlements. They are also children who are most likely to be found in child labour.

Based on conversations with key informants, it appears that some of the agencies that placed youth in vocational training underestimated costs, which, in addition to tuition, also often include tools, start up kits and apprenticeship fees. Also, in several cases initial training was insufficient for trainees to secure employment, and the funding available was not enough to underwrite the necessary advanced training.

When children work in abusive, exploitative or situations that expose them to activities that are traumatic, they may need to be rehabilitated before they are emotionally ready to reenter school or a vocational training programme. Some of the IP's recognized this, and were able to provide psychosocial support. Others lacked in-house expertise. Teachers in particular would benefit from training to help them to identify children at risk and help children who return to school after being traumatized.

Microfinance facilities have spread across Kenya over the last several decades, and it is unclear why the project did not seek to leverage access for needy families, or at very least tailor project-based IGAs to establish their credit worthiness so they could graduate into such programmes.

It is also worth mentioning that not all poor people aspire to be entrepreneurs, and not all aspiring entrepreneurs, even those with very small investments, succeed. IGAs are not a universal panacea for poverty or child labour.

The presence of a range of social service professionals on the committee was instrumental in providing individualized safety net interventions. This demonstrates the value of the multi-stakeholder structure. However,

given the resourcing of public sector services in Kenya today, reliance on public sector safety nets at any scale to address the root causes of child labour may not be a solution in the medium term. The development of scalable community-based solutions remain an outstanding challenge. DCLC linkages with private entities that provide child support, feeding and health care programmes etc. should be institutionalized as far as possible. This is particularly critical in urban areas where the social safety net is weaker.