



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation
Office

Strengthening National Action to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Lebanon - Final Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries:	<i>Lebanon</i>
Final Evaluation:	<i>09/2011</i>
Evaluation Mode:	<i>Independent</i>
Administrative Office:	<i>DWT/CO-Beirut</i>
Technical Office:	<i>ILO/IPEC</i>
Evaluation Manager:	<i>ILO-IPEC/DED (Design, Evaluation and Documentation Section)</i>
Project Code:	<i>LEB/08/06/ITA</i>
Donor(s) & Budget:	<i>Italy (US\$ 835'655)</i>
Keywords:	<i>Child labour; Education; Vocational training</i>

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The Independent Final Evaluation of the Project on Strengthening National Action to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Lebanon assessed the results of the project under the four headings of Effectiveness, Relevance, Efficiency and Sustainability. A set of evaluation questions has been drawn up with the purpose of drawing conclusions about the success of the project in terms of its dual strategy approaches: “upstream” policy intervention approach with the purpose of creating the right environment in the fight against child labour (CL); “Downstream” direct intervention approach through the implementation of effective models with the purpose of withdrawing a fixed number of children

from the Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL). Particularly the evaluation examined to what extent the project has: (a) Supported the enforcement of national legislation in line with international labour standards, (b) Strengthened the institutional capacity of the National Steering Committee (NSC) and other institutions related to the combat of CL and WFCL, (c) Advocated the cause of CL and WFCL among policy-makers and raised awareness effectively among community and targeted geographical areas, and (d) Withdrawn 400 boys and 200 girls from the WFCL and prevented another 200 boys and 200 girls from engaging and how far the models of direct intervention were successful. The evaluation made its assessment based on available evidence, and offered recommendations resulting from this analysis.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The aims of the evaluation as identified in the Terms of Reference (ToR) are as follows:

- Aim a: Evaluate the extent to which the project achieved its objectives and target outputs and the factors behind achievements and non-achievements;
- Aim b: Assess project management, including how it monitored implementation, partnered and coordinated with various parties, performed various activities taking into consideration their timeliness and make recommendations based on lessons learned and best practice;
- Aim c: Determine whether the project has achieved synergies with other UN agencies in combating CL and other country-wide initiatives to eliminate WFCL;
- Aim d: Appraise the impact of the project in terms of the improvements achieved and their sustainability, primarily improvements at the level

of national legislation and policies, in line with the international labour standards;

- Aim e: Determine whether the project is sustainable and which recommendations are to be implemented in this regard by the ILO, national counterparts and different stakeholders;
- Aim f: Pinpoint, analyse, articulate and document lessons learned and good practices.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation was based on an initial desk review, followed by field visits, a series of interviews with stakeholders and focus group discussions with child and parent beneficiaries in the two regions that are the focus of the download implementation of the project (Tripoli and Bekaa). It also referred to specific ILO/IPEC norms while taking into consideration the United Nations Evaluation Group standards and those of the quality evaluation of the OECD/DAC.

The evaluation addressed the various stakeholders relevant to the project, and took each of their strengths, weaknesses, capacities, comparative advantages and perspectives into account. It tried to assess the extent to which each of these stakeholders positively affected, within a theory of change, the long-term goal of eliminating CL and WFCL in Lebanon.

Main Findings & Conclusions

In two years of implementation, successes were registered in two of the action programmes, namely: the Action Programme to combat CL through remedial education with the René Mouawad Foundation, and the Action Programme of Vocational Training and remedial education for boys and girls at risk to be involved in the WFCL with the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA).

These successes were particularly evident in two domains: remedial education as an approach to combating WFCL, and the provision of vocational training for at-risk boys and girls. The intervention of these two NGOs has been translated into concrete success stories in terms of withdrawing 198 children from WFCL.

In addition to these successes it is necessary to note that:

- The Implementation of the Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS) action programme had a good start in terms of its implementation. However, it was not concretized until the objectives were fixed because of a shortage of funding, deficits in the referral system of children and lack of follow up;
- An achievement was concretized through the implementation of the Rapid Assessment on Child Labour in North Lebanon which was implemented through the University of Saint Joseph.

However, it is to be noted that the progress accomplished by the project in general was below expectations. This was due to several factors:

1. The planning and design stage of the project was not participatory and did not meet the ILO tripartite principles. This was due to the limited amount of time granted to ILO Beirut by the donor for the submission of the draft project document. While noting this constraint, the lack of participation:

- a. negatively affected the extent of national and local ownership of the project and the effective commitment of some local partners; and
- b. led to project orientations, action and activities which were not to an advanced extent in line with the needs of national partners or their existing capacities.

2. The project included a wide range of action programmes (nine in total), and was too ambitious horizontally when the financial, administrative and logistical infrastructure provided are taken into account.

3. The administrative and logistical infrastructure that was put in place to manage the project included locating the management of the project in Tripoli (which was a requirement of the donor). However, an important portion of the project – which required consistent follow-up – consisted of upstream strategic and important action located in the capital, Beirut. Basing the project management in Tripoli created a serious logistical constraint, bearing in mind that two other action programmes also had partners located in Beirut, and that another action programme took place in the Bekaa region.

4. The nine action programmes were designed on an individual basis rather than in a holistic and integrated way. The linkage or complementarity between some of the different action programmes was not advanced.

5. In some cases, such as the action programmes with the René Moawad Foundation and the YMCA, the quality of design of the different action programmes was relevant and in harmony with a clear objective. In some other cases, however, the micro vision of the action programme was not clear, with immediate objectives which were activity oriented. Weaknesses were sometimes also found at the level of linkages between objectives, outputs and activities, with indicators for follow up not considered relevant.

6. Serious concerns were noted at the level of project management in terms of coordination, design of the action programmes, prioritization, communication with partners and knowledge sharing.

7. A difficult political situation – specifically, a governance vacuum combined with political tension – coincided with the implementation of the project for seven months, causing delays in the validation of action programmes and their implementation.

8. During the last two years, the main governmental counterpart (the Ministry of Labour (MoL)) was not able to generate enough dynamism at the level of the implementation of its own action programme, and also at the level of the national agenda of combating CL. The validation of the action programme with the ministry was delayed for six months for internal reasons: (a) the action programme with the MoL began to be implemented only four months before the end of the entire project, (b) the list of WFCL has not yet been validated by the ministerial council, despite being drafted during Phase 2 of the project two and half years ago, and (c) the National Committee for Child Labour (NCCL), an inter-ministerial committee under the management of the MoL, ceased its activities at the end of Phase 2 (although this is supposed to be a national committee, and is not a project committee that is related exclusively to ILO project phases, and thus should not be reconsidered according to each new phase of an ILO/IPEC project). A new composition of the committee was suggested to the ministerial council at the beginning of Phase 3 of the project but has not yet been validated (which is only partially due to the political vacuum).

9. The evaluation concludes that further technical support is required to advance towards concrete progress in combating the WFCL at both the upstream and downstream levels. However, for such support to be effective at the upstream level, it must have as a precondition a meaningful national commitment to the issue. This urgently needs to be concretized through two key national measures that have been pending for two years: firstly, the national validation of the list of WFCL, and secondly, by the creation of the NCCL. Moreover, it is necessary that the planning and design of any eventual ILO/IPEC intervention is carried out through a national participatory approach and in harmony with the tripartite principle. If the project goals are to be achieved, it is also necessary that the level of managerial, logistical, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) resources that are provided match the ambition of the project.

Recommendations

Main recommendations and follow-up

Institutional development

- F.1 Re-establishment of the NCCL.
- F.2 Institutional support and coaching to the Child Labour Unit (CLU) in MoL.
- F.3 Institutional developmental support to the labour inspectorate.

Legislation harmonization

- F.4 Validation of the list of WFCL.
- F.5 Achieving the study on legislative gaps.

Policies for enforcement of international labour standards to combat WFCL

- F.6 A review of the status of implementation of the National Policy and Programme Framework (NPPF) over a period of six years from the validation and conceptualization of an updated Time-Bound Programme for its implementation.

Improvement of knowledge base

- F.7 Translating the findings of the Rapid Assessment on Child Labour to the policy level.
- F.8 Implementation of a survey on the size of the informal/shadow economy in Lebanon, including the north and Bekaa.

F.9 Liaising with the Central Bureau of Statistics and the World Bank for the planning of the household living conditions and budget survey in 2012. e

Child labour monitoring system

F.10 Extension of the CLMS action programme for another 3-4 month.

F.11 Involving intensely the René Moawad Foundation in the CLMS.

Advocacy, awareness raising and social mobilization

F.12 Preparation by ILO/IPEC of an integrated plan on WFCL for advocacy and awareness.

Capacity building

F.13 Re-implementation of the training on SCREAM.

F.14 Implementing capacity-building activities at the upstream level (to policy makers including ministers, vice ministers, members of parliament).

Planning Process

F.15 Involving main national partners including government, workers' and employers' unions in the planning phase and design of the project in line with ILO and IPEC guidelines.

F.16 Adopting a standardized, holistic and participatory approach in the planning and design of the action programmes of any future project.

Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms

F.17 Adopting a more simplified and light reporting mechanism tailored to capacity of focal points and local partners.

F.18 Considering a light Mid-Term Review (MTR) for ILO projects that have a duration of less than three years.

F.19 Reconsidering the number of IPEC planning, M&E mechanisms and instruments.

F.20 Considering a pure ILO Lebanon country management level.

Raising Success stories to the upstream level

F.21 Raising the models of René Moawad and YMCA at the up-stream level.

Project extension

F.22 Extension of the ILO/IPEC project by 3-4 months.