

Introduction

An important part of the ILO-International Program for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) contribution to the construction of a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the War is linked to its intervention in the field of prevention and rehabilitation of children affected by the war (CAW)

The ILO-IPEC mandate to deal with the phenomenon of (CAW) derives from ILO convention no. 182. Art. 3 a) the convention defines the forced or compulsory recruitment of children as one of the worst form of child labour¹.

The ILO-IPEC, in collaboration with IFP\Crises and with the financial support of USA Department of Labour (USDOL), launched in October a major sub-regional programme entitled Prevention and reintegration of children involved in armed conflicts in Central Africa. Burundi, Congo, DRC and Rwanda participated in the project. The objectives of the first and preparatory phase of the project were to (i) Enhance the knowledge on the situation and needs of children involved in armed conflicts in the 4 participating countries through a Rapid Assessment Survey (RAS), (ii) increase the capacities at country level to tackle the problem of child soldiers and (iii) identify a common strategy for the second phase.

The second phase of the project started in November 2003 and covers the following Countries. Core Countries: Burundi, Colombia, Congo, DRC, Rwanda, The Philippines and Sri Lanka. Non-core Countries: Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Uganda.

The reintegration of former child soldiers is scheduled to be the priority of the project. There are two main alternative approaches, the first emphasizes the skills and capacities of the individual and the second involves broader community-based approaches.

ILO-IPEC contribution to the Programme of Action

The following table shows ILO-IPEC contribution in respect to selected domains of the Programme of Action:

Domain of the Programme of Action	ILO-IPEC contribution from June 2003
1.d) Ensure quality of access to education for women, especially girls;	Education is for IPEC the best alternative to offer to children withdrawn from the worst forms of child labour. A number of initiatives are on going worldwide to ensure access to basic and advanced education to children,

¹ Article 3(a) of Convention No. 182 mentions "forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict" as a worst form of child labour that should be prohibited and eliminated as a matter of urgency. From the records of the preparatory work of the Convention it appears that the choice of the words "forced or compulsory recruitment" was made after lengthy discussions. The only case that was clearly confirmed to be outside of the scope of the term was in respect of 16 and 17-year-olds that lawfully volunteer for service in the national armed forces. In respect of children recruited by forces distinct from the armed forces of a State, evidence generated by IPEC shows that the circumstances of recruitment by such forces in almost all cases rule out the possibility that such recruitment was truly voluntary.

	<p>especially girls, involved in the worst forms of child labour or at risk.</p> <p>As regards to the phenomenon of CAW, education is considered at the same time as an exit strategy for children demobilised from the conflict and a preventive measure for those at risk. Examples of intervention in this area are: refurbishment of school buildings, equipment or teaching materials, financial support for redesign of appropriate curriculum, recruitment of teachers or other staff needed, development of teacher training and related materials with teachers' organizations, provision of non-formal education to war-affected children, support for direct and indirect costs of schooling (e.g. fees, uniforms, school meals or textbooks) for a fixed period.</p> <p>IPEC is targeting 3,000 children to be prevented through education from being recruited as child soldiers in the above-mentioned countries. The number of the demobilised children that will receive education as a mean of reintegration depends on the age of the target group. Appropriate initiatives to facilitate the access to education to former girl child soldiers are developed (such as pilot projects to provide life skills training, catch-up education or similar, or provision of special support for those girls who are experiencing difficulty in getting access to reintegration programmes)</p>
<p>2.g) Include in development strategies special measures focussing on needs of women and children as well as groups with special needs. And 2.h) Strengthen, through development assistance in post-conflict situation, rehabilitation, reintegration and reconciliation processes involving all engaged in conflict.</p>	<p>It is widely recognised that the added-value of ILO in assisting the development of post-conflict situation is to offer rehabilitation services to the targeted population. IPEC is, therefore, intervening in the above-mentioned countries to offer socio-economic alternatives for a durable rehabilitation of children affected by the war. Examples of services offered by ILO-IPEC at this purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop the knowledge base for the economic reintegration of ex-child soldiers - Assessment of the educational and training needs both for targeted children and at community level - Facilitating and supporting the economic reintegration of children - Provision of catch-up education and

	<p>vocational training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision of grants for income-generating activities - Monitoring progress of income-generating activities - Special initiative for the reintegration of girl child soldiers - Prevention measures, including education - Establishment of child protection networks
<p>8.a) promote general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control, taking into account the priorities established by the United Nations in the field of disarmament.</p>	<p>ILO-IPEC, through counselling and training, is ensuring that the legislation in place is in line with international treaties obligations.</p>
<p>8.f) Support initiatives, at the national, regional and international levels, to address concrete problems arising from post-conflict situation, such as demobilisation, reintegration of former combatants into society, as well as refugees and displaced persons, weapon collection programmes, exchange of information and confidence building.</p>	<p>Interventions listed under points 2g)-2h) are designed and implemented in collaboration with, <i>inter alia</i>, other UN Agencies dealing with the demobilisation of ex-combatants, including children.</p>