

▶ INDEPENDENT CLUSTER EVALUATION PROJECTS SUPPORTING THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN FREE OF CHILD LABOUR - PHASE II

▶ Objectives of the projects

The independent cluster evaluation assesses the strategic contribution of six projects to support the implementation of Phase II of the *Regional Initiative Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour* (RI) taking into consideration the criteria of relevance, design validity, effectiveness, efficiency, and orientation towards impact and sustainability.

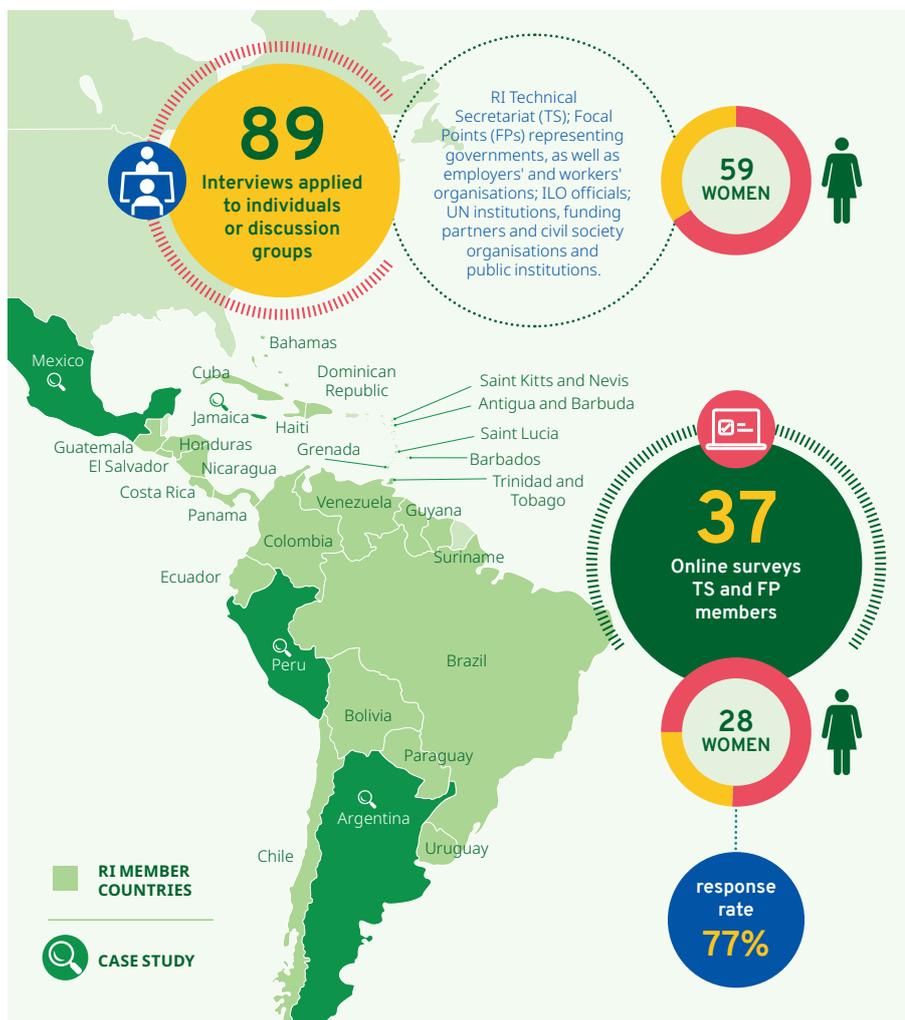
The objective of these six Projects (the "Projects") is to **improve the degree of implementation of national and regional public policies related to the prevention and eradication of child labour (CL) and the protection of permitted adolescent work** through a combination of actions related to:

advocacy to place child labour as a priority on national and regional agendas; capacity building of national actors involved in the fight against child labour; the promotion of knowledge generation; and the exchange of experiences and good practices between countries.



▶ Methodology

The evaluation, applied 100% remotely, is based on a participatory Theory of Change approach and has used the ILO-DAC principles for evaluation.



▶ 5 The expected results of the Projects



The RI positioned globally, regionally and nationally as an effective instrument to accelerate the achievement of Target 8.7



RI member countries have strengthened the preventive approach to child labour



Synergies and sustained dialogue have been established between countries and/or regions in the framework of South-South cooperation (SSC)



The RI consolidated as a space for knowledge generation, reference and convergence of actors



The RI is progressing in its consolidation and has effective and sustainable management to accelerate child labour eradication

¹ Although PAIRE V and AACID V end in July 2021.

► Conclusions



The RI is relevant as an intergovernmental and tripartite coordination mechanism to incorporate the child labour issue in the public agenda, to update and design national public policy instruments, and to build a shared vision on child labour prevention and eradication at regional level. However, governments are prioritising other issues to mitigate the negative effects of the pandemic and the RI is at risk of losing relevance.



The Projects are not only aligned with public policies for the prevention and eradication of child labour in Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC) countries, but also strengthen them by proposing a tool for the targeting of child labour prevention policies with a territorial approach (the Child Labour Risk Identification Model - CLRISK/ Child Labour Vulnerability Index - IVTI). Project designs are also fully aligned with the RI's axes of intervention; however, the level of alignment is lower with the results of the RI's Phase II Strategic Plan.



The main **advances** of the Projects are summarised in: the number of countries adhering to the RI, the number of countries that have implemented the CLRISK /IVTI, the number of spaces in which the RI is recognised as a reference point; the number of exchanges and knowledge transfers in the framework of SSC; the number of visits to the web page and the number of fans on Facebook and followers on Twitter. There are still **challenges** regarding the implementation of multisectoral actions in the countries in response to the CLRISK /IVTI, the replication of practices by the countries that exchanged experiences in the framework of SSC and the effective incorporation of the gender approach.



Gender mainstreaming in the projects has been insufficient. Training has only been carried out **for FPs on how to incorporate the gender approach in actions for the prevention and eradication of child labour**, and the **Gender and child labour toolbox and the Gender Strategy of the RI (EGIR)** have been developed, although given that the latter was only published in November 2020, it is still too early to analyse its implementation. No studies have been carried out on gender and child labour to make inequalities and gaps visible that could generate evidence for better policies. Neither have plans/programmes (or other products) or budget allocations been developed to demonstrate the effective incorporation of this approach, nor have partnerships been established with regional or national institutions specialised in gender.



In this period, the RI has been consolidated as an intergovernmental coordination model that is based on tripartite dialogue as the main strategy to accelerate national responses for the prevention and eradication of child labour and the fulfilment of Target 8.7 of the SDG and an intervention model that fosters smooth communication between the TS and the FP through mechanisms based on the intensive use of new information and communication technologies. The main challenges are to broaden FP responsibilities so that they have a greater say in the RI decisions, and to seek to mitigate the negative effects of high FP turnover.



The coordination of the RI with other UN agencies (ECLAC, FAO and IOM) has contributed to the realisation of the projects' outputs and outcomes, especially those linked to the implementation of the CLRISK/IVTI and the generation of knowledge. It has also been permanently articulated with the Ministries of Labour (MoL), through the FPs, and has been transversal to all the outcomes and outputs of the projects. However, the articulation has been weaker with other public institutions with competencies and influence on children and adolescents and with the National Committees for the fight against child labour, as well as with civil society organisations.



FPs have strengthened their capacities to understand the multidimensional nature of child labour, as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of the preventive approach. The challenge remains to mainstream the application of these increased capacities into concrete actions for the prevention and eradication of child labour in their countries. There is also a need to strengthen other types of FP capacities: mobilisation of funds, management and use of statistics, and advocacy with government and, in FP representatives of employers' and workers' organisations, with their own networks or constituencies.



Although it is estimated that the COVID-19 pandemic will increase child labour in LAC and will affect government budgets and international cooperation funds allocated to the fight against child labour, there are also internal conditions (the RI is an institution with the capacity to advocate and mobilise resources from international cooperation) and external conditions (start of the vaccination process and probable reopening of schools, that 2021 will be the International Year for the eradication of child labour, the development, by UN agencies, of knowledge and public policy recommendations to countries on how to mitigate the possible impacts of the pandemic on the welfare of children and adolescents, and the concern of donors about the potential impact of the pandemic on the well-being of children and adolescents, and the concern of donors not to roll back the achievements made in terms of child labour reduction in the region) that can be harnessed and leveraged by the RI to provide a timely and effective response in the fight against child labour.



► Lessons learned



The CLRISK/IVTI has limits to its implementation as it requires countries to have minimum conditions of availability and quality of statistical information and administrative records. It also requires, on the part of the Ministries of Labour, the capacity to access sources of information generated by other institutions and political commitment at the highest level to promote the model. In addition, the implementation of Phase II requires the existence of an articulated supply of public services and programmes in the selected municipalities.



The mobilisation of resources from international cooperation is a very complex challenge due to the following reasons:

- The resources that cooperation allocates for interventions by UN agencies in child labour in LAC are increasingly reduced.
- The RI's intervention model seeks to strengthen the capacities of country organisations to institutionalise the policy of prevention and eradication of child labour, which is not very visible and, therefore, could be less attractive to finance.
- It is very complicated to evaluate the impact of the intervention in terms of observed changes that can be attributable to the RI, and this type of evidence is increasingly requested by funding agencies.
- To carry out the RI's intervention model, the permanent coordination and technical assistance role of the TS is key, which requires resources to cover the costs of TS staff, and this funding destination is not very attractive to donors.
- In the context of COVID-19, international cooperation agencies may direct their funding in LAC towards other themes.



► Good practice



In Colombia, the Public Policy Line for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labour and Comprehensive Protection of Adolescent Workers 2017-2027 and in Argentina the National Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labour and Protection of Adolescent Labour 2018-2022 include strategies and activities proposed by the RI, explicitly mentioning the development of actions within the framework of the risk identification model (in Colombia the CLRISK is expressly mentioned).



The use of whatsapp has contributed to the consolidation of an intervention model that fosters constant communication between the TS and the FPs and also between FPs. Likewise, the actions deployed by the TS to integrate English-speaking countries in the communication spaces, providing them with simultaneous translations in virtual meetings or immediate translations on whatsapp, have contributed to their growing integration in these spaces.



The rapid response capacity and flexibility of the RI to adapt to the new context of the pandemic and not to delay planned activities. The PAIRE V and AACID V projects adjusted their activities to strengthen FP capacities, exchange experiences and prepare studies, orienting them towards the identification and analysis of the effects of COVID-19 on child labour in the region. Likewise, the lockdown and compulsory social isolation measures established in the countries motivated the RI to strengthen capacities for the use of social networks and access to virtual platforms of FPs.





► Main recommendations



Promote, RI member countries a greater use of the information generated by the CLRISK /IVTI.



To incorporate the gender approach more effectively in the intervention of the RI:

- carry out a diagnosis to identify the mechanisms, progress and limitations of the effective incorporation of the gender approach in public policies to combat child labour in the Ministry of Labour and other public sector bodies of the RI member countries;
- promote the collection of statistical information available in the countries to measure Unpaid Domestic Work and care work in the household and analyse the advantages and disadvantages of the CLRISK /IVTI being able to incorporate it into its model; and
- establish partnerships with key institutions in the field of gender.



Co-finance the position of TS Coordination, designate as TS Coordinator a specialist who is currently part of the regular ILO staff or designate an ILO specialist or technical expert to support the work of the TS (as part of their regular functions).



Carry out training actions aimed at strengthening the following FP capacities:

- mobilisation of funds from public and private resources and cooperation agencies;
- management and use of statistics and evidence-based planning; and
- advocacy (advice) in the National and Local Committees for the fight against child labour so that the prevention and eradication of child labour is addressed more effectively by the institutions that make up these committees; and
- in the case of FP representatives of employers' and workers' organisations, advocacy (advice) with their own networks or databases.



Regarding access to funding for Phase III of the RI, seek to involve, in addition to current partners, others such as the OAS, the WB, the IDB, UNICEF, the WHO, SEGIB, for which it is suggested to:

- incorporate child labour in other linked issues that are more of a priority for cooperation (such as the situation of Venezuelan refugees and migrants in LAC or the socio-economic recovery strategy in the face of the COVID-19 crisis); and
- incorporate child labour in a more global (programmes or initiatives) rather than regional dimension.



► The voice of the actors

"The ILO's greatest contribution is that it has been able to bring together actors that have not normally been allies: employers, workers, civil society and public institutions, actors that governments themselves cannot bring together".

FP government representative

"Actions with the UN agencies allow to improve knowledge generation towards the RI and to position child labour on the agenda of other institutions with responsibilities and competences in matters that are linked to child labour".

Member of the TS

"The evolution of RI should be that countries themselves take over decision-making. Greater involvement of governments, trade unions and employers should be encouraged. Cooperation has difficulties in financing projects, so the TS has to involve not only the ILO to commit its funds, but also the countries themselves, as they are mature enough to be able to take it on".

Member of the international cooperation

