# Evaluation Summary

International Labour Office

Evaluation Office

# *Inter-agency Programme for Improving the Situation of Children at risk in Senegal ILO-UNICEF*

## *Final Evaluation*

## Quick Facts

**Countries:** *Senegal*

**Final Evaluation:** *10/2012*

**Evaluation Mode:** *Independent*

**Administrative Office:** *ILO/IPEC*

**Technical Office:** *ILO/IPEC*

**Evaluation Manager:** *ILO/IPEC-DED*

**Evaluation Consultant(s):** *Sue Upton and Mamadou Gueye*

**Project Code:** *SEN/07/02/HSF*

**Donor(s) & Budget:** *ILO & UNICEF (US$ 2,519,133)*

**Keywords:** *Child Labour*

## Background & Context

### Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

As in other West African countries, child labour in Senegal is linked to poverty, limited access to quality education and health services and socio-cultural constraints. Surveys show that more than a third of Senegal's children are working, the majority in agriculture in their family fields. Many girls are employed as domestic workers, large numbers of children are found working across the informal sector and boys from koranic schools are commonly seen begging on the streets.

Since 2000, the Government of Senegal, supported by UNICEF and the ILO, has been working to establish a legal and administrative framework to protect vulnerable children and combat child labour. However, the current National Action Plan to combat child labour was only validated in October 2012 and has yet to be implemented and the administrative framework is not fully operational. The Child Labour Unit within the Ministry of Labour is under resourced in relation to the magnitude of the challenge and cooperation between the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry for the Family could be improved.

**Project description**

Funded by the United Nations Trust Fund on Human Security (UNTFHS) and designed by the ILO and UNICEF, this interagency-project built on previous interventions in four administrative districts of the region of Thiès. It used an Area Based Approach (ABA) to tackle child labour, through the creation of four Local Commissions and Action Programmes (AP) carried out by twelve implementing agencies selected for their technical expertise and local knowledge and experience. The project aimed to raise awareness of issues related to child labour among administrative authorities, elected local officials, religious leaders and the community as a whole so that they would work together to reduce Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL) through testing and documenting an ABA. It was also intended that by the end of the project administrative, political and community leaders would have put in place a mechanism to monitor and prevent WFCL in the targeted zones.

The ILO supported and supervised ten APs (Action Programs) while UNICEF was responsible for three in the targeted zones. Since one of the UNICEF APs had not been implemented at the time of the evaluation, there were effectively 12 APs that contributed to the impact of the project. The Ministries of Labour and the Family were involved to some extent in overseeing the project and the Ministries of Education and Justice were each responsible for implementing an AP. AP activities included:

- raising awareness about child labour and the importance of education;
- establishing village child protection committees;
- supporting vulnerable children within the education system and assisting their enrolment;
- withdrawal of children from WFCL and provision of a range of educational and training opportunities;
- material assistance and educational opportunities for talibé children;
- psycho-social support for traumatised children;
- enabling non-registered children to obtain birth certificates at reduced cost
- enrolling vulnerable children in local health insurance schemes
- support for parents, guardians and koranic school teachers to increase their income and thus be better resourced to care for their children

Starting in March 2009 and originally planned for 36 months, the project was given a 9 month no cost extension. The intended mid-term evaluation became a three-day auto-evaluation work shop for implementing stakeholders in June 2012 and this final evaluation was carried out by a team of two independent consultants in October 2012.

***Purpose, scope and objectives of the evaluation:***

The main purpose of the final evaluation was to determine to what degree the project has achieved its stated objectives and establish the relevance of the strategies adopted and the level of sustainability attained.

**Methodology of evaluation**

After some preliminaries the evaluation team spent two weeks in Senegal where they met with national stakeholders, 13 implementing agencies, the four Local Commissions and 122 children, parents and koranic teachers from among the direct project beneficiaries. The field work concluded with a stakeholders' meeting.

## Main Findings & Conclusions

Overall the project was well designed to meet its objectives, although in practice the arrangements for collaboration between the ILO and UNICEF did not work out as planned. At the implementation level there were two possible omissions: (i) project-wide strategies to enable children to be active in child rights advocacy and awareness raising and (ii) training opportunities for older children related to the principal livelihoods in their communities, such as, for example, agriculture, animal husbandry or fishing.

In spite of a number of management challenges, the project succeeded in demonstrating the potential for tackling child labour through an Area Based Approach. The Local Commissions created as the focal points in each area were actively engaged in and committed to improving services to vulnerable children and their families and demonstrated significant ownership of activities after a relatively short period of existence. APs were largely creative, well-coordinated and effective. The specific skills and expertise of a range of implementing agencies (government ministries, local and national NGOs) were combined to offer a comprehensive range of services. The project far exceeded its intended number of beneficiaries, but the short period of operation at community level will inevitably limit the sustainability of its work.

There were two important factors that affected project management. The first was the progressive disengagement of the two principal agencies, to the extent that at the time of the evaluation there was virtually no communication between the ILO and UNICEF; each agency was operating independently to oversee the APs which they were funding. The ILO put in place a team of full time staff to support ten APs, which it did extremely well. UNICEF relied on their child protection specialists using part of their time to monitor their APs, in spite of having committed themselves to providing full time staff in the project document. The evaluation team had difficulty in understanding UNICEF managed APs, partly because the standard of the reports provided was poor, and partly because UNICEF was slow to respond to requests for information, and did not attend the stakeholder's meeting at the end of the evaluation.

The second management issue concerns the time scale for project implementation. In a 45 month project the effective period of community level intervention was less than ten months. When the project started in March 2009, it took around a year for an ILO team to be recruited and to become operational. It then took a second year to select implementing partners and approve APs, most of which started in May 2011, for a ten month period. By the time they were running, the remained time was even less for community based work and often as little as five months for educational and training opportunities for direct beneficiaries. At the time of the evaluation, TOR for the proposed child labour monitoring system had yet to be agreed, making it impossible to implement the system before the end of the project in December 2012.

It is difficult to know exactly what went wrong. Work plans seem to have taken an enormously long time to be approved within the ILO, and the lead agency does not seem to have tackled the lack of collaboration at a high enough level within UNICEF. It transpired during the evaluation that UNICEF has yet to spend the majority of its allocated budget and the ILO also had a much smaller amount of funds remaining.

While many aspects of the inter-agency project were in line with the UNTFHS approach, the project failed to fulfil the crucial criteria of implementing activities in an integrated way, due to the lack of cooperation between UNICEF and the ILO. To ensure a genuine human security approach, agencies need to work beyond collaboration and towards integration, which this project did not achieve.

## Recommendations

***Main recommendations and follow-up:***
*Addressed to the ILO and UNICEF*

In line with the suggestions from national stakeholders for future interagency projects, it is recommended that one joint management team that is commonly owned by two (or more) agencies should be established.

Participating agencies should agree and sign a Memorandum of Agreement that would specify the commitments, roles and responsibilities of each agency. The MOU needs to include a calendar of meetings to monitor the agreement.

The MOU should identify a responsible officer in each agency and specify lines of responsibility, decision making and reporting, so that the management team has the necessary back up to support its work.

An inter-agency project should use common reporting standards and procedures for all implementing partners, and partnership agreements should be with the interagency project as a whole, rather than with specific agencies. A common financial system should be agreed between the partner agencies, so that all implementing partners have the same monitoring, support and supervision systems.

Projects using an area based approach to combat child labour need to ensure a minimum of two years community level intervention to ensure a reasonable degree of sustainability. A longer period would be even better.

*Addressed to Implementing Agencies*

AP proposals should include a community based office – either specifically for one implementing agency or ideally a commonly funded office shared by project implementing agencies working in the same geographic area.

Implementing agencies should make every effort to employ local development workers, or failing this, for their staff to be resident in the project area during project implementation.

Implementing agencies in the same locality should have regular coordination, planning and monitoring meetings to ensure the most effective use of their different skills and experience and to encourage shared learning.

Community based implementing agencies need to plan for their role to change during the course of the project. At the beginning they are likely to spend considerable time training, raising awareness and offering support to the Local Commissions. As the project goes on they should progressively hand power and responsibility to these Commissions, so that they are well established and functioning before the end of the project. Implementing agency staff will by then be primarily advisors and resource people, able to offer services as requested.

Implementing agencies should share the project document with Local Commissions in order to promote transparency and good governance and avoid misunderstanding. It is also good practice for the organisations involved in the delivery and use of a given service to sign written agreements stating how the service will operate and the roles of the different stakeholders.

*Addressed to Local authorities and Local Commissions*

Local Commissions should develop realistic work plans for the coming year (2013). These should focus on monitoring of inter-agency project beneficiaries to ensure that they can make full use of the opportunities offered by the project. Work plans should also specify how the Local Commissions plan to move from being specifically linked to project activities to a more general child protection role, reporting to their local executive authorities.

*Addressed to the Ministries of Labour and the Family*

12. These Ministries are encouraged to develop their cooperation and collaboration concerning initiatives to tackle child labour in order to make the best possible use of the resources at their disposal and their complementary expertise, in the service of the working children of Senegal. They are encouraged to exploit the newly approved National Child Labour Action Plan to support the development of mechanisms to monitor and control child labour and collaboration across departments and ministries

***Important lessons learned:***

*Inter-agency projects*

An inter-agency project requires more than the sharing of resources between the agencies concerned so that each may follow its own course of action independently of the other. It requires joint planning, implementation using common systems and procedures and common ownership of monitoring and evaluation activities.

Implementing an inter-agency project needs detailed planning to ensure effective joint management. The roles and tasks of each agency need to be clearly defined and there needs to be a well-respected management monitoring plan. This requires a spirit of collaboration and compromise within the agencies concerned, in order to support one common team to do the desired work.

*Period of operation of APs*

An Area Based Approach is primarily a community development approach. The process of changing ideas and behaviour requires relevant interventions of sufficient duration, accompanied by appropriate use of the necessary resources. The Inter-agency project APs were relevant, the majority of implementing agency personnel had the necessary skills and there were adequate resources. But the operational period of these APs was too short for the process to be sustainable and for the beneficiaries to complete the cycle of education or training and put it to good effect.

*Respect for the PRODOC*

It is important to respect the PRODOC agreed between partners and the funding agency. The PRODOC for this project stated that UNICEF would provide the required financial support and technical capacity with regard to the personnel to manage and support the project. It stated that UNICEF would name a National Head of Project as the focal point, in addition to a full time consultant and an administrative assistant to support this person. In effect this does not seem to have happened.

UNICEF requested some changes to a number of activities linked to immediate objectives one and two and these were agreed by the funding agency in 2010. It appears that some activities linked to these changes may have been carried out in the town of Thiès, which is outside the four geographical zones of project intervention identified in the PRODOC.

**Potential good practices**

1. Focus on the community
2. Village committees to combat child labour
3. Creating an enabling environment.
4. Psychosocial support
5. Child centred activities