

ARISE Brazil and Malawi. Independent evaluation.

Summary

A Joint Independent Evaluation of the ARISE Program (the Program) in Malawi and Brazil took place from March to June 2014. The ILO-IPEC's Evaluation and Impact Assessment Unit managed the evaluation, and three external consultants conducted both a desk study and field work in Brazil and Malawi. The approach was consultative and participatory and involved all key stakeholders. The methodology included quantitative and qualitative techniques, with more emphasis on qualitative techniques to better align with the Program's objectives and anticipated results. Information was collected using document reviews, semi-structured individual interviews, group discussions, focus groups, direct observation, and questionnaires. The evaluation also reviewed global level training activities as part of ARISE.

Findings

Relevance

The Program brings together a wealth of expertise from a range of national and international organizations. It reflects a positive confluence of institutional goals and is built on sound technical foundations. It has responded to the real needs of extensive and varied beneficiaries and stakeholders, both individuals and institutions, at the policy level and at the direct or targeted action level. The Program has managed to break through different political and ideological sensibilities and promote a constructive dialogue around the sensitive issue of child labor in tobacco supply chains. It has clear links with national policies and plans in both countries and has lent continuity to the efforts against child labor already in motion. It has supported the development of national policies, for example, by providing technical assistance for debates on crucial issues (Malawi), mediating the effective implementation of policies, and promoting dialogue on family-based agriculture (Brazil).

Design

The Program's design was difficult to assess because it had been set up with a fragile

consolidated plan that had faced challenges integrating the different activities within the Program. The absence of a common protocol between the three partners (ILO, JTI, and Winrock) has been raised as one of the explanations for the shortfalls of the Program, that while not critical in terms of over achievement, does need to be addressed in future programs.

Implementation and delivery

The Program has managed to deliver a broad list of services, and the implementation of the three pillars of the Program at various territorial levels has been highly satisfactory. A high degree of success has been achieved under the education and awareness pillar. Several services related to economic empowerment have attained high levels of community satisfaction, although more impact has been made changing socio-cultural paradigms related to the role of women than providing economic alternatives to child labor. Significant efforts to develop regulatory frameworks have been made, and the receptiveness and openness to collaboration of communities and institutions is extremely high.

Governance and coordination

The governance structure has not been fully effective in fulfilling its mission and is somehow blocked by its members' institutional constraints. The structural problems relate to the overlapping of functions between the partners, the difficulties to optimize resources, and the materialization of the potential synergies. Opportunities to exploit the comparative advantages of the partners have not yet reached full potential.

Monitoring systems

There is a significant gap regarding the monitoring of the outputs, outcomes, and impacts, which could be attributed to the deficiencies in the design process. The use and application of the Integrated Logical Framework for each country as a management tool or for monitoring purposes has been limited. There is inconsistency in definitions and concepts such as 'withdrawal,' 'prevention,' and 'reduction,'

Effects and impacts

The Program has made an impact in the areas where it is active. A trend of reduction in child labor in the communities served by the Program was observed. The qualitative assessment identified impacts in the areas of engagement in education, awareness of child labor and its risks, other changes in cultural and socio-economic paradigms, income and job opportunities, empowered communities, and institutional and regulatory frameworks. Field assessments suggest that the Program's formula has yielded good results for local communities and the surrounding areas, however the cost-effectiveness and scalability of the model was questioned, particularly in Malawi.

Recommendations

- Clarify the terms and conditions of the partnership.
- Develop protocols and procedures, (including guides, materials) to integrate a balance between strategic and adaptive management practices that include standardized monitoring tools and reporting formats.
- Continue to use the Key Performance Indicators in the logical framework.
- Explore options to benefit from JTI's extensive presence in the field, particularly that of the JTI Leaf Technicians.
- Extend monitoring activities to include reflection on good practices and part of the work of local structures.
- Develop clear definitions including legal assessments to determine compliance with legislation.
- Determine the most cost-efficient

formulae to continue in each country, considering decentralization or geographical division of roles, and how synergies between the models could be achieved.

- Determine a way to replicate proposals to generate successful models, possibly working with other UN and government programs.
- Complement ongoing dialogue and coordination of training events with a methodology that begins with the development of skills and is followed by changes in practices and improvements in performance.
- For Brazil, create a proposal for program development, promote the program in rural areas, review budget forecasts, and increase liaison activities to achieve continuation of afterschool activities.
- For Malawi, diversify vocational skills, increase capacity building of local Program committees, assess activities in the economic pillar, copy reports to the Ministry, and reorganize the monitoring system.

Lessons learned

- Effective realization of synergies requires a number of conditions such as partners relying on each other's competencies (which should be complementary), and using a proactive approach to search for the synergies. Comparative advantages should be identified and acted upon in a clear and decisive way.
- Extensiveness and diversity of the program requires specific discussion and in-depth analysis between partners and stakeholders.
- An (external) arbitrator might be necessary when stalemate situations arise.
- A horizontal cooperation formula could be used as a framework to help integrate the different realities of Malawi and Brazil. Each country could develop its own model and the Program would serve as channel to facilitate the exchange of experiences and to follow up on the effectiveness of the exchange.
- Actions targeting groups of young people and women constitute a key element of any strategy that seeks to

address the problem of child labor in family agriculture.

- Adequate technical training in agriculture for youth helps to bring about innovation to family farms, an increase health and safety, and prevents the exodus of youth towards urban areas.
- Using health and safety issues is a valid awareness raising strategy for families to avoid cultural rejection of the message against child labor.

Good practices

- Permanent commitment to dialogue as a way to raise awareness.
- Intervention models founded on previous experiences.
- Actions developed into routines and practices of existing structures.
- Involvement of JTI Leaf Technicians in training, discussions, and potentially monitoring activities.
- Processes constructed from existing human, technical, and material resources.
- Empowerment of local actors and partners in advocacy work (Malawi).
- Meaningful and value added content in afterschool activities (Brazil).
- Offering courses for men/fathers can help break resistance to the program.