



Evaluation Summaries

Supporting the time bound programme in El Salvador and combating child labour through education

Quick Facts

Countries: *El Salvador*

Final Evaluation: *November 2006*

Mode of Evaluation: *independent*

Technical Area: *Child Labour*

Evaluation Management: *IPEC*

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Project: *ELS/01/50/USA, ELS/02/02/USA*

Donor: *USA*

Keywords: *Education and Child Labour*

Extracted from the Executive Summary of the Main Report

Both the Project of Support to the TBP and the Education Initiative have made important contributions to the eradication of the worst forms of child labour in El Salvador, laying the groundwork for a national action framework against the worst forms of child labour and in support of education. At the planning and institutional strengthening levels, the TBP enabled the establishment of a national plan on the eradication of the worst forms of child labour and contributed to strengthen the institutional capacities of DIGESTYC and the Ministries of Labour and Education. Likewise, the TBP has contributed in a substantive way towards improving the legal framework for dealing with the worst forms of child labour, particularly as regards commercial sexual exploitation. Pertaining to public opinion and awareness-raising among the government and private

sectors, the projects have given visibility to the issue, placing it on the agenda of government and private sector institutions, and promoted the population's adverse opinion of the issue of child labour. In like manner, the projects have contributed to position education as an alternative to child labour and as an effective tool in the combat of this scourge.

Within this framework, the projects have validated and given sustainability to the after-school centre model as an alternative to enhancing the quality of education and student retention within the school system, as well as improved the technical and operational capacities of schools and educators and their comprehension of the problem of child labour in the country and its negative effects on education.

A particularly important attainment of the projects has been the performance of joint actions to reduce the supply of child labour through combining actions geared towards reducing also the demand for it. The fact that this has been done in a relatively successful fashion with the participation of public institutions (Ministry of Labour, National Civilian Police, Municipalities, Ministry of Education) as well as private ones (sugarcane mills, NGOs) is encouraging. From this perspective, the effectiveness of the project is high in terms of children removed from labour (65.3% in fishing and 52.5% in sugarcane according to the tracer study, figures which might have indicated full attainment of the goal of withdrawing 50% of the children and adolescents engaged in the worst forms of child labour in the targeted districts – in which said WFCL were majority–

if it were not for the fact that said effectiveness was a great deal lower in the case of children withdrawn from CSE (less than 25%).

However, despite progress in the aforementioned areas, the projects show several deficiencies and constraints that must be addressed in the second phase. Thus, the vocational training and occupational health component and the social protection of adolescents have had a reduced application and a very low impact. As regards CSE, a viable and successful model has yet to be constructed and disseminated that is also sensitive to gender differences. Although in general it has been substantial, in many cases community mobilisation to combat child labour lacks continuity and autonomy – its successful implementation being limited to Local and Inter-institutional WFCL Monitoring Committees.

Likewise, the proposed income generation alternatives had a limited, rather marginal, impact on household incomes. Therefore, high poverty levels can be a determining factor for children removed from child labour eventually dropping out of school and returning to child labour when the project is withdrawn from the geographical areas they live in. For that reason, it is advisable that during the second phase of the project several additional actions be implemented in some of the geographical of the first phase, so as to enhance the sustainability of achieved progress.

The main recommendations are grouped around various axes, such as the need to foster institutional strengthening and coordination that can lead to the full application of the National Plan on the Eradication of the worst forms of child labour; to make the issue a cross-cutting theme on the agenda of the various public agencies, including those programmes oriented to fight poverty; to support MINED's autonomous actions and capacities in the fight against the worst forms of child labour and the increase of educational coverage and quality; to perform different actions to improve indicators and establish a monitoring system of the National Plan; to develop actions to promote the implementation of an effective model for addressing the CSE from an inter-institutional standpoint; to study the schemes of public

opinion sensitisation developed so far in greater depth; to consolidate a parallel approach to CSE, so as to combine those actions to promote the reduction of the supply of child labourers with others having an impact on the demand; and to improve upon training and income-generation schemes, the latter being an indispensable component in terms of the medium-term sustainability of attained goals. Because child labour is directly linked to household economics, actions during the second phase of the project should include more in-depth work in this field.