



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
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IPEC, ACTRAV and ACT/EMP Social Dialogue and Child Labour Project - Part of the Irish Aid Partnership Programme (IAPP) – Final Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, India, Mexico, South Africa

Final Evaluation: 09/2011

Evaluation Mode: Independent

Administrative Office: ILO/IPEC

Technical Office: ILO/IPEC

Evaluation Manager: ILO/IPEC/DED

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Project Code: INT/08/72/IRL

Donor & Budget: Ireland (US\$ 1'572'327)

Keywords: Child Labour; Social Dialogue; Donor Partnerships

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The purpose of the Irish Aid Partnership Programme (IAPP) is distinctive. It adds a more strategic and complementary dimension to the programme of technical cooperation which ILO/IPEC already implements. Although ILO/IPEC does work through social partners (employers and trade unions) it is recognized that the capacity of these partners needs to be strengthened, so that, to a greater extent, they are able to go ahead by working to their own strengths and implement their own activities in response to

Conventions 138 and 182, and within the framework National Action Plans on Child Labour and within South-South Cooperation. This is expected to generate greater sustainability and national ownership to its work. The strategy of the project was to work with social partners to implement the work of eliminating child labour (CL) through knowledge sharing, policy development with action plans and capacity development. The key evaluation question posed is: how far have social partners been strengthened to be more capable in addressing CL issues in their own activities? The project was global in nature with over 70 countries involved in one way or another. Therefore outreach was considerable.

In the area of design and planning, the project was innovative and filled niches not filled by activities organized by other ILO/IPEC social partners. In the area of implementation and effectiveness, the project has made a significant contribution to strengthening the role of social partners in the elimination of child labour (ECL), making them feel they had ownership. In turn the various advocacy and information products – DVDs, manuals, and advocacy materials will help social partners play a stronger role in the future. The role of ILO/IPEC, Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT-EMP) and Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) specialists at HQ and in the field and the coordination they achieved was fundamental to the success of the project.

In terms of relevance, the activities of the project broadened the response of social partners to the ECL and are likely to make them more effective in that response. It strengthened the partnerships required to address CL by placing more attention on the needs of social partners in meeting this response. Sustainability of the elements of the programme component is

difficult to judge at this stage. Appropriate advocacy materials and ‘how to do it’ materials are in place and in some cases, were tested. They can continue to be applied without funding.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation used conventional methods to gather largely qualitative information, using a desk review, and interviews and consultations with staff in the field over telephone and “Skype interviews”. This included some interviews with beneficiaries.

Main Findings & Conclusions

This project can be seen as complementary to other IPEC projects: it has encouraged a high degree of social dialogue, not always achieved in other IPEC projects. This requires understanding at several levels: ACTRAV/ACT-EMP in Geneva, specialists in the field, and as well as workers and employers. This project has uncovered the areas of common interest in CL between workers and employers.

The project has contributed effectively to strengthening the capacity of trade unions and employers in the areas of CL, and some are now able to implement a number of activities without involving IPEC. The trade union focal points for CL have been re-energized and employers’ activities have found new avenues to address CL. Many focal points have elaborated plans of action for their institutions and started campaigns (e.g. to mark World Day Against Child Labour) and awareness-raising activities.

All of the results have required a cohesive approach from the three ILO units of IPEC, ACTRAV and ACT-EMP. It is recommended to Irish Aid that an extension be made of the project and funded accordingly. The project was global, flexible, and targeted social partners directly and made good use of materials produced elsewhere. Some recommendations have also been made about how IPEC can more effectively incorporate social partners into its existing national programming. In particular, the project made contributions to bipartite activities. (i.e. trade unions and employers). These partners enabled IPEC to strengthen capacity in addressing CL.

Recommendations

Main recommendations and follow-up

1. On the basis that a high degree of social dialogue has been achieved in the area of CL, with common interest identified and acted upon, as evidenced by enthusiastic feedback from the field, it is recommended to Irish Aid that an extension be made of the project and funded accordingly.
2. A major feature of the IAPP is that it was global, flexible, and targeted social partners directly and made good use of materials produced elsewhere. As regards learning between HQ units, a by-product has been the opportunity to pilot some activities, learn by doing, and find entry points to put something into practice. It is recommended that ILO/IPEC reviews how the role of social partners and concerns of social partners could be better integrated into existing projects.
3. It is recommended to the ILO implementing units that in terms of which activities to implement, for IPEC, ACTRAV and ACT-EMP, funds could be split between following up existing projects and opening up new countries and social partners *in new sectors*, and in IPEC activities in an integrated area approach. The existing successes could be used to encourage these new sets of social partners.
4. It is recommended to the implementing units that IPEC continue as lead with a needs assessment, an agreed work plan and funded accordingly. All outputs and activities should be based on a thorough needs analysis and agreed upon by all parties.
5. The programme management structure has worked, and the transaction costs are justified by the achievements. This depends on the level of trust and shared objectives, and it is hoped that the success of this project means that all partners are now reasonably comfortable about the structure for the allocation and disbursement of funds, and believe that the results of the project will endure. It is therefore recommended that the current management structure continues to maintain the level of close consultation between all implementing partners.
6. ILO/IPEC specialists have also become better informed and effective, and have heard new views from social partners. The project funds have helped

ILO/IPEC in the concentration of efforts in Africa with the support of social partners. Some background comments and a rationale for this observation are made in the section on Achievements (Implementation and Effectiveness). It is recommended to ILO/IPEC that the lessons of this project and the level of social dialogue achieved be used to improve the role of the social partners in the development of NAPs (especially in Africa) and the more direct involvement of social partners in these plans. From an employer's perspective, Central Asia also requires further attention.

7. As noted above, there will be lessons to learn about penetrating the informal agricultural sector. It is recommended that this could be something that the ILO/IPEC/FAO Agricultural Partnership Project could follow up on.

8. It is important to continue to focus on capacity development and strengthening the knowledge base of employers' and workers' organizations. There is still a need to develop and disseminate information, training and awareness-raising materials. The project implementation has shown that ILO/IPEC needs to develop further work with the employers and trade unions to build on the activities started and may require more attention to coordinate mechanisms at ILO HQ. It is recommended to ILO/IPEC that it makes more use of the bipartite mechanism.

9. The flexible nature of the project funds enabled synergies to be made with other activities, such as development of materials and guidelines. There have been multiplier effects in so far as social partners have been able to implement their own activities more effectively, and within the context of South-South/Triangular Cooperation. The project enabled social partners to take unilateral action in the area of CL (e.g. trade union handbook on hazardous CL). Various effective campaigning and advocacy aids were also produced: a DVD by social partners, the activity in Colombia with the employers' organizations and their mining members, and the transformation of the Chilean manual into a web-based platform and instrument to disseminate it. It is recommended to IPEC that these materials be piloted in other countries.

Important lessons learned

A lesson drawn from the mid-term assessment should be reinforced: that for future similar projects some

preparatory phase with needs assessment should be planned to arrange consultation sessions in the field for setting priorities and adding time for the elaboration of the project work plan. It was reported that implementing social dialogue projects through technical assistance funding was unusual for the ILO, and this may require different approaches. In addition, all future components should be thoroughly discussed with social partners as well as the implementing units, and be based on a thorough needs assessment.

The approaches made by IPEC have been based more on the needs of social partners than was the case in previous activities. This means there has been a lot of learning between social partners and ILO/IPEC staff: the former can see how CL is a concern of their constituents (despite its prevalence in the informal sector, in some cases bordering on criminal activity) reinforcing existing ethical perspectives, and they can do something concrete about it. They have seen how social partner responses will be a foundation for longer-term solutions through Decent Work.

Extending CL programmes to the agricultural sector (as well as other programmes) has always been a challenge for the ILO. In this project some inroads were made to semi-formalizing the agricultural sector through penetrating the supply chain. Although the micro evidence is not available, it is possible that these processes touched other small agricultural enterprises.

Lessons have been learned upwards to social partner national institutions and downwards (in some countries) to district level.