GOOD PRACTICES
TO END CHILD LABOUR

A collaborative tool for monitoring child labour

Information System for Monitoring and Assessing Child Labour (SIMETI-its acronym in Spanish)

Child Labour and Information and Communications Technologies

Country
El Salvador

Creation year and validity
At the end of June of 2013, the Information System for Monitoring and Assessment of Child Labour (SIMETI) was introduced. Currently, it has been suspended.

Responsible institution(s)
SIMETI was implemented by the National Committee for the Eradication of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, with technical assistance from the International Labour Organization (ILO). The inter-institutional coordination body was made up of representatives of the Government, employers' and workers' organizations, and civil society. The actions were part of the Road Map for the Eradication of Child Labour in El Salvador.

Within the framework of the Regional Initiative for Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour, eight factors have been prioritized with the potential to accelerate the rate of reduction in child labour and advance towards the achievement of target 8.7 of the SDGs.

As social challenges continue, the differential value of the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), to innovate in actions aimed at development and social inclusion in the countries, grows. ICTs can improve and make more effective the responses of governments and organizations for the fulfillment of fundamental rights. Therefore, they have the potential to reduce gaps in education, economy, health, work, etc. They help to produce and process, organize and analyze information in a cost-efficient way to make evidence-based policy decisions and subsequently assess them.

At the time, the Ministry of Economy (MINEC) assumed responsibility for the design and implementation of the system. For the operation, the Child Labour Unit assigned to the Information Technology Management Office was appointed. To date, this unit is not in operation, but it was responsible for the administration, coordination and support of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare of El Salvador (MTPS) for the use of SIMETI.

On the other hand, the MTPS maintained competence in monitoring the operational programming of the Roadmap. The other institutions of the inter-institutional coordination body (ministries of Education and Health, institutes of statistics and child protection, as well as the ILO) were responsible for feeding the system based on the information that each one produced. A quarterly monitoring was established and in certain cases, the frequency depended on the periodicity of the indicator.

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Currently, governance (agreements and committees) are being restructured, as well as the technical contact points that fed SIMETI.

Background

With the technical assistance of the ILO, the financial support of the United States Department of Labour (USDOL) through cooperation projects, and the commitment of the competent public institutions, as well as employers' and workers' organizations, El Salvador has maintained for several decades an action committed to the prevention and elimination of child labour, in particular of its worst forms.

In 2013, the project "Elimination of Child Labour in El Salvador through economic empowerment and social inclusion" was launched. The results of the project were defined in accordance with the Road Map to make El Salvador a country free of Child Labour and its worst forms and the Five-Year Development Plan (2010–2024).
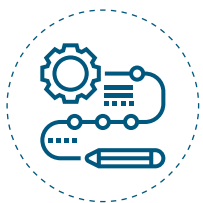
The project consisted of six key components: public policies, protection systems, knowledge management, municipal policies, livelihoods and education. In the knowledge management component, the project proposed the design and implementation of an Information System for the Monitoring and Evaluation of Child Labour (SIMETI).

Objectives of the practice

The objectives of the SIMETI were:

- Provide local stakeholders in the country with reliable, timely, valid and verifiable elements for knowledge management, based on continuous and sustained surveillance actions that allow appropriate decisions and impact actions in the short, medium and long term to identify and to locate cases of children and adolescents in child labour situations.

- Verify the conditions in which child labour is carried out for its registration and intervention.

- Guarantee that the corresponding attention is provided, with the required quality, to protect and remove girls, boys and adolescents from work and prevent recidivism.

- Make references to existing institutions in the territory according to the violation of violations of human rights identified in the cases.

Methodology developed

SIMETI is an instrument that was designed to contribute to the unification of information related to child labour, produced by public and private institutions related to the subject in the country.

This system collected data and indicators on the trend and evolution of child labour. For projections, it used information provided by macro-systems, such as censuses or household surveys, and it also made available documents and updated bibliography on the causes, consequences and the legal framework of child labour.

It developed routine processes related to surveillance and monitoring, in order to identify girls, boys and adolescents in child labour situations and provide them with care services so that, in the case of people under 14 years old, remove them from the activity and, in the case of adolescents between 14 and 17 years old, ensure protected working conditions in permitted activities.

SIMETI was made up of two modules: the Public Module and the Registered Users Module. The first was aimed at the general public and presented documents, news, indicators and analysis tools to help improve the level of general knowledge on the subject. This module had a starting menu based on which one could interact with the mentioned documents. It also included a predetermined list of indicators for child labour reports, analysis tools that allowed the exploration of data grouped by institution.

The second module was aimed at those people who had a username and password to enter. It contained several option menus: 1) Audit Menu, which allowed access to the report of the record of activities carried out by users in SIMETI; and 2) Analysis Tools Menu, through which the available databases and the administration of said databases were accessed, as well as the categories of documents, news, monitoring of the policy and intervention of the different components and projects, among others. The users had a manual for the best use of the tool.

The information databases provided by the competent entities took into account: the multipurpose household survey, in charge of the Ministry of Economy; the Family File, in charge of the Ministry of Health, which compiled information on the comprehensive health situation in families and the decisions taken in the matter; the databases with the baselines on child labour, which included both the population census and the Baseline Survey; and, finally, the School Census, performed by the Ministry of Education, which made it possible to know the quantitative reality of education.

Currently the MTPS is promoting the Labour Market Information System (SIMEL), which includes child labour as a thematic area of analysis and research. They are taking steps to articulate the competent information from SIMETI in SIMEL.

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Expected Results

The application of SIMETI allowed for continuous monitoring of the policy for the prevention and eradication of child labour, based on reliable and quality information that contributed to more timely and effective decision-making by organizations, both public and private.

In this way, the country could respond to social commitments to guarantee the rights of boys, girls and their families, and, before the international community, to comply with international instruments against child labour and the protection of adolescents in allowed jobs.

Challenges for the implementation

One of the greatest difficulties of SIMETI was the failure to achieve sustainability that transcended the governmental changes that periodically take place. A more detailed evaluation of the experience will provide lessons for those who wish to replicate the initiative.

SIMETI innovated with the creation of an information system installed on a WEB platform to capture, process and analyse data.

Criteria that identify it as a good practice

Innovation

SIMETI innovated with the creation of an information system installed on a WEB platform to capture, process and analyse data. It provided timely and quality information to users with competence in the fight against child labour for proper decision-making. It also contributed to the dissemination of the advances to the general public.

Relevance

One of the great challenges that countries have in the fight against child labour is to have reliable mechanisms that allow them to monitor both the evolution of the phenomenon and the actions that are implemented to address it. SIMETI became a timely and adequate tool to achieve this purpose, contributing to the monitoring of the national strategy against child labour.

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