



Evaluation Summary



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Stop child labour in agriculture: Contribution to the prevention and elimination of child labour in Mexico – Final Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries:	<i>Mexico</i>
Final Evaluation:	<i>02/2014</i>
Evaluation Mode:	<i>Independent</i>
Administrative Office:	<i>ILO/IPEC</i>
Technical Office:	<i>ILO/IPEC</i>
Evaluation Manager:	<i>ILO/IPEC</i>
Evaluation Consultants:	<i>Emma Lucía Rotondo (leader) & Pilar Campos (national)</i>
Project Code:	<i>MEX/09/50/USA</i>
Donor & Budget:	<i>USDOL (US\$ 4,750,000)</i>
Keywords:	<i>Child Labour; Agriculture; Migration</i>

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

In Mexico, the majority of working children and adolescents carry out their activities in the farming sector, in the manufacturing industry, in construction, in commerce and in services, affecting their health, education and development. It is estimated that some 3,014,800 children and adolescents are involved in productive activities (10 per cent of the total population between 5 and 17 years of age) and that these are primarily adolescents between 14 and 17 years of age (71 per cent).

The primary objective of the project “Stop Child Labour in Agriculture” is: “*To contribute to the*

prevention and elimination of child labour, in particular the worst forms in the agricultural sector in Mexico, with special focus on indigenous children and child labour as a result of internal migration.” In this regard, the project is *very relevant*, because it intervenes with working children and adolescents in agriculture, critically affected in their human development. Concentrating on the worst forms of child labour (WFCL) in migration contexts in Mexico is very relevant because it addresses the root causes of poverty and because these kinds of economic activities constitute a barrier for social inclusion.

The strategies of the project are relevant and complementary with the educational programmes of the Programme on Primary Education for Migrant Children (PRONIM) and the National Council of Educational Promotion (CONAFE), as well as with regular schools (Sinaloa), since they identify with and are closer to the target population (children and migrant agricultural workers) and are compatible with social programme efforts such as Agricultural Day Labourer’s Attention Programme (PAJA).

Main objectives:

1. Strengthen legal, institutional and policy framework to prevent and eliminate child labour (CL), in particular its worst forms in the agricultural sector
2. By the end of the project, social partners are implementing actions to eliminate CL in agriculture
3. By the end of the project, the knowledge base to record actions of key actors to combat CL in agriculture will have increased

4. By the end of the project, pilot demonstrative direct action interventions for withdrawal and prevention of children from work in agriculture will have been implemented and documented in selected states

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The final evaluation of the programme “Stop Child Labour in Agriculture” has the following purposes:

- a) Determine the project effectiveness at national and states levels: achievement of project objectives at outcome and impact levels and recognition of their successes and failures;
- b) Identify relevant unintended changes at outcome and impact levels;
- c) Assess the project implementation efficiency;
- d) Establish the relevance of the project outcomes and the level of sustainability attained;
- e) Provide recommendations regarding relevant stakeholders, building on the achievements of the project in supporting the National Action Plan (NAP) at state and national level toward the sustainability of the project outcomes and initial impacts;
- f) Identify emerging potential good practices for key stakeholders.

The evaluation scope covers the project as a whole, including issues regarding the original design, execution, lessons learned, replicability and recommendations for future projects. Likewise, it should cover expected and unexpected results based on desired outcomes.

Methodology of evaluation

The final evaluation was mainly qualitative in order to answer evaluation questions. Individual and group interviews were conducted, as well as direct observation, participant and non-participant testimonies, multi-stakeholder workshops and document review.

Project design

The project design surrounds the proposed objectives and strategies, which complement one

another in the elimination of child labour (ECL) from its multiple causes. In the design, there are four primary elements identified as positive:

1. *The strategy of co-responsibility.* “The elimination of Child Labour is everyone’s task”. This epic message was applied through four valid objectives in appropriate geographic areas, which convened all influential sectors towards the prevention and elimination of WFCL directly or indirectly. Such inclusive mandates foster new partnerships and work groups within in the states.
2. *The use of available information for the analysis of the situation on child labour* has been effective. Allocating a specific knowledge component to gather all available information for comprehensive analysis leads to more efficient and specific solutions. This also ensures a consistent flow of information from beginning to end of the project.
3. *The inclusion of the production value chain in the strategy;* this involves new actors, such as transporters and sugarcane producers and takes advantage of previous ILO work within the sugar sector, which maintains international market standards in CL matters.
4. *The inclusion of a monitoring system of migrant child labour.* The Direct Beneficiary Monitoring and Reporting System for Migrants (DBMR-M) supports registration and verification for prevention and withdrawal of child and adolescent workers, and accountability in a context where there are no follow up or control systems in place.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Project effectiveness

The first main objective, relative to the strengthening of the legal and institutional framework has been largely attained. Several groups of stakeholders have been strengthened, trained, informed, advised and sensitized to construct a strategy to address migrant children and adolescents, settled and non-migrants of agricultural day labour families at federal and state levels. Capacity has been developed in all states in the general public, for entrepreneurs, workers’ organizations and executing

entities to plan, make visible and follow-up and begin the prevention and withdrawal of children from CL.

The second main objective, relative to social partners performing actions to eliminate child labour, has been mostly met. A rising level of change in knowledge and attitudes of entrepreneurs and of workers' organizations is seen, though the level of commitment for direct action remains incipient and variable amongst stakeholders.

Civil society and Government, as well as agricultural employers' and workers' organizations, has proved to be very successful in the prevention and elimination of PECL. The "Rural Development Commissions", identified in the design as important mechanisms to position the CL issue, were not actually important stakeholders in the geographic intervention areas. There were important advances in sensitizing and developing the commitment of national employers' and workers organizations that operate at the local level.

The third immediate main objective has had a high level of achievement. The programme produced academic studies disseminating the CL problem through sensitization and training to journalists, universities and other key stakeholders. These outcomes had shifted government action toward CL issues and strengthened the matter in some universities to give a greater public platform for civil discourse. Journalists challenged this objective by preferring to report on immediate and quick news where social issues were considered too hard to be included in a diverse media context, such as the Mexican one.

The fourth immediate main objective, relative to the direct withdrawal and prevention of children and adolescents from child labour, was measured quantitatively and attained an overall project mean of 70.7 per cent of its initial target. Sinaloa and Veracruz had the longest implementation periods yet achieved over 80 per cent of their target (Veracruz began one year prior to Sinaloa). Oaxaca met 67.7 per cent of its target, as this was the last state to participate. Furthermore, the dissemination of CL information to states, which expel/receive agricultural workforce, has made progress in differentiating CL from their worst forms, especially to teachers, community leaders, parents, children and adolescents. Alliances have been formed to address

CL and capacity has been developed mainly in the entities that mainstream it in their programmes.

Project efficiency

In relation to meeting immediate objectives, overall they have been met with differences at the federal and state levels (see project final evaluation). The main factors causing delay in the delivery of some outcomes are the following:

- (i) Until 2012, the absence of ILO/IPEC state liaisons which would have facilitated the monitoring and meeting of targets;
- (ii) The late delivery of some products by the consultants (in objectives 1 and 3);
- (iii) The extension and complexity of the baseline survey to then initiate actions in the Action Programme (objective 4);
- (iv) Training, understanding, adoption and delivery of the DBMR-M (objective 4) in the Action Programmes implementing organizations as in ILO/IPEC.

There are external/contextual factors, which were important in relation to the deceleration of the implementation speed.

Project sustainability

Project design affirms that sustainability will be achieved through:

- (i) Adoption of the Action Programme for Elimination of Child Labour by multiple institutions, including amendments in the legal framework;
- (ii) Development of key stakeholders' capacity to mobilize their resources (human, technical and financial);
- (iii) Strengthening of inter-institutional coordination spaces in CL issues;
- (iv) The production and promotion of information to sensitize employers' and workers' organizations, as well as public opinion-makers; and
- (v) The development of demonstrative direct action programmes. Since there is no explicit exit strategy, it is assumed that the achievement of the presented factors above would make possible the desired sustainability.

Based on evaluation findings, governmental institutions, especially the Ministry of Labour at federal level and Labour Ministries in the selected

states, employers' organizations (sugar cane, unions and main NGOs) have adopted and mainstreamed the child labour issues into their own agendas. Sustainability still requires continual sensitizing to these stakeholders to minimize changes in priorities when personnel rotation occurs. The inter-ministerial groups or committees that work in the CL issue have manifested interest and commitment in continuing without the project, although it is the evaluators' judgement that this process must be followed from an international organization such as ILO, to attain a higher degree of consolidation.

CONCLUSIONS

Overall the project has attained significant progress in meeting objectives and outcomes. The projects' greatest effects in respect to its scope and sustainability achieved were in the first three objectives; to a lesser extent in the fourth objective (especially in the CL withdrawal).

Prevention and elimination of child labour in its worst forms has been mainstreamed for the first time in the public agenda, at the Ministries of Labour at federal level and in the states where the project has been implemented (excluding Michoacan due to changes in authorities and the security situation) and in diverse public and private stakeholders, including employers' and workers' organizations. More knowledge regarding CL and changes in attitude or institutional stance have been achieved. The evaluation has confirmed that in the states of Chiapas, Oaxaca, Sinaloa and Veracruz there is recognition of the CL issue, whereas before it was denied, considering it natural or unknown in official and social discourses.

The matter of ECL is at an initial stage in the agenda of different government sectors as well as employers' organizations, adult education institutes, universities and NGOs at state level. Its causes and consequences are being recognized, understanding it as a social and public problem. Recognition of child labour has not yet happened in indigenous organizations and municipalities in the targeted states because work has not been undertaken with these organizations. Regarding municipalities, only efforts on dissemination have been made.

An important achievement is that project partners understand and apply the conceptual difference of CL and its worst forms. They have improved their

capacities to differentiate both forms of child labour and hence, to increase mainstreaming of its actions in the partners activities. This situation is still at an initial stage as the project is ending when the CL issue is beginning to be included in the partners' agendas.

For more details on recommendations, lessons, learned and good practices, see the full report.