

ILAB's EVALUATION ROUNDUP | FY2024 Q4

MEXICO | LABOR RIGHTS IN THE AUTO SECTOR

Thematic Evaluation ([Report](#), [Infographic](#), [Learning Briefs 1-5](#)), [CALLE](#), [Engaging Workers and Civil Society to Strengthen Labor Law Enforcement](#), [Mexico Awareness Raising](#), [Mexico Auto Employers](#)

COTE D'IVOIRE | CHILD LABOR IN COCOA GROWING

Interim Evaluation ([Report](#), [Brief](#)), [CACAO](#)

ARGENTINA | CAPACITY BUILDING TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

Multi-Project Final Evaluation ([Report](#) | [Brief](#)), [NOEMI](#), [OFFSIDE](#), and [PAR](#)

GLOBAL, ARGENTINA, MADAGASCAR | CHILD LABOR AND FORCED LABOR

Multi-Project Final Evaluation ([Report](#), [Brief](#)), [Research to Action](#) and [Evidence to Action](#)

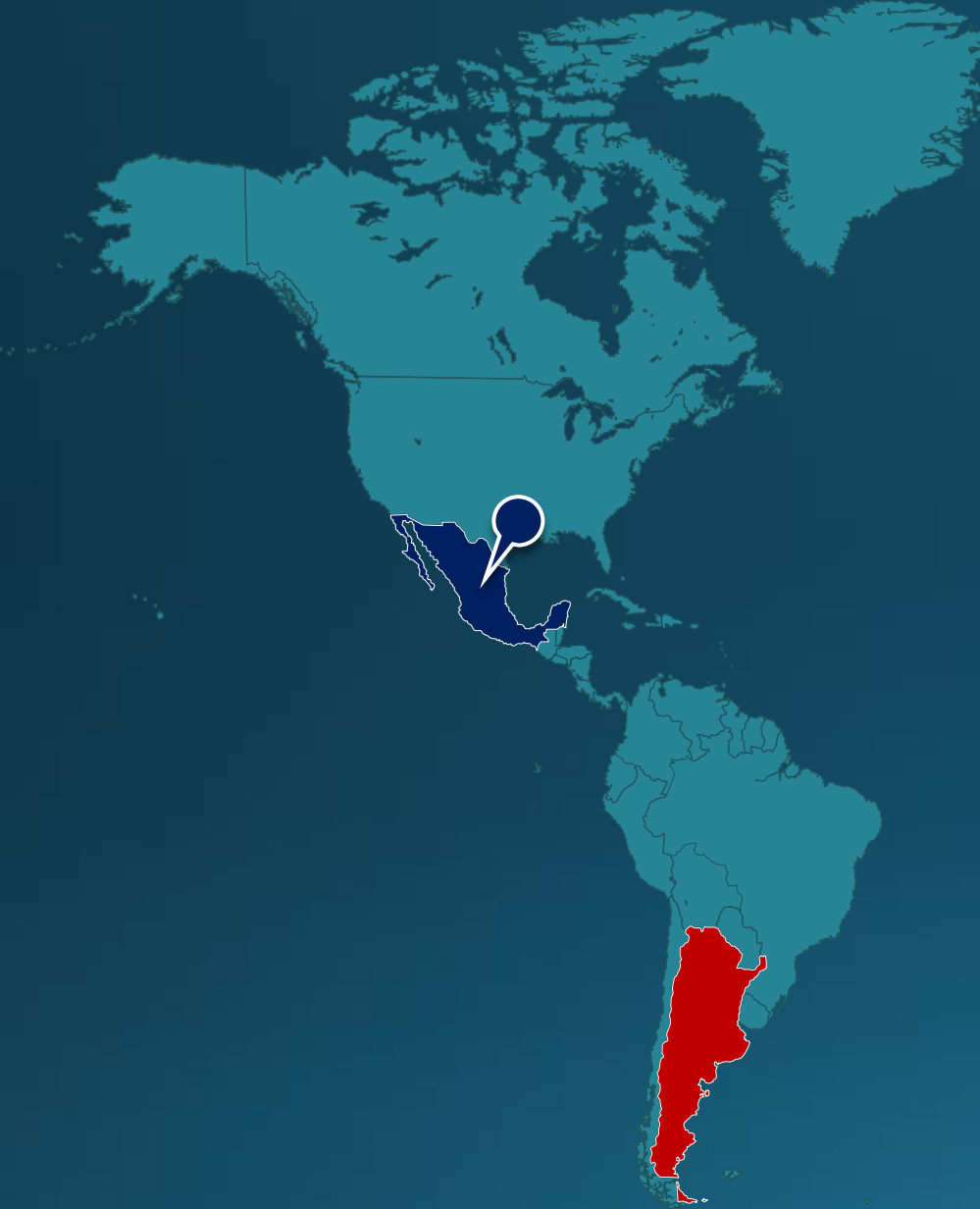
LEGEND

Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, & Human Trafficking (OCFT)



Office of Trade & Labor Affairs (OTLA)



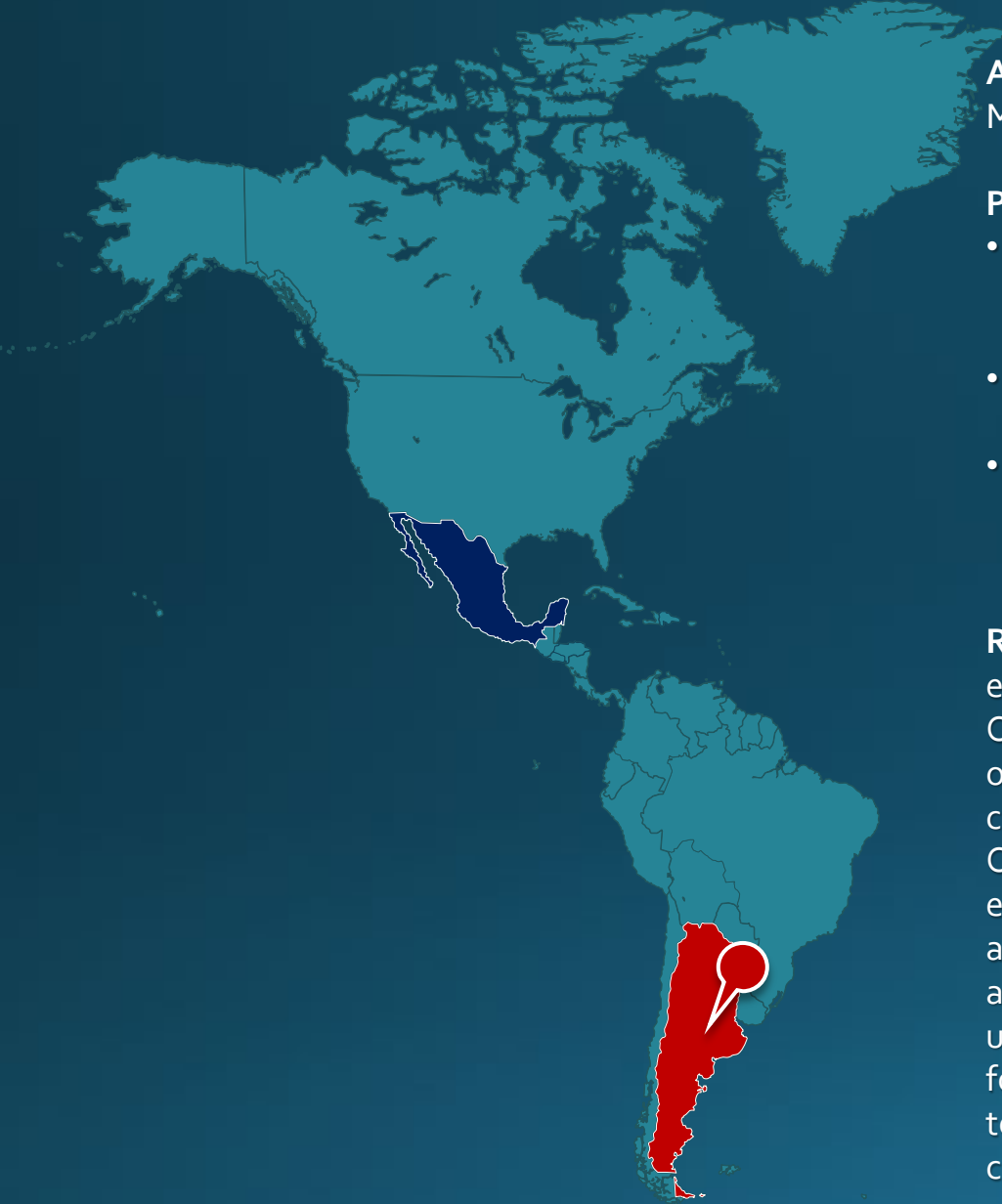


MEXICO | LABOR RIGHTS IN THE AUTO SECTOR

Thematic Evaluation (Report, [Infographic](#), [Learning Briefs 1-5](#)), [Improving Working Conditions in the Mexican Automotive Supply Chain \(CALLE\)](#), [Engaging Workers and Civil Society to Strengthen Labor Law Enforcement](#), [Mexico Awareness Raising](#), [Mexico Auto Employers](#)

PROJECT. ILAB contracted DevTech Systems Inc. to conduct an evaluation (2023-2024) of four ILAB projects in the automotive sector in Mexico. The evaluation used a systems-based and utilization-focused approach to identify results and outcomes. Primary data was generated from 179 participants, and results were validated at six workshops with implementing partners, labor unions, academia, civil society organizations, the Mexican government, and business associations.

RESULTS. The evaluation found that ILAB's initiatives have strengthened awareness and enforcement of labor laws, capacity of institutions to engage with labor reforms, and compliance of employers with labor laws. The evaluation also found that while ILAB does not explicitly incorporate Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) principles in its programming, its adaptive management practices align with key CLA aspects. Challenges were noted in the form of employer resistance to meaningful engagement with new unions, the continued dominance of traditional protection unions, and the need for more comprehensive and practical training on workers' rights. The Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) was recognized for its effectiveness; however, concerns exist about it overshadowing domestic institutions. Stakeholders emphasized and the evaluation recommends the need for further professionalization of the labor inspectorate and enforcement of rigorous and clearly defined penalties. The evaluation also recommends promoting gender equity in union activities, initiating training programs within new and existing unions, and developing a strategic country framework for Mexico.

A map of the Americas, including North and South America, is shown in a light blue color. Argentina is highlighted in a darker blue. A red location pin is placed on the eastern coast of Argentina, with a white line pointing to the country's name in the text.

ARGENTINA | CAPACITY BUILDING TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

Multi-Project Final Evaluation ([Report](#) | [Brief](#)), [NOEMI](#), [OFFSIDE](#), and [PAR](#)

PROJECT. This report includes performance evaluations of three projects in Argentina:

- NOEMI (2016 – 2023) was a \$3,300,000 project to generate the necessary conditions to develop educational workplace-based training (EWBT) opportunities for vulnerable adolescents and youth.
- PAR (2019 – 2024) is a \$3,125,000 project to increase action to address child labor (CL) by improving coordination tools among labor and agriculture stakeholders.
- OFFSIDE (2019 – 2024) is a \$3,125,000 project to better implement Argentina's National Action Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor through improved coordination.

RESULTS. The evaluation found that the overall level of achievement was high for the final evaluations of NOEMI and PAR projects, and above moderate for the final evaluation of the OFFSIDE project. The three projects made effective progress toward their respective target outcomes, demonstrating effectiveness through their strategic alignment with local contexts, proactive interventions, and collaborative efforts across sectors. NOEMI, PAR, and OFFSIDE exemplified effective cross-sectoral coordination by bringing together the education, agriculture, and private sectors and operationalized across the local, provincial, and national levels of governance. The projects opted for an agile, experience-driven approach, allowing the projects to evolve based on field learnings, stakeholder needs, and unforeseen external shocks like the global pandemic. Despite the successes, the evaluation found that receptivity and commitment to addressing child labor at the national level appears to be dwindling under a new administration. As a result, the evaluation recommends continuing to prioritize advocacy at the national level, as well as enhanced coordination to enhance visibility and credibility.

COTE D'IVOIRE | CHILD LABOR IN CACAO GROWING

Interim Evaluation ([Report](#), [Brief](#)), [Cooperatives Addressing Child Labor Accountability Outcomes \(CACAO\)](#)

PROJECT. Côte d'Ivoire is the world's leading producer of cocoa beans, but the exploitation of child labor in the cocoa supply chain persists. To support the Ivoirian Government and cocoa producing communities in addressing this issue, USDOL is financing CACAO. This five-year project, implemented by Save the Children in partnership with the NGO 2A, engages cocoa cooperatives in the departments of Daloa and Vavoua in the Hautassandra region. The goal is to increase the number of cocoa cooperatives showing a reduction in child labor. To reach that goal, CACAO is pursuing two outcomes: (1) improved accountability of cocoa cooperatives to monitor child labor in the cocoa supply chain, and (2) increased support for vulnerable households within cocoa cooperatives.

RESULTS.

- Under Outcome 1, the evaluation team found that awareness campaigns were very effective at informing households, producers, and cooperatives about the worst forms of child labor that are forbidden by law. Cocoa cooperatives have also gained accounting, recordkeeping, and planning tools that improve their functioning and management. Further, while the evaluation found that the Committees for Child Protection (CPEs) were effective in addressing child labor locally, their current structure requires revenue generating activities to be sustainable post-project. Finally, trainings for social service workers and resources to help them protect children have allowed them to address select at-risk cases, despite their continued limited capacity to reach rural communities.
- Under Outcome 2, Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLAs) programs have also been very effective at raising household incomes. Some are even supporting public services, such as school construction. Farmer field schools are teaching agroforestry techniques to farmers, which is boosting their productivity and providing environmental benefits. Households are increasingly interested in sending their children to school as an alternative to working in cocoa fields. However, this requires robust Self-Help Farmer Groups (SHFGs) to replace the labor, as well as available schools.



GLOBAL, ARGENTINA, MADAGASCAR | CHILD LABOR AND FORCED LABOR

Multi-Project Final Evaluation ([Report](#), [Brief](#)), [Research to Action](#) and [Evidence to Action](#)

PROJECT.

- The Research to Action (R2A) project with the ILO sought to bridge the divide between research and policy on child labor, forced labor and human trafficking. It helped policymakers and practitioners access relevant research and evaluation tools, identified key knowledge gaps, and developed a global research agenda to guide new policy-relevant research efforts.
- Evidence to Action (E2A) project was also implemented by the ILO. It too sought to make research more actionable. The project conducted prevalence estimates and qualitative research on forced labor in the garments sectors of Argentina and Madagascar, while simultaneously working with tripartite stakeholders to use this knowledge to take actions against forced labor.

RESULTS. The joint final evaluation found that the projects were relevant, effective, and efficient. Their flexible approaches were good as they allowed the projects to adapt to the needs of their stakeholders and to changes in their operational environment. While the projects received positive feedback from their stakeholders, it was hard to measure the impact of research within the lifetime of the projects. Improved monitoring tools could help to better reflect this. Projects need sufficient time to build effective relationships with stakeholders. Having in-country staff would help to coordinate this outreach and engagement. A strong dissemination plan would also help to ensure that research products reach their intended audience. We should anticipate the economic concerns stakeholders may have with the research and build into the project design a strategy of raising awareness of the economic risk child labor and forced labor can have on export markets and what can be done to mitigate this risk. Similarly, projects should ensure that they have a strong commitment from the government at the start to avoid wasting time waiting for approvals that may never come.