

Evaluation Summary: Combating Exploitive Labor Through Education in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Ethiopia Together (KURET) Project: Rwanda Country Report

Project and Evaluation Facts

Region/Country: AFRICA/ Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia

Grantee: World Vision/Rwanda

Project Duration: September 30, 2004 – March 31, 2009

Fiscal Year and Funding Level:

FY 2004 USD 14,500,000

World Vision Matching Funds USD 5,906,929

Type of Evaluation: Final

Date of Evaluation: 2009

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

Evaluation Management: Macro International

Evaluator(s): Martina Nicolls (Lead) and Lou Witherite

- Increased support for the education of target children by government institutions, communities, and households.

The project was designed to work closely with government actors, NGOs, and community-based organizations.

Purpose and Scope of Evaluation

The final evaluation examined project performance to date in relation to stated objectives. Specifically, the aim was to determine the project's relevance and fulfillment of objectives, to identify challenges and successes, to assess its impact, to provide recommendations to USDOL for future programs, and to share best practices.

Background and Context

Summary of Project Objectives and Focus

KURET was a four-year regional project that operated in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Ethiopia. The aim of the project was to withdraw and prevent children in HIV/AIDS-affected communities from exploitive labor work through the provision of educational services. The KURET project in Rwanda specifically aimed to withdraw and prevent a total of 7,000 children from exploitive child labor in affected communities. KURET/Rwanda operated in 25 administrative sectors in 10 districts.

KURET/Rwanda was guided by the following Immediate Objectives:

- Access to education for target children increased;
- Improved quality and relevance of educational services available to target children at risk of entering, or removed from, the worst forms of child labor (WFCL);
- Increased awareness of key stakeholders on the negative effects of child labor, the importance of education, and the relationship between HIV / AIDS and education;

Methodology of Evaluation

The evaluation was based on a desk review of relevant documentation, followed by a field mission to Rwanda conducted by Lou Witherite from October 5, 2008 to October 13, 2008 in select districts. The field work consisted of interviews, focus groups, and other information collection techniques with stakeholders including government representatives, volunteer citizens, children, parents of beneficiaries, teachers, district officers, and labor inspectors. The evaluation was carried out in accordance with the terms of reference (TOR), as prepared by Macro International with input from USDOL and other key stakeholders.

Evaluation's Main Findings & Conclusions

Performance Summary

At its conclusion, KURET has enrolled in educational services 7,372 children from HIV/AIDS-affected communities, exceeding the project target of 7,000 children. Further, the project has served to positively affect the national enabling environment through partnership with select ministries, as well as the local enabling environment through the mobilization of community based organizations.

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Nonetheless, as a consequence of a lack of an effective exit strategy coupled with financial constraints due to budgetary revisions, sustainability concerns remain evident, with stakeholders expressing reservations that the project ended prematurely.

Lessons Learned & Recommendations

Lessons Learned

- A four-year time frame is not sufficient to put in place the conditions for sustainable efforts to eliminate child labor;
- USDOL requirements for monitoring, evaluation, and reporting served to strengthen national capacity to track incidence of WFCL in Rwanda;
- Creating dependencies among project-supported beneficiaries is a concern and an effective exit strategy should be included within the project design; and
- KURET/Rwanda benefited greatly from the regional structure of the project and the support from the KURET Regional Office, which provided technical expertise and helped strengthen the project's contributions at the policy level and in the education and child labor monitoring arenas in Rwanda.

Key Recommendations

Following are some of the key recommendations for future child labor programming as presented by the evaluator:

- Explore additional ways for parents and community members to contribute to the costs of keeping children in school, and ease out of KURET support;
- Involve children at a deeper level, especially to identify and address problems of working children;
- Expand vocational training to reach more students, provide a broader offering of vocational skills, and train more vocational teachers in learner-centered methods and life skills;

- Incorporate school performance measures of individual children and project-assisted schools into the M&E design;
- Ensure that livelihood support components are embedded in the design of the project from the outset and employ a staff member who is an expert in income generation/livelihood support;
- Bifurcate responsibility for consciousness raising and policy advocacy efforts;
- Develop more creative methods for awareness-raising and involve an awareness-raising coordinator from the outset;
- Articulate a clear, focused, and strengthened HIV/AIDS strategy if it is to be a component of the project's mission statement;
- Build research components into child labor projects from the beginning, especially in addressing the needs of young children who are heading households, orphans, and the legacy of genocide;
- Establish links with some of Rwanda's 10 institutions of higher education; and
- Conduct an in-depth knowledge, attitudes, and practice exercise, followed by systematic follow-up to understand the impact the project's efforts to combat WFCL.