

Independent Evaluation of Project Childhood MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Initiative Summary

Initiative Name			
AidWorks initiative number	INI940		
Commencement date	August 2010	Completion date	June 2014
Total Australian \$	\$7.5 million (2010-2014)		
Total other \$	Prevention Pillar: \$698,360 (from World Vision Australia)		
Delivery organisation(s)	Prevention Pillar: World Vision Australia (WVA), Feb. 2011-2014 Protection Pillar: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in partnership with INTERPOL, Nov. 2010-2014		
Implementing partner(s)	<p>Prevention Pillar: World Vision Australia (WVA)</p> <p>Protection Pillar: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in partnership with INTERPOL</p>		
Country/Region	Mekong Sub-Region: Thailand, Cambodia, Viet Nam, Lao PDR		
Primary sector	Governance; child protection; and criminal justice response		
Initiative objective/s	To combat child sexual exploitation in travel and tourism (CSETT) in target locations across the Mekong sub-region		

Evaluation Summary

Evaluation Objective:

The 2013 Independent Evaluation of Project Childhood aimed to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of project implementation and administration, to provide recommendations which would strengthen the projects management and coordination, and to guide DFAT's management decisions related to Project Childhood beyond 2014. The Evaluation:

- Assessed implementation progress within and between both the Protection and Prevention Pillars of Project Childhood;
- Identified and framed lessons learnt during the first two years of the Project activity (2011-2012); and
- Reviewed the continuing relevance of the Project in the context of DFAT's regional program priorities in South East Asia.

Evaluation Completion Date: 15 November 2013

Evaluation Team:

- The independent evaluation team was composed of two external evaluators: Dr Martina Nicolls, Team Leader and Evaluation Expert; and Shelley Casey, Context Specialist.

- DFAT oversight was provided by the following staff: Vi Than, Senior Regional Program Manager; and Nuch Supavanich, Senior Program Officer, with support from Michael Cole, Senior Regional Program Manager – Design, Performance & Quality, and the Mekong Hub - Aid Effectiveness Team, Hanoi.

DFAT's response to the Independent Program Review report

Overall, the Project Childhood Independent Evaluation, and resultant Evaluation Report, was thorough and yielded a fair and evidence-based assessment of the project and report. However, the initial draft of the report was highly critical and needed additional evidence and analysis to support its findings, conclusions and recommendations. Both UNODC and WVA believed that the first draft Evaluation report contained factual errors, failed to adequately acknowledge the progress made to date by each Pillar, and lacked sufficient evidence and technical understanding of CSETT to support its findings. DFAT considered feedback from UNODC and WVA thoroughly and provided selected comments and corrections to the draft, and made requests to the evaluators for further supporting evidence. The subsequent iterative editing process produced a final Evaluation Report which DFAT considered to be a comprehensive, accurate and balanced but critical assessment of Project Childhood.

- DFAT largely agrees with the findings of the Evaluation and its recommendations to narrow the Project's scope of activities for the remainder of the Project. The Evaluation makes eleven recommendations, of which, DFAT supports seven recommendations in full and partially agrees to the remaining four. When implemented, these recommendations will enable each Pillar to consolidate progress and deliver a contribution to combatting CSETT in the Mekong Sub-Region, while avoiding further investment in underperforming areas.
- Based on DFAT's internal Quality at Implementation (QAI) assessment, Project Childhood was categorised as an "Initiative Requiring Improvement" because of underperformance in the effectiveness criteria for two consecutive years. As a consequence a Remediation Plan has been developed to improve effectiveness of Project Childhood. The development of the Remediation Plan was informed by various sources of information, including but not limited to, six-monthly and annual progress reporting, QAI assessments, communications and meetings with implementing partners and key stakeholders, direct observation of program activities, and the findings and recommendations of the final Evaluation Report.
- On 14 October, the Remediation Plan for Project Childhood to continue with narrowed scope until the project end date of 30 June 2014 was approved by the FAS, East Asia Division.
- The final Evaluation Report will be shared with Project Childhood's implementing partners: World Vision Australia, UNODC and INTERPOL.
- DFAT will then begin meeting with these partners to map out a detailed work plan for each Pillar for the remaining life of the project. Government counterparts and other stakeholders will be sent the Evaluation report, along with a covering letter detailing DFAT's decisions moving forward.
- The response of both implementing partners to the draft Evaluation was that they would not agree to that document being published on the website without significant revision (partner agreement was at the time a requirement for publication on the then AusAID website). It is anticipated that the final version of the Evaluation will be acceptable to partners and DFAT will publish the document on the website in due course.
- DFAT will work closely with UNODC and WVA and carefully monitor implementation of both the Management Response to the Evaluation and the Remediation Plan throughout the remaining period of Project Childhood.

DFAT's response to the specific recommendations made in the report

Recommendation	Response	Actions	Responsibility
<u>Remediation to June 2014</u>			
Prevention Pillar (Implemented by World Vision Australia)			
<p>1. World Vision to discontinue Community Training</p> <p>The community training activities and NGO contracts under Component 1 should be finalized by the end of 2013, and resources re-allocated to Component 3: Child Safe Tourism Campaign.</p>	<p>Partially agree</p> <p>DFAT agrees with the Evaluation findings that the content and delivery of the community training are not suitable and sustainable in its current format. The training curriculum for community leaders, parents and duty bearers and children does not focus on the specific issue of CSETT. Rather, CSETT is treated as an optional component.</p> <p>With improved facilitator guidelines and a stronger focus on core messaging in the delivery of the specific CSETT materials, a more useful and sustainable product could be delivered.</p>	<p>The Prevention Pillar will immediately cease community trainings and draw on existing training materials to produce a revised set of contextualised CSETT curriculum and Training of Trainer materials by February 2014.</p> <p>DFAT will discuss with WVA their capacity to amend the training curriculum in the given timeframe.</p> <p>The amendment of the curriculum will also be informed by feedback from NGO partners who conducted the training at the community level on behalf of the Prevention Pillar.</p> <p>WVA will develop a clear strategy for how the community-level work can be integrated, and sustained into existing child protection systems or initiatives. This will include identification of the key child protection counterparts which can utilise these materials for future use.</p>	<p>WVA DFAT</p>

<p>Recommendation 2. World Vision to finalise the Child Safe Tourism campaign</p> <p>The Prevention Pillar should focus its remaining time and resources on strengthening and consolidating the Child Safe Tourism campaign at the regional and multi-country levels. Opportunities should continue to be explored for sustaining tourism sector training and the Child Safe Tourism website through national and regional tourism authorities.</p>	<p>Partially agree</p> <p>DFAT agrees that the Child Safe Tourism campaign should be finalised. However, as discussed above, DFAT does not agree that all remaining resources should be focussed solely on the campaign.</p> <p>DFAT considers that the Child-safe tourism campaign requires more analysis and rigour to be effective and should focus very specifically on CSETT.</p> <p>DFAT also agrees that a detailed plan needs to be developed to ensure sustainability at both the regional and national levels.</p>	<p>WVA will refocus its campaign messaging on the specific issue of CSETT.</p> <p>As there is only 6.5 months left of the project DFAT will discuss with WVA the options for sustainability, including appropriate partners at the regional and national levels</p>	<p>WVA DFAT</p>
<p>Protection Pillar</p>			
<p>Recommendation 1. UNODC to finalise the Training Strategy</p> <p>The draft strategy should be completed as soon as possible, in collaboration with government partners. This should include a clear articulation of the process of how the training materials will be institutionalised in each country.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>DFAT agrees with the recommendation for UNODC to finalise the Training Strategy for police.</p> <p>DFAT notes that activities related to police training have previously been described in the Project Implementation Design Document (PIDD) and Work Plan. However, up to the time of the Evaluation, there was no separate document that provided detail of the police training strategy.</p>	<p>UNODC has already developed the first draft of the "Police Training Programme: Strategic Approach" in August 2013. The document covers the development of police training curricula, training delivery, contextualisation process, pilot training, training opportunities and institutionalisation process.</p> <p>DFAT will request that the Police Training Programme: Strategic Approach be finalised in consultation with partner governments as soon as feasibly possible.</p>	<p>UNODC DFAT</p>

<p>Recommendation 2. UNODC to focus on consolidating police training, rather than expanding to judges and prosecutors.</p> <p>The Protection Pillar should use the remaining Project period to consolidate the work that has been done and contextualise the police training manual for each country, rather than moving to the next planned phase for prosecutor and judges.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>DFAT agrees with the recommendation to focus the remainder of the Project period on the consolidation of the police training materials.</p> <p>As it took UNODC over a year to develop Project Childhood's training curriculum for police, it is unlikely that the training materials for prosecutors and judges would be completed in the remaining timeframe of the Project.</p>	<p>UNODC has already begun scaling back and finalising its engagement with prosecutors and judges.</p> <p>DFAT and UNODC will discuss the process in supporting national counterparts to determine what aspects of the generic police regional training manual can be adapted and incorporated into existing in-service training programs on related topics, and how the issue of CSETT can be effectively incorporated into the standard training programs for new recruits and for investigators/superintendents. UNODC will look to develop more user-friendly, practical resource materials on CSETT investigations, such as simple guidelines and checklists.</p>	<p>UNODC DFAT</p>
<p>Recommendation 3. INTERPOL to discontinue the Operational Component</p> <p>The Operational Component has not yet begun and the level of mentoring and hands-on operational support envisioned in the Project design appears to be neither feasible with existing advisory resources, nor agreed by counterparts.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>DFAT agrees that the operational component (expert investigations carried out, offenders identified, investigated and arrested and prosecuted, and child victims appropriately supported) has not demonstrated concrete progress toward its intended output and outcome, and thus should be discontinued.</p>	<p>The Operational Component is within UNODC's mandate and subcontracted to INTERPOL therefore UNODC will manage the contractual termination of INTERPOL in the Project.</p>	<p>UNODC</p>

<p>Recommendation 4. UNODC to work with counterparts to identify legislative reforms that can be progressed within the project period.</p> <p>Given the limited time remaining, the Protection Pillar should focus on working with government counterparts to identify specific areas of reform (if any) that can be progressed within the remaining time frame.</p> <p>Continued advocacy and legislative review workshops are not likely to be an effective or efficient use of resources.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>DFAT agrees that the most effective use of the remaining Project timeframe would be to focus on individual country reforms, rather than regional ones, for the greatest impact and sustainability.</p> <p>The legal analysis reports conducted by UNODC have been well received by governments, and many of the recommendations have been accepted by government counterparts for incorporation into on-going reforms that extend beyond June 2014 (e.g. Penal Law Reform in Lao PDR and Vietnam).</p>	<p>UNODC agrees with this recommendation. It also notes that specialist resources from UNODC Headquarters can and should be used to support the implementation of this recommendation.</p> <p>DFAT will work closely with UNODC on the implementation of this recommendation.</p>	UNODC
<p>Recommendation 5. UNODC to promote integration of CSETT into existing ASEAN and Mekong mechanisms for bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation.</p> <p>Opportunities should be explored to integrate this work with legislative reform initiatives of the ASEAN Commission for the Protection and Promotion of Women and Children's Rights, and with the MLAT and bilateral/multilateral MoU work being supported by the United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking (UNIAP) and the Australia-Asia Program to Combat Trafficking in Persons (AAPTIP).</p>	<p>Partially Agree</p> <p>DFAT agrees that integrating CSETT into regional mechanisms could further cooperation on CSETT across ASEAN.</p>	<p>DFAT and UNODC will seek to introduce the CSETT work to existing ASEAN and Mekong mechanisms, look for opportunities within other DFAT initiatives, as appropriate. However, given the remaining timeframe of Project Childhood, AAPTIP still being in inception phase, and UNIAP beginning a new phase early in 2014, DFAT is realistic that limited progress could be achieved in the remainder of the project.</p>	DFAT
<p>Cross Pillar Activities</p>			

<p>Recommendation 1.</p> <p>World Vision and UNODC to focus their time, energies, and funding on their respective mandates for the remaining Project period.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>DFAT agrees that there is a difference in both conceptual and operational approaches of both Pillars that makes cross-pillar coordination onerous and has been shown to be not particularly effective in furthering the aims of Project Childhood.</p>	<p>DFAT will not seek or emphasise further cross-pillar coordination in the Project including the development of a cross-pillar M&E system. DFAT has already cancelled the next Project Childhood Coordinating Committee meeting.</p> <p>However, DFAT will encourage both the Prevention and Protection Pillar to continue their communication and information exchange as appropriate and relevant.</p>	DFAT
DFAT Programming Beyond 2014			
<p>Recommendation 1:</p> <p>If a multi-component approach to CSETT is maintained, all components should be implemented through one implementing partner, with a clear plan for aligning project activities to create synergies.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>DFAT notes that this concern was raised during the design appraisal of Project Childhood in 2010. However, it was recognised at that time that there was no single overarching partner that could implement the two conceptually and operationally distinct pillars of protection and prevention of CSETT.</p>	DFAT will consider this recommendation for any future CSETT programming.	DFAT
<p>Recommendation 2:</p> <p>DFAT's future support to CSETT should focus on the development of high-quality Child Safe Tourism communications materials, rather than community-based awareness-raising</p>	<p>Partially agree.</p> <p>DFAT agrees that the Australian government funded 2005-2007 CSETT campaign was successful in its simple and clear messaging and in garnering support from ASEAN Tourism Ministers and the ASEAN Secretariat.</p>	DFAT will consider this recommendation for any future CSETT programming— noting that any future standalone tourism campaign should be complementary to and coordinated with any broader CSETT prevention activities (eg information campaigns, awareness raising) in order to achieve the most effective and efficient use of funds.	DFAT
<p>Recommendation 3:</p> <p>DFAT's support to regional coordination on CSETT should focus on existing regional bodies, such as ASEAN and the Mekong Tourism Forum.</p>	<p>Agree.</p> <p>DFAT agrees that supporting coordination on CSETT to regional bodies will strengthen the embedding of CSETT into ongoing regional discussions on child protection issues more generally.</p>	DFAT will consider this recommendation for any future CSETT programming and seek to implement this action as per Recommendation 5 under the Protection Pillar.	DFAT