



Evaluation Summaries

Evaluation: Support to the Cambodian National Plan of Action on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour: A Time-Bound Approach

Quick Facts

Countries: Cambodia

Mid-Term Evaluation: May 2007

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

Technical Area: Child Labour

Evaluation Management: ILO-IPEC Design, Evaluation and Documentation Section

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Project Start: 30 September 2004

Project End: December 2008

Project Code: CMB/04/51/USA

Donor: US Department of Labor (USA)
US \$4,750,011

Keywords: Child Labour, Time Bound Programme

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The ILO through its International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO/IPEC) supports the Cambodian National Plan of Action on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (NPA/WFCL) in the capacity of facilitator, catalyst and service provider. With financial support from the U.S. Department of Labor, the programme targets children working in domestic work (Phnom Penh), in salt fields (Kampot), in fisheries (Kampot, Kep and

Sihanoukville), in brick-making (Kampong Cham and Siem Reap) and as porters (Bantay Meanchey).

The ILO Project of Support (POS) to the NPA/WFCL has the following Development Objective, "To contribute to the elimination of identified worst forms of child labour in Cambodia and to the creation of a platform for eliminating all forms of child labour". The POS has three strategic components:

- Strengthened policy and capacity building;
- Increased knowledge base, commitment and mobilization; and
- Effective targeted interventions in education.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The purpose of the midterm evaluation is to provide project partners with formative, participatory-driven, and utilization-focused feedback to promote decision-making and improvements to the programme of work

The evaluation sought to (1) review all activities and outputs of the project in light of their relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, and efficiency; (2) assess the implementation process; (3) identify the project's strengths, good practices, and challenges; and (4) provide recommendations for the future. The overall evaluation question is: 'How relevant is the ILO-IPEC project design and support system to the child labour situation in Cambodia?'

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation consisted of a desk review of available documents, as well as field interviews

and stakeholders evaluation workshops. The project exerted maximum effort to involve all possible stakeholders in the evaluation process, from the national level down to the community level. Site visits and consultations were undertaken at the village level among direct and indirect beneficiaries, and at the provincial level among project implementers and involved line agencies.

Main Findings & Conclusions

A combined campaign through the POS is proving effective. The POS's practical assistance and advocacy has helped the Royal Government of Cambodia to ratify the international labour conventions on the elimination of child labour, and translate these commitments into practice through the development and application of *Prakas* on hazardous child labour and on light work permitted for children below the legal minimum age. *Prakas* is a Khmer word meaning *Proclamation* and used by the Government to mean an order issued by a Minister (Ministerial Order), as distinct from a piece of legislation or law passed by the Parliament. Equally important is the mobilization of line Ministries, workers' and employers' organizations and civil society to support the implementation of national policies.

According to POS records, since the project's start date (or inception) on 30 September, 2004, a total of 14,363 Cambodian children have been withdrawn or prevented from child labour. Of this number, a total of 11,010 have been provided with educational services or training opportunities. A total of 3,353 have been provided with other non-education services. In the period May 2006 to February 2007, a total of 24,531 direct services were provided to children. These include:

- Books and School Supplies (8,609)
- Counselling Services (6,556)
- Formal Education (4,088)
- Non-Formal Education (NFE) (3,203)
- Uniforms (1,537)
- Vocational and Skills Training (517)
- Nutrition (94)
- Other Incentives (30)

No direct services were provided in Legal Assistance, Health Services, or Stipends. Despite these efforts, national capacity to coordinate policy and programme implementation needs further strengthening.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Main recommendations and follow-up

Based on the evaluation findings, the following recommendations for programme improvements are offered:

1. Continue to provide support to the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC);
2. Translate legislation into law (*Prakas*);
3. Focus the POS approach to sectors and provinces where child labour is endemic;
4. Better coordinate stakeholders and develop donor mapping;
5. Improve educational provisions;
6. Include health and nutrition service provisions;
7. Expand project with additional capacity building;
8. Improve income generation strategies;
9. Promote gender mainstreaming in hiring within ILO-IPEC, Implementing Agencies and Executive Agencies;
10. Encourage the greater involvement of religious organizations.

Important lessons learned

Lessons learned refer to significant insights gained from practice — whether positive or negative. The evaluation highlighted two such lessons, which are summarized below:

Change is slow

The legislative and national policy preparation process requires an extended period of time. From the *Prakas* preparation phase to the approval phase, at least seven bodies and agencies are involved in their drafting, review, revision, adoption, and implementation. The design of interventions should take this legislative process into account by developing short-term interventions or Action Programmes in preparation for their long-term implementation.

Educational component is complex

The educational interventions associated with Sectoral Action Programmes are very complex. They will require a systematic and integrated approach in order to be effective. The POS will benefit from expert advice. It may also benefit from replication of "good practices" in educational interventions in Cambodia (e.g., A scholarship programme supported by the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction administered by the Asian

Development Bank), and by the conduct of small-scale experimental studies.

Emerging Good Practices

- Cross/agency coordination was strongly supported through the Understanding Children's Work (UCW) project which developed a joint inter-agency publication of the UCW project, World Bank, and UNICEF called "Children's Work in Cambodia: A Challenge to growth and poverty reduction" (April 2006).
- Integrating project services and interventions in relevant agencies within the government and community organizations ensures continuity of service delivery and more effective implementation of interventions. Multiple contributions toward the elimination of the WFCL are more sustainable than when a single entity does everything independently.
- Mobilizing community groups: Because trade union and employers' groups' structures are similar in different countries, it may be possible to replicate the development of similar policies and practices in other locations.
- Participatory planning: This approach was followed and encourages a high level of commitment to act against child labour. Cambodian protocol requires that for any intervention to be implemented at the community level permission needs to be solicited from local authorities and traditional leaders.
- Community learning centres: The establishment of CLCs in the target communities demonstrates the project's tangible presence. It evidences the participation, collaboration and ownership of the project by the community.
- Vocational skills training: Outsourced training to local experts and craftsmen created good relationships with local businesses and provincial level vocational training schools. In addition, training programs provided met students' basic needs, extending from necessary materials to transportation and room and board.
- Capacity building: Community workshops and meetings conducted through the CLCs, targeting community leaders as primary beneficiaries. Self-help groups are also provided training which focused on child

rights, child labour issues in general and the value of education. An emerging good practice was observed on the cooperation and partnership between the project and the ILO WEDGE in promoting income generation opportunities for the target families. Off-site trainings also provided by the Implementing and Executing Agencies allowed project staff and management to meet with trainers and share knowledge regarding common goals, objectives, and learning experiences.