



Evaluation Summaries

Combating the Worst forms of Child Labour in Ecuador - Support to the Time Bound Programme on the worst forms of child labour in Ecuador

Quick Facts

Countries: *Ecuador*

Mid-Term: *September 2005*

Mode of Evaluation: *independent / external*

Technical Area: *Child Labour*

Evaluation Management: *IPEC*

Project Code: *ECU/0350/USA*

Donor: *USA*

Keywords: *child labour*

Taken from the Executive Summary of the Main Report

This Mid Term Evaluation Report focuses on the progress of the project of support to the TBP between January 2004 and June 2005. The following outlines the main findings that have been verified in field visits and through the revision of various documents of the project.

The report is divided in a first initial part where the process of design and management of the project support to the TBP is analyzed. A second part follows, where the main findings about the performance of the two strategic components of the project are presented.

Design and Management of the Project

In this part, two important aspects are analysed; the first one on the design of the project and the second on the management of the project. For the analysis, the importance

and interrelation between two central objectives or strategic components has been considered: (i) The creation of an institutional favourable environment and (ii) the reduction of child labour in specific sectors.

Project design

For the analysis of the project design, seven key aspects have been contemplated that allow to assess the coherence of the proposal:

i) Objective and Strategies of the project: The evaluation finds that the objectives of the project are coherent with the needs and the social and cultural problems in the existing political situation in Ecuador. Nevertheless, the design of the project did not contemplate a clear implementation sequence between the two objectives mentioned above. For this reason, the team of the project "Support to the TBP" considered it convenient to initiate the implementation of Strategic component 1 under the premise that it would contribute to the institutionalisation and would manage to achieve levels of sustainability and impact, that would subsequently enable the 2nd objective.

ii) Social Context: The respective information in the document did not necessarily match with the existing social situation in which the country was when the project was initiated. The social and political instability of Ecuador caused various changes that had a repercussion in the analysis of the context of the project.

iii) Activities and budget: The dimension covered by the Project of Support to the TBP was very ambitious. The time horizon and the limited budget presented a barrier for the achievement of expected results. The project has been affected by the social, economic, and political problems that occurred in recent years, as the dollarization of the economy. The decision to elaborate an addendum for the project has been a fundamental variable, it has permitted not only the adjustment of goals to include activities, enlarge goals, budget and times frames, but also the incorporation of strategies and actions related to child trafficking, a problem that has been prioritized by the Ecuadorian Government.

iv) Gender inclusion in the Project design. In the design of objectives and the definition of the beneficiary population there is a clear distinction between boys and girls, even in the formats used for the monitoring or for progress reports of the project. Nevertheless, in spite of this distinction it is found that the project has failed to incorporate the gender focus as a cross-cutting issue.

v) Baselines carried out by the project. The baselines were not part of the original design of the project of support to the TBP, they were carried out later. One of their limitations is that in their design they lack the objectives or components, targets and indicators of the project as main reference. In fact the baselines correspond to a general diagnosis of the problematic of child labour.

vi) Use of SPIF. This tool aims at identifying expected changes and results, articulating them with complementary interventions or stakeholders linked to the implementation of the project. The use of this tool was not effective because of the gap between the analyzed context and the actual (real) context found in Ecuador.

vii) Lessons learned or good practices. The original document of the project of support does not explicitly indicate to have included prior experiences from other countries. Nevertheless, the experience of the ILO through the IPEC program and the work that results from carrying out other projects in the world leads to the conclusion that the strategy expressed in the design of the project of

support could have been inspired by other similar experiences.

Project Management

The existence of management instruments, regulations and definition of procedures from ILO headquarters and the regional office in Lima facilitated decision making for an efficient management of the project. Likewise, the existence of communication channels amongst these instances favoured coordination between the parts. In this section, three important points are highlighted which will be subsequently briefly described:

The administrative financial aspect. The project has been strengthened due to its professional team (programme and administrative staff which came from a prior IPEC project in the mining industry in Ecuador). This has enabled a faster management and a positive response from the project support to the TBP, as well as from the Lima office.

It is important to take into account that the project is in the initial phase of implementation of activities. Consequently there is still a limited demand related to disbursements, expenditure forecasts, funds transfer and other financial management aspects.

The programmatic aspect (technical-operational). At the technical level, the Regional office of Lima has played an important role through providing technical assistance to the project of support to the TBP. Looking at the operational level, the progress reports of the project represent certain difficulties due the fact that they do not necessarily allow for compilation of qualitative information. Nevertheless this does not signify that the team cannot present this information since the format of the progress reports does provide the possibility of including narrative information for each of the numerical matrixes, thus allowing for a better documentation on achieved targets. However, filling out the format is a complex exercise.

Finally the evaluation signals that if delays through observations from the donor or the Geneva ILO Office are to be minimized, reprogramming of activities should be made

by the implementing team, who has more experience and knowledge.

Institutional structure and implementation capacity of the project. The organizational structure of the project is based on teamwork which is expressed by a division of functions in two main management areas. The first area corresponds to a small operational nucleus dedicated specifically to advocacy, monitoring, programming, evaluation and technical assistance.

The second area corresponds to the Action Programs (APs) with the main goal to eradicate the WFCL and eliminate the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) (component two of the project).

Main findings regarding the performance of the project: relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and efficiency

This mid term evaluation report assesses the effects and impacts of the project after almost a year and a half of implementation, based on the following criteria:

- i) relevance to the problem and the necessities of WFCL and CSEC
- ii) effectiveness to assess the results achieved in the process,
- iii) sustainability of the achieved changes in time and
- iv) efficiency of the achieved results in relation to the resources used.

The evaluation will briefly indicate some of these criteria, which have been thoroughly outlined in chapter four of the evaluation report.

Relevance:

The project through its objectives and strategies allows to adequately respond to the problem of child labour and commercial sexual exploitation of children in Ecuador. It has been trying to take into account the social and political instability that the country has experienced and to a certain extent still experiences today, as well as the international demands related to these issues that have placed Ecuador in a difficult situation.

At the same time, the project has profited from with an open attitude on behalf of the government (considering the constraints of constant political changes) as well as from the response from business sectors, workers and civil society organizations, in order to gain commitment for joint and coordinated work arrangements to solve the problem together.

Finally the evaluation highlights the clear identification of stakeholders and institutions who deal with the WFCL and CSEC.

Effectiveness:

This corresponds to the analysis of achieved results relating to the two objectives or strategic components of the project of support to the TBP.

Objective 1: Strengthening of the institutional framework which is presented in the following three components:

Awareness Raising and commitment of stakeholders that work in the eradication of the WFCL and CSEC

The coming together of different stakeholders has permitted the creation of synergies that have fortified the positions and the standardization of the approach to combat the worst forms of child labour and commercial sexual exploitation. The Government and its respective institutions recognize the problem as a national priority, thus facilitating the generation of public policies in favour of the rights of children, girls and adolescents.

As part of this process the project has contemplated the design and implementation of an intersectoral information system on child labour and CSEC. This instrument will be implemented by CONEPTI. However, some stakeholders such as enterprises and trade unions show certain reluctance regarding its use.

Eradication of the worst forms of child labour

As a consequence of the coordination and articulation amongst diverse stakeholders the necessary connections have been made between government and civil society. They are elaborating guidelines for policies against child labour, for example the "Flor del Ecuador", that consists of a quality certification program.

Eradication of commercial sexual exploitation of children

Similar to the above, the results in this area stem from strengthening the institutional framework that favours public policies in the area of commercial sexual exploitation of children. For this purpose, the project supports the Inter Institutional Commission for Fighting against Child Labour and Commercial Sexual Exploitation in the elaboration of a National Plan against child labour. However, this commission does not yet have a shared focus on the form to undertake this task. One of the important achievements of the project is the elaboration of a map of local capacities that enables to identify and to characterize NGOs, shelters, etc. that work in this area.

Objective 2: Eradication of the child labour and Child Commercial Sexual Exploitation.

The strategy consists of the implementation of action programs and of direct interventions for the eradication of child labour and commercial sexual exploitation. The following has been done:

Programme of prevention and eradication of child commercial sexual exploitation in Machala.

A network has been created that involves different institutions. These include several governmental institutions such as the city Major of Machala and the members of civil society such as the shelter María de la Paz, and Youth Organizations such as La Aurora, Fortaleza Nuevo Siglo and the Foundation Chimera. The purpose of this interinstitutional network is the eradication of CSEC in the province of Machala.

The AP has quantitative data on the progress towards its goals, and manages to reintegrate adolescents into their families, while others are sent transitorily to the shelter María de la Paz. However, this place is a centre for girls that have committed crimes. To respond to this, the project of support to the TBP is thinking about some mechanism to overcome this limitation, not only for implementing this Action Program but also in the framework of the national protection system for children and adolescents.

On the other hand, the evaluation highlights the preventive work of the AP in schools and on the issue of CSEC, jointly with youth

organizations such as La Aurora and Fortaleza Nuevo Siglo.

Programs of progressive eradication of the childlike work in the flower-growing sector in Cayambe and Pedro Moncayo.

The AP of the flower-growing sector began its activities only a month ago and has interventions in the provinces of Cayambe and Pedro Moncayo in Quito.

In the province of Cayambe, coordinations with different stakeholders have been established. They are jointly working in the action framework of the program, a factor that could contribute to the sustainability of the expected effects and impacts. In the same way, the province of Pedro Moncayo has created a social network that will support the implementation of the AP.

Likewise, the project has managed to establish a municipal order with various stakeholders for the creation of a system to protect children and adolescents at the local level, which includes the eradication of child labour as a priority.

Programme of prevention and eradication of child labour in the banana plantations of the provinces of Guabo and Passage,

The AP is in the phase of identifying local stakeholders that will be part of the social network in which the intervention will be carried out. The strategy that has been defined gives priority to associations of small banana producers that have a level of organizational capacity and that are willing to jointly work in the eradication of child labour. The intervention is based on the export of bananas produced by small scale farmers, by promoting the criteria of socially acceptable and ecological production.

Likewise, the AP has established contact with other key actors to implement the program. It should be mentioned that the implementing NGO has proven experience with the eradication of child labour in the mining sector. In this sense, the intervention strategy of this AP results from adapting lessons learned to the banana sector.

Sustainability:

As it can be seen in the evaluation report, the project of support to the TBP creates social

conditions and a political basis that, if consolidated institutionally, could effectively contribute to strengthening the National System for the Protection of Children and Adolescents.

Fortunately, all stakeholders have declared their interest to continue supporting the project beyond the period of implementation of the project of support to the TBP.

Efficiency:

Although a financial evaluation has not been done, a series of implemented activities to date including the respective costs has been identified. In this respect, the correspondent sections with tables in chapter four summarize the activities according to the following categories: action programmes, mini programmes and actions of awareness raising and training.