



Quick Facts

ECLT project in the south of Kyrgyzstan

Overall goal

To create a sustainable mechanism to eliminate child labour in tobacco growing through increasing family income and integrating alternative forms of child labour.

Objectives

To achieve this goal, the project has five objectives:

- Social mobilisation of internal resources to ensure efficient practices to eliminate child labour.
- Improve the living standards of farmers and expand geographic coverage of the project.
- To support and develop credit unions and cooperatives.
- Improve families' access to social services and ensure children have access to alternative forms of employment.
- To provide direct financial support to poor families.

Implementing partner

Working Group on the Elimination of Child Labour in Tobacco Growing.

Location

The project is being implemented in southern Kyrgyzstan: Nookat in Osh district and Ala Buka in Jalalabat district.

Duration

First project: January 2005 to December 2006.

Second project: April 2007 to December 2009.

Third project: January 2010 to December 2012.



Project achievements since January 2010

- 93 mutual aid groups have been created for low-income tobacco growers.
- 801 families have received micro-credits, enabling them to invest and increase their incomes.
- 276 children attended summer camps in the Nookat and Ala Buka. They undertook recreational activities and health activities at summer camps.
- 61 children suffering from illnesses from working in tobacco received high quality treatment in a medical rehabilitation centre.

- 4 workshops were held to strengthen the capacity of health workers and farmers.
- 9 meetings were held to help create awareness amongst government employees and others about the harmful effects of children working in tobacco. Over 100 people attended, including employees of local magistrates, social workers, heads of villages, elders, directors of schools, and representatives of medical institutions. 1,245 people attended a further 27 meetings that were held for farmers .
- To raise awareness about the issue of child labour more broadly, the project was featured on television.

Budget

The first project: US\$ 170,470. The second project (including an extension): US\$ 147,610. The third and current project: US\$ 552,909.

Project Advisory Committee

- Unions: Agricultural Workers Union of Kyrgyzstan, Trade Union of Educators, Trade Union of Workers of Public Health Services;
- Tobacco companies: Imperial Tobacco & Sunel tobacco;
- Government: The Ministry of Rural and Water Management, State JSC Kyrgyztamekesi, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Migration, Department of Ombudsman of Kyrgyzstan;
- International agencies and NGOs: ILO/IPEC, UNICEF, the Centre for the Protection of Children, Save the Children, Youth Programme, UNDP, American Center of International Solidarity.

Lessons learned

Selection of beneficiaries – microcredit applicants: In the previous phases of the project, farmers in most need of micro credits were identified by social workers and Heads of Local Districts. Project staff subsequently discovered that not all the farmers selected were on the lowest incomes. To address this, a new criteria method has been devised. Meetings with village communities from each rural district have appointed a commission from the villages, which includes elders, teachers, representatives of women’s local committees, medical officers and others. These commissions have selected potential applicants for microcredit funds. This new method has proved to be more effective and reliable.

Choice of micro-credit agency to deliver micro-credits: Finding a reliable partner for delivering preferential micro-credits has also proved to be a challenge. Large commercial companies that have authority in the market refused to work within the project’s social principles and conditions. On the other hand many small micro finance organisations were ready to cooperate with the project. Unfortunately the organisation that the project enlisted failed to return credit to the project, until legal proceedings were instigated. Now the project is working with a microcredit agency that has their own credit fund of 3.2 million KGS. This organisation is also small, but its founder is a public association, a civil society support centre, implementing social projects with funding from donors such as USAID. This provides some measure of assurance. As a further precaution the Working Group has decided to visit the office, once or twice a quarter, to assure themselves that the funds are being managed properly.

Keeping funds of the project in banks: All project funds were kept in one project bank account. When the bank went bankrupt the project lost money and project activities were frozen for three months. In future funds will be kept with at least two different banks.

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