

ENHANCE*Project Newsletter



International
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Organization

*Enhancing National Capacity to Prevent and Reduce Child Labour In Vietnam

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AWARENESS RAISING & EVENTS

Music Against Child Labour Song Competition launched

In Hanoi on 27 April 2021, Viet Nam launched its Music Against Child Labour song competition to raise awareness during the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour, and prepare for upcoming World Day Against Child Labour. The competition was organized with support from the Project, in collaboration with MOLISA, and the Viet Nam Musicians' Association, The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Save the Children International, and Good Neighbours International. The event, which took place in Hanoi, gathered representatives from MOLISA, ILO, UNICEF, NGOs, musicians and media agencies. During her opening remarks at the event, ILO social protection expert, Marielle Phe Goursat noted that "although music alone cannot bring an end to child labour, it can highlight its impacts, and promote the rights of children through an accessible, universal medium".

The competition is open until 27 August 2021, with two categories for entrants: songs and concerts. Musicians, can submit a maximum of three entries to one or both categories. A panel of technical experts and professional musicians will select two first prizes, as well as four second prizes, four third prizes and four fourth prizes for both categories. Winners have the opportunity to receive certificates and cash prizes with a total value of VND168 million (US\$7,300), and the award ceremony will be organized on 21 September 2021 during the mid autumn festival. The goal is to bring attention to the issue through music, and inspire action against child labour in Viet Nam.



Sharing SCREAM experiences with Lao PDR

SCREAM (Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media), an arts based educational programme designed to raise awareness on children's rights and child labour, has proven to be extremely successful in Viet Nam. To share the success of the approach, the Project participated in a virtual introductory and experience sharing session on the methodology with stakeholders in Lao PDR. Participants at the virtual event included around 60 tripartite constituents, made up of members of the Lao NPA advisory committee and its working group. The initiative aimed to strengthen the implementation of Lao PDR's National Plan of Action (NPA) to Eliminate Child Labour and Promote Decent Work for Youth in Lao PDR towards achieving SDG 8.7. The session was appreciated as a good example of South-South cooperation, with Viet Nam implementing its commitments as a Pathfinder Country to share experiences in combatting child labour.



INTERNATIONAL YEAR FOR THE ELIMINATION OF CHILD LABOUR

Stakeholders in Viet Nam register action pledges to mark the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour

In 2019, the UN officially designated 2021 as the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour, with a goal to encourage legislative and practical actions to eradicate child labour worldwide and to urge governments and stakeholders to do what is necessary to achieve Target 8.7 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In Viet Nam, in addition to facilitating enhanced awareness raising activities throughout the year, the Project is supporting the Department of Child Affairs (DCA), the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI), the International Cooperation Department (ICD) and Viet Nam National University Law School (VNU-LS) to register Action Pledges with the Alliance 8.7 Secretariat in order to accelerate progress during this important year. Follow up support will be provided to implement and document the registered Action Pledges, by capturing human-centered narratives that arise along the way, learning from others and building upon experiences.

As part of its action pledge, VCCI will focus on improving awareness and understanding of child labour issues and related risks among business associations, enterprises and suppliers; and encouraging businesses to comply with regulations and codes of conduct related to child labour. To this end, a training course on child labour prevention and reduction will be organized for representatives of employers' organisations, business associations and businesses from central provinces/cities. Participants will include staff of business associations, SME employers, export production enterprises and business establishments engaged in relevant supply chains. Priority will be given to the Project's target sectors such as footwear, textiles, seafood, stone and wood processing, and handicrafts. Follow-up consultations will be conducted with selected trained businesses to support the identification and implementation of solutions to prevent labour law violations related to child labour in their businesses and supply chains. Support will also be



provided to develop child labour prevention plan and activities, and implement tools.

VCCI is also collaborating with ICD on an action pledge to organize a national level business and child labour forum. The event will be the third of its kind since Viet Nam became a pathfinder country, and the focus for this dialogue will be on child labour elimination in agricultural supply chains in the context of international integration, with an emphasis on exploring vocational training solutions. Participants will include SMEs and big brands, business associations, relevant government stakeholders, socio-political agencies, vocational training providers and institutions, community organizations and international organizations. The dialogue was intended to be held last year but was postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak. There are now tentative plans to hold the event in the second quarter of 2021, as part of the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour.

The Project is also supporting the School of Law at the Vietnam National University to organize a Conference on Combating Child Labour in ASEAN, in collaboration with the Southeast Asian Human Rights and Peace Studies Network (SEAHRN); and the Programme to Strengthen Human Rights and Peace Research and Education in ASEAN/Southeast Asia (SHAPE-SEA). The objectives of the Conference are to increase awareness among scholars, practitioners, public officials and corporate and industrial sectors on child labour standards and issues; to foster education on children's rights in Vietnam and Southeast Asia; and to ensure sufficient learning materials for the newly updated Master's Programme on human rights at VNU-LS. Materials developed from the conference will be published by the Project and disseminated to related local state agencies, social organizations and academic institutions for education, reference and other professional purposes.

Enhancing the employability of vocational training beneficiaries in An Giang

In An Giang province, 49 children who enrolled at Chau Phu vocational school and 20 children who enrolled in Cho Moi vocational school during the previous phase of the project are performing well. Chau Phu school has put in place a job linkage plan for their students to ensure their employability after graduation, and both schools have developed a strong partnership with enterprises in the province over the past year, which will help to promote opportunities for the project's targeted children after vocational training completion.

Several children who attended short-term vocational training during the previous phase are now in employment and self-employment, with one beneficiary having opened her own shop in An Phu district. The project provided tool kits to these children, enabling them to immediately practice their newly acquired skills during and after the training, which has greatly enhanced their employability. This integrated approach – access to vocational training together with ownership of equipment – has been identified as a successful approach to be replicated during the upcoming phase.



Piloting vocational training and careers counselling guidelines

The Project has been supporting the Directorate of Vocational Education and Training (DVET) to enhance the quality of vocational education and careers counselling in Viet Nam to better meet labour market needs. To this end, guidelines for developing vocational training curricula and undertaking career orientation sessions have been developed, pre-tested and finalized. To support the development of appropriate courses in line with guidelines, a survey of training needs and competency requirements for selected occupations was conducted with the participation of 40 enterprises and 400 workers. Furthermore, seminars assessing elementary vocational training programmes for selected occupations were held throughout December 2020 and 20 January 2021.

Based on results, Ho Chi Minh City vocational college has developed one set of training materials for air-conditioning repair and maintenance in accordance with the guidance, which is scheduled for implementation from May to July 2021. In parallel, the An Giang Vocational School of Economics and Technology has been piloting the development of two training programmes in poultry farming and disease prevention techniques, and Pangasius aquaculture techniques in accordance with the guidelines. To evaluate the effectiveness of the vocational counselling and enrolment guidelines, the selected vocational schools implemented careers counselling for students and workers in April 2021. The goal is to improve the quality and relevance of vocational training and careers counselling services across the country, to provide viable alternatives to child labour.

Maintaining and strengthening livelihood support in Hanoi

Following consultations and rapid assessments to determine livelihood needs in Hanoi, the project is continuing to collaborate with its partners to deliver livelihood support in five selected communes, namely Trung Hoa, Hoang Dieu (Chuong My district), Huong Ngai (Thach That district), La Phu and Duong Lieu (Hoai Duc district). To date, under the collaboration with Hanoi Cooperative Alliance (VCA), a partnership has been established with the People's Committees of the two communes of Trung Hoa and Hoang Dieu; an animal husbandry cooperative group and a taro/chive growing cooperative group have been established; technical training courses on animal husbandry techniques and taro/chive planting techniques have been organized and seedlings and pigs have been delivered to 26 selected households. In order to provide technical support to the established groups, two technical groups for the animal husbandry and the taro/chive cultivation have been paying monthly visits to support beneficiary households and will collaborate with local authorities to monitor the implementation of these models. This is expected to significantly contribute to the sustainable development of these activities. Moving forward, the goal is to build on these models with a view to scale up and replicate.



CAPACITY BUILDING

Enhancing collaboration with the cooperative sector

In the context of Viet Nam's global integration, enterprises in the cooperative sector are increasingly attentive to requirements to meet international standards and commitments on labour, especially in light of the prevalence of child labour in agriculture. There is therefore a need to advocate among the VCA business community on these issues, with attention given to the unique characteristics and needs of VCA, which require specific guidelines on child labour prevention tailored to cooperatives. To this end, the ENHANCE project has supported VCA to develop a practical and user-friendly manual on child labour prevention and elimination, which is appropriate for the use of cooperative members and VCA officials. The manual, which is currently under development, will serve to support the implementation of international labour standards pertaining to child labour, with a goal to sustainably prevent and eliminate child labour among agricultural cooperatives in Viet Nam.

Supporting the Alliance 8.7 pathfinder process

As a pathfinder country for Alliance 8.7- a global coalition to speed up progress towards SDG Target 8.7 to eliminate child labour, forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking- Viet Nam has committed to act faster and do more to achieve this target. In November 2020, The Alliance 8.7 Secretariat organised technical online workshops gathering for the designated national focal points from all Alliance 8.7 pathfinder countries. The aim was to provide pathfinder countries a platform to exchange experiences and to reflect on the pathfinder country process to date, including the monitoring of progress against agreed priorities, and to discuss the way forward. The ENHANCE project supported DCA, as the focal point for Alliance 8.7 in Vietnam, to participate in the series of meetings. With support from the project, DCA is currently completing its annual pathfinder progress report to document Viet Nam's efforts.

Circular approved and handbook developed to guide implementation of legislation on minor workers

The ENHANCE Project has continued to support the Department of Child Affairs (DCA), the International Cooperation Department (ICD) and the Work Safety department to assist in the development of a circular to provide guidance for executing regulations in the Labour Code 2019, pertaining to the employment of persons under 15 years of age. Following several rounds of revisions, Circular 09/2020/TT-BLĐTBXH, issued on 12 November 2020, was approved by the MOLISA minister in early March 2021. The circular provides guidance on provisions of the labour code related to minors, detailing the list of light work that children between 13 and 15 years old can perform; the list of work and working conditions from which minor workers are prohibited to engage in; regulations on overtime and work at night among minor workers and the employment of under 15 year olds.

The project will continue to support the dissemination of the circular to relevant stakeholders during the upcoming period. To further clarify provisions on minor workers in the revised labour code, the Legal Affairs Department of MOLISA requested the ENHANCE project to support the development of a Q&A handbook to share among DOLISAs, relevant ministries and employers' and workers' organizations. The hand book will raise national awareness on regulations pertaining to minor workers and provide a good reference source for government officials, social partners, businesses and communities. To date, a draft of the handbook has been developed and submitted for comments, and consultants are currently finalizing the handbook in accordance with the new Circular.

Strengthening capacity to tackle child labour in the fishery sector

The project has supported the Viet Nam Association of Seafood Exporters and Producers (VASEP) to organise 2 training courses to raise awareness among enterprises in the fishery sector on the updated content of the revised Labour Code 2019 pertaining to minor workers. One training session was conducted on 15 January 2021 in Can Tho with 108 participants from 43 companies, and another was conducted in Ho Chi Minh city on 16 January 2021 with 77 participants from 37 companies. The ENHANCE Project supported VASEP to recruit a consultant to deliver training for VASEP enterprises, and worked closely with the consultant and VASEP to provide technical support to develop the training agenda, content and methodologies. Due to the success of these training sessions, VASEP has requested that the project support the organization of further training for seafood enterprises in Northern provinces during the next period.



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UPCOMING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

- World Day Against Child Labour 2021
- Launching the National Action Plan (NPA) to prevent and reduce child labour (2021-2025)
- Updating M&E indicators for the NPA
- Implementation of policy dialogue on child labour, trade related obligations and agricultural vocational training
- Enhancing the capacity of Labour Inspectors and local agencies and organizations to detect child labour
- Updating the Direct Beneficiary Monitoring System
- Child labour training at Better Work factories and training for Trade Unions
- Conference on combatting child labour in ASEAN

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