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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

# Independent Midterm Evaluation of the Combating Exploitative Child Labor Through Education in Turkey Project: *Tarladan Okula (From Field to School)*

IMPAQ International, LLC

Cooperative Agreement Number: E-9-K-4-005 I



2008

**M** INTERNATIONAL INC.  
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<b>LIST OF ACRONYMS</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>I BACKGROUND AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Project Background	1
1.2 Project Description	1
<b>II EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 Evaluation Objectives	3
2.2 Evaluation Methodology	4
<b>III FINDINGS</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1 Introduction	7
3.2 Program Design	7
3.3 Project Design/Implementation	9
3.4 Project Partnership and Coordination	15
3.5 Project Management and Budget	16
<b>IV CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>21</b>
4.1 Lessons Learned and Best Practices	21
4.2 General	22
<b>V RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>ANNEXES</b>	
Annex A: List of Interviews/Meetings by Date, Time, Site, and Person(s)	
Annex B: Fieldwork Itinerary	
Annex C: Documents Reviewed	
Annex D: Stakeholders Meeting Agenda, Discussion Topics, and Participants	
Annex E: Summary Terms of Reference	

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

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CCT	Conditional Cash Transfer
CLU	Child Labor Unit
EI	Education Initiative
ESCC	Educational Service Coordination Center
GAP	Southern Anatolia Project
GOT	Government of Turkey
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILAB	Bureau of International Labor Affairs
IMPAQ	IMPAQ International, LLC
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
İŞKUR	Turkish Employment Organization
KTS	RTS in Turkish
MOLSS	Ministry of Labor and Social Security
MONE	Ministry of National Education
MSI	Management Systems International
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NSC	National Steering Committee for Combating Child Labor
OCFT	Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking
PCC	Project Coordination Center
PIO	Primary Schools with Pensions
RTS	Registration and Tracking System
SHCEK	General Directorate of Social Services and Child Protection
SYDTF	Social Assistance and Solidarity Fund
TBPPF	Time-Bound Policy and Programme Framework
TED	Turkish Education Association
TOR	Terms of Reference
USDOL	U.S. Department of Labor
YIBO	Primary Education Boarding Schools

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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With U.S. Department of Labor funding since 2004, *Tarladan Okula* (“From Field to School” in English) has worked to help eliminate child labor from seasonal commercial agriculture in four Turkish provinces. The aim of the project is to withdraw 3,500 children from such labor and prevent 6,500 more from entering it, as indicated by four main outputs:

- Facilitating access to suitable and available education programs matching the needs of each child.
- Linking families of seasonal child laborers with available social and economic service programs helping children to stay in school.
- Making children, parents, and communities aware of education benefits to children in (or at risk of) child labor.
- Providing the public sector more information about children in seasonal agricultural labor.

However, the project met significant problems: lack of agreement about how it should function in the field and what services to offer, difficulties in communicating and collaborating with its closest government partners, competition for leadership among the project headquarters staff. Because of these problems, the project finally began full field operations in early 2007. Since then, progress has been limited, but improving. Although its record on paper is still not impressive, the project has identified and tried to support more than 500 children for withdrawal from child labor via enrollment in boarding schools, and it provided support training for nearly 1,500 more last summer. The project also has identified and begun working with a wide range of individuals and organizations that can become the nucleus of an emerging constituency to oppose child labor in Turkish seasonal commercial agriculture.

The evaluation recommends that the project and its government partners resolve a current impasse about data sharing and then recommit, in both word and deed, to an authentic collaboration for withdrawing and/or preventing 10,000 children from child labor. As the first sign of this new work process, the evaluation recommends holding a retreat so that the project and all its partners can refocus attention by reconsidering the basic design of the project, deciding whether/how to implement support training in summer 2008, and addressing concerns of headquarters and provincial staff. If the retreat effectively revitalizes efforts over the remaining six months of the original term, the evaluation recommends a no-cost extension of the project for one year starting in September 2008. This way, the project may approach or even surpass targeted objectives and maximize the likelihood that its activities will be sustained.

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# I BACKGROUND AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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## 1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

IMPAQ International, LLC (IMPAQ) and its associate, Management Systems International (MSI), began Cooperative Agreement No. E-9-K-4-0051 with the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) on September 30, 2004. According to this agreement, IMPAQ and its partner undertook the design and implementation of a Child Labor Education Initiative (EI) project in Turkey.<sup>1</sup> The objectives of this project, along with other EI projects worldwide, include the following:

1. Raising awareness of the importance of education for all children and mobilizing a wide array of actors to improve and expand education infrastructures.
2. Strengthening formal and transitional education systems that encourage working children to attend school.
3. Strengthening national institutions and policies on education and child labor.
4. Ensuring the long-term sustainability of these efforts.

## 1.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project resulting from the agreement and undertakings—plus subsequent revisions—is called *Tarladan Okula* (“From Field to School” in English). Currently, it is working in four provinces (Ankara, Elazig, Gaziantep, and Sanliurfa) and hopes to expand to two more (Agri and Mardin). With a US\$6 million budget over four years, the project has sought to fulfill its objective to withdraw 3,500 children from child labor in seasonal commercial agriculture and to prevent 6,500 more from entering such work. It has pursued these targets by identifying children in (or at risk of beginning) child labor, working with them and their families, and improving the quality of formal education while expanding access to it. In particular, *Tarladan Okula* intends to “facilitate children’s access to suitable educational programs, link and/or provide families of seasonal child laborers with social and economic service programs, raise awareness about the risks of child labor, and provide the public sector with more information about children working in seasonal agriculture.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> IMPAQ International, “Turkey Child Labor Education Initiative: Project Document,” May 17, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> “Terms of Reference for an Independent Midterm Evaluation of Turkey Child Labor Education Initiative,” developed by Macro International and USDOL, November 2007, p. 4.

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## II EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

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### 2.1 EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

All EI projects are subject to midterm and final evaluations. This formative midterm assessment of *Tarladan Okula* will examine the progress of the project toward its objectives and targets, as outlined Project Background section and as highlighted in the Cooperative Agreement, Project Document, and related materials. It will consider activities that have been carried out so far and address the following topics: design, implementation, partnership and coordination, management and budget, and sustainability and impact; as well as lessons learned, best practices, conclusions, and recommendations.

More specifically, the overarching goals of this evaluation process are—

1. To help individual organizations identify areas of good performance and areas where project implementation can be improved.
2. To assist the USDOL Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT) to learn more about what is or is not working in terms of the overall conceptualization and design of EI projects within the broad OCFT technical cooperation framework.
3. To assess the progress of objectives relevant to the Turkish project.
4. To assess progress in children's working and educational status (withdrawal and prevention from the worst forms of child labor and enrollment, retention, or completion of educational programs).<sup>3</sup>

The evaluation will also consider the following:

1. Whether assumptions about the environment in which the project works have changed since it was designed (and, if so, how).
2. Whether project activities have been effective (and, if so, how).
3. Whether the project's original goals are still achievable (and, if so, to what degree).
4. Whether new goals may be appropriate (and, if so, which ones).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

## **2.2 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

The midterm evaluation was conducted by Dr. Frederick C. Huxley, an independent consultant working with Macro International Inc., via several interrelated activities. First, before departing for Ankara, Dr. Huxley reviewed key documents, including the Final Turkey Cooperative Agreement, the Logical Framework—Final, the Turkey EI Project Document (5/17/2005), the Work Plan (revised August 2005), the Turkey PMP (11/6/2005), various technical and status reports, and related materials.

Second, Dr. Huxley conferred by telephone with the OCFT representative, IMPAQ personnel in the United States and Turkey, and Macro to establish preliminary understandings about the evaluation process and to highlight priorities in its Terms of Reference (TOR). Then, he flew to Turkey to assess how the project is working on the ground. With help from project staff, he hired Mr. Mert Karabiyikoglu as his Turkish-English translator. Next, the evaluation team (comprising Dr. Huxley and Mr. Karabiyikoglu) visited key government ministries in the nation capital and at sites in each of the provinces where the project is working.<sup>5</sup> At those locations, the team collected project-related materials and conducted personal or group interviews with project members, government or nongovernmental organization (NGO) partners, and sometimes with child beneficiaries or their families; it also observed how those parties interacted with each other during the visits and interviews.<sup>6</sup> To guide and inform such activities, Dr. Huxley developed a matrix relating TOR questions to data sources and methods.<sup>7</sup> At the end of this fieldwork, he organized a stakeholders' meeting where project members and their partners (including a beneficiary and her father) discussed the preliminary findings of the evaluation and how the project has been operating so far.

Last, the evaluator assessed and integrated the desk review, fieldwork consultations, outside readings,<sup>8</sup> and related materials in producing a first draft of the report for Macro on February 24, 2008. The draft was then reviewed by USDOL and IMPAQ, who provided questions, clarifications, and comments in April and May, which Dr. Huxley addressed to produce this final report.

Accordingly, the evaluation involved using several methods: (1) review of project-related documents, (2) telephone and e-mail conversations with USDOL or IMPAQ representatives, (3) personal or group interviews, (4) observation of interactions—especially among provincial staff and beneficiaries, service providers, or government officials, and (5) review of social science literature about Turkish agriculture and child labor. Each of these methods alone would be insufficient, but a judicious mix of methods was used to represent and assess the project within the time, budget, field condition, and other constraints present. By contrast, professionally acceptable personal interview surveys or focus group discussions would not meet such constraints.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Please see Annex A: List of Interviews by Date, Time, Site, and Person(s).

<sup>6</sup> Please see Annex B: Fieldwork Itinerary for a more detailed account of the interviews (methodology and content) as well as their context.

<sup>7</sup> Please see Annex C: Evaluator Matrix Turkey CL.

<sup>8</sup> Please see Annex D: Documents Reviewed for all documents read.

<sup>9</sup> For more discussion of methodology, please see Annex B, especially page 2.

Three of those constraints merit special discussion. First, at the repeated urging of representatives from key government ministries, Dr. Huxley agreed that a Ministry of National Education (MONE) representative could accompany the evaluation team (at the ministry's expense) on some visits to the provinces where the project is working. The representative was to say (and show) that the ministries backed the evaluation; however, he would not take part in the interviews, which would remain under the direction of the evaluator. In practice, this agreement applied to about two-fifths (14/37) of the interviews, and the mere presence of the representative might have influenced the respondents in those cases. Even though the representative refrained from asking questions or volunteering comments, he might have caused respondents to say what they thought the Ministry wanted to hear, not to say what they believed might offend the Ministry, or the like.<sup>10</sup> Comparison with the interviews, however, does not suggest that they were thus affected. For example, the representative was present during all the interviews of teachers, principals, and other public officials in Sanliurfa, Gaziantep, and two-fifths of those in Ankara; likewise, he was absent from all such interviews in Elazig and from three-fifths of those in Ankara. However, the ways those interviews proceeded and the kinds of information they produced did not differ significantly from one set of interviews to the other.<sup>11</sup>

The second apparent constraint on the evaluation came from a decision by MONE and/or the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MOLSS) not to permit participation by provincial public officials in the stakeholders' meeting at the end of fieldwork on January 18. That decision prevented those officials from commenting directly on preliminary findings of the evaluation or from otherwise participating in the discussion at the meeting. It may also exclude their questions or comments about the draft report.

The third constraint on the evaluation was the excessively short duration of the fieldwork, which limited provincial contacts in Sanliurfa and Gaziantep to half those allowed in Elazig and Ankara. Overall, it also reduced the evaluator's opportunities for responding in a principled and timely manner to the many, and often opposing, influences on the evaluation. A sign of the joint effect of the short time and opposing influences was the declining number of interviews that were carried out at the beneficiary or school level during the fieldwork. In Elazig, the team interviewed a class of beneficiaries, a parent, and six teachers or principals; in Ankara, one class of beneficiaries and four teacher/instructors or principals; in Sanliurfa, one principal; and in Gaziantep, one principal.

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<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that the representative's presence could also have been an enabling factor: It showed that MONE supported the evaluation and, without it, there might have been no interviews at all (at least with teachers, principals, and other public officials). Furthermore, the representative was cooperative and even helpful; he provided useful information outside the interviews about MONE's e-school tracking of student attendance and performance and on other topics.

<sup>11</sup> In fact, the only interview of questionable value was the last one in Gaziantep, which was negatively influenced by the interventions of the district director and recurrent interruptions from school personnel and telephone calls.

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## III FINDINGS

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### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Turkey, *Tarladan Okula* is addressing the problems of child labor in seasonal commercial agriculture. Such work—toiling long hours under difficult conditions, handling pesticides or dangerous machinery without adequate supervision or protection—is considered among the worst forms of child labor because of the threats those activities present to children’s health, safety, or development, and because they interfere with the children’s schooling. The project is targeting 3,500 children for withdrawal and 6,500 more for prevention from such work in the provinces of Ankara, Elazığ, Gaziantep, and Sanliurfa. It pursues these targets via activities producing the following measureable outcomes:

1. Facilitating children’s access to available and suitable educational programs.
2. Linking families of seasonal child laborers with available social and economic service programs to help children stay in school.
3. Making children, parents, and communities aware of the benefits of education for child laborers and at-risk children.
4. Providing the public sector with more information about children working in seasonal agriculture.<sup>12</sup>

This report describes various aspects of the project’s structure, operation, and results.

### 3.2 PROGRAM DESIGN

Turkey currently is transitioning from a mainly agricultural to a more diverse economy and from a mainly rural to a mainly urban population structure. For example, in 1970 two-thirds (68%) of the population lived in rural areas; by 2000, 7 in 10 (71%) lived in urban areas.<sup>13</sup> Changes of this type and size typically have both beneficial and adverse outcomes; child labor is a frequent negative. Accordingly, the MOLSS Child Labor Unit (CLU), and various other agencies of the Government of Turkey (GOT), enlisted the help of the International Labour Organization (ILO) International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) in 1997. The GOT and IPEC then initiated a five-year process to consider, plan, and draft a policy document to guide dealing with child labor in an integrated and comprehensive manner. The “Time-Bound Programme and Policy Framework: Turkey (TBPPF)” is a result of that process.

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<sup>12</sup> IMPAQ International, Annex A, pp. 3–5.

<sup>13</sup> Child Labor Unit, “Time-Bound Policy and Programme Framework for the Elimination of Child Labour: Turkey,” Ministry of Labor and Social Security (draft, n.d.), pp. 7–8.

*Tarladan Okula* operates well with TBPPF. It focuses on children either working in or at risk of entering seasonal commercial agriculture—one of three target groups given highest priority as the worst forms of child labor in Turkey.<sup>14</sup> The activities of the project are consistent with TBPPF “key actions” for educational efforts. For example, the support training offered in all four provinces where the project is working helped to retain children in the educational system and to enhance their attendance and performance during the following school year.<sup>15</sup> The project has also identified more than 500 children now in child labor for enrollment in regional boarding schools (Primary Education Boarding Schools, known as YIBO). The project has also helped smaller numbers in each province benefit from Distance Learning opportunities. Poverty alleviation is also a key part of TBPPF, since family poverty is the largest single cause for children working in the worst forms of child labor.<sup>16</sup> *Tarladan Okula* helps alleviate poverty by informing families about the Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT), a GOT program where the parents receive money payments if their children have perfect school attendance for extended periods. The project also provides “incentives” (e.g., clothing, hygiene packs, school materials) to children in or at risk of child labor to mitigate obstacles to their schooling. In the long term, it tries to help families find other ways to generate income by supporting vocational training for parents or siblings beyond the age of compulsory education.

Though *Tarladan Okula* operates well with GOT written policies, it has had more difficulty in working with GOT actors, especially regarding project design and startup. For example, the National Steering Committee for Combating Child Labor (NSC) is the agency within the MOLSS that is responsible for high-level coordination and monitoring of activities to eliminate the worst forms of child labor.<sup>17</sup> Accordingly, NSC has approved where the project will work: In 2004, it was in the provinces of Aydin, Batman, Gaziantep, Mardin, Mugla, and Sanliurfa; by September 2005, it had changed to Ankara, Elazig, Gaziantep, and Sanliurfa (with hopes of expansion to Agri and Mardin). Yet among these provinces, only Sanliurfa was included in TBPPF’s six priority regions for working in seasonal commercial agriculture.<sup>18</sup> A second example concerns the Project Coordination Center (PCC) of the CLU, one of the project’s main collaborating partners. Relations with that agency were often problematic until early 2007, when revisions were implemented, permitting (among other changes) project caseworkers to operate more effectively in the field and more project budget to be spent on incentives for child beneficiaries and their families.<sup>19</sup> A third example of problematic relations concerns an impasse between MONE and the project that was ongoing during the evaluation fieldwork. As outlined in Annex B, the ministry wants the data and access code(s) of the KTS (Turkish translation of

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 44–47. The other two groups were both in the urban informal economy—children working on the streets and those working in small or medium enterprises.

<sup>15</sup> Besides the example mentioned in the text, those “key actions” are as follows: (1) increasing MONE’s awareness-raising efforts among supervisors and teachers, (2) creating a school-based monitoring system within MONE to track working children, (3) allocating larger quotas to working children in the regional boarding schools, (4) establishing centers for Distance Learning opportunities, (5) improving formal and extended vocational/technical training, (6) strengthening apprenticeship training, and (7) facilitating transfers from secondary-level vocational schools to universities. For details and illustrations, please see *ibid.*, pp. 50–51.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25, p. 51, et passim.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>19</sup> Kozbek, A. O., “Technical Progress Report,” Turkey Education Initiative Project, September 30, 2007, p. 15.

Registration and Tracking System [RTS]) database to compare with its own records about children in or at risk of child labor. Ministry representatives say that they believe the project has incorrectly registered some beneficiaries and that MONE was promised the system long ago. The current director general of primary education has even notified the project to suspend entering student data into the KTS, to enter any students identified after October 15, 2007 in temporary registers, and to send the list of students already in the KTS to the ministry for approval by October 26, 2007.<sup>20</sup> By contrast, project representatives say they are constrained by obligations to protect both the children’s privacy and access to the KTS software. They note that officials at MONE and MOLSS often change positions (and sometimes policies). They also called attention to a directive written in February 2007 (just as the revisions in project procedure and budget were being implemented), when officials at both ministries met to agree (without the project’s participation) that MONE would collect data about children working (or at risk of working) in agriculture and then provide that information to both PCC/MOLSS and the project.<sup>21</sup> While negotiations to address this impasse were underway during the evaluation, it continued to strain cooperation and collaboration at least through the stakeholders’ meeting.<sup>22</sup>

### **3.3 PROJECT DESIGN/IMPLEMENTATION**

As mentioned in Section 1.1, the four goals common to USDOL’s Education Initiative projects around the world are as follows:

1. Raising awareness about the importance of education and mobilizing support to improve and expand education infrastructures.
2. Strengthening education systems that encourage children to attend school.
3. Strengthening national institutions and policies on education and child labor.
4. Ensuring the long-term sustainability of these efforts.<sup>23</sup>

The answer to whether the project design adequately supports those goals is mixed, at least to date. Certainly *Tarladan Okula* and its implementing partners are informing the parents of children in or at risk of entering child labor, the parents of other children, and communities about the importance of education to children’s present and future welfare. For example, a project-implementing partner (the district governor for Hilvan in Sanliurfa) during the evaluation fieldwork compared the project’s work on child labor with his district’s family planning efforts. In both cases, he believed that families should see their children more as long-term “investments” (which would favor having fewer children but preparing them well for the future) rather than as “resources” for short-term gain or even survival (which would favor having many

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<sup>20</sup> Er, I., Letter B.08.0.IGM.0.08.01.03.020/16645 to the “From Field to School” project, October 15, 2007.

<sup>21</sup> Basaran, M. A., C. Delibas, Y. Ugurol, and Y. Ozden, “Statement” [regarding meeting on February 19, 2007 about *Tarladan Okula* activities], n.d.

<sup>22</sup> Following the evaluation fieldwork, the project gave the ministries access to the KTS, hopefully clearing the way for better collaboration among the implementing partners.

<sup>23</sup> Bureau of International Labor Affairs, U.S. Department of Labor, available at [http://www.dol.gov/ILAB/programs/iclp/technical\\_assistance\\_Education\\_Initiative](http://www.dol.gov/ILAB/programs/iclp/technical_assistance_Education_Initiative).

to get more income soon through child labor). The project also aims to mobilize social actors to improve education in Turkey. With reference to goal two, the project has worked to increase the capacities of teachers and administrators by providing special training about the needs of children withdrawn from or at risk of child labor, just as it has worked to increase the capacities of such children to attend, achieve, and continue in the schools.

Yet, the project is meeting difficulties with supporting the third EI goal, as it attempts to identify and track the performance and needs of such students and to influence policies on child labor and education. Some of these difficulties concern communication and collaboration with government agencies, as has been highlighted above, and will be discussed in greater detail. But it now seems clear that such difficulties have significantly retarded *Tarladan Okula's* pursuit of outcome targets and that the project has barely begun to consider the long-term financial, institutional, and social sustainability of its efforts.

At midterm, the project is pursuing its purpose of withdrawing/preventing children from working in seasonal commercial agriculture through education. For example, it has worked with government agencies to sensitize teachers and administrators about child laborers and how they can best be taught. It has also given support training, incentives to remove obstacles, and other forms of help to children withdrawn from or prevented from entering child labor. It has also helped those children's parents or other family members in learning different vocational skills and, sometimes, to get new jobs.

But *Tarladan Okula* is far behind schedule in achieving important outputs. For example, the project targets withdrawing 3,500 children working in agricultural child labor or presumed to be doing so, because they are not in school and live in areas with high concentrations of children and/or families in such work.<sup>24</sup> This total target is divided into the following four subgroups:

- Groups 1 and 2 comprise children aged 6 to 17 who have either never been to school (n = 500) or were in school but dropped out (n = 500).
- Group 4 comprises children aged 14 to 17 who have completed primary school and left the educational system (n = 500).
- Group 5 comprises children aged 6 to 14 who attend primary school for part of the calendar year, but are absent in the beginning (fall), the end (spring), or at both ends of the school year (n = 2,000).<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> This presumption—that boys and girls are in child labor because they don't go to school and they reside where many others are actually in child labor—is not sufficient for identifying members of the target group. Please see footnote 30.

<sup>25</sup> IMPAQ International, pp. 26–29. Group 3 comprises 6,500 students in school, but at risk; so they are the children that the project seeks to prevent from entering child labor.

For the project to say that it has “withdrawn” any member of these subgroups, it must show that the child both has received a project-related educational service (e.g., been enrolled in a school, formal apprenticeship program, or the like) and either has left the work situation or (if an older child) has continued working, but in an improved environment.<sup>26</sup> By the end of September 2007, the project had completed three of its four scheduled years and should have withdrawn a total of 2,400 beneficiaries across the four targeted subgroups. The Technical Progress Report of that date,<sup>27</sup> however, showed that the project had in fact withdrawn only nine beneficiaries, less than 1% (9/2,400) of the expected output.

One obvious reason for this shortfall is that the project was not able to operate effectively in the field until early 2007, when its revised procedures and budget began to be implemented. Another reason is that the criteria for withdrawal—combining both the legal and practical conditions—demand close collaboration among the project, MONE, and MOLSS; such collaboration has not exactly been a hallmark of *Tarladan Okula* so far. For example, Section 3.2 mentioned that the project has notified MONE of more than 500 beneficiaries who can be considered “withdrawn” after the ministry enrolls them in regional boarding schools.<sup>28</sup> That change would markedly improve the project’s record of achievements.

Perhaps another, less obvious reason for the project’s shortfall in pursuing withdrawal targets is how it has identified beneficiaries. It usually starts with a list of children whom teachers, administrators, or official records suggest should be attending school. Project caseworkers use these lists and associated information in trying to find the missing students.<sup>29</sup> Once they are successful, the caseworkers seek to interview the children and/or their families for information about the beneficiaries, the families, and what support the children need to return to school. Caseworkers then enter this data via templates in the KTS database to permit tracking the beneficiaries, project, or other interventions to help them, and what happens with the children over time. For example, with project support, the child returns to school, stays there, and performs well.

Accordingly, to identify beneficiaries, the project typically starts with an effect (absence from school) and then proceeds “backward” to the cause (working in child labor). This procedure frequently “works” because of the functional, definitional, and logical links between child labor and school attendance/performance.<sup>30</sup> However, relying mainly on this procedure is somewhat like treating the symptoms without addressing the disease. To keep this analogy from becoming a parallel, the project and its partners should also think “forward.” For instance, they should consider larger changes in economy and population structure (such as contract farming and other developments in agriculture), which lead to consequences (such as child labor), which will lead

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<sup>26</sup> Seroka, M., “Turkey,” e-mail message of June 23, 2008.

<sup>27</sup> Kozbek, p. 13.

<sup>28</sup> The project has done less poorly with regard to targets for preventing at-risk children from leaving schools: By September 2007, it had achieved 37% (1,491/4,000) of its expected output for the end of the third project year.

<sup>29</sup> A supplemental method used for finding child laborers is asking for help from the neighbors near where the children and their families are registered.

<sup>30</sup> However, it does not always “work”: In several interviews the evaluator learned of children who were not in school, but apparently not in the worst forms of child labor either. They were at home; they were not doing work harmful or hazardous to their health, safety, or development; and they were not in seasonal commercial agriculture.

to more consequences (such as absences or diminished performances of children at school).<sup>31</sup> That rethinking, along with the project's ongoing activities, may help to remind project members and partners that this is *not* a project focused on education, despite its many ties to people and institutions involved in that important activity. It is, instead, a project focused on child labor and which uses education *as a means* to withdraw/prevent children from work that is harmful or hazardous to their present and their future.<sup>32</sup>

The project's purpose, beneficiary and output targets, and interventions seem mostly appropriate, but extremely difficult to orchestrate in Turkey within the original timeframe. Besides the issues of province choice and beneficiary identification discussed above, project goals and procedures seem feasible from a "pure design" standpoint, as if one could abstract contextual features.<sup>33</sup> In the real world, however, context counts. Some of the contextual factors influencing the development of *Tarladan Okula* pertain to relationships between the United States and Turkish governments or between project staff and officials in key GOT ministries; they will be considered as issues of project partnership and coordination in Section 3.4. Other factors pertain to the capacities of project staff and will be discussed as issues of management in Section 3.5. It is perhaps sufficient to say here that all factors, design or context, would have needed to combine just right to achieve targeted outputs within budget and on the original schedule.

Considering the information used above in discussing EI goals and project outputs, *Tarladan Okula* seems able to measure results and other data fairly accurately. It uses the visits and related efforts of its caseworkers to gather and refine such information and to respond to the careful

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<sup>31</sup> For illustrations of this type of thinking, please see Aydin, Z., "The New Right, Structural Adjustment and Turkish Agriculture: Rural Responses and Survival Strategies," *The European Journal of Development Research*, 14(2), 183–202, 2002. See also Keyder, C., and Z. Yenal, "Rural Transformation Tendencies and Social Policies in Turkey in the Post-Developmentalist Era," pp. 357–382 in A. Kose, et al. (eds.), *Kuresel Duzen: Birikim, Devlet ve Siniflar, Iletisim*, Istanbul, 2003. Thanks to Mert Karabiyikoglu for highlighting these references.

<sup>32</sup> The project already attempted a step in this direction by commissioning a Target Population Survey to obtain information on agricultural child labor in the Gaziantep, Mardin, and Sanliurfa provinces. Unfortunately, the design for this survey netted a sample of just 79 working children, about half (48%) working in agriculture. The problem of an extremely small sample size was then compounded by a failure to distinguish child work from child labor, resulting in a study that does little to illuminate the intended topic. Please see Growth from Knowledge Group, "Child Labor in Turkey: Findings from Three Provinces—Gaziantep, Mardin, and Sanliurfa" (draft), Istanbul, 2006, p. 26, et passim.

<sup>33</sup> To project a "best case" scenario (or timeline of events possible in the future) from these remarks, the discussion above has highlighted a six-month period (March to August 2007) when the project was able to work relatively effectively in the field. There are also relatively clear data for this period indicating that the project withdrew nine beneficiaries from child labor and prevented another 1,491 at-risk children from entering such work. Further, the project has claimed that it was working then with more than 500 additional beneficiaries, mostly in Group 5, who were in child labor for at least part of the school year, but could be "withdrawn" once MONE registered them in boarding schools. Supposing that the students were in fact registered and the project was able to sustain those levels of effectiveness over the following year, then it would withdraw over four-tenths (1,527/3,500) of the original target for that category, and over two-thirds (4,475/6,500) of the prevented target, by the planned end-date of the project in September 2008. Continuing the same scenario with a no-cost extension of one year, the outcomes would be 72% (2,445/3,500) of the withdrawn target and 115% (7,455/6,500) of the prevented target—not bad for a project that could not work effectively in the field for the first 2.5 years of its term.

monitoring of periodic reports by the USDOL project officer.<sup>34</sup> IMPAQ has also frequently expressed a desire to learn USDOL requirements and to respond appropriately to them. For example, the project monitors the working status of beneficiaries via several paths. One is through caseworker visits and interviews with beneficiaries and their families. Another is by recording in the KTS database the status of individuals and what services have been provided to them. A third, more indirect way of tracking working status is by following attendance and performance of beneficiaries at school. Caseworkers regularly confer with teachers and administrators who have been trained by the project to follow and report on how former or potential child laborers are doing.<sup>35</sup> However, the project could use this ability more efficiently. For example, during discussion at the stakeholders' meeting on January 18, the evaluator noted that one provider of support training had documented positive impacts of her company's program by showing that the school attendance and the performance of participating children had improved the next year. Project staff or providers in other provinces then said that their trainings also had a positive impact because of the high attendance rates of participants during the training. However, high attendance during training is not sufficient to demonstrate its impact on subsequent behavior; one needs to show how attendance at a school or other education program after the training is better than it was before. Narrative reports of teacher or administrator assessments about student behavior after the training are one way to do that;<sup>36</sup> even better would be to compare individual and/or group attendance rates (or test scores, grades, etc.) before and after the training and then tabulating the number and size of improvements. The project says that it tracks beneficiaries for six months following an event/intervention, so it may have data to document impacts in this way. If that is correct, a quantitative demonstration of such impact would be more compelling than just a narrative report.

With regard more specifically to the KTS database, some background seems appropriate. The KTS is the Turkish-language version of IMPAQ's Registration and Tracking System (RTS).<sup>37</sup> On the basis of evaluation observations and interviews, KTS is an Oracle-based system that contrasts with the Student Tracking System (STS) that has been used by other EI projects; it is based on Microsoft Access or Excel. The STS identifies beneficiaries by names (first and last), which can be a problem in countries where several persons may have the same combination of first and last names, a likelihood that increases with larger groups (n = 10,000, as with *Tarladan Okula*). The KTS avoids this problem by identifying beneficiaries by their Republic of Turkey ID, a unique 11-digit number used for the national census and by other government agencies (MONE has used it since September 2007 for tracking student absences and tardiness via its e-School system and database). Furthermore, the KTS should permit users to associate many fields of data to describe a beneficiary's case history; for example, multiple periods of enrollment or non-enrollment at schools, performance at the schools, project services provided to the beneficiary, services for the beneficiary's family.

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<sup>34</sup> In fact, following the question-and-answer dialog between the project officer and IMPAQ in those reports has been one of the more informative activities of the evaluation.

<sup>35</sup> IMPAQ, pp. 2 and 5.

<sup>36</sup> For example, see Pusula Private Training, "Elazig Support Training Evaluation Report: Schools Contacted for Follow-up on Support Training," (n.d.).

<sup>37</sup> IMPAQ International, "Annex C: Registration and Tracking System (RTS) Description," pp. 1–11.

The system can apparently also be used to show some indicators of educational quality. For example, it can show the student/teacher ratio at a school, the percentage of teachers there who use improved methods of instruction, and the school's Internet connectivity.<sup>38</sup> In those ways, it supplements the project's more direct efforts to improve educational quality through training sessions that raise teacher and school-administrator understanding of child labor and how it can be addressed. Both the training and the KTS, then, should help make schools (and education) more relevant, interesting, and attractive to students at risk of entering child labor. A 1999 Turkish survey found that the largest percentage (31%) of children aged 6 to 17 cited "disinterest in education" as the main reason for non-enrollment or dropping out of school. Smaller percentages cited economic reasons—"inability to afford school expenses" (23%), "having to assist the family in household matters" (8%)<sup>39</sup>—suggesting that the "push" of perceived poor quality in education may combine with the "pull" of wages or other income to move children out of school and into seasonal commercial agriculture.

Yet the very richness and complexity of the KTS may also limit its use or contribute to other problems. For example, only some staff at the project headquarters, or at IMPAQ's home office in the United States, have access codes permitting them to manipulate data in that system. For this reason, all tabulations of project data in the provinces that were observed by the evaluator—such as those used to make weekly reports of activities with beneficiaries and partners—were done via a parallel system of spreadsheets in Excel. Having to store data in one system and manipulate it in another add to the project's financial and administrative burdens. In addition, the restriction of KTS access limits the capacities of provincial staff for quantitative analysis, and that, in turn, may reveal why they did not urge partners to demonstrate support-training impacts quantitatively. The restriction of access probably also contributes to the database problem with MONE: A project that refuses to allow full access to employees supplying data to the system will likely be reluctant to share it with an outside agency, even if it is a key partner in design, implementation, and related activities.

With regard to other design/implementation issues, it seems useful to document some additional information revealed during fieldwork. The father of two at-risk children interviewed at Mahmutlu/Elazig works as a shepherd for two-thirds of the year. When he took herds to northeastern Turkey during past spring seasons, the whole family came along to help. However, a year and a half ago, the group of families to which he belongs decided that changes in transport (probably trucking the herds rather than walking with them to summer pastures) would allow only fathers (or fathers and some mothers) to move, leaving the children at home and in school under the care of other mothers or related family members. "Elazig is not Urfa," he said, contrasting population movements in the two provinces. This information reveals important differences among families working in seasonal commercial agriculture (broadly defined to include animal raising as well as cultivation); it suggests that some forms of sub-national social organization may effectively circumvent child labor. This insight might be useful if the project extends operations to Agri and Mardin, where larger segments of the population retain such organization and work in herding or other types of animal production.

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>39</sup> Child Labor Unit, p. 17.

### 3.4 PROJECT PARTNERSHIP AND COORDINATION

*Tarladan Okula* has many partners, encompassing at least three types of partnership. One type is with private sector or NGO subcontractors, such as the different tutoring services that provided support training in the provinces last summer or the Utopya NGO that held a summer camp for some beneficiaries in Ankara province. The second type is with government agencies at local, district, provincial, or national levels. And the third is partnership with international bodies, such as ILO-IPEC. Overall, the project seems to have met few problems in initiating such partnerships; the main difficulties have been in sustaining some of them.

Subcontractor relationships seem to have been effective in operation and positive in tone. For example, each of the tutoring services interviewed in the provinces spoke favorably of what they had done last summer with project support. All had some evidence to indicate that the training—a combination of academic review courses and guidance counseling—had positive effects on the participants' schooling (though none provided a clear, quantitative demonstration of that, as discussed earlier). As for subcontractor partnerships at the national level—for example, to provide clothing and hygiene packs as incentives—relationships between suppliers and project headquarters also seem cordial and productive. (The cost-effectiveness of these and other project activities will be addressed shortly.) Staff interviews and project reports<sup>40</sup> indicate that the same was true of the approximately one-year relationship between the project and the Turkish Education Association (TED). This NGO originally hired and supported all field staff (provincial coordinators and caseworkers) for the project's Education Service Coordination Centers (ESCCs), but it seems to have met increasing difficulties over time in meeting its side of the agreement. IMPAQ then formed a subsidiary, IMPAQ Consultancy, which hired all the provincial staffs when TED amicably ended its ties with the project in December 2006.

Partnerships with government agencies, by contrast, have been a lot more varied in effectiveness and tone. As prior discussion in this report has indicated, relationships with key GOT agencies at the national level—such as the PCC and broader CLU at MOLSS or the General Directorate of Primary Education at MONE—have often been problematic. During the first two years of project operation, this might have been because of different understandings of the responsibilities of USDOL and the GOT under a Cooperative Agreement like *Tarladan Okula*, where two private firms (IMPAQ and MSI) designed and have been implementing the project.<sup>41</sup> Those differences, however, were supposedly resolved by the revisions implemented in early 2007, which authorized more incentives and enabled project caseworkers to visit schools and families, track beneficiaries and interventions, etc. Problems in communication and collaboration emerging since then have many apparent causes. For example, project headquarters staff call attention to frequent shifts of persons and responsibilities in the ministries, requiring repeated meetings to educate new staff about the project. Ministry officials call attention to what is perceived as reticent communication from the project headquarters; these reciprocal feelings have led to suspicion and frustration on both sides. The MONE/project impasse about the KTS and database

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<sup>40</sup> For example, please see A. Kozbek, "Status Project Report," Turkey Education Initiative Project, June 30, 2007, General Comments and Clarification Questions and Responses No. 5.

<sup>41</sup> Interview with Mr. Christopher Krafft, Labor Attaché, U.S. Embassy/Ankara, January 8, 2008.

seem to be a current manifestation of that miscommunication. Relations between project staff and MONE representatives at provincial levels tend to mirror what happens at the national level, although perhaps they are moderated somewhat by the smaller scale of activities involved and by the greater personal contacts between the parties interacting.

But partnerships between project provincial staff and district representatives, or such staff and local municipalities, seem much more cooperative and effective overall. For example, the district MONE representatives at Kovancilar/Elazig, at Suruc/Sanlıurfa, and at Gaziantep City/Gaziantep all spoke warmly and at length about their appreciation for what project staff had accomplished in their areas. Other government agencies at these levels—such as the district governor in Hilvan/Sanlıurfa or the deputy director of İŞKUR (the Turkish Employment Organization) in Gaziantep—also knew about the project and supported for it, even though they were not yet contributing directly in major ways to its activities.

Partnership with ILO-IPEC has been less extensive and concrete. Although *Tarladan Okula* often is a good fit to the TBPPF (as discussed in Section 3.2) and the Project Document hoped for more synergies in the future,<sup>42</sup> the actual division of labor between ILO and the project seems more like kindred spirits on autonomous paths. For example, the project's provincial coordinator in Elazig contrasted ILO support for a child labor effort in the city with project headquarters' support for the related work he and his staff were doing in seasonal commercial agriculture. He said that the ILO members had received frequent visits from the national office in Ankara and were allowed to discuss their work in local media, which led to higher esteem from provincial officials and better working relations. By contrast, the few visits from project headquarters staff (who never went to district sites) and project restrictions on talking with local media had led several provincial and local officials to "look down" on the project and say, "IMPAQ is foreign." Between the project's provincial staff and the local ILO project office, relations accorded with accepted professional standards (the ILO office had already closed), but had not been deep or close.<sup>43</sup>

### **3.5 PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET**

Since this report has addressed the management of project relations with Turkish government agencies in the preceding section, it will now focus on apparent management strengths and weaknesses within the project.

By fall 2007, relationships within the project headquarters, between the headquarters and staff in the provinces, and between the project and some of its partners had become strained by differences between the most senior IMPAQ hire (Project Director Kozbek) and the most senior MSI hire (Education Specialist/Deputy Project Director Akkok). In December, Dr. Akkok left the project. Widely viewed as technically qualified and competent, the remaining staff now seem to function more coherently, at the workplace and in more social settings (such as at lunches and

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<sup>42</sup> IMPAQ International, pp. 48–49 and 71.

<sup>43</sup> These remarks about project-ILO coordination of implementation and other activities are probably strongly influenced by timing: The ILO-IPEC project on urban child labor in Elazig had already closed, and the one on child labor in seasonal commercial agriculture in Adana province was in closeout phase during the evaluation fieldwork.

dinners), in their own views and in those of others. While a former management weakness is becoming a strength, the headquarters office also has lost one-fifth of its membership as well as important expertise, particularly on Turkish education. A second management strength of the project is apparent between the headquarters and the provincial offices, and between the provincial coordinators and the caseworkers under their management. By and large, provincial offices have established and sustained cordial and effective work relationships with district and local officials, with beneficiaries and their families, and with provincial and local partners. Thus *Tarladan Okula* has been markedly successful at managing what the Project Document calls “the main design concept of the project”—the system of caseworkers and procedures “that helps to identify, recruit, and deliver agricultural child laborers to the education system.”<sup>44</sup>

That is not to say the project is without management weaknesses, even within the relationships just described: *Provincial staff complain that procedures such as the reimbursements for field expenses take too long.* One provincial coordinator even claimed that half of his monthly salary was fronted to cover the expenses of his staff while he awaited reimbursement for receipts submitted to headquarters. Since there is only one financial and administrative manager at project headquarters to process and reimburse all the provincial staffs, it seems that she could use an assistant (part-time, if need be) for such routine, but necessary, tasks. *Transport is another issue with field staff, particularly in Ankara province,* where project sites can be hundreds of kilometers apart and public transportation can be sparse. A second management weakness relates more to national issues and might have played a part in the intra-headquarters struggle resolved last December. The project director’s leadership style, both in attitude and behavior, is perceived by some as “reticent”—compartmentalized and bureaucratic, information-hoarding rather than information-sharing. Mr. Kozbek (and perhaps others as well) apparently sees it as “professional.” Given the history of issues between the project and the ministries, as well as the reported adversarial competition for leadership within the headquarters staff, it is not surprising that the project director would be cautious and not very forthcoming. But the project may soon enter a new phase, where it must produce results rapidly to demonstrate its capacities; thus, the project leader will need to show dynamism, actively recruit allies, and let others share credit for project successes. Otherwise, caution and reticence may appear less a judicious, prudent professionalism and more an attempt to dodge responsibility for diminished achievement.

With regard more specifically to budgetary matters, project interventions seem to have been generally cost-effective. Although there is some criticism about the quality and amount of incentives, they are closely targeted and regulated by USDOL to focus on removing obstacles to children’s schooling. The project director also conducts market research before choosing incentive suppliers; he has worked with the more socially responsible suppliers to lower prices, pay for transport, or similar cost-cutting moves. These efforts have probably contributed to why the project has spent only about half its budget although it has just passed 3.5 years of operation.<sup>45</sup> Some steps have also been taken to leverage non-project resources. For example, two of the tutoring firms that provided support training last summer have continued to support, at company expense, a small number of students at risk of entering child labor. The provincial

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<sup>44</sup> IMPAQ International, p. 58.

<sup>45</sup> Being unable to work in the field until early 2007 and losing the Education Specialist at the end of that year have also contributed to this outcome.

coordinator for Gaziantep, with active backing from the MONE district director, is lobbying the local branch of the Turkish Employment Organization for priority admission of beneficiary families to a new employment-training initiative financed by the World Bank there. These initiatives are encouraging first steps toward the sustainability of project efforts beyond *Tarladan Okula*, which will be considered next.

This report has been mainly retrospective so far, focusing on why and how the project was designed and on various aspects of how it has been implemented. Now it will become both retrospective and prospective, considering what has been done so that activities can continue in the future, even after the project has ended.

The project's initial strategy for sustainability emphasized getting support and "buy-in" from GOT agencies and ministries.<sup>46</sup> Capacity-building workshops and seminars at the CLU and MONE were mentioned as helpful to gaining such support, as were officials' trips to the provinces where the project would work. The furniture and equipment of the field offices would be turned over to the provincial governorships at the end of the project. But even greater weight was given to demonstrating the effectiveness of the project model for combating child labor in seasonal commercial agriculture. Implementing the caseworker system for connecting beneficiaries to the educational system was part of that, as was raising the awareness and expertise of teachers and administrators to deal with children withdrawn from, or at risk of entering such work. Given the success of these steps, it was "conceivable that project caseworkers could be hired as labor inspectors to help ensure that Turkey's child labor laws are enforced in the field."<sup>47</sup> Accordingly, teachers, administrators, and officials with upgraded capacities (plus office furniture, equipment, and trained caseworkers) could be mobilized to continue the work of the project.

Some of these steps have been taken, and their impacts are apparent. First, the caseworker system is identifying beneficiaries and providing support to them and their families. A 13-year-old girl and her father from Ankara province participated in the stakeholders' meeting at the end of the evaluation fieldwork; she made sure to tell GOT officials, the representative from the U.S. Embassy, and the evaluator that she was very happy to stay in school with the project's help. Second, teachers and administrators have been trained in the provinces with the participation of officials from MOLSS and MONE; also, two project-partner tutoring firms are continuing to support students at company expense. Third, local and district government agencies support project activities in all four provinces, and officials at the CLU and MONE have obtained language training to give them access to educational materials about child labor. But it took *Tarladan Okula* a long time to get into the field and to resolve problems within the headquarters staff, and it still has difficulties communicating and collaborating with the two ministries (MOLSS and MONE) most important to its work. Together, these factors have put the project far behind schedule in pursuing outcome targets, making its activities sustainable or effecting systemwide changes in child labor and education.

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<sup>46</sup> IMPAQ International, pp. 81–82.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

There seems to be, however, at least one way in which the original strategy for sustainability could succeed. *In all the provinces where the project is operating, across various sectors and levels of activity, evaluation fieldwork has revealed that there are Turkish citizens working to eliminate child labor in seasonal commercial agriculture.* At least some of them would likely do so, even if there were no project—a principal in Ankara province, a tutoring company in Elazig, a district director in Gaziantep, and a district governor and provincial coordinator in Sanliurfa. These individuals can be seen as representatives of a nascent constituency to oppose child labor and improve education in Turkey. It should not be surprising that such a constituency is emerging in one of the first countries to support ILO-IPEC and is a signatory of ILO Conventions 138 (minimum age) and 182 (worst forms of child labor).<sup>48</sup> *Tarladan Okula*, with its partners and especially with its provincial staffs, is well positioned to become the vanguard of this constituency. Collaborating earnestly with the CLU, the various members of the project can help to organize and mobilize this constituency of child beneficiaries, families, providers, and officials. That, in turn, will help broaden a base of support so that MOLSS can operate more effectively outside the large cities, the national and provincial capitals. That ministry could thus become a more active partner with MONE across the provinces and on the ground, by using the constituency to monitor and regulate an unfortunate part of agricultural labor. And MOLSS, in collaboration with MONE and under the original catalyst of *Tarladan Okula*, could thus sustain the work of the project far beyond four provinces and the next year or so.

In sum, the project's steps toward sustainability are not yet adequate, but there are signs that they could become so—given some extra time and intense, effective work by both the project and its partners.

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<sup>48</sup> Child Labor Unit, p. 7.

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## IV CONCLUSIONS

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### 4.1 LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

The preceding content of the evaluation findings suggests several conclusions about *Tarladan Okula*, which may be both applicable and useful for other EI projects. Following accepted practice, it is convenient to group these findings under the rubrics of “lessons learned” (matters that did not go well) and “best practices” (matters that worked admirably).

#### Lessons Learned

- *Representatives negotiating and establishing the agreements underlying a project should be clearer—and work harder to develop shared understandings—about its objectives, the means to pursue those objectives, and the reciprocal rights and responsibilities of the implementing parties. This project is far behind schedule in meeting output targets, partly because it took IMPAQ and GOT, with USDOL’s help, roughly 2.5 of the 4 years allotted to agree on how the project should work in the field and what services it could offer.*
- The Executing Authority of a project (IMPAQ) and its implementing and collaborating agencies (private firms such as those providing support training in the provinces plus government agencies such as MOLSS and MONE) should communicate clearly and collaborate effectively. When the collaborating agencies have frequent staff turnovers, it might be useful to establish a regular series of meetings among project and ministry staff at the working level to ensure that policy-level personnel are updated and kept informed. This is particularly important in sustaining institutional memory; for example, the mutual understandings reached earlier that permit regular monitoring and evaluation of project progress.
- The personnel hired to staff the project’s executing agency, particularly at the headquarters level, should have and follow clearly complementary authorities and duties for each position hired. The adversarial competition between the two highest-ranking staff members of *Tarladan Okula* also contributed to delays in project operation and postponed the achievement of outcome targets. This might have been avoided if Dr. Akkok had been hired and reviewed as education specialist only. Further, Dr. Akkok’s departure means that the project now lacks a senior person with long-term experience in Turkish education, a serious hurdle for a project that already has problematic relations with MONE.
- As the project progresses, there should be active dialog and reciprocal support between the project headquarters and provincial offices to strike a proper balance between long-term commitments and short-term measures to implement them. Concerns expressed by lower-level staff should be considered and addressed in a manner sensitive to the different conditions between provinces. For example, a province with relatively large numbers of beneficiaries but few caseworkers (like Sanliurfa) may have to hire more workers or raise the salaries of current workers to reflect the increased workload, while a

province with relatively few beneficiaries (like Elazığ) may have to transfer or let go of some caseworkers despite their excellent work. Dedicated transport might be appropriate in a province where sites are widespread and public transport sparse (like Ankara), but not in a province where all project sites are within the provincial capital (like Gaziantep).

## Best Practice

- The Caseworker System—the provincial and headquarters staff working together—has performed admirably to vet beneficiaries and to connect them and their families with education and/or other services. The job duties, selection process, training, and administrative support (as well as the capacities of the caseworkers, coordinators, and other personnel involved) have made the caseworker system a model to consider for other EI projects.

## 4.2 GENERAL

- The overall mission of the project has shifted perceptibly, from focusing on addressing child labor through better education to focusing on education issues caused in part by child labor. This shift has occurred possibly for several reasons, among them the project's main method for identifying beneficiaries by “working backward” from school-supplied lists, the many links (definitional, functional, etc.) between child labor and education, and the importance of each topic. However, the focus of *Tarladan Okula* is to eliminate a worst form of child labor—children aged 6 to 17 working in seasonal commercial agriculture in four provinces of Turkey.
- The issue of sharing the KTS and database with MONE (and, if desired, with MOLSS) is damaging communication and collaboration among the project's key partners. The project headquarters has exacerbated this problem through the intra-office competition for leadership (from which it is now healing), the leadership style of the project director, and a willingness to put at risk the good work that has been accomplished by not moving expeditiously on this issue. The ministries also have contributed to the problem through frequent changes in personnel and policy, conflicting signals, and reduction (or even loss) of institutional memory about who agreed to what when. It is time for both parties to resolve this issue and move on to more substantive work.
- If an authentic collaboration can be sustained among the project and its partners, from local level (where it now exists) to national level (where it has been sporadic), *Tarladan Okula* has an opportunity to organize and mobilize the emerging constituency for opposing child labor in Turkish seasonal commercial agriculture. In turn, this effort can help the project revitalize its pursuit of outcome targets for withdrawing and/or preventing children from child labor and to promote the sustainability of its work for related activities after the project ends.

## V RECOMMENDATIONS

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- IMPAQ should share the KTS data and access codes with MONE (and, if desired, with MOLSS). This step should help clear the way so that these key partners can show whether (and, if so, how well) they will work together to withdraw and/or prevent significantly more children from child labor in Turkish seasonal commercial agriculture.
- *If* both the project and the ministries will commit to cooperate, coordinate, and collaborate effectively, *and if* they show evidence of doing so consistently between now and September 30, 2008, then USDOL should consider a no-cost extension of *Tarladan Okula* for one year. The project seems to have spent about half of its (revised) budget by September 2007,<sup>49</sup> so funds sufficient to cover the extension should remain in the project accounts. Such an extension would recognize and reward the good work the project has accomplished in the provinces *if* the project's most serious problem—poor communication and collaboration at the national level—is also addressed rapidly and effectively.
- As an initiation to an authentically collaborative work process, the project and its partners should organize and hold a retreat to refocus attention and activities in response to this evaluation. Such a retreat should occur soon, take the form of a workshop outside the usual places and times of work, and consider topics such as the following:
  - Rethinking causal linkages among agriculture, child labor, and primary education—changes in agriculture (contract farming) leading to changes in labor (children 6 to 17 working in seasonal commercial agriculture) leading to changes in education (problems in student attendance and performance). Such rethinking would reverse the logic of the project design, which starts from the school and works “backward,” but it could help clarify priorities and activities, illuminate supportive actions, and contextualize project work within Turkish social science and policy dialogs. It also could examine differences among populations involved in seasonal commercial agriculture such as those revealed for herders in Elazig.
  - Considering whether and/or how to implement support activities in summer 2008 so that the project can supplement teacher/administrator narratives about the impacts of such training with clear, quantitative demonstrations of improvement. Such demonstrations could take the form of before-and-after comparisons (on individual and group basis) of student attendance and tardiness rates, performance on tests, and course grades to show whether and how much the training influences subsequent behavior at school and in the classroom.
  - Discussing project management, administration, and staffing to address concerns expressed by both headquarters and provincial personnel and highlighted in the “Lessons Learned” section of this report—for example, hiring staff support so that the

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<sup>49</sup> IMPAQ, “Response to USDOL General Comments and Clarification Questions on Technical Progress Report dated 30 September 2007,” No. 15.

financial and administrative manager can process reimbursements more efficiently, providing dedicated vehicles for caseworkers where public transport is insufficient, hiring or transferring at least one caseworker to address the needs in Sanliurfa, perhaps hiring on a part-time basis a senior person with standing in Turkish education to help improve communication and collaboration with key ministry partners.

- Coordinating and speeding activities so that the project will approach, attain, or surpass its targeted outcomes, especially pertaining to children prevented or withdrawn from child labor.
- Identifying, coordinating, and nurturing the efforts of people and organizations who likely will continue opposing child labor even when there is no project. Such activities can make the project the vanguard of this constituency and benefit the long-term battle against that form of exploitation.

*Tarladan Okula*, its partners, and its supporters have come part way on an often-difficult journey. This evaluation has looked at project progress, detours, breakdowns, repairs, stalemates, and even some possible routes ahead. Now is the time for the project members either to get on with the job or to end it so that resources can go to related efforts elsewhere. The futures of 10,000 Turkish children are in the balance.