

Final Independent Evaluation of the Country Program Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Panama (Phase II)

International Labour Organization's International
Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour

Cooperative Agreement Number:
06-K110-RVBR-4143-CL-601-000



2009

This page left intentionally blank.

FUNDED BY THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Independent Final Evaluation of the Country Program Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Panama (Phase II)

International Labour Organization's
International Programme on the Elimination of
Child Labour

Cooperative Agreement Number:
06-K110-RVBR-4143-CL-601-000

2009

This page left intentionally blank.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report describes in detail the final evaluation, conducted during July 2009, of the Country Program against the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Panama. The report was prepared by ICF Macro, according to agreements specified in its contract with the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT). The evaluation of Country Program against the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Panama was conducted and documented by Mauricio García-Moreno, an independent evaluator in collaboration with USDOL/OCFT staff, the Panama Country Program project team, and stakeholders in Panama. ICF Macro would like to express sincere thanks to all parties involved in this evaluation: the independent evaluator, International Labour Organization's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC) and its partners, and U.S. Department of Labor.



Funding for this evaluation was provided by the United States Department of Labor under Task Order number DOLB089K28215. Points of view or opinions in this evaluation report do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the United States Department of Labor, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the United States Government.

This page left intentionally blank.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
LIST OF ACRONYMS	vii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	ix
I ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY	1
1.1 Information Gathering Techniques	1
II DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT	3
III PROJECT RELEVANCE	5
3.1 Analysis of Assumptions	6
3.2 Analysis of Activities	7
3.3 Other Aspects Concerning the Design	8
IV EFFICACY OF THE PROJECT	11
4.1 Result 1: Initiatives to Support the Implementation of the PN	11
4.2 Result 2: Improve the Effective Application of Child Labor Legislation	16
4.3 Result 3: Withdrawal from and Prevention of Child Labor	17
V PROJECT EFFICIENCY	21
VI PROJECT IMPACT	23
VII SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROJECT	25
VIII CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	29
8.1 Conclusions	29
8.2 Recommendations	30

Annexes

Annex A: Government Periods of Panama and Execution Periods of the Two Country Programs

Annex B: List of Persons Interviewed

Annex C: Terms of Reference

This page left intentionally blank.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AP	Action Programs
AP/PC	Panama-Colón direct Action Program
CE	<i>Casa Esperanza</i> (Hope House)
CETIPPAT	<i>Comité para la Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil y Prevención de la Persona Adolescente Trabajadora</i> (Committee for the Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of the Adolescent Worker)
CONATO	<i>Consejo Nacional de Trabajadores Organizados</i> (National Council of Organized Workers)
CONEP	<i>Consejo Nacional de la Empresa Privada</i> (National Council of the Private Enterprise)
FUNDESPA	<i>Fundación para el Desarrollo Sostenible de Panamá</i> (Foundation for the Sustainable Development of Panama)
IFARHU	<i>Instituto para la Formación y Aprovechamiento de Recursos Humanos</i> (Institute for Training and Human Resources Development)
INADEH	<i>Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo Humano</i> (National Institute for Human Development)
INEC	National Institute of Statistics and Census
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOE	International Organisation of Employers
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
MEDUCA	<i>Ministerio de Educación</i> (Ministry of Education)
MIDA	<i>Ministerio de Desarrollo Agropecuario</i> (Ministry of Agricultural Development)
MIDES	<i>Ministerio de Desarrollo Social</i> (Ministry of Social Development)
MINSA	<i>Ministerio de Salud</i> (Ministry of Health)
MITRADEL	<i>Ministerio de Trabajo y Desarrollo Laboral</i> (Ministry of Labor and Labor Development)
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
PN	<i>Plan Nacional de Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil y Protección de las Personas Adolescentes Trabajadoras 2007–2011</i> (National Plan for the Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of the Adolescent Worker 2007–2011)

This page left intentionally blank.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Country Program Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Panama (Phase II) was executed in Panama by the International Labour Organization's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour from September 15, 2006 to September 15, 2009. The project received US\$1.6 million in funding from the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) and is the continuation of a previous Country Program, also funded by USDOL, executed from September 2002 to March 2006.

The project worked in two complementary areas: (1) strengthening the country's institutional capacities to combat the worst forms of child labor and (2) implementing the direct Action Programs (APs) in four districts of Panama to withdraw children from work and prevent others from engaging in labor activities. The project worked in coordination with public sector institutions, workers' unions, and entrepreneurial associations. The implementation of AP was conducted by the nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) Casa Esperanza (Hope House) and the *Fundación para el Desarrollo Sostenible de Panamá* (Foundation for the Sustainable Development of Panama).

The evaluation revealed that the project design was relevant to the priorities and policies defined by the country and that it was formulated in consultation with the *Comité para la Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil y Prevención de la Persona Adolescente Trabajadora* (Committee for the Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of the Adolescent Worker). Nevertheless, it also established that the objectives and results targeted by the project overestimated the capacity of the institutions involved in child labor eradication.

The project boosted the design and implementation of the state-funded Panama-Colón AP. While it only covers 10% of the demand, the strategy of AP is promising, as it has managed to coordinate the action of several institutions to offer beneficiaries a package of services suitable for the eradication of the worst forms of child labor.

The project undertook some actions toward increasing the degree of application of the law by law enforcement. Although progress was made on several fronts—improvement of the legal framework, incorporation of child labor inspectors, training, and preparation of guides and working procedures—the country still has a long way to go on this matter.

With regard to the civil society actors, the project made significant progress with indigenous populations, from raising awareness to planning actions with unions and the media; however very little progress was made with entrepreneurial associations. Civil society organizations still do not have sufficient capabilities to demand and monitor the execution of policies for the eradication of the worst forms of child labor by the state. Furthermore, there is not a significant number of NGOs cooperating with the state toward that end.

The project implemented actions to eradicate the worst forms of child labor in some indigenous and non-indigenous communities of the country. These actions were successfully executed, fulfilling their primary goal to remove children from work and prevent other children from engaging in labor activities. This goal was achieved with the active participation of several public institutions, which contributed human and financial resources.

I ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The objectives of this evaluation were to—

- Analyze the degree to which the project objectives were fulfilled and identify the challenges found during project implementation.
- Analyze the relevance of the project with respect to the cultural, economic, and political context of the country, as well as the extent to which it adjusted to the priorities and policies of the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) and the Government of Panama.
- Evaluate the desired and undesired effects of the project.
- Identify lessons learned that may be applicable to future or ongoing projects executed in this country in similar conditions or target groups.
- Analyze the sustainability of the activities of the project in the national and local spheres.

The evaluation was conducted through the following steps:

- Document analysis and preparation for the visit to the project areas.
- Gathering information in project implementation areas.
- Meeting with actors involved in the project for the preliminary presentation of the assessment findings.
- Preparation of the report draft.
- Review and comments on the draft report by USDOL and by actors involved in the project.
- Final report.

1.1 INFORMATION GATHERING TECHNIQUES

Four techniques were used to gather information: document analysis, interviews with qualified informants, focus groups, and field visits.

Documentary analysis—The following documents were analyzed: project document and project revisions, Cooperative Agreement, Solicitation of Grant Applications, Management Procedures and Guidelines, progress reports, technical and financial reports, Project Monitoring Plan, work

plan, final assessment of Phase I, midterm evaluation of Phase II, baseline studies, tools developed for the project, and other pertinent materials, such as laws and plans concerning child labor.¹

Interviews—The following interviews were carried out:

- Personnel from the International Labour Organization's (ILO) International Programme on the Eradication of Child Labour (IPEC) who executed the project.
- Management and field personnel from the NGOs that co-executed the project: *Casa Esperanza* (Hope House or CE) and the *Fundación para el Desarrollo Sostenible de Panamá* (Foundation for the Sustainable Development of Panama or FUNDESPA).
- Representatives of institutions that participate in the *Comité para la Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil y Prevención de la Persona Adolescente Trabajadora* (Committee for the Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of the Adolescent Worker or CETIPPAT).
- Representatives from trade unions and employers' associations.
- Representatives of indigenous organizations.

Focus groups—The following focus groups were carried out:

- Beneficiaries of income-generating projects.
- Children participating in the project.
- Parents of children who participated in the project.
- Teachers from schools where the project was implemented.
- Members of public institutions that collaborated with the project locally.

Field visits—Visits were made to the communities where the project was executed in the provinces of Panama (La Chorrera), Veraguas (city of Santiago de Veraguas), and in the indigenous region of Gnobé-Buglé (Cerro Maíz).

¹ It is important to note that the final evaluation of the Phase I and the midterm evaluation of the Phase II were independent external evaluations handled by ILO-IPEC's Design, Assessment, and Documentation (DED) section. These evaluations were carried out under ILO-IPEC's normal process for projects funded by USDOL following the Guidelines for Management Procedures agreed on by both USDOL and ILO, and under the assessment policy of ILO. This final evaluation of Phase II was commissioned by USDOL as an external evaluation.

II DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The Country Program Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Panama (Phase II) was executed in Panama by ILO-IPEC from September 15, 2006 to September 15, 2009. The project received US\$1.6 million in funding from USDOL. The project's intended objectives and outputs are shown in Table 1.

The project covered two complementary areas: (1) strengthening the country's institutional capacities to combat the worst forms of child labor and (2) implementing the direct Action Programs (AP) in four districts of Panama to withdraw children from work and prevent others from engaging in labor activities. Pursuant to its mandate, ILO-IPEC works with three actors in a coordinated manner: the public sector, trade unions, and trade associations. The implementation of AP was handled by the nongovernmental organizations (NGO) *Casa Esperanza* and FUNDESPA. The third portion of the USDOL funds was assigned to the implementation of APs.

It is worth noting that this project is the continuation of the previous Country Program, also funded by USDOL, which was executed from September 2002 to March 2006. There was a break of approximately six months between the completion of the first Country Program and the start of the second. Together, the projects covered a period of 79 months and three constitutional administrations in Panama.²

Table 1: Objectives and Outputs for the Country Program Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Panama (Phase II)

Development Objective:

To contribute to the elimination of the worst forms of child labor in Panama.

Immediate Objectives	Outputs
I/O ¹ 1: By the end of the program, implementation of targeted, quality initiatives by public institutions and key social partners (employers, workers, and the media) in support of the National Child Labor Plan is increased.	O 1.1: Mechanisms for the coordinated implementation of the <i>Plan Nacional de Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil y Protección de las Personas Adolescentes Trabajadoras 2007–2011</i> (National Plan for the Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of the Adolescent Worker 2007–2011) between all the responsible institutions are created.
	O 1.2: System for the tripartite monitoring of achievement of national goals on child labor is created and in operation.
	O 1.3: Key responsible public institutions (MITRADEL, ² MIDES, ³ IFARHU, ⁴ MIDA ⁵) apply tools in programs to reduce child labor.
	O 1.4: Training programs on child labor are created and inserted in the training programs of national institutions.
	O 1.5: Organizations of workers, employers, and other key partners in civil society develop specific strategies to reduce child labor and the tools for their implementation.
	O 1.6: The media and opinion leaders place child labor on their agendas and promote behaviors and values in favor of the eradication of child labor and the protection of children's rights.

² Annex A shows a table that relates government administrations with the two project stages.

Immediate Objectives	Outputs
<p>I/O 2: By the end of the program, officials in the justice system (labor and children's courts and labor inspection) improve the application of child labor legislation and regulations.</p>	<p>O 2.1: Justice officials of relevant public institutions (Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Justice, etc.) become knowledgeable of the legal framework revised according to ILO Conventions 138 and 182.</p>
	<p>O 2.2: Justice officials of relevant public institutions (Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Justice, etc.) improve tools to ensure the effective application of legislation.</p>
<p>I/O 3: Sustainable and quality educational, vocational, and income-generation activities to withdraw and prevent 1,500 children from the worst forms of child labor are implemented by local-level national organizations.</p>	<p>O 3.1: Public institutions, local workers, and employers' organizations implement coordinated actions for the withdrawal of children from selected worst forms of child labor.</p>
	<p>O 3.2: The local school system provides programs to meet the needs of working children and adolescents.</p>
	<p>O 3.3: Professional training and decent employment opportunities are created for adolescents and adults.</p>
	<p>O 3.4: Communities and key partners mobilize against the worst forms of child labor.</p>
	<p>O 3.5: Indigenous organizations are made aware of the negative consequences of child labor</p>

¹ I/O = Immediate Objective.

² MITRADEL = *Ministerio de Trabajo y Desarrollo Laboral* (Ministry of Labor and Labor Development).

³ MIDES = *Ministerio de Desarrollo Social* (Ministry of Social Development).

⁴ IFARHU = *Instituto para la Formación y Aprovechamiento de Recursos Humanos* (Institute for Training and Human Resources Development).

⁵ MIDA = *Ministerio de Desarrollo Agropecuario* (Ministry of Agricultural Development).

The close relationship between the project objectives and public policy goals forced an analysis of several elements of the country's institutional capacity to implement such policy. Some of these elements are related to the political and institutional structure of the country and are, therefore, not included in the field of action attributable to the project. Specific elements with modifications not subordinated to project actions are high personnel turnover due to changes of authority, administrative centralization, weakness of civil society actors, and detachment between planning and budget. Nevertheless, the design and execution of the project had to take these elements into account to set out strategies towards achieving its objectives. The evaluation will analyze to what extent these strategies considered the institutional environment in achieving the objectives set out.

III PROJECT RELEVANCE

In June 2006, CETIPPAT published the *Plan Nacional de Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil y Protección de las Personas Adolescentes Trabajadoras 2007–2011* (National Plan for the Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of the Adolescent Worker 2007–2011 or PN), which was prepared with the technical support of the first Country Program. The preparation of PN had the participation of numerous institutions from both the public sector and civil society, and drew from the ample diagnostic information produced during the previous years. Among such data was the Child Labor Survey, conducted by the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC) in 2002, which enabled the reliable identification of the magnitude and characteristics of child labor in the country. Furthermore, PN takes into account the existing national legislation and international conventions concerning child labor. It also considers the national policies in labor, education, and social matters to establish objectives and strategies well coordinated with all government actions. All this enabled CETIPPAT to come up with a harmonized PN, duly supported by and anchored in government policies.

The project objectives are directly related to the PN objectives and strategies. Accordingly, the first project objective involves increasing the institutional initiatives that provide support to the execution of the PN, while the second one aims at applying the legislation in force on child labor (third PN objective), and the third one at eradicating the worst forms of child labor in specific communities (second PN objective).

Given that the project was formulated using PN as reference, it follows that the Country Program is relevant to the priorities and policies defined by the country. Furthermore, the project was formulated in consultation with CETIPPAT in a process that involved the preparation of an initial proposal, the summary of which was submitted for consideration by that committee during the first quarter of 2006, with its validation through the use of the *Strategic Programme Impact Framework*³ methodology in November 2006 once the project was initiated.

It must be noted that while PN is duly supported, it has some technical problems that undermine its strength as an instrument to achieve results, including the following, among others:

- The plan is ambitious, as it establishes 32 expected results and 107 lines of action.
- It does not prioritize the results according to the real capacities of the institutions involved and of their allocated budgets.
- The chain of results is not well established—products are not indicated, there is no direct relationship between the objectives and the components, the results of the components do not become products, and the lines of action (activities) stem from the results and not from the products.
- There is no cost analysis of the products.

³ The *Strategic Programme Impact Framework* is a logical model for problem identification and strategy planning developed by ILO.

- There is no baseline for the indicators.
- Goals are not related to a baseline.
- Goals are not annualized.
- There are numerous persons responsible for each result.
- The plan does not perform an analysis of the institutional capacities in the country to fulfill the objectives it set out.⁴

The project wisely included in its first objective some activities towards giving PN a more operational nature. There were intentions to develop Annual Operation Plans in the institutions and to prepare a monitoring system that would include more accurate indicators for each institution. However, the main problems affecting the plan were not addressed: the extent of the results expected and the lack of logical rigor in the construction of the chain of results concerning the products and the goals in particular.⁵

3.1 ANALYSIS OF ASSUMPTIONS

The project considered the following assumptions: (1) the Government of Panama continues supporting the eradication of child labor; (2) the institutions in charge of the eradication of child labor are strengthened with the resources and personnel required; (3) the interest of the unions and the media in child labor is still ongoing; (4) the pending legal reforms are executed in the short term; (5) consensus, commitment, and resources are obtained from institutions for the execution of APs; (6) indigenous organizations and communities mobilize to address child labor issues; and (7) government institutions are responsive to the concerns of indigenous organizations.

Table 2: Assumptions of the Project

Immediate Objectives	Assumptions
<p>I/O 1: By the end of the program, implementation of targeted, quality initiatives by public institutions and key social partners (employers, workers, and the media) in support of the National Child Labor Plan is increased.</p>	<p>Eradication and prevention of child labor continues to be a main priority of the government at the highest political level and leads to the allocation of necessary resources for the implementation of PN and other child labor related policies and programs.</p> <p>Units dealing with child labor within national institutions: Labor Inspectorate and Child Labor Department in the Ministry of Labor, Technical Secretariat of CETIPPAT, and others are strengthened with the necessary resources and qualified, permanent staff to accomplish their mandate for the eradication of child labor.</p>

⁴ Although the member list of CETIPPAT, the institution in charge of the execution of PN, includes 27 senior- and mid-level officers, among them seven Ministers of State, the operating division is actually the Technical Secretariat of the CETIPPAT, which has nine mid- and low-level officers.

⁵ The term *products* is used here as the goods or services resulting from an intervention for development.

Immediate Objectives	Assumptions
	The interest in and dedication to issues on eradicating child labor on the part of unions and the media will continue.
I/O 2: By the end of the program, officials in the justice system (labor and children's courts and labor inspection) improve the application of child labor legislation and regulations.	Pending key legal reforms, especially the Children's Code, address child labor in accordance with ILO Conventions and the International Children's Rights Framework.
I/O 3: Sustainable and quality educational, vocational, and income-generation activities to withdraw and prevent 1,500 children from the worst forms of child labor are implemented by local-level national organizations.	Consensus is reached and commitments have been obtained from the institutions for APs, and the resource allocation by the corresponding counterpart is ensured.
	Indigenous organizations and communities can be mobilized to address the issue of child labor.
	Government organizations, particularly MINEDUC, is responsive to the concerns and issues raised by the indigenous organizations

Although ILO-IPEC is well acquainted with the Government of Panama, having worked with the authorities for two years, the assumptions of the first goal seem to be overstated; to expect child labor eradication and prevention to be one of the main priorities of the government at the highest political level seems exaggerated. Furthermore, to expect allocation of the resources required for the implementation of a national plan that, as already seen, is very ambitious, is somewhat unrealistic.

On the other hand, given the limited institutional capacities at the local level, the commitment of the institutions and the allocation of resources for the execution of APs should not have been considered an assumption, but rather a goal to be achieved. The commitment of the national authorities is not immediately translated into decisions and capacities at the local level.

The assumption that considered the approval of the Law for the Comprehensive Protection of Children and Adolescents was not accomplished. It aimed to provide the country with a comprehensive legal and institutional framework in application of the International Convention for Children's Rights and other international conventions, including those concerning child labor. This reduced the possibilities for building in the medium term a sound institutional system for the protection of children.

3.2 ANALYSIS OF ACTIVITIES

The project considered incorporating the PN goals into the operational plans of the institutions that form part of CETIPPAT; however, the execution of the activities to pursue those goals depended on including them not only in the plans, but also in the budgets. The relationship

between planning and the budget is very weak in most countries in the region;⁶ therefore, it would have been convenient to include in product 1.1 (coordination for the implementation of PN) a specific activity with the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the entity in charge not only of the national budget but also of public investment and planning. Furthermore, its minister or vice minister forms part of CETIPPAT.

Also of note, the activities towards achieving product 1.2 (three-party monitoring of PN) are not sufficient to develop and establish a monitoring system given the limited experience and capacity of the institutions in this field. Only the activity (1.2.1) concerning the design and validation is directly related to the monitoring system and the most difficult and important activity—the implementation and use of the system by all the institutions involved—is not considered. On the other hand, product 3.1 (implementation of actions at the local level) includes activities related to monitoring the worst forms of child labor by unions and employer associations but not by public institutions, whose information is the most relevant to feed the national monitoring system.

Activities with the indigenous organizations should also have been included in the first goal, as these organizations are as relevant as the union and employer associations in the fight to eradicate child labor in indigenous communities. National organizations represent a significant portal to reach indigenous communities as they have influence on community and district authorities. Furthermore, CETIPPAT includes a representative of the National Council for Indigenous Populations, and the national plan contemplates several activities with indigenous organizations, precisely because of their importance in the fight against child labor. In fact, the project took several strengthening actions with these organizations.

It must be noted that the selection and engagement of the NGOs that executed the APs was not foreseen among the activities of the third goal, although this task was of the utmost importance for the project. Lack of consideration for this activity delayed the implementation of APs since the actual hiring of the NGOs took time and entailed various steps involving three ILO offices (Panama, San José, and Geneva) as well as USDOL. This flaw in the program design occurred even though the project had already experienced several setbacks engaging the NGOs during execution of the first phase, as pointed out in the corresponding final assessment.⁷

Finally, activity 1.5.3 (study on risky girls' activities) is not directly related with product 1.5 (activities of unions and employer associations) and could have fit better in objectives 1.2 or 1.3.

3.3 OTHER ASPECTS CONCERNING THE DESIGN

Originally, the project considered executing the direct action programs in the provinces of Bocas del Toro and Colón; however, during the first months of execution, CETIPPAT requested that ILO-IPEC change the beneficiary communities believing there were other areas with similar priority where institutions had greater presence and more coordination capacity. Following a process that took several months, it was decided that would be executed in the following provinces and districts.

⁶ ILPES. (2008). *Planning and budgeting in Latin America*. Martner, R (Ed). Santiago de Chile: ILPES.

⁷ Matos, S. *IPEC Evaluation: Panama Country Programme to fight the worst forms of child labour, An independent final evaluation by an external consultant*. Geneva: International Labour Organization. p. 35.

Table 3: Places of intervention of the AP

Province	District	Type of Communities	Worst Forms of Child Labor Present
Panama	La Chorrera	Rural	Fishing, agriculture
Veraguas	Santiago	Urban	Informal urban work, domestic employment
Comarca Ngobe-Bugle	Nedri and Kodri	Rural Indigenous	Agriculture, migration

Once the districts were established, communities were selected based on survey and institutional data provided by the two NGOs that executed the APs. Beneficiaries were selected through the use of surveys conducted in communities, neighborhoods, and schools, enabling the identification of working children. In general, this process made it possible to focus the work adequately on communities and beneficiaries with greater exposure to the worst forms of child labor.

One of the most important project strategies to strengthen the institutions that form CETIPPAT was to promote its participation in as many activities as possible. At the national level, the project desired that the institutions fulfill the responsibilities assigned within the legal framework in force and in the national plan. The preparation of guides and protocols was programmed to establish the tasks and procedures of each institution in line with their specific roles. At the local level, the participation of the different ministries was sought for the provision of goods and services for the APs, as well as the engagement of NGOs to coordinate the different institutional efforts. This strategy was consistent with the institutional strengthening objectives of the Country Program.

The project introduced the perspective of gender in training workshops to the different actors, highlighting the vulnerability of girls to some of the worst forms of child labor. Furthermore, it promoted the participation of the National Coordination Organization of Indigenous Women of Panama in the project and conducted a study on the risk factors associated with the incorporation of adolescent girls in dangerous economic activities in the Province of Panama (activity 1.5.3).

The project adopted most of the recommendations made in the midterm evaluation (July 2008). Most of them were aimed at undertaking or strengthening actions and strategies that the project had already considered in its design but were barely implemented. Nevertheless, there are two recommendations worth mentioning: one refers to the permanence of a national ILO-IPEC office to continue the support work in the country, and the other to the sustainability of the PN once the project has finalized. With regard to the first, there is still no firm decision on how ILO-IPEC will continue in Panama. As for the second one, although CETIPPAT has planned financing for the next two years, this will depend on ratification by the new authorities and will probably focus on the Panama-Colón project, headed by the First Lady's Office, which would leave most of the 107 lines of action proposed by the PN without funds.

This page left intentionally blank.

IV EFFICACY OF THE PROJECT

4.1 RESULT 1: INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PN

The Country Program set out to increase the initiatives to support the implementation of the PN by the institutions involved, offering technical assistance and financial resources to public institutions, trade unions, and entrepreneurial associations, as well as to the media, in order to improve the inter-institutional coordination mechanisms, foster the mobilization of institutions, design intervention proposals to eradicate the worst forms of child labor, prepare work tools, and implement training actions. Below is an analysis of the actions with greater potential to contribute to the achievement of the PN objectives.

4.1.1 Strengthening of CETIPPAT

Two elements combine for the strengthening of CETIPPAT. The first and most important is the intention of the First Lady during the 2004–2009 administration to combat the worst forms of child labor. Her action made it possible to confer an important status to the struggle against child labor within the framework of government social policies and, furthermore, promoted the mobilization of financial, human, and institutional resources.

The second element, a consequence of the first, is the execution of the Panama-Colon direct Action Program (AP/PC). Designed with the technical assistance of ILO-IPEC, this program was planned to be executed over four years as of 2008, with US\$5 million in State funds. It serves 5,000 boys and girls age 5 to 14 who perform some kind of economic activity in the metropolitan area of the Panama and Colón provinces. The direction of the program is the responsibility of the First Lady's Office and the direct execution is under the CETIPPAT institutions, through an inter-institutional coordination model similar to that proposed for the Country Program's APs. This model involves providing the beneficiaries with a set of goods and services produced by MIDES, MITRADEL, *Ministerio de Educación* (Ministry of Education or MEDUCA), *Ministerio de Salud* (Ministry of Health or MINSA), IFARHU, INEC, and *Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo Humano* (National Institute for Human Development or INADEH).⁸ These institutions have assigned approximately 250 persons to the project.

In practice, these institutions' activities concerning child labor have focused almost entirely on the execution of AP/PC. Furthermore, the new financial and human resources that the government has allocated to the struggle against child labor are focused essentially on the execution of AP/PC. This led to a poor execution of other aspects considered in the PN.⁹ Given

⁸ Torrero, A. (2008). *Systematization of the Action Program for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor in the Provinces of Panama and Colón*, mimeo.

⁹ The midterm evaluation already mentioned this fact concerning MEDUCA and MITRADEL (p. 13–14).

the limited coverage of the project and the ambitious nature of the PN, it is likely that the country will not accomplish the goals proposed for 2011,¹⁰ the main responsibility of CETIPPAT.

Nevertheless, the execution of the program is teaching institutions how to work in a coordinated manner, both horizontally (between ministries) and vertically (national and local levels). Ensuring that children attend school, receive school supplies, food, and periodical medical checkups, and participate in sports and art activities, in addition to their families receiving a monthly subsidy from the government is only possible through a complex web of institutions coordinating actions among themselves. With its corresponding impact assessment and costs study, the AP/PC has the potential to become an intervention model on a greater scale.

It is understandable that, given the weaknesses of the public management systems of the country,¹¹ the authorities and institutions have focused their resources on a specific project, in well defined areas, instead of committing to a more complex and medium-term policy like the one established by the PN.

By the end of the second stage of the Country Program, it can be inferred based on the information gathered that the execution of the AP/PC has managed to promote the coordination of the institutions around concrete actions at both the national and local levels. Nevertheless, given the instability of the authorities and of the public policies, it can be said with certainty whether the program will continue. ILO-IPEC played a very important role in the design of the project and promoted coordination between the executor institutions.

4.1.2 Raising Awareness and Training

The country program sponsored a great number of events to educate and raise awareness of the worst forms of child labor at a national level. Some events were performed by the institutions as part of an agenda to train their staff. For example, the Judicial School (under the Supreme Court of Justice) trained magistrates, judges, social workers, psychologists, and clerks; the University of the Americas dictated a formal course covering 40 hours of training for members of unions¹² with support from the Panamanian Institute of Labor Studies; the National Council of Organized Workers conducted awareness-raising courses for its members; the Ombudsman's Office held training conferences for school teachers; and the National Assembly of Representatives held a training course on the worst forms of child labor for representatives in its formal training space. Furthermore, organizations of indigenous women held discussions among the authorities of the indigenous communities to discuss the problem of child labor and its worst forms. All these initiatives have contributed to generating internal capacity in the institutions to address child labor issues and make it possible to form knowledgeable leaders in this matter.

¹⁰ The 2011 goal seeks to withdraw 90% of boys, girls, and adolescents from the worst forms of child labor. According to the latest survey, performed by INCEC in 2008, there are currently 115,000 working children, and according to ILO-IPEC, 40% of them are in the worst forms of child labor (45,000). Accordingly, to reach the goal 40,000 children and adolescents would have to be withdrawn from work.

¹¹ Weaknesses include: a weak planning system (there are no medium-term sector plans), disarticulation between planning and budget, nonexistent monitoring systems, and public management assessment.

¹² This University had already dictated training courses for public officials during the first stage of the project.

The project reported having trained a total of 1,824 persons and keeps a record of their names and institutions. However, no assessment of knowledge acquired by the participants was performed (except in the case of the University of the Americas). Furthermore, it would have been feasible, as well as useful, to analyze the change of knowledge, attitudes, and practices of those individuals who participated in the awareness raising and training activities.

During the first stage, a research study was conducted to discover public institutions' training needs concerning child labor. This information could have been used as a baseline to assess the level of progress achieved by the Country Program in the second stage.¹³

On the other hand, the project set out to analyze the “degree of knowledge, attitudes, and practices developed by the population in general and the society as a whole” with regard to the worst forms of child labor. In order to produce this indicator, it was necessary to design and apply a survey both at the beginning and at the end of the project; this did not occur and, therefore, there is no direct way to know if the perceptions of the population changed during project implementation.

It would be convenient for future projects to generate more specific indicators about training activities to better enable analysis of facts. For example, it would be convenient to differentiate the events by number of hours (a one-day training course is not the same as a 40-hour course) and to relate the training time received with the number of participants per audience.

4.1.3 Production and Use of Information

The Country Program supported the creation of instruments to produce information on child labor and to monitor the national plan. For the former, the program provided technical assistance to INEC to design a survey on child labor that was applied in 2008 to a sample of homes representative of the entire country, both urban and rural areas, as well as provinces and indigenous and non-indigenous populations.¹⁴ Furthermore, the program supported the organization of inter-institutional meetings to discuss questions to be included in the survey and report the results of their application. This was the second survey of its kind conducted by INEC in Panama; the first one was applied in 2000. INEC coordinated with the MITRADEL and MIDES and requested that they include in their budgets the resources required to conduct another survey in 2010.¹⁵ These surveys represent a significant contribution to the country, as they are the primary instruments for follow up on the indicators concerning children's and adolescents' labor activity, and may possibly become instruments for analysis of the worst forms of child labor to assist in focusing any future programs.

As of 2007, MEDUCA included information on the labor situation of students in the forms schools must submit upon completion of each school year. This form includes data on the number of students, by gender, grade, class, dropout, and other educational variables. Although a

¹³ The midterm and final evaluations of the first stage also made this suggestion.

¹⁴ The technical name of the survey is “Homes Survey—Labor Market October 2008”

¹⁵ The results of the 2000 survey reveal an increase in the participation of children and adolescents in the labor market. A detailed data analysis is still pending and, therefore, it is yet unknown if this increase is due to the differences between the instruments used—the 2008 survey is more accurate and targets child labor better—or if the rate effectively increased.

cascade training process was in place to inform teachers of this innovation to the school file (the statistics department trained supervisors and they, in turn, trained the teachers), there is no instrument with uniform criteria that may be useful to determine if a student is working or not. The information included in the files is based on the assumption that the teachers know their students well and, therefore, know if they work or not. However, this assumption has been denied by the experience of APs, which have found precisely the opposite: teachers generally do not know if their students work. It is probable that the statistical information stemming from these files may not be reliable. In addition, MEDUCA has not yet used that information for analysis and application in the design of educational responses to the child labor issue.

The Country Program also supported INEC in the preparation of software (CETIPPAT Info) to handle data resulting from the monitoring indicators of the PN. INEC trained officers from CETIPPAT institutions in on the use of this software. However, INEC has not yet been able to enter all the indicators as the institutions have not sent their respective information. Only data that may be taken from the census and surveys directly managed by INEC have been entered into the system. Meanwhile, the manner in which the information will be used to enhance the implementation of the PN has not yet been determined. A monitoring system is more than a set of indicators and software; it is basically a management system, an element that still remains a challenge for CETIPPAT.

In summary, the Country Program has been able to support the development of instruments of great significance for obtaining insight on the worst forms of child labor and monitoring actions toward their eradication. The challenge to institutionalize these instruments within the framework of an inter-institutional management with the PN as reference still remains.

4.1.4 Strengthening the Civil Society's Capacity to Fight Against the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The project continued its actions initiated during the first stage toward strengthening the mobilization capacity of unions and entrepreneurial associations. It supported CONATO and its associates¹⁶ in the elaboration of PN-based operational plans. In general, these plans established two types of actions: (1) raising awareness and training union members on the worst forms of child labor and (2) mobilizing for eradication of the worst forms of child labor. For the latter, CONATO assisted the workers' unions in supermarkets in achieving a prohibition in their respective collective agreements against hiring children under age 14. This action received the support of MITRADEL, which performed inspections of supermarkets to ensure the enforcement of this measure. These actions were also coordinated with the entrepreneurial associations, who assisted in promoting a dialogue with supermarket owners. Furthermore, this measure was accompanied by a campaign in the media. The action shows how effective an eradication action can be when there is coordinated between workers, employers, and the state.

According to the opinion of union members interviewed, the active participation of the unions' male leaders of today is one way that shows how they have taken up the child labor issue. Until a few years ago, only women were interested in this problem, but now also men consider it relevant and believe it must be included in the agenda of the unions.

¹⁶ CONATO groups seven union centers and two workers' federations.

Only minor progress was achieved with the entrepreneurial associations, mostly focused on events toward raising awareness of entrepreneurs concerning child labor issues and existing legislation. The head of these efforts has been Consejo Nacional de la Empresa Privada (National Council of the Private Enterprise or CONEP), which groups entrepreneurial associations throughout the country. Additionally, active involvement by a CONEP representative in the CETIPPAT events has been achieved, contributing the point of view of the entrepreneurial associations and promoting coordination. Also of note, a trend concerning companies' social responsibilities is just beginning in Panama, fostered by an agreement between CONEP and the International Organisation of Employers (IOE). To the extent this trend is consolidated, the actions initiated by private enterprises toward the eradication of child labor have a better chance to develop. Although the reasons for limited progress achievements in this sector are related to the institutional weakness of entrepreneurial associations and their minimal interest in social problems—aspects that the Country Program could hardly have changed, promoting the exchange of experiences with associations from countries that have achieved greater progress in this matter would have been fitting. Cases in Brazil, Colombia, and Chile could prove inspirational to pioneer entrepreneurs who are interested in the social responsibility of the private sector.

The Country Program achieved significant progress involving indigenous organizations in the fight against the worst forms of child labor, including the Coordination Organization of the Indigenous Women of Panama, student organizations of the Gnobe-Bugle, Emberá, and Kuna communities,¹⁷ as well as with indigenous organizations of the regions (Comarcas). With the support of the Country Program, all of these organization mentioned created and elaborated plans of action toward eliminating the worst forms of child labor. While most of their activities were focused on raising awareness about child labor, meetings were also organized to discuss the characteristics of this problem with indigenous communities, according to their own culture and worldview. The facilitators of both the awareness-raising activities and the discussions were members of the indigenous communities themselves, who organized the meetings in their mother tongues. Currently, several organizations have one or more members who are acquainted with the worst forms of child labor. Promoting intercultural dialogue—analysis of problems and practices with regard to education, work, and socialization of children from the perspective of their own indigenous culture—in their own language is considered a good practice that helped open up organizations allowing them to address the subject and build an opinion of their own in this respect. Furthermore, it was observed that the women and youth organizations were especially sensitive to the child labor problem and they should be kept in mind during intercultural dialogue.

The project continued the awareness-raising and training tasks with the media that it had initiated during the first stage. Motivated by this, and based on the agreement between CETIPPAT and the National Council of Journalism, a study was conducted called *Diagnosis of the Handling of the Child Labor Issue in the National Newspapers of Panama*. The results of the study were used to prepare a guide for journalists on addressing child labor in the news. The project trained various journalists in the use of this guide. However, no follow up was made to the guide's use or the treatment of the news concerning child labor in the national newspapers after the training activities.

¹⁷ The work with the Kuna community was undertaken by ILO-IPEC with funds from another project.

The participation of the civil society in CETIPPAT continues being only formal. Despite there being representatives of union associations, entrepreneurial associations, and indigenous communities among the 27 members of this organization, the authority that truly works is the Technical Secretariat, made up only of public institutions.

In summary, the project made significant progress with indigenous populations, from raising awareness to planning actions with unions and the media, but made little progress with entrepreneurial associations. As in the case of institutional strengthening of state agencies, an instrument is required that would allow follow up on the capacity-building process of civil society organizations to combat the worst forms of child labor.¹⁸

4.2 RESULT 2: IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVE APPLICATION OF CHILD LABOR LEGISLATION

The Country Program set out to encourage law enforcement to improve its application of the law through training and the provision of instruments to establish proper work processes and procedures. As previously mentioned, the Judicial School organized training courses for magistrates, judges, social workers, psychologists, and clerks. The courses were dictated by professionals, specialists in the field commissioned by the project to that effect, who used material previously published by ILO-IPEC.¹⁹ No system was applied to assess the knowledge acquired or to follow up on any changes in the practices of law enforcement officials.

Additionally, the project supported the elaboration of a protocol that established the “practical procedures to be fostered by the Ministry of Labor and Labor Development for the restitution of underage workers’ human rights, whether or not authorized by Law, under their jurisdiction and in coordination with other institutions and authorities in charge of the protection and defense of underage workers’ rights.”²⁰ The objectives of the protocol are (1) to implement the pertinent measures when so required by the seriousness or urgency of the situation; (2) to systematize the data gathered for subsequent actions; (3) to refer the case to the competent authorities for due attention and response; and (4) to follow up on actions undertaken. All MITRADEL inspectors received training on the contents of the protocol. However, there is no information on the extent and manner in which Ministry officials are applying it.

While these actions effectively cover basic aspects for law enforcement officials to improve the application of legal provisions, the lack of follow up on both the practices generated by the training received and the application of the protocol makes it impossible to find out to what extent officials and institutions made this new insight and instruments their own.

¹⁸ There are several instruments designed to diagnose and monitor the strengthening of institutional capacities in the public sector that could be adapted to the characteristics of the civil society organizations. Review of the following instruments is suggested:

USAID. (2000). *Measuring Institutional Capacity*.

Office of the Auditor General of Canada. (2003). *The Managing for Results Self Assessment Tool*.

Asian Development Bank. (2006). *Capacity for Results Management*.

¹⁹ ILO-IPEC. (2007). *Handbook on Child and Adolescent Labor for Law Enforcement Officials*. San José, Costa Rica: ILO-IPEC.

²⁰ Intra-institutional coordination protocol for labor inspection and development to address underage workers.

On the other hand, inspection activities notoriously increased from the period 2003–2005 to 2006–2008, from 21 complaints in the first period to 1,830 cases identified by the inspectors in the second period.²¹ However, of the 1,830 cases identified by the inspectors, only eight reached the sanction stage and 31 are being processed in labor or child courts. This is proof that there is a lack of coordination between the labor inspection office and the courts.

It must be noted that the fostering of labor inspection activities could also have undesired adverse effects, as seen in Playa Chiquita (La Chorrera) during the evaluation visit. In this community, parents had the perception that child labor was a crime for which they could be accused and punished. This induced them to furnish false information when the baseline survey takers asked them questions concerning the work activities of their children. Although it was not possible to identify the source of this idea, it is presumed to have been a rumor stemming from the inspection visits to agricultural estates. Furthermore, it was also observed that some inspectors emphasized the punitive dimension rather than the preventive one during the inspection²² and considered the parents to be “guilty” of their child being required to work.

The Country Program also promoted the creation of a protocol to set in order work procedures developed by state institutions and nongovernmental organizations with regard to the provision of services for the prevention of, attention to, and eradication of child labor in Panama. It also aims to set in order work procedures for the identification of, attention to, and withdrawal of working children and adolescents.²³ This protocol has been useful for the AP/PC operation.

In summary, it is difficult to establish the extent of improvement in the application of the law within the framework of the Country Program due to the lack of detailed information. Nevertheless, the scarce existing data show that while progress was made in several fronts—improvement of the legal framework, incorporation of child labor inspectors, preparation of guides and working procedures, the country still has a long way to go in this matter.

4.3 RESULT 3: WITHDRAWAL FROM AND PREVENTION OF CHILD LABOR

The Country Program set out to implement educational and income-generation activities to prevent the incorporation of or to withdraw 1,500 children from work. The project formulated three APs, which were executed by the NGOs Casa Esperanza and FUNDESPA.

²¹ Although the indicator is not the same since the final evaluation report for the first stage refers to the “number of complaints” while the data of the second stage refer to “cases identified by labor inspection,” the data is useful to observe the changes that have occurred.

²² This observation was also raised in the final evaluation report of the first stage.

²³ Interinstitutional Coordination Protocol for the Protection and Care of Underage Workers.

Table 4: Direct Action Programs (AP) Executed by the Project

District	NGO	Type of Community	Number of Schools	Withdrawn/ Prevented
La Chorrera	FUNDESPA	Rural	8	281/243
Santiago	<i>Casa Esperanza</i>	Urban	14	284/300
Nedri and Kodri	<i>Casa Esperanza</i>	Rural Indigenous	4	325/300
Total			26	1,733

The strategy for the prevention and withdrawal of primary school children was similar in the three APs and consisted in the combination of the following elements:

- Training teachers to raise their awareness of child labor and improve their teaching skills. The training course was held for one week at the beginning of the school year and used materials elaborated by ILO-IPEC (SCREAM) or validated by other institutions, such as *Casa Esperanza* or the *Destino* Project (also funded by USDOL).
- Biweekly tutoring for children withdrawn from the worst forms of child labor (only applied by *Casa Esperanza*).
- Provision of meals during the school day.
- Primary health care (vaccines, parasite removal, growth control) and dental care provided by personnel from MINSA.
- School scholarships granted by IFARHU or cash subsidies to the family from the government project *Red de Oportunidades* (Network of Opportunities).
- Provision of school supplies and uniforms to the children.

In addition, the AP executed by *Casa Esperanza* conducted one-month training courses for 45 adolescents. The number of beneficiaries is not significant within the context of the project and there was no follow up on the effect this training had on the adolescents.

The three APs promoted the implementation of activities that would enable the income generation for the parents and families. In general, the project provided support to initiate small businesses, such as food or grocery vending, small-scale farming, and farm animal raising. Some parents received brief training from MIDA. There is no information available to evaluate the impact of this activity on the economic situation of these families, let alone in the prevention and eradication of the worst forms of child labor. The activity was held from March 2009, the last quarter of AP execution, which did not allow for follow up of the results. In turn, it may be established that this activity did not contribute to the results concerning children's schooling,

retention, and improvement in school performance, as it was carried out when the projects were coming to an end and the mentioned results had already been produced.²⁴

Approximately 226 parents benefited from this measure, but the criteria to include them were not uniform. In most cases, parents selected already had some previous experience in some of the activities that the projects could promote. For example, women who had already engaged in selling merchandise opted to set up a small stand selling groceries, and farmers with experience in animal raising chose to raise chickens.

Another intervention strategy element shared by the three APs concerned inter-institutional coordination work. Both NGOs dedicated a good part of their work to lobbying, awareness raising, and training of local ministry officials in order to establish the coordination basis for the activities and resources that the public institutions would contribute to the project.

Table 5: Institutions that Participated in the APs

Institution	Activity
Private Enterprise	Backpacks, school supplies
IFARHU	Scholarships for students
INADEH	Training courses for parents
MEDUCA	Coordination for teacher training, school meals
MIDA	Training courses for parents
MIDES	Literacy, attention to children at risk
MINSA	Primary health care
MITRADEL	Training on the worst forms of child labor
Red de Oportunidades	Conditional subsidy

Although CETIPPAT supported and promoted the project at a national level, at a local level the two NGOs had to engage in intense lobbying to obtain the trust of officials and the allocation of resources from their institutions. The project design was based on the assumption that the political will of the authorities at a national level would automatically be transferred to the local level and the collaboration of the officials and economic resources required would, therefore, be obtained for the implementation of actions.²⁵ This explains the absence of lobbying and institutional deployment as part of the activities required to obtain product 3.1.²⁶ Things actually worked differently. As already indicated, the NGOs invested a great deal of their time and effort in these tasks, which they had initially not considered. To a great extent, the programming of these activities of the APs was subordinated to the proceedings and procedures of government institutions.

²⁴ The first stage of the Country Program also promoted income-generation projects. It would have been fitting for a study to have been conducted on the effect of these projects, and would have contributed important lessons.

²⁵ The assumption read as follows: “Consensus is reached and commitments have been obtained from the institutions for the direct action programs, and the resource allocation by the corresponding counterpart is ensured.”

²⁶ These activities were neither programmed nor budgeted.

In addition, the implementation of the AP in La Chorrera suffered delays due to coordination problems with the AP/PC executed by CETIPPAT. It was initially established that this project would not work in La Chorrera (province of Panama), since it had already been agreed in 2007 that this area would be covered by the Country Program. Subsequently, the AP/PC changed its mind and decided to intervene in the same area. The conversations to reach an agreement took several months and only in May 2008 was the decision made to keep the initial agreement, delaying the intervention of FUNDESPA. The La Chorrera AP was not implemented in the 18 months initially foreseen, but in only 12 months.

Although the project managed to consolidate a group of officials that supported the project in La Chorrera and Santiago, the formation of local CETIPPAT committees is still far from being achieved. The work focused basically on the coordination of specific activities of the AP and not in the implementation of the PN at a local level. Furthermore, given the high turnover of officials with each change of authorities, it is unknown if the persons who worked on the AP will continue in their positions.

With regard to monitoring of child labor and school attendance, the APs executed by *Casa Esperanza* applied two labor condition surveys to the children in the project subsequent to the baseline: one in November 2008 and another in May 2009.²⁷ Furthermore, they carried out periodical records of labor activity and school attendance by the children. The AP executed by FUNDESPA only applied the baseline, as MITRADEL and MIDES were in charge of verifying the labor and education condition of the children; however, this did not occur. In effect, the logical framework of the AP executed by FUNDESPA maintains that the monitoring of the children's activities would be undertaken by the aforementioned ministries, and therefore, no resources were allocated to this task. In practice, however, MITRADEL and MIDES never verified the labor situation of the children and limited themselves to the provision of institutional services. Neither employers nor workers participated in the follow up; the idea of implementing three-party monitoring systems was never put into practice.²⁸

The APs involved the community leaders through awareness-raising actions on child labor issues and information on the project. Nevertheless, the organizational weakness of the communities, in both the indigenous and non-indigenous areas, diminished the capacity for action of the community organizations.

The Country Program did not promote the interaction between the two executing institutions of the APs. It would have been valuable to favor a periodic exchange of opinions to obtain the maximum benefit from the experience of both institutions.

²⁷ This second survey was not included among the CE commitments with ILO-IPEC and was undertaken with ILO-IPEC resources.

²⁸ For the reasons mentioned above, the execution of the AP in La Chorrera was quite troubled and suffered delays. Due to this situation both FUNDESPA and ILO focused on accomplishing the execution of services for the children and their families without finding a solution to the lack of monitoring by MIDES and MITRADEL.

V PROJECT EFFICIENCY

The primary strategy used by the Country Program to strengthen the capacity of the institutions at local and national levels entailed a strategy for the optimizing the use of both financial and human resources. The project opted to allocate goods, services, and resources from the institutions and organizations to involve them in the execution of the PN and generate the products foreseen within the logical framework. For instance, the greater part of resources to ensure the schooling of the children and their withdrawal from labor activities came from public institutions, as seen in the previous chapter.²⁹ This explains, in part, how the project was able to benefit 1,733 children instead of 1,500, as planned. Likewise, the investment made in the monitoring activities of the PN is minimal compared to the resources allocated by INEC.

Nevertheless, there are some aspects of the ILO-IPEC procedures that could be improved to increase the efficiency of the APs. Internal proceedings to consider and approve changes in the intervention areas and to select the executing NGOs took a long time, as there were several levels involved in decision making (the ILO-IPEC offices in Panama, in San José, and in Geneva). Additionally, the project programming did not consider the time and effort that would be required to execute the inter-institutional coordination strategy at both the national and local level. These factors had a negative impact on the implementation of the programming, leaving very little time for the closing of the project and the analysis and systematization of the experience.

From the analysis in the previous chapter, it is clear that the monitoring systems the project used were not able to identify the complexity of the objectives set out in their entire dimension. The indicators used to observe the first and second objectives do not show progress in institutional capacity building. For example, the number of institutions that implement initiatives to support the PN (indicator 1.1) does not make it possible to identify the degree of progress and the pertinence of these initiatives. The same happens with the indicator concerning the number of actions executed by the workers' (1.3) or employers' (1.4) organizations. There was no follow up on the training actions either. With regard to the monitoring of the APs, the software provided by ILO-IPEC did not work as expected and the implementing NGOs had to design their own systems to enter the data. Furthermore, the study to track the beneficiaries of the first stage was not performed.³⁰

The management of the Country Program, which was carried out in an orderly and efficient manner, used the human and technical resources of ILO to provide technical assistance in various technical aspects that required specialized skills, such as the preparation of the protocol for MITRADEL and the survey of INEC.

The public institutions and the civil society organizations consider the professional team of the Country Program to be a driving force in the eradication of the worst forms of child labor and a valuable source of assistance. Furthermore, the NGOs that executed the APs obtained great acceptance from local institutions and from the communities where the NGOs intervened.

²⁹ The direct execution of the APs entailed an approximate investment of US\$500,000, while only the cost of scholarships (covered by the IFARHU) amounted to approximately US\$220,000.

³⁰ This study was programmed for the final stage of the project.

This page left intentionally blank.

VI PROJECT IMPACT

The impact of the project can be observed in three areas: (1) the institutional capacities of public entities, (2) the mobilization of the civil society at a national level, and (3) the eradication of child labor in communities served by the APs.

With regard to the first area, the final evaluation of the Country Program's first stage formulated the following opinion on the results of the institutional strengthening activities: "while significant progress has been achieved as to the public initiatives, they seem today more formal than real, more punishment-oriented than preventive and still situated in a high hierarchical level rather than in technical work."³¹

The Country Program has been able to modify the situation described by the final assessment of the first stage. Although greater progress is observed in the formal rather than in the real aspects (legal and institutional framework and national plan), the country has been able to design and set in motion the AP/PC, which implies significant progress with respect to strengthening institutional capacities to comply with the provisions of the law and planning. Although AP/CP is executed in a small area of the country and serves only 10% of the children in the worst forms of child labor, a model of action that requires coordination between several public institutions has been implemented. This has generated institutional experience and insight that could result in substantive improvements in the capacity to combat child labor at a national level. For this to happen it is necessary for the government to continue implementing the APs and undertake assessment studies of both the efficiency and the efficacy of the different project components.

On the other hand, no substantive improvements have been observed in the capacity of law enforcement officials to comply with and to enforce the law. The increase in the number of inspectors and inspections has not correlated to an increase of judicial proceedings and sentences. It is possible that the strategy the Country Program set in motion this effect may not have been sufficient. The training of court personnel and the design of work protocols do not seem to be sufficient to remove the obstacles that prevent the application of the law. Given that the administration of justice of the country is not very reliable in general,³² the efforts of projects such as the Country Program will never be sufficient to improve it; therefore, it would be convenient to be careful when setting out objectives and goals in this field.

With regard to the mobilization of civil society organizations to support the eradication of the worst forms of child labor, the Country Program was able to assist some regional and national organizations of the indigenous populations in making this issue their own and submitting it to discussion with their traditional and community authorities. Given the weakness of these organizations, this step is considered significant.

In the unions, the Country Program surpassed the awareness-raising and training of leaders stage and managed to develop action plans that included training for union members and specific mobilizations. Currently, seven union organizations and two workers federations have an action

³¹ Final Assessment 2006, p. 21.

³² Only 20% of the population of Panama trusts the administration of the justice system according to a survey of Latibarómetro 2008.

plan for the eradication of the worst forms of child labor and have persons responsible for their implementation. Nevertheless, they still do not have sufficient capacity to appear as actors demanding state institutionalization of public policies oriented towards the elimination of child labor.

The impact of the project on the private sector has been lower. CONEP participates in the activities of CETIPPAT and has organized specific activities towards the dissemination of the child labor problem among its members, but they do not undertake significant activities. The adoption of international management standards and a social responsibility approach is still in its initial phase in the companies and associations of the country.³³

The APs' actions executed in the communities (teacher training, and scholarships, school supplies, primary health care, and food for the children) had an effective result in encouraging children to enter and/or stay in primary school, as confirmed by the project data, as well as by testimonies of the teachers and parents during the evaluation.³⁴ The teachers argue that these measures have helped to drastically reduce school desertion and have increased the students' performance. The parents stated that children attend school with more enthusiasm than before and do their school homework willingly. Furthermore, they stated that they are now more interested in the education of their children than before. In the Gnobe-Buglé communities, parents stated that the project has helped to prevent the seasonal migration of children to work in the coffee fields. However, there is no statistical information available to calculate the effect that the project had on this phenomenon.

The causes of these changes seem to be related to two complementary factors: (1) the incentive that money and food represent for the children and their families and (2) the improvement of the school environment promoted by the teachers training and the support received from the NGOs. In addition, other contributing factors include the academic support received by the children in the tutoring sessions in the schools with which *Casa Esperanza* worked, as well as the scholarships and subsidies IFARHU and the *Red de Oportunidades* granted on the condition that the children attend school—an aspect that is very present among the parents and that tilts the scale towards school rather than towards work.

Nevertheless, we must consider the hypothesis that the conditioning of assistance could lead parents to conceal the productive activities performed by children in the afternoon, weekends, and vacations because they fear losing the economic support.

Despite the fact that the APs managed to call for the work of public institutions in the provision of specific services, no indications are seen that any organizational structures for inter-institutional coordination have been formed. The objective of the NGOs was the implementation of the activities with the children and not the strengthening of local institutions.

³³ There are some exceptions, mostly in transnational companies like Telefónica; the program Proniño is an example of social responsibility. The Country Program has coordinated some actions with Proniño.

³⁴ The midterm evaluation also reported this trend.

VII SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROJECT

The Country Program developed a sustainability strategy consistent with its objectives and intervention strategies, based fundamentally on the strengthening of institutional capacities of the public and the private sector at both the national and local level.

Table 6: Sustainability Strategy of the Project

Project Component (Components of the project or immediate objectives)	Conditions for Sustainability (Conditions in which there is a required degree of sustainability)
<p>I/O 1: By the end of the program, implementation of targeted, quality initiatives by public institutions and key social partners (employers, workers, and the media) in support of the National Child Labor Plan is increased.</p>	<p>CETIPPAT maintains its leadership and coordinating role and the capability to mobilize other organizations to join the efforts against child labor. Specifically, this would mean that the committee can—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Propose initiatives that will be carried out by its member institutions. • Facilitate coordinated action between the member institutions. • Monitor the effective implementation of the commitments made by the member institutions.
	<p>The operative plans and budgets of relevant ministries include child labor provisions.</p>
	<p>CONATO implements the Trade Union Plan for the Elimination of Child Labor.</p>
<p>I/O 2: By the end of the program, officials in the justice system (labor and children's courts and labor inspection) improve the application of child labor legislation and regulations.</p>	<p>The Law for the Integrated Protection of Children which incorporates efforts against child labor in accordance with ILO Conventions 138 and 182 is approved.</p>
	<p>The regulations and documents needed for implementing the relevant legislation are created. These include protocol for child labor inspection and for inter-institutional coordination, among others.</p>
	<p>Training programs for judicial system operators developed by the project become part of the permanent curricula of labor judge training centers and the labor inspection training programs.</p>
<p>I/O 3: Sustainable and quality educational, vocational, and income-generation activities to withdraw and prevent 1,500 children from the worst forms of child labor are implemented by local-level national organizations.</p>	<p>Public institutions involved in action programs provide the necessary services to the target group.</p>
	<p>An inter-institutional platform of services is available in each of the main components of the second phase intervention that can contribute to withdrawal from child labor and to child labor monitoring.</p>

In general, most of the sustainability conditions foreseen in the strategy were accomplished (with the exception of the approval of the Law on Childhood and Adolescence). Nevertheless, some elements that were not taken into account put the continuity of the results obtained by the Country Program at risk. One of them was the high turnover of personnel when authorities changed. Another was the insufficient elements planned for the effective application of the law.

The midterm evaluation of the second stage found adverse conditions for the strengthening of institutions, as “during these last two years significant changes have occurred, not only with regard to ministers of State, but also with regard to directors and technical staff who had been trained and sensitized regarding child labor issues; even the CETIPPAT Technical Secretariat was renewed on three occasions, which has hindered the implementation of the project”³⁵ (2008 Midterm Assessment: 9). The high turnover of authorities and officials continues to be an obstacle for the development and consolidation of institutional capacities. Furthermore, the finalization of the Country Program coincides with the beginning of a new government administration, which poses questions about the continuity of the achievements promoted by the Country Program.

As previously mentioned, the main government activity for the eradication of child labor is the AP/PC, the continuity of which has not been formally announced by the new government. Nevertheless, most of the CETIPPAT officials interviewed believed it will continue. The technical and institutional conditions for the continuity are given, so the political intention is the only thing required. However, the course that the new authorities will give to the project is still uncertain: Will they expand it? Will they change the way it is being executed?³⁶ The future of CETIPPAT and the national plan is also unknown beyond the AP/PC.³⁷ Furthermore, several officials at different hierarchical levels who were trained by the Country Program or who were involved in its activities will probably be removed from their positions.

On the other hand, while the project based its strategy on the experiences gained in the first stage, it did not set out to analyze the medium-term results of some of them (income-generating projects for parents, first certificate from the University of the Americas) or to study the aspects that favored or hindered the execution of others (2003–2006 National Plan, 2004 Inter-Union Plan). Although a Tracer Study was programmed to evaluate the medium-term impacts of the APs on children and their families, it was not executed in the end. These analyses could have provided additional elements to streamline project strategies and improve their sustainability.

It is believed that the progress obtained with the PN monitoring system will not stand without permanent technical assistance from ILO-IPEC. As mentioned above in Section 4.1.3, there is still a long way to go to institutionalize the use of CETIPPAT Info and turn it into a PN management instrument.

³⁵ An indicator of the institutional instability can be seen in the four changes undergone by the executive decree that created CETIPPAT: in 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2005.

³⁶ The evaluation mission was only performed three weeks after the new government administration took office; therefore, the new authorities did not yet have an opinion in this respect.

³⁷ Recent history indicates that drastic changes may occur between one administration and the next.

At the local level, continuity of the actions is unlikely without the presence of the NGOs, as the intervention of public institutions limited itself to delivering specific services through these organizations. *Casa Esperanza* will continue working in some schools of the Gnobé-Buglé Comarca with funds from Proniño, but not in Santiago de Veraguas. FUNDESPA will not continue its work in La Chorrera.

Sustainability in withdrawing children from the worst forms of child labor depends to a large extent on the continuity of scholarships, family subsidies, and school meals. The programs that keep these services are designed to continue operating during several more years, but the final decision will depend on the new authorities.

This page left intentionally blank.

VIII CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 CONCLUSIONS

The Country Program set ambitious goals and results that did not take into account the real institutional capacity of the entities that form part of CETIPPAT or the weakness of the public management systems of the country. The program was based on a National Plan to Eradicate Child Labor that covers a very wide scope of objectives and activities and lacks logical rigor in the construction of a chain of results. Furthermore, it assumed that the political intention at a national level would suffice when it came to institutions coordinating activities at a local level. The program also believed that training law enforcement officials and developing working guidelines would be enough for the law to be effectively enforced. Along that same line, it considered that the monitoring system would operate once the plan indicators were built and the data processing system developed. In summary, the project design did not consider the complexities entailed to attain the results proposed.

The program was able to promote the design and implementation of a project to eradicate child labor executed with state funds. While it only covers 10% of the demand, the strategy is promising, as it has managed to coordinate the action of several institutions to offer beneficiaries a package of suitable services for the eradication of the worst forms of child labor.

The program produced some instruments essential for the management of the institutions involved in CETIPPAT: a set of indicators to monitor the child labor situation in the country, a monitoring data processing system, protocol for the inspection office of the MITRADEL, and protocol for coordinated actions of the institutions working to eradicate the worst forms of child labor. While these instruments are not sufficient to ensure good institutional management, they represent important elements to progress toward institutionalizing a child labor eradication policy.

The program promoted the preparation of operational plans in institutions and organizations as a means to simplify the operation of the PN. This is a significant achievement, as it entailed placing the child labor issue in a visible manner in the agenda of those institutions and organizations. Nevertheless, many plans have a formal nature and most of their activities continue to focus on raising awareness and training. This shows that while leaders and authorities are aware of the child labor issue, raising awareness is still required with operators of institutions and members of organizations.

The program developed considerable training activities in public institutions and civil society organizations, and provided an important step in promoting that these same institutions and organizations be in charge of managing some of these events. However, no follow up of the training was carried out and it is therefore difficult to establish its effect and degree of progress.

The APs implemented were successfully executed as they fulfilled their primary goal, which was to remove children from the worst forms of child labor and to prevent other children from engaging in these activities. The AP execution experience, combined with that of the AP/PC, offers the country a rich source of experiences to promote a large-scale program for the

eradication of child labor through schooling. The inter-institutional coordination turned out to be more complex than planned, forcing the NGOs to invest considerable additional efforts. The idea of forming three-party monitoring systems in the APs was not put into practice.

At the national and local levels, the program was able to allocate important human and financial resources. At the national level, in addition to the already mentioned project, INEC conducted a national survey on child labor, and at the local level, public institutions contributed services to child beneficiaries of the APs.

The sustainability of project achievements the project is uncertain due to the institutional weakness of the actors involved. The country still requires technical support to consolidate both the management area of public policies and the implementation of the APs.

ILO-IPEC has been the most important promoter of actions toward eradicating the worst forms of child labor in Panama. Its actions have enabled the state to execute several legal and institutional measures to address the problem. It is important that ILO-IPEC continues providing support to the country in this issue.

8.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following actions are recommended:

- The PN should be reviewed to prioritize results and establish other elements required by the strategic and operational planning, including: the definition of medium- and short-term results; definition of goods and services to be offered with their respective cost; performance indicators for objectives, effects, products, and activities; baseline of indicators and multi-annual and annual goals; and officials and institutions responsible for the accomplishment of results.
- The results of the PN should be recorded in the national plan and in the state budget. This involves coordinating with the Ministry of Economy and Finance. The commencement of a new government administration is an ideal moment to undertake this task.
- The CETIPPAT structure should be revised to provide the PN with the capacity for action; the organizational design must be in line with the plan and not the other way around. Furthermore, CETIPPAT must receive the active, not just formal, participation of civil society organizations (NGOs, unions, and entrepreneurial associations).
- Efforts to train law enforcement officials should continue in order to moderate the punitive approach of labor inspectors and to promote a preventive and corrective vision that may promote the coordinated action of several institutions.
- An assessment and cost study of the AP/PC should be performed to examine expansion possibilities. To this effect, it will also be useful to analyze the experiences of the APs executed by the Country Program and of other projects (such as *Destino*), Creative Associates, and *Casa Esperanza*. Valuable experience has been accumulated, been duly analyzed, and could contribute to generating more pertinent educational models.

- Collaboration with MEDUCA is recommended to examine the legal and institutional changes required for the AP experiences to be institutionalized in the school system. Furthermore, improve and use the information concerning child labor, included in the school year completion file, should be examined.
- Case studies should be conducted using qualitative methodologies to analyze the effect of the APs (especially of school meals and scholarships) on the schooling of children and on their labor activities.
- Additional case studies should be conducted to analyze the undesired effects that inspection activities may be generating in the communities.
- In light of the experience of the two stages of the Country Program, an instrument should be prepared that may enable monitoring the development of institutional capacities using the management-by-results approach.³⁸ This will provide a conceptual framework and more efficient follow-up instruments to support the improvement of institutional capacities.
- For future actions, a more rigorous analysis of the results indicators of the logical framework should be performed, especially for those concerning the immediate objectives and outputs. Those indicators are the core of the monitoring system and if their formulation is weak, the programs will not be able to gather evidence and report the results of their actions. This is twice as valid for the Action Programs, such as the one of Panama, which are focused not only on the execution of the APs, but also on changing public policies and strengthening the capacity of national institutions to fight against the worst forms of child labor. In these cases, the common indicators of USDOL are not sufficient to analyze the effects of the projects.
- Extending the implementation term of the APs to 24 months, with a view to improving the sustainability possibilities of the results, would be beneficial. The APs of the Country Program of Panama were programmed to be executed in 18 months, which is insufficient time to adequately implement all actions.
- The most important training activities should include learning assessment instruments and follow-up mechanisms for the application of the new knowledge. Likewise, instruments to monitor the evolution of the child labor issue management in the media should also be developed.

³⁸ The analysis of the following instrument is recommended in addition to the examples mentioned in previous pages: UNDP. (2007). *Capacity Assessment Framework*.

This page left intentionally blank.

Annexes

This page left intentionally blank.

ANNEX A: GOVERNMENT PERIODS OF PANAMA AND EXECUTION PERIODS OF THE TWO COUNTRY PROGRAMS

Government Administrations	First Stage	Second Stage
Mireya Moscoso September 1, 1999–August 31, 2004	23 months	
Martín Torrijos Espino September 1, 2004–June 30, 2009	22 months	33 months
Ricardo Martinelli July 1, 2009–Present		3 months

This page left intentionally blank.

ANNEX B: LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

ILO-IPEC

Briseida Barrantes	Coordinator of the Country Program
Carmen Gerald	AP Official
Daira Dawson	Institutional Strengthening Official

Casa Esperanza

Ramón Alemán	Executive Director
Maritza Anderson	Regional Director
Roderick Castillo	Programs Director, Zone 3
Diana Gómez	Programs Director, Zone 4
Bleixen Caballero	Communications Official
Orix Bernal	Social Promoter

FUNDESPA

Celia Pérez	AP Coordinator, FUNDESPA
Ricardo Somoza	AP Promoter, FUNDESPA

Union, Entrepreneurial, and Indigenous Organizations

Kaira Reece	Convergencia Sindical
Damaris Centeno	Workers' Unions Association
Carmen Taitt	CONATO
Aurelio Linero	CONEP
Deidamia López	UKUPSENI
Violorio Ayarza	UKUPSENI
Sara Omi	Emberá Youth Association
Delia Tovar	Emberá Youth Association
Ebinia Santos	Coordination Organization of the Indigenous Women of Panama
Sonia Henríquez	Coordination Organization of the Indigenous Women of Panama
Darco Miranda	Gnobe-Bugle Youth Association
Melania Concepción	Gnobe-Bugle Youth Association
Juan Concepción	Gnobe-Bugle Youth Association
Rubén Arcia	Kuna Youth Association

Government Institutions—Panama

Verónica Rogers	MITRADEL
Wilma Baloy	MITRADEL
Ahychel Elias	MITRADEL
Yara Trujillo	MITRADEL (Head of the Service to Adolescent Workers Department)
Denis Acosta	Technical Secretary of the CETIPPAT
Iris Urriola	CETIPPAT
Elidia Marín	CETIPPAT
Damaris Guevara	CETIPPAT
Rando Ruiz	CETIPPAT
Janiela Medianero	CETIPPAT
Astreny Artunduaga	CETIPPAT
Lucy Tejedor	INEC
Néstor Aguirre	MEDUCA
Istmenia Pérez	MIDES
Doris Martínez	MIDES
Carlos Cedeño	MIDES
Irina Conoán	Ombudsman's Office
Karen Zamora	Ombudsman's Office
Maritza de De Sedas	Higher Court for Children and Adolescents
Denis Rosas	Higher Court for Children and Adolescents
Judith Flores	IFARHU
Doris Hernández	UDELAS
Gladys Córdoba	MINSA
AP La Chorrera	
Ruth Ávila	MINSA
Janet Bonilla	MEDUCA
Flor Nieto	MITRADEL
Johanny Ávila	MIDES
Rufino Rodríguez	Director of Playa Chiquita School
Yodela Caballero	Teacher, Playa Chiquita School

Marlene Barsallo Teacher, Playa Chiquita School

Six mothers from the Playa Chiquita School

Twelve students from 10 to 14 years old from the Playa Chiquita School (6 boys and 6 girls)

AP Santiago de Veraguas

Clotilde de Fernández MEDUCA

Milca Barsallo MEDUCA

Joselina Hernández MEDUCA

José González MIDA

Maximilian Delgado MIDA

José Vega MIDA

Fidel Concepción Deputy Director of the San Martín de Porras School

Nelas de Maure Tutor

Neivel Guerra Tutor

Five mothers and one father from the San Martín de Porras School

Seven students from the San Martín de Porras School (4 girls and 3 boys)

AP Comarca Gnobe-Bugle

Dixenia Prado Deputy Director of the Cerro Maíz School

Amelia Jiménez Teacher

Nelly Alba Teacher

Ofelia de Duarte Tutor

Aquilino Avellaneda Tutor

Juan Pimentel Tutor

Edith Duarte Tutor

Julián Ortega Mayor of Nibrá

Four fathers from the Cerro Maíz and Cerro Vaca Schools

Eight students from the Cerro Maíz school (5 girls and 3 boys)

Seven students from the Cerro Vaca school (2 girls and 5 boys)

This page left intentionally blank.

ANNEX C: TERMS OF REFERENCE

TERMS OF REFERENCE for the Independent Final Evaluation of the Country Program for Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Panama (Phase II)

Cooperative Agreement Number: Project Number:	06-K110-RWBR-4143-CL-601-000 PAN/06/50/PUSA
Financing Agency: Grantee Organization:	U.S. Department of Labor International Labor Organization's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (ILO-IPEC)
Dates of Project Implementation:	September 15, 2006–September 15, 2009
Type of Evaluation:	Independent Final Evaluation
Evaluation Field Work Dates:	July 27–August 7, 2009
Preparation Date of TOR:	July 6, 2009
Total Project Funds from USDOL Based on Cooperative Agreement:	US \$1,600,000
Vendor for Evaluation Contract:	MACRO INTERNATIONAL INC. Headquarters, 11785 Beltsville Drive Calverton, MD 20705 Tel: (301) 572-0200 Fax: (301) 572-0999

I BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

The Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT) is an office within the Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB), an agency of the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL). OCFT activities include research on international child labor; supporting U.S. government policy on international child labor; administering and overseeing cooperative agreements with organizations working to eliminate child labor around the world; and raising awareness about child labor issues.

Since 1995, the U.S. Congress has appropriated over \$720 million to USDOL for efforts to combat exploitive child labor internationally. This funding has been used to support technical cooperation projects to combat exploitive child labor in more than 80 countries around the world. Technical cooperation projects funded by USDOL range from targeted action programs in specific sectors of work to more comprehensive programs that support national efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor as defined by ILO Convention 182. USDOL-funded child labor elimination projects generally seek to achieve five major goals:

1. Withdrawing or preventing children from involvement in exploitive child labor through the provision of direct educational services;
2. Strengthening policies on child labor and education, the capacity of national institutions to combat child labor, and formal and transitional education systems that encourage children engaged in or at risk of engaging in exploitive labor to attend school;
3. Raising awareness of the importance of education for all children and mobilizing a wide array of actors to improve and expand education infrastructures;
4. Supporting research and the collection of reliable data on child labor; and
5. Ensure the long-term sustainability of these efforts.

The approach of USDOL child labor elimination projects – decreasing the prevalence of exploitive child labor through increased access to education – is intended to nurture the development, health, safety, and enhanced future employability of children engaged in or at-risk of entering exploitive labor.

USDOL reports annually to Congress on a number of indicators. As these programs have developed, an increasing emphasis has been placed on ensuring that the data collected by grantees is accurate and reported according to USDOL definitions.

In the appropriations to USDOL for international child labor technical cooperation, the U.S. Congress directed the majority of the funds to support the two following programs³⁹:

1. *International Labour Organization's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labor (ILO-IPEC)*

Since 1995, the US Congress has earmarked some \$410 million to support the International Labor Organization's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (ILO/IPEC), making the U.S. Government the leading donor to the program. USDOL-funded ILO/IPEC projects to combat child labor generally fall into one of several categories: comprehensive, national Timebound Programs (TBP) to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in a set time frame; less comprehensive Country Programs; sector-specific projects; data collection and research projects; and international awareness raising projects. In general, most projects include "direct action" components that are interventions to remove or prevent children from involvement in exploitive and hazardous work. One of the major strategies used by IPEC projects is to increase children's access to and participation in formal and non-formal education. Most IPEC projects also have a capacity-building component to assist in building a sustainable base for long-term elimination of exploitive child labor.

³⁹ In 2007, the US Congress did not direct USDOL's appropriations for child labor elimination projects to either of these two programs. That year, USDOL allocated \$60 million for child labor elimination projects through a competitive process.

More specifically, the aim of IPEC is the progressive elimination of child labor, especially its worst forms. The political will and commitment of individual governments to address child labor is the basis for IPEC support. In addition to working with governments, ILO-IPEC works in coordination and cooperation with employers' and workers' organizations, non-governmental organizations and other relevant organizations. ILO-IPEC support at the country level is based on a phased, multi-sector strategy. This strategy includes strengthening national capacities to address child labor, legislation harmonization, improvement of the knowledge on child labor, raising awareness of the negative consequences of child labor, promoting social mobilization against it, and implementing demonstrative direct action programs (AP) to prevent children from child labor and remove children from hazardous work situations and provide them and their families with viable alternatives.

2. *Child Labor Education Initiative*

Since 2001, the US Congress has provided some \$249 million to USDOL to support the Child Labor Education Initiative (EI), which focuses on the elimination of the worst forms of child labor through the provision of education opportunities. These projects are being implemented by a wide range of international and non-governmental organizations as well as for-profit firms. USDOL typically awards EI cooperative agreements through a competitive bid process.

EI projects are designed to ensure that children in areas with a high incidence of child labor are withdrawn and integrated into educational settings, and that they persist in their education once enrolled. In parallel, the program seeks to avert at-risk children from leaving school and entering child labor. The EI is based on the notion that the elimination of exploitative child labor depends, to a large extent, on improving access to, quality of, and relevance of education. Without improving educational quality and relevance, children withdrawn/prevented from child labor may not have viable alternatives and could resort to other forms of hazardous work. EI projects may focus on providing educational services to children removed from specific sectors of work and/or a specific region(s) or support a national Timebound Program that aims to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in multiple sectors of work specific to a given country.

Other Initiatives

Finally, USDOL has supported \$2.5 million for awareness-raising and research activities not associated with the ILO/IPEC program or the EI.

Project Context

While child labor has declined substantially in Latin America and the Caribbean in recent years, there are still 5.7 million working girls and boys who are under the minimum age for employment or are engaged in work that must be abolished according to ILO Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention No. 182.⁴⁰ According to the Child Labor Survey conducted in 2000 in Panama, approximately 7.6% of children between the ages of 5 and 17 were working.⁴¹ These

⁴⁰ ILO-IPEC, "Latin America and Caribbean," <http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Regionsandcountries/LatinAmericaandCaribbean/lang--en/index.htm>.

⁴¹ ILO-IPEC, "Country Program for Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor," Project Document.

working boys and girls were mostly located in rural areas, and 68% of working children only had elementary schooling.

In rural areas, children often work in agriculture. Many girls, particularly from indigenous or Afro-Panamanian groups, work as domestic servants. In urban areas, children work as street vendors and garbage collectors, and pack bags at supermarkets, shine shoes, wash cars, and assist bus drivers. Some girls also work in personal services, taking jobs as stylists, cooks, and manicurists. Rates of work tend to be higher among indigenous than non-indigenous children in Panama, and commercial sexual exploitation of children is a problem; again, indigenous children are particularly vulnerable due in part to rising tourism activity.⁴²

USDOL has provided \$5.6 million in funding for child labor elimination initiatives in Panama. This funding includes the \$1.6 million Country Program for Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Panama (Phase II) that is the topic of this evaluation as well as two earlier projects. These include the \$1 million first phase of the ILO-IPEC country program and a \$3 million project that closed in August 2008 and withdrew 1,021 children from exploitive work in agriculture and prevented an additional 823 children from becoming engaged in such work. In addition, USDOL has provided assistance to Panama through regional projects which have totaled over \$15 million USD. These initiatives included projects to combat children in agricultural labor and commercial sexual exploitation.

The Government of Panama has been actively involved in these and other initiatives to combat child labor in the country, and has been working with ILO-IPEC since 1996. The law sets the minimum age for employment at 14 years. Children who have not completed primary school, however, may not begin working until 15 years of age. The law prohibits youth under the age of 18 from engaging in potentially hazardous work or work which could interfere with their schooling. Those who employ youth in potentially hazardous work may face imprisonment; the law also provides protection for children who are trafficked for sexual purposes.

The Government of Panama has approved a list of the worst forms of child labor, as stipulated in ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor. The Ministry of Labor is responsible for monitoring child labor violations.⁴³ Panama has a National Plan against Child Labor (2007-2011), comprised of seven strategic components which address policy and legislation, advocacy, education, health, and monitoring working children.⁴⁴

In addition to participating in projects implemented by ILO-IPEC, the Government of Panama sponsors its own programs to combat child labor. The Ministry of Social Development (MIDES) supports and implements a number of programs that provide services to vulnerable children, including a program which has provided 3,000 scholarships to working children to enable them to continue their studies and remove them from work.⁴⁵ The Institute for Human Resources, Capacity Building, and Vocational Training (IFARHU), an independent government agency,

⁴² USDOL, "Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor 2007," Panama, <http://www.dol.gov/ilab/programs/ocft/PDF/2007OCFTreport.pdf>.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ ILO-IPEC, "Country Program for Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor," Project Document.

⁴⁵ USDOL, "Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor 2007," Panama.

also implements a scholarship program for children who have been withdrawn or prevented from exploitive labor; in 2007, IFARHU provided 3,192 scholarships to former child workers.⁴⁶

Country Program for Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor in Panama

On September 15, 2006, ILO-IPEC received a 3-year Cooperative Agreement worth \$1.6 million from USDOL to implement the second phase of a Country Program in Panama. This program aims to withdraw and prevent children from exploitive child labor by expanding access to and improving the quality of basic education. As stipulated in the Cooperative Agreement, the project targets 750 children and adolescents for withdrawal from exploitive labor in rural (agricultural) and informal urban work and an additional 750 children and adolescents for prevention from becoming engaged in such activities through the provision of basic education and other services. The project focuses on the urban areas of Santiago de Veraguas, West Panama City and the rural areas of districts of Nole Duima and Muna, in the Ngöbe-Buglé Demarcation (Chiriqui). Approaches to be utilized include registration and retention of children in the education system, working with families to change values and attitudes towards child labor and education, and technical assistance and capacity building for institutions working to combat child labor in the country.

The goal of the project is to contribute to the elimination of the worst forms of child labor in Panama through the following two immediate objectives:

- Build on the experiences and lessons learned of the first phase to help national institutions to implement the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Child Labor.
- Withdraw 750 children and adolescents from exploitive labor in rural and informal urban work and prevent an additional 750 from becoming engaged in such activities through the provision of basic education and other services.

Midterm Evaluation

A midterm evaluation of this project was conducted in June 2008 by an independent evaluator.⁴⁷ The midterm evaluation found that the project's design was logical, relevant and coherent, but that the project needed to strengthen its efforts to involve communities in project planning and decisions. In addition, because the government was providing input on site selection, the project experience delays in deciding locations for direct action programs. Although this was inconvenient, the project was able to move forward and achieve its goals at the local level.

The evaluation found that the project made solid progress regarding training, sensitization, and data dissemination. Many papers and documents were published, which contributed to increase the level of knowledge about child labor issues among specialized officers and professionals at the national level. However, it was found that the project could fortify its efforts to raise local awareness about the hazards and negative effects of child labor.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ The midterm evaluation was managed by the evaluation function of ILO-IPEC and carried out as per ILO-IPEC established procedures to meet the requirements for ILO evaluation policy and agreed requirements of key stakeholders such as the donor.

Regarding the strengthening of institutional capacity, the evaluation suggested that the project had achieved mixed results at midterm. On one hand, some institutions had included the goal of eradicating child labor in their institutional plans, due to efforts of the project; several of these institutions had allocated resources to this purpose as well. Additionally, some NGOs, governmental organizations and enterprises supported the project activities. On the other hand, the high rotation of ministry officers trained by the project impeded the fulfillment of some of the goals of the National Child Labor Committee.

Recommendations from the midterm evaluation included:

- Provide the National Commission for the Elimination of Child Labor and the Protection of the Adolescent Worker (CETIPPAT)'s Secretariat with a technical team to improve monitoring activities.
- Improve coordination between member institutions of CETIPPAT.
- Improve coordination between CETIPPAT and NGOs implementing DAPs (*Casa Esperanza* and FUNDESPA)

II PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF EVALUATION

OCFT-funded projects are subject to midterm and final evaluations. The Country Program for Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor project in Panama went into implementation in September 2006 and is due for final evaluation in 2009.

Scope of Evaluation

The scope of the evaluation includes a review and assessment of all activities carried out under the USDOL Cooperative Agreement with ILO-IPEC. All activities that have been implemented during the life of the project should be considered. The evaluation should assess the achievements of the project in reaching its targets and objectives as outlined in the cooperative agreement and project document.

The evaluation should address issues of project design, implementation, management, lessons learned, and replicability and provide recommendations for current and future projects. The questions to be addressed in the evaluation (provided below) are organized to provide an assessment of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and (to the extent possible) impact on the target population.

Final Evaluation Purpose

The purpose of the final evaluation is to:

1. Assess whether the project has met its objectives and identify the challenges encountered in doing so;

2. Assess the relevance of the project in the cultural, economic, and political context in the country, as well as the extent to which it is suited to the priorities and policies of the host country government and USDOL;
3. Assess the intended and unintended outcomes and impacts of the project;
4. Provide lessons learned from the project design and experiences in implementation that can be applied in current or future child labor projects in the country and in projects designed under similar conditions or target sectors; and
5. Assess whether project activities can be deemed sustainable at the local and national level and among implementing organizations.

The evaluation should also provide USDOL, ILO-IPEC, and other project stakeholders documented lessons learned, good practices, and models of intervention that will serve to inform future child labor projects and policies in Panama and elsewhere, as appropriate. It will also serve as an important accountability function for USDOL and ILO-IPEC. Recommendations should focus around lessons learned and good practices from which future projects can learn when developing their strategies toward combating exploitive child labor.

Intended Users

This final evaluation should provide USDOL, ILO-IPEC, other project specific stakeholders, and stakeholders working to combat child labor more broadly, an assessment of the project's experience in implementation and its impact on project beneficiaries. USDOL/OCFT and ILO-IPEC management will use the evaluation results as a learning tool regarding the relevance of the approach and strategy being used by the project. The final report will be published on the USDOL website, so the report should be written as a standalone document, providing the necessary background information for readers who are unfamiliar with the details of the project.

Evaluation Questions

Specific questions that the evaluation should seek to answer are found below, according to five categories of issue.

Relevance

The evaluation should consider the relevance of the project to the cultural, economic, and political context in the country, as well as the extent to which it is suited to the priorities and policies of the host country government and USDOL. Specifically, it should address the following questions:

1. How has the project design fit within existing government initiatives on child labor and Education for All and other initiatives of the ILO or other organizations? How does the program strategy, in line with the Conventions on Child Labor (C. 138 and C. 182), fit within existing policies and programs on child labor and interventions carried out by other organizations?

2. Have the project assumptions been accurate and realistic? How have critical assumptions changed?
3. Were the project's immediate objectives, outputs, indicators and means of verification relevant and realistic?
4. Are the designed strategies responsive to gender issues?
5. Please assess the relevance of the project's criteria to select action program regions and sectors and subsequently project beneficiaries?
6. Assess whether the project designs were logical and coherent and took into account the validity and practicality of institutional arrangements, roles, capacity and commitment of stakeholders in Panama, at both the central and the local level.
7. Assess the use of strategic planning, through the SPIF methodology, for project design and planning for broader national frameworks. Was the SPIF as a tool useful?
8. How were the recommendations from the previous evaluation followed up on by the project?

Effectiveness

The evaluation should assess the extent to which the project has reached its objectives, and the effectiveness of project activities in contributing toward those objectives.

Specifically, the evaluation should address:

1. At the end of Project, were the goals and objectives properly achieved?
2. Please assess the effectiveness of the project's main strategies/activities, under each of the project objectives, designed to withdraw or prevent children from WFCL, including:
 - i. Has the project accurately identified and targeted children engaged in, or at risk of working in, the worst forms of child labor in the country?
 - ii. Have the target populations been reached? Please distinguish between populations of children, focused sectors (agriculture, informal urban work) and by which interventions (in particular those beneficiaries reported to receive educational services and beneficiaries that have received non-educational services).
 - iii. Are the project education services responsive to the needs of child beneficiaries? To what degree were government agencies' capacities increased as a result of the project? What new programs and policies were developed within government agencies (MIDES, MITRADEL, and CETIPPAT for example) as a result of the project's technical assistance?

3. How effective is the project's system to monitor the school and work status of project beneficiaries?
4. To what extent were the project's management structures, both financial and technical, effective, and are there areas that could be enhanced to maximize project impact?
5. What strategies did the project employ to engage indigenous communities and organizations and how effective were they?
6. To what extent did the project provide practical, relevant, and accessible vocational education to adolescent beneficiaries?
7. Describe the effectiveness of the project's efforts to increase law enforcement capacity?
8. Assess level of participation of the National Steering Committee and its contribution to the project.
9. Assess the progress of the programme's gender mainstreaming activities.
10. Review and assess the coordination with other NGOs and agencies (international and national) implementing child assistance projects in the country.
11. How effective has the program been at building the capacity of implementing agencies' staff as well as capacity of government ministries and agency personnel to combat child labour?
12. How well did the local institutional structures contribute to the program implementation?
13. Please assess the change in levels of awareness as a result of the program regarding child labor and attitudes towards the phenomenon at all levels-community, parents, children, government etc.
14. One recommendation from the mid-term evaluation was increasing the capacity of employer organizations in order to promote corporate social responsibility to combat child labor. To what extent did the project engage private sector organizations and what was the result of these efforts?
15. Assess the level of involvement of local/national government in the project and how their involvement has built their capacity and commitment to continue future work on child labor programs. One of the primary justifications for the Phase II project was to raise the issue of child labor from a policy of the government to a policy of the state. To what extent did the project reach this objective?
16. The project experienced some delays in selecting locations to operate direct action programs. What lessons can be learned from this experience to expedite the selection of project sites in the future?

17. One reason for the August 2007 revision of the geographic locations of the action programs was to address rural/urban migration. To what extent did the project address the rural/urban migration dynamic and what lessons can be learned in combating child labor that is frequent in migrant populations?

Efficiency

The evaluation should provide analysis as to whether the strategies employed by the project were efficient in terms of the resources used (inputs) as compared to its qualitative and quantitative impact (outputs). Specifically, the evaluation should address:

1. Are the project strategies efficient in terms of the financial and human resources used, as compared to its outputs? What alternatives are there?
2. How efficient has the process been of communicating between the field offices, regional offices, headquarters, and the donor?
3. Are the monitoring and reporting systems designed efficiently to meet the needs and requirements of the project?

Impact

The evaluation should assess the positive and negative changes produced by the project – intended and unintended, direct and indirect– as reported by respondents. Specifically, it should address:

1. What appears to be the project’s impact to date, if any, on individual beneficiaries (children, parents, teachers, etc)?
2. What appears to be the project’s impact to date, if any, on partners or other organizations working on child labor in the country (NGOs, community groups, schools, etc)?
3. What appears to be the project’s impact to date, if any, on government and policy structures in terms of system-wide change on education and child labor issues?
4. Review the level of community, parent and teacher interest and participation in program activities, and assess whether their commitment to the program has evolved over time.

Sustainability

The evaluation should assess whether the project has taken steps to ensure that the project’s approaches and benefits continue after the completion of the program, including sources of funding and partnerships with other organizations, and identify areas where this may be strengthened. Specifically, it should address:

1. Has an exit strategy and sustainability plan been integrated into the project design? Was it relevant and effective?

2. How successful has the project been in leveraging non-project resources? Are there prospects for sustainable funding?
3. What is the likelihood that the services coordinated with government entities will continue after the end of the project?
4. What have been the major challenges and successes, if any, of initiating and maintaining coordination with the host country government, particularly CETIPPAT, the Ministry of Labor and Development, and the Ministry of Social Protection, as well as other government agencies active in addressing related children's issues?
5. What have been some of the challenges and opportunities in working with international and/or multilateral organizations, NGOs and/or community-based organizations present in the country?
6. Examine any networks, partnerships and collaboration schemes in the country related to the program; consider especially the coordination and information sharing between other ongoing ILO/IPEC efforts (country programs) underway in the Spanish-funded Sexual Commercial Exploitation Project.
7. Are the child labour monitoring systems likely to be sustainable in each of the project sites?

III EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND TIMEFRAME

The evaluation methodology will consist of the following activities and approaches:

A. Approach

The evaluation approach will be primarily qualitative in terms of the data collection methods used as the timeframe does not allow for quantitative surveys to be conducted. Quantitative data will be drawn from project reports to the extent that it is available and incorporated in the analysis. The evaluation approach will be independent in terms of the membership of the evaluation team. Project staff and implementing partners will generally only be present in meetings with stakeholders, communities and beneficiaries to provide introductions. The following additional principles will be applied during the evaluation process:

1. The evaluation team will attend to the guidelines provided by USDOL and consistent with ILO-IPEC DED principles (located at: www.uneval.org/documentdownload?doc_id=22&file_id=128) and apply high a standard of evaluation principles and adhere to confidentiality and other ethical considerations throughout.
2. Methods of data collection and stakeholder perspectives will be triangulated for as many as possible of the evaluation questions.

3. Efforts will be made to include children's voices and beneficiary participation generally, using child-sensitive approaches to interviewing children following the ILO-IPEC guidelines on research with children.
4. Gender and cultural sensitivity will be integrated in the evaluation approach.
5. Consultations will incorporate a degree of flexibility to maintain a sense of ownership of the stakeholders and beneficiaries, allowing additional questions to be posed that are not included in the TOR, whilst ensuring that key information requirements are met.

B. Final Evaluation Team

The evaluation team will consist of:

1. The international evaluator
2. One member of the project staff may travel with the team to make introductions. This person is not involved with the evaluation process.

The international evaluator is Mauricio Garcia-Moreno. He will be responsible for developing the methodology in consultation with Macro and the project staff; directly conducting interviews and facilitating other data collection processes; analysis of the evaluation material gathered; presenting feedback on the initial findings of the evaluation to the national stakeholder meeting; and preparing the evaluation report.

C. Data Collection Methodology

Following Macro International's evaluation procedures for USDOL evaluations, a question matrix will be completed specifying each evaluation question in the TOR and the source of data and methodology for collecting information for that question. This matrix will ensure that all the pertinent questions are included in the methodology and that opportunities to triangulate the findings are optimized. The question matrix is under preparation based on the TOR.

The proposed data sources and methods for collecting information are as follows:

a) Document review and visit preparation

Prior to the field visit the evaluator will review the project and other background documents. This material will be verified during fieldwork and additional documents may be collected.

During the preparation phase, the evaluator, project staff and Macro will confirm the team membership, stakeholders to be interviewed, field visit logistics and daily timetable. The project staff will introduce the evaluation to stakeholders, arrange appointments with stakeholders at the national level and communicate with the implementing agencies regarding the meetings to be held in the provincial project sites.

- Documents may include:
 - Project document and revisions,
 - Cooperative Agreement,
 - Technical Progress and Status Reports,
 - Project Logical Frameworks and Monitoring Plans,
 - Work plans,
 - Correspondence related to Technical Progress Reports,
 - Midterm evaluation report,
 - Management Procedures and Guidelines,
 - Research or other reports undertaken (baseline studies, etc.), and
 - Project files (including school records) as appropriate.

b) Interviews with stakeholders

Interviews and group discussions will be held with as many stakeholders as possible, including implementers, direct and indirect beneficiaries, community leaders, other donors, government officials and other international NGOs and multilateral agencies working on the issues.

Individual interview guides, focus group discussion guides and meeting agendas will be designed for all interviews and meetings held with each key informant group. These tools will be drafted prior to the visit and adjusted if necessary as a result of the project briefing with project staff. In meetings with child beneficiaries and other child workers, games and other child-friendly tools will be used to ensure that their participation is empowering, that children are relaxed and not intimidated in any way by the process.

It is anticipated that meetings will be held with:

- ILAB/OCFT Staff;
- Headquarters, Country Director, Project Managers, and Field Staff of Grantee and Partner Organizations;
- Government Ministry Officials and Local Government Officials (MIDES, MITRADEL, CETIPPAT, Ministry of Education);
- Community leaders, members, and volunteers;
- School teachers, assistants, school directors, education personnel;
- Project beneficiaries (children withdrawn and prevented and their parents);
- International NGOs and multilateral agencies working in the area;
- Other child protection and/or education organizations, committees and experts in the area; and

- Labor Reporting Officer at U.S. Embassy and USAID representative.
- Group interviews with project staff from grantee and its partners:
- Staff at ILO-IPEC
- Casa Esperanza
- FUNDESPA
- National Coordinator of the Program, Institutional Strengthening and Direct Action Programme Officers

The group interview with project staff will consist of a review of the logical framework and an auto-critical analysis of the following elements:

- Achievement of objectives and outputs
- Completion of targets
- Aspects that make achieving the objectives difficult
- Aspects that facilitate the achievement of objectives
- Follow up of mid term evaluation recommendations
- Institutional Coordination and alliances
- Coordination with other ILO projects
- Monitoring and Evaluation (Project)
- Monitoring and Evaluation (Tripartite System)
- Analysis of assumptions and the sustainability strategy
- Understanding of DOL common indicators

Interview with the National Coordinator of the Programme

- Achievement of products and objectives
- Completion of targets
- Aspects that make achieving the objectives difficult
- Aspects that facilitate the achievement of objectives
- Coordination, alliances and resources leveraged
- Relationship with partners organizations and USDOL
- Management issues
- Monitoring and Evaluation (Project and Tripartite System)

Interview with the Institutional Strengthening Officer

An interview has been planned with the Institutional Strengthening Officer, in which the following subjects will be covered:

- Achievement of products and objectives
- Aspects that make achieving the objectives difficult
- Aspects that facilitate the achievement of objectives

Interview with the Direct Action Programme Officer

- Achievement of products and objectives
- Aspects that make achieving the objectives difficult
- Aspects that facilitate the achievement of objectives

Group Interviews with the partner organizations personnel

Group interviews have been planned with the partners' organization personnel to analyze the following subjects:

- Institutional background
- Coordination with ILO
- Review of the models and methodologies applied
- Follow up of mid term evaluation recommendations
- Understanding of the monitoring strategy developed by the project
- Characteristics of the relationship with the beneficiaries
- Social changes observed
- Sustainability

Semi-structured interview with representatives of governmental, non-governmental institutions and community based organizations

The interviews with the project partners will cover, during approximately one hour, the following aspects:

- Description of the mission and institutional objectives
- Origins and history of cooperation with ILO project
- Objectives, targets and results of the cooperation with ILO project
- Human resources, materials and financials used in the cooperation
- Areas in which the project has had difficulties

- Areas in which the project has succeeded
- Opinion of ILO project
- Opinion of sustainability and actions

Interviews with Teachers

The interviews with the teachers participating in the project will cover the following subjects:

- Educational innovations which the project has developed to augment the children's entry, persistence and completion of school, and their withdrawal and prevention from exploitive child labor.
- Educational innovations which the project has developed to improve the quality of education or to withdraw and prevent children from exploitive child labor.
- Awareness raising strategies which the project has developed
- Relationship with the project promoters
- Opinion about the impact of the project on the education of children and children's working status.
- Opinion about the impact of the project on the attitude of the parents with respect to the education and working status of their children
- Sustainability of project interventions.

Field Visits

The evaluator will visit a selection of project sites. The final selection of field sites to be visited will be made by the evaluator. Every effort should be made to include some sites where the project experienced successes and others that encountered challenges, as well as a good cross section of sites across targeted child labor sectors. During the visits the evaluator will observe the activities and outputs developed by the project. Focus groups with children and parents will be held, and interviews will be conducted with representatives from local governments, NGOs, community leaders and teachers.

A total of four focus groups will be conducted with children and parents. The participants of the focus groups will be chosen randomly from the list of beneficiaries.

Focus Groups with Children

The objective of the focus group with the children is to identify the educational and work activities which they are doing and their perception of them. The groups will be formed of no less than eight children and no more than 12. The exercise will be done without the presence of the director, teacher, or other member of the project.

The focus groups will be done in three steps: 1) introduction of the children, 2) graphical representation of "A Day in my Life" by the children and 3) analysis of information.

Focus Group with Parents

The objective of the focus group with parents is to identify the knowledge they have of the activities of the project and their perception of the education of their children and child labor. The groups will be formed of no less than six parents and no more than 12. The exercise will be done without the presence of the director, teacher, or other member of the project.

The focus groups will be done in two steps: 1) introduction of the parents, 2) opinion about the project activities and 3) opinion of education and child labor.

D. Ethical Considerations and Confidentiality

The evaluation mission will observe utmost confidentiality related to sensitive information and feedback elicited during the individual and group interviews. To mitigate bias during the data collection process and ensure a maximum freedom of expression of the implementing partners, stakeholders, communities, and beneficiaries, implementing partner staff will generally not be present during interviews. However, implementing partner staff may accompany the evaluator to make introductions whenever necessary, to facilitate the evaluation process, make respondents feel comfortable, and to allow the evaluator to observe the interaction between the implementing partner staff and the interviewees.

E. Stakeholder Meeting

Following the field visits, a stakeholders' meeting will be conducted by the evaluator that brings together a wide range of stakeholders, including the implementing partners and other interested parties. The list of participants to be invited will be drafted prior to the evaluator's visit and confirmed in consultation with project staff during fieldwork.

The meeting will be used to present the major preliminary finding and emerging issues, solicit recommendations, and obtain clarification or additional information from stakeholders, including those not interviewed earlier. The agenda of the meeting will be determined by the evaluator in consultation with project staff. Some specific questions for stakeholders will be prepared to guide the discussion and possibly a brief written feedback.

The agenda is expected to include some of the following items:

1. Presentation by the evaluator of the preliminary main findings
2. Feedback and questions from stakeholders on the findings
3. Opportunity for implementing partners not met to present their views on progress and challenges in their locality
4. Possible SWOT exercise on the project's performance
5. Discussion of recommendations to improve the implementation and ensure sustainability. Consideration will be given to the value of distributing a feedback form for participants to nominate their "action priorities" for the remainder of the project.

Additionally, another meeting will be conducted after the above-mentioned. This meeting will include only to ILO staff in order to discuss findings regarding internal topics, such as management and M&E.

Afterwards, feedback from the project and DOL staff will be collected as written comments on the draft report.

F. Limitations

All efforts will be made to ensure that the evaluator is visiting a representative sample of sites, including some that have performed well and some that have experienced challenges.

This is not a formal impact assessment. Findings for the evaluation will be based on information collected from background documents and in interviews with stakeholders, project staff, and beneficiaries. The accuracy of the evaluation findings will be determined by the integrity of information provided to the evaluator from these sources.

Furthermore, the ability of the evaluator to determine efficiency will be limited by the amount of financial data available. A cost-efficiency analysis is not included because it would require impact data which is not available.

G. Timetable and Workplan

The tentative timetable is as follows. Actual dates may be adjusted as needs arise.

Activity	Responsible Party	Proposed Date(s)
Phone interview with DOL and Grantee Staff/Headquarters	Macro, DOL, ILO-IPEC, Project, Evaluator	June 2009
Desk Review	Evaluator	June 2009
Question Matrix and Instruments due to Macro/DOL	Evaluator	June 2009
Draft TOR and submit to DOL and ILO-IPEC	Macro, Evaluator	June 15
Finalize TOR and submit to Grantee and DOL	Macro, Evaluator, DOL, ILO-IPEC	July 20
International Travel	Evaluator	July 26
Introductory Meetings with Project Staff and National Stakeholders	Evaluator	July 27
Field Site Visits	Evaluator	July 28–August 5
National Stakeholder Meeting	Evaluator	August 7
International Travel	Evaluator	August 8
Post-evaluation debrief call with DOL	DOL, Evaluator, Macro	August 17
Draft report to Macro for QC review	Evaluator, Macro	August 25
Draft report to DOL & ILO-IPEC for 48 hour review	Macro	August 28

Activity	Responsible Party	Proposed Date(s)
Draft report released to stakeholders	Macro	September 2
Comments due to Macro	DOL, ILO-IPEC, Stakeholders	September 15
Report revised and sent to Macro	Evaluator	September 22
Revised report sent to DOL	Macro	September 24
Final approval of report	DOL	October 8
Finalization & distribution of report	Macro	October 29

IV EXPECTED OUTPUTS/DELIVERABLES

Ten working days following the evaluator’s return from fieldwork, a first draft evaluation report will be submitted to Macro. The report should have the following structure and content:

- I. Table of Contents
- II. List of Acronyms
- III. Executive Summary (providing an overview of the evaluation, summary of main findings/lessons learned/good practices, and three key recommendations)
- IV. Evaluation Objectives and Methodology
- V. Project Description
- VI. Relevance
 - A. Findings—answering the TOR questions
 - B. Lessons Learned/Good Practices
- VII. Effectiveness
 - A. Findings—answering the TOR questions
 - B. Lessons Learned/Good Practices
- VIII. Efficiency
 - A. Findings – answering the TOR questions
 - B. Lessons Learned/Good Practices
- IX. Impact
 - A. Findings—answering the TOR questions
 - B. Lessons Learned/Good Practices
- X. Sustainability
 - A. Findings—answering the TOR questions
 - B. Lessons Learned/Good Practices

XI. Recommendations and Conclusions

A. Key Recommendations - critical for successfully meeting project objectives

B. Other Recommendations—as needed

1. Relevance
2. Effectiveness
3. Efficiency
4. Impact
5. Sustainability

XII. Annexes—including list of documents reviewed; interviews/meetings/site visits; stakeholder workshop agenda and participants; TOR; etc.

The total length of the report should be a minimum of 30 pages and a maximum of 45 pages for the main report, excluding the executive summary and annexes.

The first draft of the report will be circulated to OCFT and key stakeholders individually for their review. Comments from stakeholders will be consolidated and incorporated into the final reports as appropriate, and the evaluator will provide a response to OCFT, in the form of a comment matrix, as to why any comments might not have been incorporated.

While the substantive content of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the report shall be determined by the evaluator, the report is subject to final approval by ILAB/OCFT in terms of whether or not the report meets the conditions of the TOR.

After returning from fieldwork, the first draft evaluation report is due to MACRO on August 25, 2009, as indicated in the above timetable. A final draft is due one week after receipt of comments from ILAB/OCFT and stakeholders and is anticipated to be due on September 22, 2009, as indicated in the above timetable. All reports including drafts will be written in Spanish, but a copy of the final report will also be translated into English.

V. EVALUATION MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Macro International Inc. has contracted with Mauricio Garcia-Moreno to conduct this evaluation. Mr. Garcia-Moreno holds a Master degree in Administration from the Army Polytechnic School of Ecuador. He has extensive experience in conducting evaluations in child labor and education projects through Latin America for USDOL, including evaluations on a regional project operated by CARE in Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Guatemala, and two projects conducted by ILO-IPEC in South America. The contractor/evaluator will work with OCFT, Macro, and relevant ILO-IPEC staff to evaluate this project.

Macro International Inc. will provide all logistical and administrative support for their staff and sub-contractors, including travel arrangements (e.g. plane and hotel reservations, purchasing plane tickets, providing *per diem*) and all materials needed to provide all deliverables. Macro

International Inc. will also be responsible for providing the management and technical oversight necessary to ensure consistency of methods and technical standards.

Macro International Inc. or its subcontractors should contact Ms. Briseida Barrantes, IPEC National Programme Manager for Panama - National Project Coordinator (ph. + 507 263 75 80 / + 507 264 16 91; e-mail bbarante@oit-ipec.org.pa); Ms. Carmen Gerald, Direct Action Programmes Officer (ph. + 507 263 75 80 / + 507 264 16 91; e-mail cgerald@oit-ipec.org.pa); Ms. Dayra Dawson, Institutional Strengthening Officer (ph. + 507 263 75 80 / + 507 264 16 91; e-mail ddawson@oit-ipec.org.pa); Mr. Virgilio Levaggi, Director of ILO Sub-regional office (ph. + 506 2 207 87 18; e-mail levaggiv@sj.oit.or.cr); Mr. Jesus de la Peña, IPEC Sub regional Coordinator for Central America, Panama and Dominican Republic (ph. + 506 2 280 72 23; e-mail delapena@sj.oit.or.cr); Mr. Guillermo Dema, ILO Regional Office, Regional Child Labor and Youth Employment Specialist (ph. + 511 615 03 00; e-mail dema@oit.org.pe); and Mr. Jose M. Ramirez, Senior Programme Officer, America's Desk, ILO-IPEC Headquarters (ph. + +41 22 799 65 35; e-mail: ramirez@ilo.org).