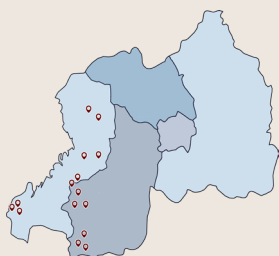


# IMPACT EVALUATION OF MODEL FARM SCHOOL PROGRAM IN RWANDA

RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL



## PROGRAM NAME

Closing the Child Labor and Forced Labor Evidence Gaps: Impact Evaluations

Randomized Controlled Trial of the Model Farm School (MFS) program

## EVALUATION LOCATION

West and Southern regions, Rwanda

## STUDY SAMPLE

962 youth, ages 16-17

## TIMELINE

December 2015 - September 2018

## FUNDER

United States Department of Labor (USDOL), Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB)

## IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

- Winrock International
- FERWACOTHE
- Rwanda Workforce Development Authority (WDA)

## INDEPENDENT EVALUATOR

IMPAQ International, LLC. (IMPAQ)

This material does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the United States Department of Labor, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the United States Government. 100 percent of the total costs of the project or program is financed with Federal funds, for a total of \$4,194,395 dollars.



## BACKGROUND

The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that 152 million children are victims of child labor; with almost half of them, 73 million, performing hazardous work daily.<sup>1</sup> Ample evidence documents the detrimental effects of child labor on children's health, education access and attainment, and economic outcomes.<sup>2</sup>

In Rwanda, poverty, children's limited access to education and vocational training, and a general lack of awareness and enforcement of labor laws all contribute to high rates of child labor. According to the Rwanda National Child Labor Survey Report, 11.2 percent of children ages 5 to 17 years old are engaged in economic activity, with almost half of these children working full time.<sup>3</sup> Most children (84 percent) work in the agricultural sector.<sup>4</sup>

IMPAQ International designed and implemented a randomized controlled trial (RCT) evaluation of the effectiveness of a child and hazardous labor intervention in Rwanda from 2015 through 2018. This RCT evaluation contributes to the expansion of the evidence base on child labor interventions by investigating the role of youth training and safe work opportunities provided by the program on hazardous child labor and other outcomes. This summary brief presents the program, as well as the main findings of the evaluation.



## INTERVENTION

Beginning in 2016, Winrock integrated the Model Farm School (MFS) program into its Rwanda Education Alternatives for Children in Tea-growing Areas (REACH-T) program targeting vulnerable out-of-school youth. MFS aimed to provide training for small groups of 16-17 year old youth and to connect them to on- and off-farm safe work opportunities, by equipping them with both technical and life skills. The program enrolled youth in a non-formal training program, which included agronomy techniques, off-farm vocations, and occupational safety and health instruction and equipment. The goal of MFS was to

use these trainings to push youth out of potentially hazardous occupations and into educational or appropriate work opportunities.

Another goal of MFS was to collaborate with the Rwanda WDA to link qualified youth to WDA opportunities, including public and government-aided technical vocational education programs.

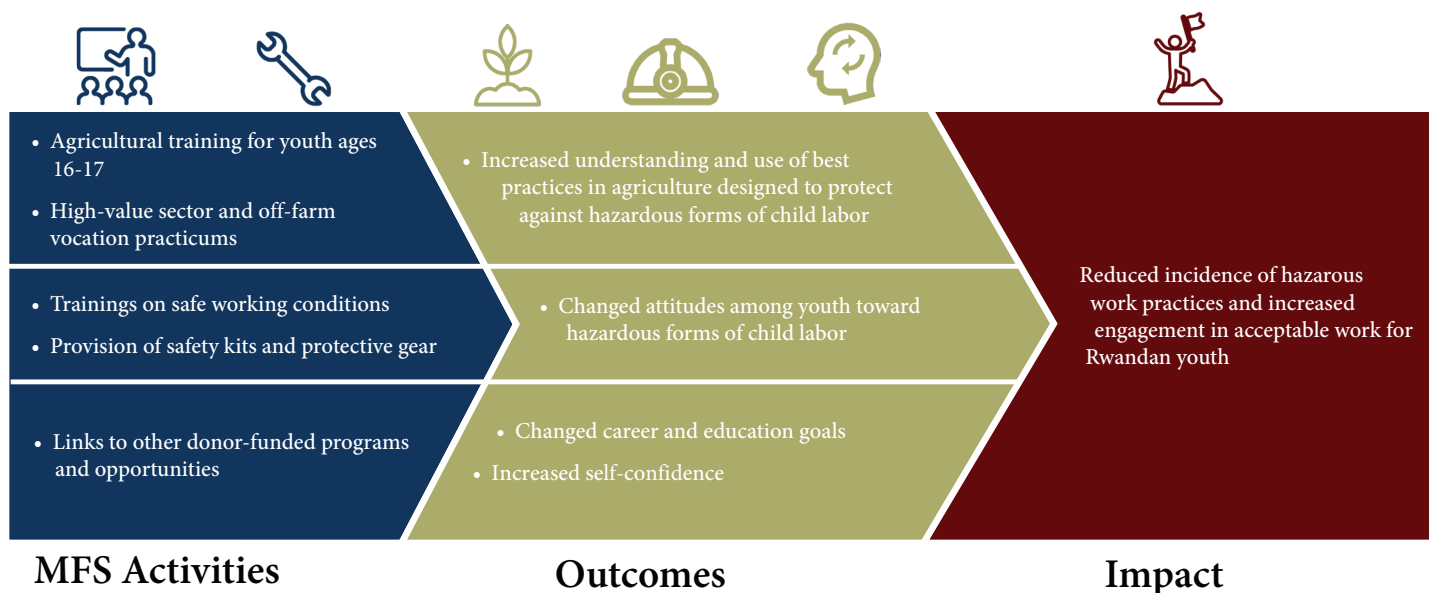


## MEASURED OUTCOMES

The evaluation was designed to measure the impact of MFS on the following youth outcomes:

- Likelihood of participating in hazardous labor
- Educational aspirations of youth
- The type of work youth would like to have in the next two years
- Youth's level of confidence and locus of control.

## PROGRAM THEORY



## EVALUATION DESIGN

IMPAQ randomly assigned 962 youth, ages 15 to 17, from 15 sites in the Southern and Western regions of Rwanda to treatment and control groups. Youth in the treatment group were selected to participate in MFS trainings through a random public lottery.

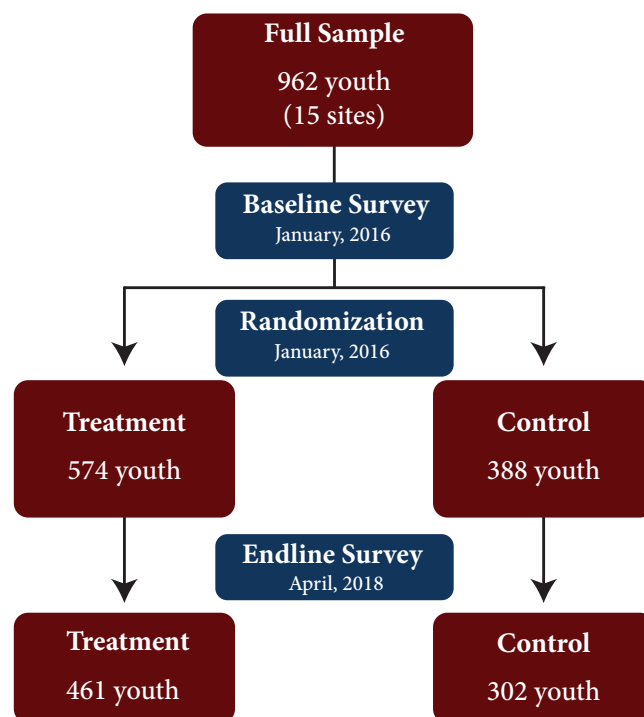
The evaluation team estimated MFS effects by comparing the average outcomes of the treatment group with the average outcomes of the control group. The team also compared the outcomes of all treatment students who participated in the training with the control group.

A qualitative study complemented the impact evaluation to investigate the program implementation fidelity and provide in-depth understanding of the mechanisms of changes resulting from the program.

## DATA

IMPAQ designed a project-specific survey questionnaire administered to the treatment and control group youth between December 2015 and January 2016, as well as between March and April 2018. The survey included sections on students' household characteristics and demographics, labor activities and ambitions, and program participation.

In addition to the youth survey, IMPAQ conducted key informant interviews with local leaders and focus group discussions with MFS participants and youth in the control group after program completion.



## KEY FINDINGS



### Hazardous Labor

There is no evidence to suggest that the MFS program led to a decline in hazardous labor. All participants in the control and treatment groups were found to be engaged in hazardous labor at the end of the study.

### Educational Aspirations

Students who reported participating in MFS for any length of time, indicate that the MFS program had a significant impact on aspirations to complete senior secondary school. Students who participated for the full six months were 7 to 13 percentage points more likely to aspire to complete senior secondary school.



### Employment Aspirations

Aspirations for non-farm jobs increased significantly among students who participated in MFS compared to those who did not. The result is driven by changes in girls aspirations rather than boys. In focus groups, most students reported that the MFS program had no influence on their employment aspirations.

### Student Confidence

The level of confidence that youth have that they will be able to achieve their aspirational job and the extent to which they believe they have control over their future were not impacted by the MFS program.



## Insights from Qualitative Interviews

IMPAQ used qualitative interviews to explore whether MFS changed youth's knowledge or attitudes with respect to hazardous labor.

- There was no evidence of a shift in attitudes concerning hazardous forms of labor. While students understood that they currently or previously worked in hazardous conditions, they reported being hesitant to speak up to their bosses who expected them to work without complaining. Students tested were not able to provide specific examples of safer labor or farming practices, indicating that elements of the training were not effective in educating participants in alternative practices.
- In contrast to the quantitative findings, youth did not demonstrate differences in educational and employment aspirations within the focus group discussions. A majority of intervention youth stated that their employment aspirations were not influenced in any way by their participation in MFS. This lack of program influence may be due to the fact that MFS focused on agricultural jobs, while participants were more interested in non-farming careers.
- All focus group participants agreed that the primary reason for the persistence of hazardous labor was the lack of availability of non-hazardous jobs. Many participants also referenced a lack of educational and financial means that could prevent them from engaging in hazardous work. Local leaders confirmed that there were not enough non-hazardous jobs available in their regions.

## References:

<sup>1</sup> Child Labour. (n.d.). Retrieved November 27, 2019, from <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/child-labour/lang-en/index.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Guarcello, L., Lyon, S., & Rosati, F.C. (2008). Child Labor and Education for All: An Issue Paper. The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth 1(2), 254-266. doi:10.1353/hcy.0.0002.

<sup>3</sup> National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. (2008). National child labour survey report. Retrieved from [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/clsurvey/lfsurvey.list?p\\_lang=en&p\\_country=RW](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/clsurvey/lfsurvey.list?p_lang=en&p_country=RW).

<sup>4</sup> Understanding Children's Work. (2011). Understanding children's work and youth employment outcomes in Rwanda: Report on child labour and youth employment. Retrieved from [http://www.ucw-project.org/attachment/child\\_labour\\_Rwanda20110630\\_120902.pdf](http://www.ucw-project.org/attachment/child_labour_Rwanda20110630_120902.pdf).