



Evaluation Summaries

Evaluation: Supporting the Time-Bound Programme on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor in the Republic of the Philippines

Quick Facts

Country: Philippines

Mid-Term Evaluation: November 2005

Mode of Evaluation: independent

Technical Area: Child Labor

Evaluation Management: Rights and Standards Sector

Evaluation team: International team leader with national consultant

Project Start: September 2002

Project End: December 2006

Project Code: PHI/02/50/USA

Donor: United States (US\$ 5,199,198)

Keywords: child labour, plan of action, economic policy, development policy, poverty alleviation, education policy, gender mainstreaming, awareness raising, local government, social mobilization, legislation, institution building, capacity building

Background & Context

Project Background: In November 2000, the Government of the Philippines ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor (WFCL). In order to comply with Convention 182 a Time Bound Program (TBP) on WFCL was introduced in 2002 as a major component of the National Program Against Child Labor (NPACL). The NPACL has been designed as an overall framework for action and aims for a 75 percent reduction of the WFCL by 2015. The development of the Philippines' National Plan Against Child Labor and of the IPEC project of support to

the NPACL took place simultaneously and has been closely inter-linked. The IPEC Project aims to support the TBP as a component of the NPACL.

The project has identified a two-pronged approach to support the National Program by:

1. Strengthening the enabling environment for the elimination of the WFCL,
2. Reducing the incidence of selected WFCL through direct action for child laborers and their families.

To strengthen the enabling environment, the Project is sponsoring new research and policy discussions to improve the knowledge base and capacity of relevant institutions. The issue of child labor (CL) is being mainstreamed into macro-economic policies (poverty, employment, labor and social policies) and programs that will benefit the poorest of the poor. The Project aims to develop education and training policies that will respond to the special needs of working children and those at risk. It promotes new legislation against CL and strengthens national capacity for its enforcement. Increasing public awareness and social mobilization against the WFCL is part of this approach.

Direct action at the regional/provincial (meso) and municipality/village (micro) levels are being focused on strengthening local capacity to monitor and manage action against the WFCL. To ensure that children withdrawn from work will not go back again, the Project is supposed to provide relevant and quality educational alternatives in the form of

transitional education and/or vocational training.

Six target groups are identified as the Project's WFCL, namely Child labor in Sugarcane plantations, Mining and quarrying, Pyrotechnics, Deep-sea fishing, Domestic work, and Child prostitution. By the end of the project an estimated 22,000 children in the WFCL should have been withdrawn from their place of work or exposure to hazardous conditions and another 22,500 children at risk should have been prevented from entering into child labor.

Evaluation Context: The evaluation looked at the project as a whole and addressed issues of project design, implementation, lessons learned, replicability and recommendations for future programmes and any specific recommendations for use in the project of support to the TBP in Philippines. The mid-term evaluation served as a learning tool for the project management team.

The evaluation's methodology included desk review, field visits, and stakeholder workshop for further data collection and sharing of preliminary results to project partners.

The evaluation was linked to a simultaneous evaluation of another USDOL funded project in support of the TBP. A common set of questions related to linked elements were addressed in both evaluations and certain site visits as well as evaluation workshop were joint. Field visits were carried out but were limited due to time and resource constraints for the evaluation.

Main Findings & Conclusions

One year before the end, the Project was successful in facilitating the establishment of a legal and policy-making environment on the national level that is child-labor oriented. There are also signs that such a child-labor oriented environment is being established at the regional, provincial and in some cases the local levels. For example, the child labor committees were established through the

initiative and financial support of the project. It is unfortunate that Action Programmes APs aimed at creating a conducive environment for elimination of child labor, in particular on the regional and lower levels were delayed.

This has also affected the potential of the Project to reach the target figures by the end of 2006. It is a drawback that in the drive to reach these target figures the Project has given up on the integrated AP strategy therewith reducing the impact of the two-pronged approach. However, the Project was successful in mobilizing a number of partners from government and civil society and together with them not only being able to keep child labor on the national and local agenda's but to accelerate the process and spreading the concept to beyond the project target areas. It is this catalyst function that in the end might turn out to be the most important and lasting affect of the Project. The Project promised to include gender concerns but has limited success to put this in practice.

The Project Design: The overall approach of the Project is appropriate with a two-pronged strategy of creating an enabling environment and direct action. However, the design should have emphasized stronger the interrelationship between these two strategies.

Legislative and Structural Achievements: There is a sufficiently strong and comprehensive legislative framework on the national level. There is also in the target areas a start with introducing similar legislation and policies, but this is still in an early stage. The Project needs to continue focusing its efforts on strengthening and consolidating the legislative framework in the regions and provinces.

The Project has not so much contributed to the national structure itself, as this already was established, but has supported the work of the Committee and therewith contributed to maintaining and consolidating the system. On the regional/provincial level the Project has had a more initiating role and the field

coordinators were often instrumental in the formation of local committees.

Direct Action: The direct APs that operated for a year or longer show definite progress and indicate that the approach is realistic and appropriate. However, the migratory nature of some of the target populations makes it questionable whether their target figures will be reached.

The local context is very conducive for change towards child-labor orientation in legislation and action. Combined with a very thorough and participatory proposal formulation process this opened the door in virtually all target areas for child-labor activities supported by government agencies and civil society. It is therefore unfortunate that the Project has made a decision not to follow the regional/provincial proposal structure as a package but to select individual APs for implementation.

The service delivery by the Projects' partners does have an impact on the target populations and contribute to the withdrawal of child laborers, in particularly from family-based work. However, in some cases the Project need to look deeper in the service delivery methods.

Capacity building through APs was limited to the few locations with approved APs but the results were good. However, the Project has even more success with institutional capacity building and creating networks on national and provincial levels outside or alongside the APs.

The National Statistics Office has conducted two IPEC-supported national surveys on working children in 1995 and 2001. This initiative was sustained and further developed by the project, resulting in the mainstreaming of child labor indicators in the Labor Force Survey (LFS) and in the annual poverty indicators survey (APIS). The LFS and APIS are now sources of regular indicators on the number of working children and households with working children, respectively and used in national development planning.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Recommendations: The evaluation gives following recommendations for the last period of support project:

- 1) Strengthen the enabling environment in the regions/provinces using innovative approaches.
- 2) Take measures for improved communication with partners and adopt an attitude of 'nurturing' these partners towards sustainability.
- 3) Allocate more time to work with the National Committee on Child Labor in order to assist them to strengthen/form regional/provincial committees on CL.
- 4) Flexibility in identifying target children. The Project management is of course concerned that the target figures not will be reached. Indeed, this concern is realistic and remedial action should be taken.
- 5) The review of AP proposals in the pipeline should be completed as soon as possible, but whenever feasible the integrated nature of the proposals should be taken into consideration.
- 6) The relationship with the ABK project (Education Initiative project) should be kept as it is, trusting on the status quo for the rest of the Project lifetime. However, collaboration on the regional/provincial levels should be encouraged and strengthened.
- 7) The Project management should receive assistance from other ILO-IPEC departments in order to overcome the AP delays and to improve the internal communication with office and field staff. The project monitoring system should be reviewed and improved.
- 8) Finally, the Project should make work of introducing gender concerns in existing and new APs. Special training sessions and specific research could reduce the gender-blindness of the current agenda.