

FUNDED BY THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Independent Final Evaluation of the Combating Child Labor and Exploitation Through Education in Guinea (CCLEE) Project

Save the Children

Cooperative Agreement Number: E-9-K-4-0060



2008



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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND TERMS

AACG	<i>Association des animateurs Communautaires de Guinée</i> (NGO Partner)
AME	<i>Association de Mères d'Elèves</i> (Mothers Association)
APEAE	<i>Association des Parents d'Elèves et Amis de l'Ecole</i> (Parents Association)
APROFIG	<i>Association pour la Promotion des Filles de Guinée</i> (NGO Partner)
ASED	<i>Association "Sauvons les Enfants Déshérités"</i> (NGO Partner)
CAAF	<i>Centre d'Appui à l'Auto-promotion Feminine</i> (Vocational training center in N'Zérékoré)
CAM	<i>Club des Amis du Monde</i> (NGO Partner)
CECOJE	<i>Centre d'Ecoute, de Conseil et d'Orientation pour Jeunes</i> (Youth Center)
CCC	Central Consultative Committee
CCP	District (Prefectural) Consultative Committee
CCR	Regional Consultative Committee
CONEBAT	National Commission for Basic Education
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DPC	<i>Diagnostic Participative Communautaire</i> (Participative Community Analysis)
EFA	Education for All
EI	Child Labor Education Initiative
FGN	<i>Guinean Franc</i> (Guinean currency, also known as GNF)
ICLP	International Child Labor Program
ILAB	Bureau of International Labor Affairs
ILO-IPEC	International Labour Organization—International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labor
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
INADER	<i>L'Institut National pour l'Appui au Développement Rural</i> (NGO Partner)
MEPU-EC	Ministry of pre-University Teaching and Civic Education
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
PACEEQ	Community Participation for Equitable and Quality Basic Education
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
RONGEP	NGO network for Education and Child Protection (<i>Réseau des ONG pour l'Education et la Protection des Enfants</i>)
SERACCO	<i>Service Régional d'Appui aux Collectivités et de Coordination des ONG</i> (Regional service coordinating local government and NGOs)

TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
WFCL	Worst Forms of Child Labor

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2004, Save the Children-U.S. signed a four-year cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) to implement the Combating Child Labor and Exploitation through Education in Guinea (CCLEE) project. The project aimed to prevent or withdraw 4,800 children engaged in or at risk of the worst forms of child labor (WFCL) and exploitation, and enable such children to benefit from either formal or nonformal education. To do that, Save the Children worked in partnership with five national nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), using a range of strategies to achieve four goals in line with USDOL's Education Initiative:

1. To raise awareness on the importance of education for all children and mobilize a wide array of actors to improve and expand education infrastructures.
2. To strengthen formal and transitional education systems that encourage working children and those at risk of working to attend school.
3. To strengthen national institutions and policies on education and child labor.
4. To ensure the long-term sustainability of these efforts.

The CCLEE project worked in 110 communities in 10 districts. It revitalized, restructured, and trained 100 primary school parents associations and 20 *Nafa* management committees (a *Nafa* center is a nonformal vocational education center, also called a second-chance school).

The project registered a total of 4,800 vulnerable children who were either exposed or at risk of exposure to exploitive labor, all of whom are now enrolled and being supported and monitored in either formal or nonformal education. A total of 110 youth "listening" clubs (*clubs d'écoute*) were established in the target communities to enable young people to play a role in their own protection and that of their peers. They use theatre, sport, and other strategies to draw attention to health and child protection issues (including HIV/AIDS) and the importance of education. Participants in these clubs are also trained in life skills (based on a module established by the project).

Further, support networks for girls were set up in nine project districts in response to the particular difficulties faced by girls trying to access education, and in particular to assist "girl-mothers" (i.e., young mothers age 14 to 18). These networks bring together representatives of local agencies to promote a girl-friendly environment for education and to act in specific cases to facilitate enrollment and attendance. Also, the networks assist young mothers with vocational training classes at *Nafa* centers.

Consultative Committees at Provincial, Regional, and Central levels brought together representatives of various government institutions concerned with children, employment, education, and the law. Together, they coordinate activities and promote the development and implementation of child protection and education policies, and support project initiatives at central and decentralized levels.

The final evaluation looked at the impact of the project in relation to its objectives, analyzed the project's impact in regions of intervention, and questioned stakeholders about the possible impact of the project in regions of nonintervention. Also, Save the Children asked the final evaluation to address gaps from the current project and help design new strategies and approaches for further interventions in Guinea.

The evaluation found that Save the Children initially used a type of outsourcing, partnerships called *faire-faire* (or “to make do”) to subcontract partner organizations. This partnership structure, initially used by the World Bank in West African countries, ensured the selection of five very capable partner organizations (among a total of about 70 bidding organizations). The subcontracted organizations received considerable training on child protection issues, and started the community work with a participative analysis of community problems (DPC: *Diagnostic Participative Communautaire*).

At the community level, the project worked with parents associations, (known in Guinea under the French acronym of APEAE: *Association des Parents d'Elèves et Amis de l'Ecole*) and Nafa management committees; which, it was found, are now capable of distinguishing between acceptable work for children and work that is exploitive or hazardous. The APEAEs and Nafa management committees also received training on improved advocacy techniques to facilitate negotiation with potential financial and technical partners. They have been using the project training to identify and register vulnerable children in their communities, all of whom are now enrolled in formal or nonformal education. All of the 4,800 direct beneficiaries registered and tracked by the project received a kit of school materials to support their schooling and to prevent dropout.

As a consequence of the training of APEAEs and Nafa management committees, primary schools and Nafa centers now have more democratic, transparent, and effective management. This is demonstrated by the better election procedures in all APEAEs and management committees (most committees have been reconstituted and reactivated as a result of the project's intervention). Further, the quality of the education for all students has improved due to better community monitoring and follow-up of student and teacher attendance. In addition, the project facilitated the development of local action plans to address issues such as lack of infrastructure, equipment, and personnel. The implementation of these action plans was supported by small grants from the project. Based on recommendations from the project audit, additional financing was made available for micro-projects to support infrastructure in 34 communities, mainly for rehabilitation and construction of latrines and water pumps in project schools and Nafa centers. These services benefited not only children registered as being at risk, but also all those attending the schools concerned. Increased demand for education became apparent in many target communities, to the extent that sometimes the supply no longer met the demand.

At times, the project's support to 20 Nafa centers and to select children within the target primary schools created jealousy among a few staff members of nonsupported Nafa centers, as well as among non-beneficiary children in primary schools. The problems were generally managed by the community elders and religious leaders who had been associated with the project since the initial participative analysis, and who intervened to explain to parents and schoolchildren the objectives of the project and the rationale for helping specific children in the community. All

these challenges were managed in a timely and appropriate manner by project staff and community members, and had been resolved at the time of the final evaluation.

The youth clubs raised community awareness on education and protection issues, and developed leadership and organizational skills among young people. The girls' networks encouraged increased schooling among girls, and also helped to place young mothers age 14 to 18 with community host families (called *tutorat*). The girls' networks also facilitated the learning of a professional activity, such as soap-making or sewing, at a local Nafa center for these young mothers (who had reached motherhood at 14 to 18 years).

The project's work at the grassroots level was complemented by its policy-level initiatives. Members of consultative committees at central, regional, and district levels participated in key project activities and expressed their commitment to promoting child protection and education. Since members of the consultative committees were civil servants, they established links between key government agencies at various levels and encouraged cooperation on child protection issues.

Finally, all project stakeholders at all levels (community, Sous-Prefecture, Prefecture, Regional, and Central stakeholders) received training through 11 "modules" created by the project with help from various experts, including regional teacher training colleges.

Although the project team initially had difficulties understanding and measuring the USDOL common indicators, and the implementation was at times hampered by the sociopolitical and economic problems facing the country, most difficulties were overcome and most targets were reached. Many of the project strategies could be considered as examples of best practice, which could be used by USDOL for similar projects in other countries. Examples of best practices include—

- Successful use of *faire-faire* partnership structures to select the best NGO partners among a large number of bidders.
- Follow-up and management of the partnership structure, and capacity building of the NGO partners.
- The initial participative community meeting, which explained the project and set up a community work plan for project activities, created community ownership.
- The use of already existing community institutions (APEAEs and Nafa management committees) created sustainability.
- The use of a range of experts—including professionals from teacher training institutes—enabled the creation of 11 high-quality training modules.

The main recommendations of the evaluation are linked to sustainability issues (mainly the institutionalization of the consultative committees), and to the investigation of possible side-effects of project activities in communities or among pupils *not* having received project support. It is important to ensure that the project, by its sheer success among a number of communities

and a number of beneficiary children, avoids the creation of undesirable effects among non-recipients of project support. A further problem is the project's lack of assistance to respond to the poverty context in the communities, which at times may hinder its effectiveness in combating child labor. It is recommended that partnerships with income-generating activities be investigated, as these may compensate the families for income lost when children are attending school (i.e., mainly opportunity costs).

Finally, during the evaluation, a number of ideas were discussed for the possible establishment of protection activities that have successfully been used in other countries and in similar contexts; such activities may be considered by Save the Children for future projects and initiatives in Guinea. These ideas include (1) development of child-trafficking monitoring structures involving a large number of partner institutions; (2) facilitating the creation of mothers associations (AME: *Association de Mères d'Elèves*) to enhance women's role in the protection of children and in the follow-up of their schooling; (3) the creation of "study points" in the communities where high school or college students can help the younger students with their homework and revisions—and which can also facilitate the organization of work-play-learn activities during the holidays. Lastly, since child trafficking is an increasing problem in Guinea, it is advised that trafficking patterns in Guinea be examined, and strategies devised to respond to this problem.

I **CONTEXT**

1.1 INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) funds international labor projects through its Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB). The Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT) is the division within ILAB that administers grants and contracts to organizations engaged in efforts to eliminate child labor and raise awareness of child labor issues. Since 1995, Congress has appropriated over US\$595 million to USDOL, and this has been used to combat child labor in more than 75 countries around the world.

USDOL-funded projects preceding 2008 seek to achieve four 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. Ensuring the long-term sustainability of these efforts.

In 2008, USDOL added a fifth goal, specifically supporting research and the collection of reliable data on child labor. While the Combating Child Labor and Exploitation through Education in Guinea (CCLEE) project was designed before 2008, the addition of the fifth goal, which relates to collection of reliable data on child labor, is of important note for recommendations to future Child Labor Education Initiative (EI) projects in Guinea.

USDOL supports two specific programs in addition to some smaller initiatives:

The International Labour Organization’s International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour

Since 1995, the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) has received US\$330 million from the U.S. Government, the leading donor to the program. Most IPEC projects include “direct action” components, which are interventions to remove or prevent children from involvement in exploitive and hazardous work, and a major strategy is to increase children’s access to and participation in formal and nonformal education. Most projects also have a capacity-building component to assist in building a sustainable base for long-term elimination of exploitive child labor.

The Child Labor Education Initiative

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. Concurrently, 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 exploitive child labor depends, to a large extent, on improving the access to, quality of, and relevance of education. Funds under the EI are competitively bid and support cooperative agreements with international, nonprofit, for-profit, and faith-based entities.

In addition to these two initiatives, USDOL in 2007 allocated US\$60 million for other child labor elimination projects, and provided US\$2.5 million for additional awareness-raising and research activities.

1.2 LOCAL CONTEXT

The Republic of Guinea, despite possessing major mineral, hydropower, and agricultural resources, remains one of the world's least developed countries. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index (2007/08) classifies Guinea among the poorest of poor countries, with an estimated 40 percent of the population living below the poverty line (1990–2004). Recently, the poverty situation has deteriorated, and some Government sources estimate that the poverty rate has increased from 49.2 percent in 2002 to 53.6 percent in 2005.¹ The country suffers from extensive inflation. Governance is poor and Guinea is listed in Transparency International's newly updated corruption index (2007) among the most corrupt countries in the world (168 out of 179). Government workers are poorly paid, with salaries often in arrears and failing to cover the cost of basic food requirements. This difficult situation has resulted in a series of national strikes and demonstrations during 2007 and 2008 that have led to widespread social unrest.

Education

Though Guinean law made education compulsory and free in 1984, primary school enrollment remains low. This is principally due to parents' inability to meet the associated costs, and the need for children to contribute to the family income. More boys than girls are enrolled in school, and girls are also often withdrawn early, either to work or to marry. In 1986, the Ministry of Education created parents' associations (APEAEs) to provide stronger links between schools and their communities and to give parents some control over their children's education. Since 1987, Save the Children has been working with some of these associations in the Forest and Upper Guinea regions to promote the value of education and encourage community participation in the education process. Over the past 15 years, there have been several national education initiatives and some progress has been made. However, only an estimated 59 percent of men and 26 percent² of women are literate, and there remains a long way to go to achieve the goal of Education for All.

¹ Ministère des Affaires Sociales, de la Condition Feminine et de l'Enfance, 2007.

² U.S. Department of State, Bureau of African Affairs, June 2008. Background Note, Guinea. Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2824.htm>.

In addition to strengthening the formal education sector, the Government, assisted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), created Nafa centers (or "second chance schools"), which give young people who have left or never attended school a second chance to acquire basic literacy, numeracy, and vocational skills. The centers can also enable children to reenter the formal schooling system. The Government originally created Nafa centers to cater principally to the needs of girls, in recognition of the lack of provisions responsive to their needs. Girls have always been prioritized in admissions, and the overwhelming majority of students enrolled are traditionally female. The centers usually offer a three-year course. Once admitted, one cohort of girls will attend the center for three years, following which a new cohort of students will be admitted. Some of the Nafa centers admit students every year, and can thereby cater up to three classes. Adult and adolescent literacy classes are also offered by various institutions in Guinea. The literacy programs are usually of much shorter duration than the Nafa centers' three-year curriculum, and rarely exceeds one year.

Exploitive Child Labor

The combination of a fragile economy, a weak education system, and the absence of a formally regulated labor sector makes child labor omnipresent in Guinean society. A study commissioned by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2006 found that in a random sample of 6,037 children ages 5 to 17, 73.4 percent worked, and it was estimated that 68.2 percent were engaged in WFCL. The main cause for child labor was poverty. Additionally, a large percentage of the interviewed children had been trafficked (22.4%).³ It should be noted that the country's statistics are not reliable and that it is difficult to estimate the number of working children in the country. International immigration and trafficking exasperate the problem. Activities range from household chores to exploitive labor that impinges on children's health and development, including subsistence farming, small-scale commerce, mining, and domestic labor. Most rural children work at home or in the fields, whereas urban children work primarily in small-scale commerce. The perception that cities offer better pay and working conditions has created a rural exodus, especially toward Conakry or to other major centers such as Kankan, with the ultimate aim of subsequently reaching Conakry. Children who leave their communities to seek more remunerative solutions in the towns are more vulnerable to exploitation than their urban counterparts. Guinea ratified ILO Conventions 138 and 182 in 2003, but while the Government has spoken out against child labor, it lacks technical and financial resources, enforcement mechanisms, and reporting structures to combat the problem.

Child Trafficking

Guinea is one of nine West African countries to sign a multilateral agreement to cooperate against child trafficking, which has become increasingly common in Guinea. A 2003 study commissioned by the Ministry of Social Affairs (interviewing 2,000 working children) determined that the majority of children were trafficked for cooking and domestic work, followed by employment in mines, garbage collection, and marine work.⁴ Children from neighboring countries are also trafficked in or through Guinea. During the course of fieldwork,

³ Guinée Stats Plus, BIT, (Décembre 2006). *Etude de Base sur le Travail des Enfants en Guinée*.

⁴ Stat View International, (Août 2003). *Enquête Nationale sur le Trafic des Enfants en Guinée*.

interviewees said that they believed a number of children are trafficked for organ harvesting (and subsequently killed).

Refugees and Child Soldiers

Guinea shares borders with Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, which all suffer from civil unrest or the aftereffects of war. The flow of people, including refugees and former child soldiers, across Guinean borders makes exploitive child labor an international concern. In recent years, a large number of relief agencies have been working with refugees in the Forest region. As these people return to their countries of origin, the agencies are also departing, leaving the local population to cope with the remaining youth who are often traumatized and lack family or other social support systems.

II PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In September 2004, Save the Children signed a four-year cooperative agreement with USDOL to implement the CCLEE project in 22 districts of the four regions of Guinea. The project made use of partnerships with civil society organizations to implement its activities. The selection of provider organizations was done through a bidding process that selected the five best proposals for financing (among 70 proposals). The method went under the names of “partnership” (*le partenariat*), or “to make do” method (*faire-faire*). It is under this last name, *faire-faire*, that it has become known in Guinea. By using *faire-faire*, the project contributed to changing the role of the state and civil society organizations in the conception and delivery of education and protection services in Guinea. As the Government is increasingly being considered as a policymaking agent without sufficient resources for implementation of protection activities, civil society is rapidly becoming a main implementing agent of services.

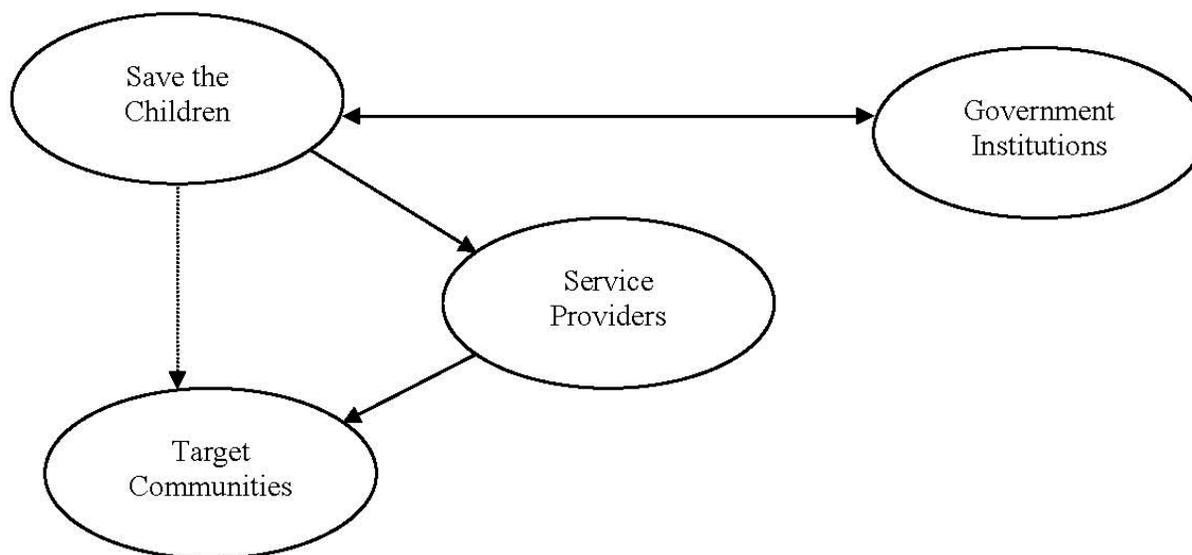
In this regard, the term “public-private partnership” (PPP) has been employed to denote a certain type of outsourcing in which the public and private sectors join for the purpose of delivering a project or a service traditionally provided by the public sector. The International Finance Corporation’s (IFC) Edinvest group defined PPPs in the following terms:

1. PPPs are risk-sharing relationships that are firmly grounded on a determined ambition between the public and nonpublic sectors (including voluntary and private) to achieve a preferred public policy outcome.
2. PPP usually takes the form of a long-term and flexible relationship that is underpinned by a contract for the delivery of a publicly-funded service.

In Guinea, the partnership approach was designed to establish a risk-sharing relationship along the lines of the above definition. From an institutional economics point of view, the effectiveness of the partnership depends on the ability of the “principal,” or the economic sponsor (Save the Children), to control the actions of the “agent,” or the provider. The success of an outsourced service, therefore, depends on the ability of the principal to monitor the results of the service.

A simplified schema of the interaction between actors follows. The main levels of interaction took place between communities and the service providers (five nongovernmental organizations [NGOs]). The NGOs were supervised and trained by Save the Children, which also monitored the results of the services provided in the communities.

Figure 1: NGO Project Interaction



The five NGOs were **each** responsible for a geographic area of implementation, as follows:

- *Club des Amis du Monde* (CAM): Boké and Conakry
- *Association Sauvons les Enfants Déshérités* (ASED): Labé
- *Association pour la Promotion des Filles de Guinée* (APROFIG): Kankan, Mandiana, and Kerouné
- *Association des animateurs Communautaires de Guinée* (AACG): Guéckédou and Macenta
- *L'Institut National pour l'Appui au Développement Rural* (INADER): N'Zérékoré and Lola.

Save the Children also interacted with various Government institutions to (1) influence policy, (2) raise awareness, and (3) inform about project progress. To do that, the Government and Save the Children established a Central Consultative Committee (CCC) at the national level, three Regional Consultative Committees (CCR), and 10 Consultative Committees at Prefectural (CCP)—or District—level to support the development and implementation of child protection legislation and activities. These committees were mainly composed of civil servants from various ministries, and local administrative structures, including justice, education, health, and labor. The committees functioned as coordination and consultative institutions, and facilitated the project's contact with key policy authorities. Hence, the committees supplemented government work, rather than duplicating it.

Further interaction between the project and administrative levels took place through the project's involvement in teacher training and the development of teacher training materials. The project aimed to reduce the number of children at risk of or engaged in the worst forms of exploitive labor by withdrawing them from such work, preventing their exposure to it, and by providing

them with education. Project activities were conducted in 110 communities in 10 districts (including Conakry, Boké, Kankan, Kerouane, Mandiana, Labé, Guéckédou, Macenta, Lola, and N'Zérékoré) where children were judged to be particularly vulnerable. A further 12 districts benefited from the project through dissemination of information and experience gained in the intensive implementation zone.

The project worked with the APEAEs of 100 primary schools and the management committees of 20 Nafa centers to enable them to differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable work for children, identify children engaged in or at risk of exploitive labor, and encourage and support children's enrollment in formal or nonformal education. The APEAEs and Nafa management committees received financial, management, and advocacy training to enable them to support and improve the functioning of the schools and Nafa centers in their communities, hence improving the quality of the education provided. Project activities included establishing youth clubs (*clubs d'écoute*, such as *Centre d'Ecoute, de Conseil et d'Orientation pour Jeunes* [CECOJE]) in all of the project communities and support networks for girls in nine project areas.

Save the Children managed the project from its Guinea headquarters in Kankan and three regional offices in Conakry, Labé, and N'Zérékoré. In addition, a regional coordinator for Boké had an office in the NGO responsible for the Boké Region (CAM).

The project is implementing a range of strategies and activities in order to achieve the following outputs:

Output 1: Awareness Raising

- Output 1.1: Stakeholder awareness raised regarding the importance of education and the negative effects of exploitive child labor, especially regarding girls.
- Output 1.2: Girls' awareness raised about the importance of education and the consequences of risky behavior.

Output 2: Educational Systems Strengthened in the Target Communities

- Output 2.1: Quality of formal education delivered to children in targeted schools improved.
- Output 2.2: Access and quality of education delivered to students at Nafa and other nonformal education centers improved.
- Output 2.3: Girls' education and protection issues addressed by formal and nonformal educational systems.

Output 3: Institutional Capacity Strengthening

- Output 3.1: Capacity of governmental institutions regarding education and child protection re-enforced.
- Output 3.2: Capacity of NGOs, APEAEs, and other civil society organizations in education and child protection re-enforced, with emphasis on girls' issues.

The project intended to reach 4,800 children at risk of engaging in exploitive child labor by enrolling, monitoring, and supporting them in formal or nonformal education programs, and providing them with school supplies or materials. The project also intended to indirectly support the enrollment of an additional 9,000 children in primary school, and prevent 29,749 children from dropping out of school and becoming vulnerable to exploitive child labor. Finally, the project aimed at raising awareness among some 200,000 family members, as well as government and community leaders about the negative effects of exploitive labor, promoting education as a positive and viable alternative.

III EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND ORGANIZATION

The evaluation looks at the project as a whole and its overall impact in relation to its stated objectives. The activities carried out during the project implementation period are reviewed and assessed with regard to their relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. Specifically, the evaluation aims to—

- Help individual organizations identify areas of good performance and areas where project implementation can be improved.
- Assist OCFT to learn more about what is or is not working in terms of the overall conceptualization and design of EI projects within the broad OCFT technical cooperation program framework.
- Assess the degree to which objectives relevant to the country-specific situation they address have been achieved.
- Assess progress in terms of children’s working and educational status (i.e., withdrawal and prevention from WFCL; enrollment, retention, and completion of educational programs).
- Address the gaps from the current project and help design new strategies and approaches for further interventions and/or projects in Guinea.

The first, second, and last goals have been addressed using evaluative methods based on the formative needs of the project stakeholders. In this context, the evaluative needs have been adapted to proactively help improve future projects (and their design), as well as to retroactively judge the evaluated project’s effectiveness in reducing abusive child labor within a context of poverty. The third and fourth goals have been addressed using an objective-based approach, determining whether the objectives of the project have been achieved. During evaluation and for all the above goals, a mixed-methods approach was used, including both quantitative and qualitative methods (see Section IV). To achieve the abovementioned objectives, the evaluation’s findings are divided into five main sections:

PROJECT DESIGN

The evaluation first assesses the project’s overall design in terms of its relevance and adaptation to the local context. It looks at services provided to the direct and indirect beneficiaries, the types of child labor that exist in the targeted areas, as well as the education situation. It considers the degree to which the project was informed of the needs of the targeted population at the start, and the adequacy of the project’s preparation to meet its objectives.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The project implementation section focuses on the project's achievement of its stated purpose and the challenges it encountered. Also, the capacity of the project to track direct beneficiaries and other aspects of monitoring and evaluation are assessed, alongside the implementation and impact of project activities. The section looks particularly at how the project is improving the quality of formal and nonformal education, and also at its strategies to raise awareness about child labor. Further, other initiatives, such as youth clubs and girls' support networks are discussed in terms of their effectiveness in preventing abusive child labor and child trafficking.

PARTNERSHIP AND COORDINATION

The major issues and challenges of initiating and coordinating partnerships in support of the project are examined, including the opportunities for working with the host country government, and the development of the consultative committees. The evaluation also assesses the partnerships between the principal organizations involved in the project.

MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

The evaluation looks at the overall management of the project and budget issues, with regard to their effect on project implementation. It also considers whether the project team was able to work effectively within the current budget provision and management structure.

SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT

This section examines the strategies being used to promote sustainability and continuing development of education opportunities to combat child labor beyond the life of the project. It evaluates the impact that the project had on the various stakeholders, and considers the particular challenges to sustainability emerging from the decision to provide basic school supplies to children.

The primary purpose of the evaluation is to learn what was and was not working, which may have implications for the project itself, for future projects, or for the EI program in general. The evaluation is an objective inquiry, which may facilitate any necessary corrective action to be taken in future projects, and whereby any successful aspects of past experiences can be capitalized upon and possibly carried over to other projects, in Guinea or internationally.

IV EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND LIMITS OF THE EVALUATION

4.1 METHODOLOGY

To perform this present evaluation, various sources of information have been triangulated to establish validity. These sources include (a) policy and project documents, including project progress reporting; (b) fieldwork data; and (c) research documents related to exploitive child labor and child trafficking in Guinea. It was likewise based on onsite interviews and group discussions. Key informants with special knowledge of the project were consulted. The interviews were based on unstructured and semistructured questionnaires (see interview schedules in Annex 5), which were conducted in an interactive manner that entailed self-disclosure on the part of the researcher, and was aimed at fostering a sense of collaboration. The results of the evaluation were further probed and investigated with key informants.

Because of the time constraints of the evaluation, a compressed research design was used, which sought to understand the project's impact on both project beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries in a given community. The non-beneficiaries included Nafa teachers *not* receiving support from the project, or school children *not* receiving direct educational aid from the project (unlike their classmates, who do).

The interviewees, as well as focus groups and classroom participants, can be divided into the following five broad categories: (1) civil servants; (2) project personnel staff; (3) children; (4) teachers, APEAE members, and Nafa management committee members; and (5) other stakeholders, such as village elders, religious leaders, and concerned parents (see Annex 1 for a list of interviewees and meetings conducted). This sample was intended to give as broad a knowledge base as possible regarding the project. Sampling of interviewees was therefore stratified, attempting to cover all categories of people involved in the project. The selection of communities to visit during the fieldwork was based on both random and stratified sampling. Therefore, three communities were selected by stratified sampling (i.e., areas of best practice of project implementation), and three were selected by random sampling. Most field visits were announced in advance, which was necessary because the evaluation took place in the rainy season, and project stakeholders would otherwise not be available for the interviews. During some visits, the interviews were undertaken with the help of a translator (who was not a stakeholder in the project or working for Save the Children); otherwise, the interviews were conducted directly by the evaluator (in French). For reasons of stakeholder confidentiality, most interviews with project beneficiaries were conducted without the presence or intervention of Save the Children or the implementing NGO.

The evaluation consisted of three main phases. Initially there was a desk review of relevant documents, including the cooperative agreement, progress and technical reports, the performance monitoring plan (PMP) and data tracking tables, midterm evaluation, audit, work plans, and the baseline study. A conference call with USDOL staff members enabled a clear understanding of the Terms of Reference (TOR) and the particular concerns and expectations for the evaluation (the TOR are attached in Annex 4).

A second phase of the evaluation consisted of extensive interviews with stakeholders at all levels. During this phase, the evaluator met with the Deputy Director of Save the Children's Sahel Country Office in Bamako before traveling to Guinea. In Conakry, representatives of the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Labor, and the Ministry of Education were interviewed, in addition to a meeting with the CCC for the project (in which key civil servants from ministries working on issues related to child labor participated). The evaluator traveled to four of the five regions where the project works. Meetings took place with three of the five NGO partners. Further, visits to schools and Nafa centers in three districts provided opportunities to talk to the APEAEs and Nafa management committees. An in-depth meeting took place with project staff at Save the Children's head office in Kankan. Throughout the field visit, local authority representatives were interviewed according to their availability. Youth "listening" club (*Club d'écoute*) representatives were interviewed in Kankan. Discussion sessions with several groups of children took place, supplemented by a series of question-and-answer sessions in the classroom. The following list summarizes the discussions that provided information for the evaluation (more detail can be found in Annex 1 of this report).

The evaluator met with the following:

- Members of the Save the Children project team
- Representatives of three partner NGOs
- Ministry representatives
- Local government representatives
- A group of youth club representatives
- Three Nafa management committees
- Three primary school APEAEs
- Representatives of U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) staff in Guinea
- School children, Nafa participants, parents, community elders, and religious leaders.

The findings of the evaluation were presented in a stakeholders meeting, constructed as a member-check and peer-debriefing session to verify whether the conclusions from data analysis and fieldwork were accurate (see Annex 3 for the presentation of the evaluation made during the stakeholder meeting). The meeting had as its main objective to verify, with the respondent groups, the evaluation recommendations that resulted from data collection and analysis. A further meeting was held to discuss future Save the Children activities in Guinea. This meeting was specifically designed to respond to the fifth objective of the evaluation (see Section III above). Finally, a peer debriefing session was conducted with USAID and U.S. Embassy staff. The findings, conclusions, and recommendations from the stakeholder meeting and debriefing meetings are included throughout the evaluation and constitute an integral part of the findings.

4.2 LIMITS OF THE EVALUATION

Due to security constraints, the evaluation could not be conducted before July 2008, following the end of the school year and held during the rainy season. Hence, it was necessary to inform schools about the arrival of the evaluation mission well in advance, so as to ensure that project stakeholders were present during the fieldwork. This may have had an impact on the findings of the evaluation.

Internal flights are at present not operational in Guinea. Moreover, because the Forest Region is almost inaccessible during the rainy season, the evaluation mission could not look at project achievements in that part of Guinea. Further, the unavailability of internal flights made it necessary to spend an unusually large amount of the evaluation time in the car (of a total of 12 field days, 4.5 days were used for traveling). In total, only three days were available for field visits (APEAEs and Nafa centers). This limited the possibility of conducting a fuller and more in-depth analysis of project achievements, and made it impossible to verify all the information reported by project stakeholders and by progress reports. Again, this may have had an impact on the validity of the findings of the evaluation. In order to get a sound analysis of the project within the constraints of the evaluation, three of the six sites were chosen by random sampling. The information gathered through interviews with various project stakeholders and civil servants was largely in harmony with project documentation and Save the Children information provided to the evaluator. Hence, the evaluator believes that the accuracy of the findings in this report is solid, within the above-mentioned limitations of the scope and implementation of the evaluation.

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V FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section examines how the project is addressing the child labor situation in Guinea, the strategies it has developed, and the activities it is implementing. These findings, conclusions, and recommendations are grouped into the five categories identified under the evaluation objectives:

- Project Design
- Project Implementation
- Partnership and Coordination
- Budget and Management
- Sustainability and Impact

The findings of the evaluation are organized around the questions posed by USDOL in the TOR, taking the opportunity to not only respond to each question but also to expand on the issues concerned as appropriate. Any additional findings are covered after the responses to the questions. Conclusions and recommendations complete the evaluation of the relevant issues.

5.1 PROJECT DESIGN

5.1.1 Relations to Existing Government Efforts

The CCLEE project design, according to all interviewees, to a large degree was relevant and adapted to both needs and existing Government efforts; inasmuch as the Government has limited funding possibilities for combating child labor and to a large extent is relying on NGOs and various organizations to implement child protection activities. Hence, the project's design was in large part responding to needs identified by the Government, when it was realized that child trafficking and exploitive child labor was a problem in Guinea. For example, the Governor of Kankan said:

“This project is in line with the policies of Guinea. Child trafficking, and in general the difficult conditions of children, is a big problem. The Government is supporting projects that are related to child protection. This project has organized a large amount of seminars and capacity building, and is highly appreciated. We [the Government] don't have funding—follow-up on the children's situation is more and more difficult...This project has helped us avoid problems.”

A Save the Children staff member further explained:

“This project was set up in response to Government demand. It started when we got to know that child work and trafficking are problems here. The Government is now promoting the approach toward other NGOs that have contacted us to receive copies of our project documents.”

Also, the design is a “mature” one, as it capitalizes on three former Save the Children projects in the region. CCLEE arrived at a time when other projects had already been implemented or were underway (e.g., a USAID funded project supporting *Community Participation for Equitable and Quality Basic Education*). Hence, many of the Save the Children team members had experience with former projects, and were able to capitalize on former experience to design a well-built project proposal.

The particular strengths of the project design include:

1. An *integrated* project design. The project design integrated child protection, family health and hygiene, and education. Further, the project aimed at strengthening both formal and nonformal education (the latter is not reduced to Nafa centers, but also includes literacy classes and other vocational training).
2. Use of *faire-faire* partnership approaches to select and train civil society organizations. The use of these approaches ensured that high-quality subproject proposals were selected (5 out of 70 proposals). The partnership was backed by an adequate monitoring and evaluation design that ensured that the partners’ performance was adequate.⁵
3. Capacity building at all levels. The project design planned for systematic capacity building for civil society organizations’ staff members, teachers, community leaders, parent associations (APEAEs), Nafa management committees, youth club leaders, and civil servants.
4. Use of participatory approaches to gain community involvement in the project. In each community, the project started its implementation through a participatory diagnostic, identifying community problems that could be addressed by the project. This design feature helped the project to get around cultural barriers, and also helped overcome problems that the project encountered later, during its implementation. The use of participatory approaches not only ensured that the project activities were adequate for each participating community, it also ensured that the whole community—including village elders and religious leaders—were mobilized. Subsequently, this had a positive effect on awareness-raising activities.
5. Working at both *community* and *policy* levels. With this dual approach, the project ensured visibility of its activities, even in high political levels (i.e., ministers, senior civil servants), and made it possible to capitalize on lessons learned in the field to influence policy and raise awareness. In this regard, the creation of a central coordination committee, composed of civil servants from various ministries and departments working with child protection, with decentralized arms at regional and prefecture levels (the CCC, the CCR, and the CCP, respectively) helped assist the establishment of a national legal framework for child protection.

⁵ The monitoring and evaluation of the partners’ performance was an example of best practice; whereas other parts of the monitoring and evaluation work, such as the monitoring of the work status of beneficiary children, was insufficient.

One weakness in the project design was its failure to address the poverty that is the daily reality of its target communities. Parents were asked to withdraw their children from exploitive labor, hence losing the children's contribution to the family income. In addition, they were asked to send their children to school with the additional costs that this incurs. While the provision of school supplies helped to some extent, this support will cease with the end of the project. One NGO member explained that, with the project:

“Parents, APEAEs, teachers, the whole community are working together to follow-up on children. The school kits motivate them.”

However, the project had no income generating or micro finance strategies to help communities cope with the cost of education, and this emerged as one of the challenges faced by the project. A second weakness with the project design is paradoxically connected to its own success: in raising awareness about the importance of schooling, the project generated community interest in education, thus creating a higher demand for schools than the community could offer.

5.2 PROJECT DESIGN/IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

5.2.1 Support for the Education Initiative Goals

In general, the evaluation found that the project adequately supported all five Education Initiative Goals.⁶

Education Initiative Goal 1: Awareness raising of the importance of education for all children. The understanding of the project goals was generally very good. CCLEE had, in most cases, successfully raised awareness on the concept of exploitive child labor and on the need for education (i) at the community and school level through the mobilization of the whole community, and through training of teachers, APEAE, and Nafa management committees; (ii) at the regional level through the training of civil servants and the organization of forums on issues such as child labor and child trafficking; and (iii) at a national level through the CCC. Generally, the evaluator was positively surprised at the effect the project awareness raising had had; a frequent statement of community members was that:

“We thought our children needed to work very hard to become strong. We didn't realize that it might harm them—and that it may prevent them from attending school.”

Generally, the evaluator found that the awareness raising was not only understood by the communities, but that it had also led to behavioral change (which is an unusual result, since it was achieved in a relatively short time). This achievement also underlines the importance of the use of participatory approaches by the project, which helped it adapt awareness-raising activities to the communities' needs, and to involve community leaders such as elders and religious authorities in the awareness raising.

⁶ The information in this section is based on evidence from a variety of interviewees (both project stakeholders and civil servants) that has been triangulated with project documentation (including evaluation reports and audit findings).

In addition to the above, the project has also contributed to awareness raising through its presence in national media. In this regard, two particular activities should be underlined:

The project organized eight regional forums on child-related issues (one in each region⁷ in 2006 and in 2008). These fora were in fact large reunions to share project findings and results, and also to discuss project-related issues such as child trafficking. At the same time, the forums disseminated information about the project, collected information, and exchanged views on media-supported issues such as child trafficking. These fora included local representatives from the departments or ministries of education, social affairs, justice, the regional governorate, NGO partners and other NGOs working in the same area, UNICEF, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as well as Nafa and APEAE members. For the Boké/Conakry forums, representatives from the U.S. Embassy and USAID, as well as core ministries participated. The organization of these forums was an excellent tool for both coordination and awareness raising. It should be noted that during the evaluation, both the U.S. Embassy and USAID provided highly positive feedback on the project, and stated that the project, through these fora and various other coordination efforts (meetings, etc.), had enabled them to draw lessons from the field and improve other initiatives to combat child labor. In particular, representatives from USAID expressed their hope that Save the Children extends and expands the project's implementation in the future.

In addition, the project organized roughly 100 “roundtable sessions” (*tables rondes*) during which radio journalists came to ask child labor-related questions from key project stakeholders in two-hour sessions. These roundtable sessions were regularly organized during children's days and related events, but also occurred as a result of local radio invitations. On average, each participating “intensive” district organized about four to five such sessions per year. The sessions were not limited to intensive project intervention areas, but also regularly organized in non-intensive areas. Furthermore, the project, by its mass media focus and interaction, also gained a reputation for child protection expertise that made radio and other mass media ask the project to participate or give feedback on other programs about child protection.

Education Initiative Goal 2: Strengthen systems that encourage working children and those at risk of working to attend school. This initiative has been supported by (i) provision of school materials to children at Nafa centers and primary schools; (ii) building capacity of teachers, Nafa management committees, and APEAEs; (iii) support for small-scale projects supporting the APEAE action plans in the target communities; (iv) improvement of school infrastructure in 34 schools (latrines and water pumps); as well as (v) provision of equipment to Nafa centers (sewing machines, dyeing, and embroidery equipment, etc.). The project thus helped improve the school infrastructure, the school management quality (through management training of APEAEs and Nafa management committees), and the quality of learning (through teacher training and provision of materials). The main education-related services of the project are outlined below.

⁷ A joint forum was organized, at both occasions, for the Boké and Conakry regions.

The direct service of the project included—

- Provision of school materials to 4,800 children enrolled in formal or nonformal education centers (including the provision of personal training materials and equipment to approximately 80 children enrolled in the CAAF⁸ vocational training center in N'Zérékoré, and to 200 young mothers in the 14–18 year age range).

The indirect services included—

- Extensive training for 100 primary school parents associations (in all, 1,100 APEAE members have been trained) and 20 Nafa management committees (a total of 180 persons trained) to enable them to identify and register children engaged in or at risk of exploitive labor, and to promote and support their enrollment in primary school or a nonformal education center.
- Creation of nine girls' support networks to develop and promote coordination and communication between different organizations and actors working with girls in each district (excluding Conakry). Training for the girls' support networks in child protection, health issues and life skills. Training for youth clubs in life skills, and assistance in the organization of youth club networks.⁹
- Training for 230 primary school teachers and for 51 Nafa teachers in lesson planning and child protection.
- Financial awards to support the workplan developed for improving schooling for the 100 participating schools and 20 Nafa centers. Following recommendations from the audit, further support was given to 26 of the 100 target schools, to seven of the target Nafa centers, and to one CAAF¹⁰ (for construction or rehabilitation of water pumps and latrines).
- The launch of a literacy campaign led to the opening and equipping of 24 literacy centers and the training of 48 literacy teachers.

Education Initiative Goal 3: Strengthen national institutions and policies on education and child labor. This initiative has been supported through the project's coordination committees, especially the committee at central level (the CCC). The project trained the personnel of these committees (mainly civil servants from key government institutions working on child protection) on child labor and protection issues. As part of the capacity building initiatives, four of the members of the CCC (accompanied by three technical specialists from the partner NGOs, and a Save the Children education adviser) also benefited from a study tour/exchange visit to Mali (visiting a USDOL-financed protection project implemented by CARE-Mali and World Vision).

⁸ *Centre d'Appui a l'Auto-promotion Feminine* (Women's vocational training center).

⁹ The networks are different from the listening clubs, insomuch as the first focuses specifically on the education of teenage mothers and the creation of girl-friendly schools, whereas the Listening Clubs are organizing activities for all youth in school to promote HIV/AIDS awareness, promote school attendance, etc.

¹⁰ Women's Vocational Training Center in N'Zérékoré.

The committees, although mainly coordinating organs, have ensured a high visibility for the project's mandate at the policy level, and thereby also contributed to heightened awareness on the necessity of policy work related to exploitive child labor and child trafficking. For example, the CCC helped support the application decrees for the enactment of ILO Conventions 138 and 182 (ratified in 2003).

Education Initiative Goal 4: Support research and the collection of reliable data on child labor. This initiative has been supported through the project's collection of data and its capitalization on lessons learned, both from this project and from former Save the Children initiatives in the region. The project initially conducted a baseline study on child labor in Guinea during March and June of 2005. Also, the project contributed to research by its use of *positive deviance* methods, investigating positive characteristics that lead to a healthy life. Hence, NGOs were trained to identify and promote positive, effective behavior change in response to a variety of health problems. In this regard, the project also identified "model mothers" that could act as tutors for young mothers in the 14–18 age group. These model mothers hosted (at their home) young teenage girls who were pregnant or had recently become mothers at the age of 14–18 years, and trained them in motherhood. Finally, the project, in establishing its capacity-building structure, conducted background research for the creation and write-up of 11 training modules.

It should be noted that at the launch of the CCLEE project, the research and collection of reliable child labor data had not yet been introduced (this objective was just introduced in 2008). Hence, research was not a direct objective of the CCLEE project. For future EI projects, Save the Children is currently envisaging conducting research in collaboration with Kankan University. Such cooperation could be very interesting, both from an academic and from a project (programmatic) point of view, since it would provide additional data on appropriate methods to address child labor and child trafficking.

Education Initiative Goal 5: Ensure the long-term sustainability of these efforts. This initiative has been supported through the project's use of *faire-faire* partnership methods and its capacity-building efforts at all levels. It should be noted that some of the participating NGOs have already obtained outside funding to strengthen their child protection activities. Senior staff from these organizations noted that they would not have obtained such funding without the prior training received from CCLEE. Further, APEAE, Nafa committees, and youth organizations received training in resource mobilization (1 of the 11 training modules covered this subject). The direct educational services provided (distribution of education materials) will very probably cease upon the end of the project and may, therefore, not be a sustainable way to keep children in school for a long time. The parents live in a situation of poverty, and the project did not offer any income-generating activities that would help alleviate poverty or make the parents more self-reliable (in terms of food and basic supplies, or in terms of school materials). It should be noted that the dropouts from the project were limited, which indicates that the direct services had a short- or medium-term relief effect.

5.2.2 Realistic Project Purpose and Outputs

In analyzing the project document and budget, and comparing them to activities in the field, the evaluator found that the project purpose and outputs were *generally* adequate. The feasibility of transiting a large number of children from Nafa centers into formal schooling was one of the indicators of the project that proved difficult to achieve. The evaluator has previous experience with Nafa centers in Guinea, and was positively surprised at the relatively high transition rate of 30 percent, which is unusual for this kind of initiative. Further, the budget was not adequate in terms of covering the necessary infrastructure improvements for the schools, nor for providing sufficient equipment to all the Nafa centers. Accordingly, many Nafa centers still suffer from inadequate equipment to support the vocational training offered.

Also, as noted above, the project aimed at assisting young mothers ages 14–18 years by pairing them with older *model mothers* (these latter were identified under the positive deviance method explained above). However, project staff indicated that a large number of the young mothers had moved away from the community, and that the indicator for young mothers to be paired with role mothers was therefore not achieved.

Finally, it should be noted that the fluctuation of the Guinean Franc (FGN, or GNF) and inflation created additional problems for evaluating expenses and costs (the average inflation rate in 2005 was 30.9%).¹¹ These problems led to difficulties in budgeting, resulting in a lack of financing to cover all NGO expenses for the last year. Hence, some NGO staff had to be discontinued a few months before the end of the project. According to interviewees from NGOs and field workers, this problem had little impact on the overall achievements of the project.

5.2.3 Measuring, Tracking, and Monitoring

In general, it was found that at the time of the final evaluation the project stakeholders at all levels had a clear understanding of USDOL common indicators of withdrawal and prevention, as well as of definitions of direct educational services. However, in the starting phase of the project, it was a severe challenge for the project team to understand the USDOL common indicators and definitions of direct and indirect beneficiaries. The fact that the indicators were only available in English hindered understanding of the different concepts and definitions. This confusion took up a great deal of project time and energy in the beginning of the project, and was worsened by the fact that many core project documents were not translated into French at the beginning of project implementation.

The Nafa management committees and APEAEs, assisted by NGO project staff, identified the direct beneficiaries and tracked their educational and working status. The tracking of the work status was done in a two-steps process: (i) the APEAEs and Nafa management committees ensured that the children were attending school systematically (it was assumed that regular school attendance diminished the risk of abusive child labor); and (ii) they followed-up at the children's homes if any irregularity was noted (in terms of irregular school attendance, low

¹¹ U.S. Department of State, Bureau of African Affairs, June 2008. Background Note, Guinea. Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2824.htm>.

grades, and/or disappearance from school). Information (as text) about the child's attendance and possible work status was subsequently recorded in each individual child's file. During the school holidays, many APEAEs organized education activities and revision sessions. A small fee was collected from each child who wished to attend (to cover teacher expenses). Although the evaluator could find no evidence for it, this fee-based system may have prevented some of the project's direct beneficiaries from attending, since most are very poor. In terms of fees, it should be noted that the children were not charged to attend project-supported Nafa vocational training centers (children attending other Nafa centers were at times charged, especially to cover the cost of the skills teacher, who is not considered as a teacher by the Government, and therefore not paid). The project successfully negotiated with local Rural Development Committees to cover the fees of the Nafa basic skills teachers in some communities:

"Before the project arrived, we paid 500 FGN every month. The teacher was paid about 30,000 per month. Now the Rural Development Committee pays him 50,000 a month."

Government policy theoretically provides for tuition-free, compulsory primary school education for six years, but enrollment rates are low due to additional school fees (school-specific) and lax enforcement of laws mandating school attendance. Interviews with local school authorities indicate that the project's intervention improved school attendance substantially (to the extent that in some cases, demand exceeded supply).

In practice, if a child was abused or subject to WFCL, the Nafa management committee or APEAE members were normally informed about the situation, but did not necessarily have the power to intervene. It is difficult to see how this situation could be improved in this or other projects, since each case of child abuse must be evaluated individually. For example, in a life-threatening situation, a Nafa member would have intervened, but in many milder cases, it could be counterproductive to involve the local police, and sometimes it did not help if the APEAE or the Nafa management committee talked to the family. During the evaluation fieldwork, Amina, a Nafa student who was visibly worried that her aunt would gain knowledge of what she said, told the following story (which was confirmed by the Nafa center's teacher):

"I live with my aunt and had never been to school before I enrolled the Nafa center. I didn't like the work at home—it was very hard. I started at the Nafa center and then my aunt took me back home and then she was beating me every day during two months. After two months the Nafa committee came and talked to my aunt and brought me back to school. I'm still working very hard at home, but I don't dare to complain. I've been to the Nafa center for three years but can't attend regularly [because of the aunt]. I'm in the embroidery section. I would like to transfer to the formal school system, but I think it's too late for me. Anyway, I don't think my aunt would agree to it. Later, I want to become a teacher or counselor and help other children who are in my situation."

The Nafa teacher did not have any problems in identifying the problems Amina encountered at home. However, she (and the Nafa management committee) lacked concrete ways of dealing with the problem. A more formalized tracking system (as opposed to the current informal one) would have been just as unable to deal with the situation, although it might have been helpful to know the exact number of children in Amina's situation. If the number of similar cases was

sufficiently high, one might have tried to devise concrete solutions and methods to deal with the problem.

It should be underlined that the project's tracking of the work status of children is largely informal and qualitative, and *does not* systematically and quantitatively track the children's work status (for example, as noted above, no statistics exist to identify the number of children who are in similar, abusive work situations as Amina). The tracking of each beneficiary's exact work status is only done once, at the identification of the direct beneficiaries. Registration covers detailed information about the child's circumstances, including the type of work and the number of hours per week that he or she has been working. A few examples of the tracking of the work status (taken from the project's database) are as follows:

"The child has lost his father and is working more than 42 hours per week. He is withdrawn from WFCL."

"Good-working child from a very poor family, which is unable to meet her needs. The project has improved the situation of the child, who is withdrawn from WFCL."

"Orphan of father, this child lives with the friend of her father, who was exploiting her. Thanks to the project's awareness raising, the child is now going to school without problems. She is withdrawn from WFCL."

Subsequently, project staff followed up with APEAEs and with Nafa management committees about each child's work status. However, the follow-up was not formalized or tracked quantitatively in a database. Therefore, as the work tracking system was set up, it did not fully comply with the USDOL requirements of regular tracking of the work status of each child.

The project audit noted that for a test sample of 44 children reported as prevented, 21 (47%) should not have been reported as either prevented or withdrawn because these beneficiaries were either still working in a WCFL or were not enrolled in an educational program. Save the Children has said that all the direct beneficiaries are at this point enrolled in an educational program and have received direct educational services in the form of a kit of school materials. During the fieldwork, it was noticed that some of these children, although attending an educational program, were still engaged in work, especially during school holidays and weekends. The nature of the work seems to be lighter than before the project intervention:

"Before going to school, I was with my parents in the fields. Now I'm rarely working in the fields."

"Before, I worked in the fields all the time. Now, I only go there when I want."

Other children explained that during the holidays they were involved in various types of work, including washing clothes, finding firewood to sell at the market, and working in the fields. Most of the children underlined that the work "was lighter now," and some said they "liked it." The percentage of beneficiary children still involved in WFCL is not known, but interview evidence (backed by project monitoring of WFCL) indicates that the number of children involved in

WFCL has dramatically decreased in the target communities (both among beneficiary and nonbeneficiary children).

5.2.4 Reporting of Performance Information

The project has improved its reporting on performance indicators, and addressed many of the issues raised by the midterm evaluation and the audit. The project has successfully enrolled 4,800 children in a formal or nonformal education program (i.e., Nafa center), including 200 young mothers enrolled in a nonformal educational program (organized by the project through the Nafa centers, offered specifically to these young mothers). The project staff said it has systems in place to collect the information needed to accurately measure results in terms of USDOL common indicators and performance information. A former limiting factor (noted at midterm and during the project audit in March 2007) was related to confusion about the definitions of some of the indicators and the need to measure and report others; which, it appears, has subsequently been clarified and understood.

Accuracy of reporting of project performance: The evaluator visited six communities (three of which were selected by random sampling). In each community, the project implementation, as verified by the evaluator (in terms of direct services, equipment and renovation, and capacity-building efforts), was in accordance with project performance data. Also, interviews from various sources (beneficiary children, parents, APEAE members, local officials, central government civil servants, USAID officials, and others) were largely similar in their description and evaluation of project implementation and performance. Interview information was triangulated with project performance data, and no major discrepancies were found. The evaluator, therefore, considers the accuracy of project performance reporting as adequate and reliable.

Reporting on performance in non-intensive areas: The project's intervention in non-intensive areas was limited to mass media communication activities, as well as some activities organized for Guinea's Children's Day. Also, key education people, such as the Regional and District Education authorities (*Inspection Régionale et Direction Prefectorale d'Education*), as well as members of the social bureaus have received training in protection (two modules), life skills, school health, and gender equity. Also, they were sensitized about how to work with APEAEs and Nafa Management Committees. The project has not systematically tracked the impact of these indirect activities.

5.2.5 Educational Quality

The evaluator considers the project as quality-focused rather than driven by quantitative requirements. It supported educational quality at various levels. First, the project indirectly supported educational quality in Nafa centers and schools by providing equipment and school supplies. Moreover, the project assisted 34 schools with construction and rehabilitation work of their latrines and water pumps.

An important part of the project intervention, as noted above, relates to its capacity-building work. In all, 11 modules were created, which had a clear and measurable impact on the stakeholders. The themes for these modules were partly identified during the initial participative

diagnostic organized by the project. Hence, it is believed that they correspond to the needs of the stakeholders. These modules are explained below (the modules are divided into a certain number of sessions, each of which is to be covered in one day, and normally consists of 2–3 hours of training).

Information, follow-up, and evaluation of CCLEE: This module included training sessions in the following areas:

- Problems, objectives, results and strategy of monitoring and evaluation (M&E)
- Notions of M&E
- Logical framework, indicators, and data requirements
- Common indicators for CCLEE
- M&E cycle in CCLEE
- Follow-up on financial, material, and human resources of CCLEE
- Mechanisms of identification of direct beneficiaries
- Roles and responsibilities of actors
- Tools to gather information
- How to reach the target indicators
- Use of the Student Tracking System (STS)
- How to manage the CCLEE database “Match.”

This first module was the only project-specific one, and provided core information on most aspects of the project indicators, management, and the monitoring and evaluation cycle. Although the module is not intimately linked to education quality (as the other modules are), it provided the base for understanding the project and for future improvements to educational quality.

Internal administration of Nafa management committee. This module was established by Save the Children to give the Nafa committees knowledge about the socioeconomic situation of students at the Nafa Center, and of their role as a management committee. This training helped revitalize the 20 Nafa centers participating in the project, and in particular, strengthened the management committee, which to that point had played a marginal role in the administration of the centers.

The module has the following sessions:

- Mission and role of the Nafa management committee
- Organization and functioning of Nafa management committees
- How to obtain legal documents for the Nafa management committees
- How to establish minutes from the meetings
- How to prepare and conduct a General Assembly
- How to maintain the paperwork
- How to make an action plan for education and training
- How to mobilize resources for the center
- How to elaborate a report
- Follow-up and monitoring.

Protection (key concepts): This module was established to provide broad training to APEAE, Nafa committees, and other key members of the community on the basic issues related to child protection. The module includes the following sessions:

- Introduction to the concept of protection
- Introduction to the concept of childhood
- Work and exploitation of children
- Children's psychological wellbeing
- Legal tools.

The protection module was followed by a more specific module, *Protection 2*, which focused on such issues as the impact of work on children, national policies and structures for protection, legal tools, child abuse, children's rights, and child trafficking.

Training (animation) et pedagogy (andragogie). This module prepared NGO staff in training and facilitation techniques, explained the roles of the facilitator and the qualities and knowledge a good facilitator should have. It further explained how a training session should take place, and how to change attitudes and induce behavioral change through community training sessions. Finally, the training made use of simulation techniques to help prepare the new trainer/facilitator for his or her community work.

Understanding lesson-planning theories for primary school teachers (*Harmonisation de la compréhension des enseignant(e)s sur les types de planification des cours au primaire*). This module was established as a direct result of the initial participative diagnostic, where the inadequacy of the teachers' planning of classes was brought forward as a problem. In particular, teachers felt confused by the different learning methods and the different types of classroom organization promoted through various teacher-training courses. To improve the quality of the teaching, the project (in cooperation with the Ministry of Education) organized this module to "harmonize" the teachers' planning of the lessons. This was done by explaining the different theories and methods that the teacher could draw from when planning a course or an individual lesson. The module was organized through participatory learning sessions for adults, building on the learners' past knowledge. Professors at the teacher training college in Kankan designed this module, and ensured that the quality and content of the module corresponded to the teachers' pedagogical standards and needs. It proved very popular, and included the following sessions:

- How to design a course
- Types of planning in primary education
- How to plan an individual lesson
- When and how to use the different types of planning
- Pedagogical tools for the organization of the lesson (*fiches pédagogiques...*).

This is an example of how the project could influence teaching quality. Unfortunately, it would be difficult to evaluate quantitatively the impact of the training on the individual teachers' results, but during the fieldwork, comments from teachers and education administrators led us to believe that this training session improved the organization and content of the courses they taught. Moreover, the project paired this training with monitoring and follow-up to help the teacher to move from a teacher-centered approach to a more student-centered one. To do that, the project established a comprehensive "observation sheet for teacher performance" measuring a large number of attitudes to define his or her teaching style and the extent to which it was a participatory, child-centered and open method, rather than a traditional teacher-centered method based on lecturing and rote learning.

Life skills. This module included sessions on alcoholism, drug abuse, tobacco, early marriage, youth delinquency, early sexual relations, and dropout from school. It should be noted that in Guinea, these particular problems are increasing among young people, and may lead to early pregnancies and problems of child abuse and child labor.

Fund raising and negotiation techniques for APEAE members and Nafa management committees. This very popular training module included sessions on the general concept of fundraising; how to plan fundraising campaigns; how to formulate and present a fundraising document; introduction to the concept of negotiation; strategies of negotiation; how to prepare and conduct negotiation sessions as well as how to follow-up and evaluate resource mobilization and negotiation efforts. The APEAE members and Nafa management committees generally

found that they had been empowered by this training. Although the evaluation mission did not see any direct evidence of funds leveraged as a result of this training, it should be noted that such resource mobilization takes time and that the APEAE members and Nafa management committees are still very inexperienced in fundraising.

The effect of the fundraising and of other training modules was clearly noticeable at the NGO level (which, it should be recalled, were trained in all these modules by Save the Children before they themselves conducted the training sessions in the communities). Several of these NGOs have subsequently won bids or raised funds for future work. During the evaluation, on several occasions, the NGO management teams indicated that they would not have obtained additional funding without the training received from Save the Children. It is hoped that some of the APEAE members and Nafa management committees will be able to conduct successful resource mobilization activities in the near future.

Gender equity. This module was primarily intended for APEAEs and Nafa management committees and included training sessions on gender stereotypes and discrimination (man/woman, boy/girl); initiation into notions of equity; initiation into notions of gender activities and gender roles; influential factors in gender construction and discrimination; school access and attainment for girls; how to improve girls' school results; and children's rights (including information about legal tools). Again, this module not only strengthened girls' schooling, but may also indirectly have reduced child exploitation and improved education quality by making key stakeholders aware of gender roles in the school.

School Health. This module covered information and resources on the principal sicknesses mentioned during the initial participatory diagnostic and planning sessions conducted by the project in the communities. During the initial sessions the communities identified major diseases that were a problem in their region, including malaria, diarrhea, parasites, and skin diseases. The module stimulated discussion and provided information on how to avoid these sicknesses and/or how to treat them. The learners' feedback about this module was very positive. It corresponded to needs identified in the communities, and raised awareness about main hygiene and health issues in the communities. The module contained eight core sessions, as follows:

- Nutrition
- Vaccination
- Hygiene
- Understanding of HIV/AIDS
- Vulnerability of HIV
- Psychological and socioeconomic consequences of the HIV/AIDS epidemics

- The life cycle
- How to change attitudes and behavior.

Training of Youth Clubs (CECOJE and *clubs d'écoute*¹²). This module was specifically designed for the youth clubs involved in the project (one in each project community; 110 in all) and included sessions such as introducing Save the Children; presenting the project (CCLEE); introducing concepts of child protection; the convention of children's rights; the CECOJE's role; introduction to communication techniques; and to STDs (including HIV/AIDS). The youth club members interviewed during the field work gave very positive feedback on the training received, saying it had helped them better understand the CECOJE's role, taught them how to organize awareness-raising sessions, and that it also provided them general information about important topics such as HIV/AIDS.

The project does not have the required tools to measure the impact on the educational quality of all the training modules. However, the capacity-building strategy of the project is impressive and could be used as a model by other projects, both in Guinea and internationally. Each module can be adopted and used for a variety of stakeholders, and this made it possible for the project to undertake broad capacity-building efforts directed at all stakeholders involved in the project (very few of the modules targeted only one beneficiary institution). The impact of capacity building was demonstrated during the evaluation fieldwork, first and foremost by the beneficiaries' enthusiasm, their knowledge about child-related and management issues, and by their responses to interview questions that systematically underlined the importance of this training. Other services offered by the project, e.g., the distribution of school materials to children, were found "useful," but hardly as important as the training modules they received. It was felt that the training, more than attempting to transfer a set level of knowledge to the recipients, had attempted and largely succeeded in empowering the learners. In the evaluator's opinion, the capacity-building component of this project is a good example of a best practice that could be used by USDOL and other projects.

While the content of some of the modules challenged some of Guinean cultural and traditional practices, it did this in a way that local people could relate to and understand. Child agricultural labor is a traditional part of rural life in Guinea and the concept that some forms of work are unacceptable for children was new. During visits to different communities in the course of the evaluation, people repeatedly explained that they had not known that some work was dangerous for children and now that they did know they were taking steps to tell other people and change local practice and the laws that regulate it. Anecdotal evidence suggested a general increase in school enrollment since the start of the project. Both these outcomes are directly connected to the quality of the training modules developed and offered by the project.

¹² The CECOJE were the umbrella youth associations (depending on the Ministry of Youth) that organized *Clubs d'écoute* in the communities.

5.2.6 School Infrastructure

The project provided small grants to the target schools (on average, USD \$854) and to Nafa centers (on average, USD \$1,707) to cover necessary materials and infrastructure improvement, as indicated in an initial workplan developed by the APEAEs and Nafa management committees. The grant is given only one time during the life of the project.

In addition, the project improved school infrastructure in 34 schools, with the following construction and renovation activities:

- 10 schools: renovation of latrines
- 7 schools: construction of new latrines
- 7 schools: creation of water supply

It should be noted that many project schools and Nafa centers still do not have sufficient and adequate infrastructure. Some of this is due to the project's own success, since it raised awareness on the importance of schooling in the communities. The heightened interest for schooling resulted in an increased demand of school places, which could not be met by the number of places allotted in local schools. In several cases, the schools had to set up a waiting list of school-age children to be enrolled in the following term or year, when new school places would be open. The children on waiting lists were prioritized during the next school intake, while the waiting list continued to grow. In many places, the schools are over-crowded and the material resources are insufficient (especially in terms of vocational material and supplies to the Nafa centers).

The evaluation could not establish a list of what required infrastructure was necessary to cover current demand for education in project communities, nor could the necessary water and latrine needs be verified. However, it should be noted that this is an integrated protection project, not a construction project. In terms of comparative advantage, it is uncertain that Save the Children would be an adequate organizer of school building efforts. Larger agencies such as the World Bank may have a comparative advantage in this domain. However, it should be underlined that (i) the project supported the target communities' educational workplan to improve the quality of the education offered; (ii) the project successfully undertook certain infrastructure building initiatives in 34 of the projects' 110 target communities; (iii) the project (in the evaluator's opinion) correctly concentrated its efforts in the domains where Save the Children has a comparative advantage; i.e., in protection and education efforts, through the capacity building of actors at all levels.

5.2.7 Recommendations from the Midterm Evaluation

The project staff found that the recommendations from the midterm evaluation were useful and had been beneficial to the project’s implementation.¹³ They underlined that the midterm evaluation was a positive exercise, since it was conducted as a learning and participatory exercise and enabled them to take “a step back” and understand project challenges and strengths. The Kankan office director (who arrived after the midterm evaluation) said that the evaluation had been a tool for her to better understand the project and to engage in some corrective actions.

The main recommendations from the midterm evaluation and the follow-up by the project are outlined in the tables below.

(i) Project Design

Recommendations from Midterm ¹⁴	Follow-up by the Project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear and detailed plan for the delivery of the remaining training modules needs to be developed... As these are core project activities, it is important to decide if it is realistic to implement all the planned modules and to develop a detailed timetable and disseminate it to project stakeholders so that other activities can be planned around it. • Introduce strategies to help communities improve their economic situation. 	<p>As demonstrated above, the capacity- building efforts of the project have been successfully implemented and led to significant positive outcomes. This recommendation has been fully implemented and acted upon.</p> <p>The second recommendation could not be acted on, mainly because of budget restrictions. However, future projects may revisit this recommendation and, in particular, attempt to create strategies to help communities improve their economic situation that are based on “local initiatives that the project can foster and support with start-up materials and advice, thus continuing to build self confidence, self reliance, capacity and ownership within communities.”</p>

(ii) Implementation

Recommendations from Midterm	Follow-up by the Project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An official French version of the USDOL common indicators should be available. • Key project documents should be available in French in order to maximize project staff understanding of the project and avoid confusion. • Certain CCLEE project documents should be translated into French. • The project document, the PMP, and DTT need to be revised so that they are both internally coherent; French and English versions to be harmonized. 	<p>The final evaluation did not find any apparent and major inconsistencies in the project documentation produced after the midterm evaluation and in the project stakeholders’ conception of the project indicators, including the USDOL common indicators.</p> <p>The necessity for all documents to be available in French (including evaluations and audit reports) is underlined by this present evaluation. Many key project stakeholders, including Save the Children staff, key government staff, and key partners (USAID and partner NGO staff), although being almost fluent in English, prefer French versions so as to better follow-up on and disseminate findings and recommendations to stakeholders who are not fluent in English (see also Section 4.4 on management strategies).</p>

¹³ It should be noted that the evaluator conducting this final evaluation is not the same as the evaluator who conducted the midterm evaluation.

¹⁴ All references in this column are from the Midterm Evaluation (ORC-Macro/Upton/2006).

Recommendations from Midterm	Follow-up by the Project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The frequency of provision of school materials to direct beneficiaries needs to be clarified and the information shared with project stakeholders. • Project reporting needs to distinguish between children who are withdrawn from and children who are prevented from engaging in hazardous or exploitive work. • The project team needs to carry out a comprehensive work planning exercise with the aim of completing the majority of planned project activities by the end of year 3 so that the last year of the project can concentrate on refresher training and strengthening identified weak points. 	<p>All these recommendations were acted upon. In particular, it should be underlined that the project redefined the direct beneficiaries (4,800 children) to include all those registered in project communities and enrolled in programs of either nonformal or formal education that were supported by the project, and that project monitoring from then on reported on withdrawn children (3,593, of which 2,284 girls) and prevented children (1,206, of which 636 girls).</p> <p>Also, the project made an effort to conduct and finish most capacity-building exercises within the end of year 3 of the project, thus freeing up time during the last year of project implementation to strengthen weak points and improve the exit strategies of the project.</p> <p>Although the final evaluation could not systematically sample and verify the reporting, both Save the Children and partner NGO staff were aware of the distinctions between withdrawn and prevented children and said that the children were correctly identified in the database.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strategy of supporting the development of small-scale innovations needs to be implemented as soon as possible. 	<p>The project helped the APEAEs and Nafa management committees to develop workplans for small-scale “innovations” for their school. This workplan was subsequently (during year 3 of the project) supported by small project grants.</p> <p>Also, the project set up small-scale projects in 34 communities to improve access to water, and construct or rehabilitate classrooms and latrines, etc.</p> <p>Whereas these “innovations” did not always have a direct effect on the protection component of the project, they helped the general quality of the schooling experience of the children.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The security of field workers in the Forest region should be discussed by Save the Children and NGO partners, and appropriate strategies adopted. 	<p>Save the Children’s management and security procedures impressed the evaluator. However, it was impossible to evaluate the security situation in the Forest region (and elsewhere in the country). The early summer 2008 events show that the political situation is conducive to violent demonstrations, and that the poverty situation in many areas may lead to systematic political violence, as well as more random violence.¹⁵</p>

¹⁵ It should be noted that the evaluation fieldwork was originally schedule for late May 2008 but due to military protests and insecurity, the fieldwork was postponed until July, 2008.

(iii) Partnership and Coordination

Recommendations from Midterm	Follow-up by the Project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CCLEE team needs to make a concrete plan to ensure collaboration and coordination with UNICEF. • CCLEE should initiate discussions with the Peace Corps to investigate future collaboration. 	<p>Negotiations with the Peace Corps had not been continued because of the uncertain political situation in the country. At this point, Save the Children did not have any volunteers from Peace Corps or interns working with the organization, partly because of the unstable political situation.</p> <p>The evaluator felt that the project could have improved some of its coordination structures, especially with UNICEF initiatives. At the time of the evaluation, the cooperation with UNICEF was not systematic, and it seemed particularly important to inform partners about the production of learning materials by the project (i.e., learning modules).</p> <p>If funding was secured to continue the Save the Children's work, future research collaboration has been planned with the University of Kankan, and especially with PhD students who would conduct research on education and protection-related issues.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies and activities for capacity building and encouraging ownership of project objectives by the CCC, CCR, and CCP should be developed in consultation with these committees so that they form the basis of an effective and active national child protection network. 	<p>Save the Children provided training to the coordination committees and had taken steps toward their institutionalization. However, much more remains to be done to guarantee the autonomy of these committees. It is hoped that these committees will continue to serve under new Save the Children initiatives (if funding is made available), and that they will be gradually transformed into a more permanent structure.</p> <p>During the final evaluation, a meeting was conducted with Save the Children and the CCC to discuss the future of the project-created committees. In particular, it was pointed out the necessity to define the specialization of these committees, since several parallel protection committees exist in Guinea.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More strategies for consultation with key partners can usefully be built into each stage of the project process for this and future EI projects. 	<p>One of the strengths of the project was its use of participatory approaches involving the whole community (including elders and religious leaders).</p>

(iv) Project Management and Budget

Recommendations from Midterm	Follow-up by the Project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A budgetary review should take place in conjunction with the detailed work planning exercise recommended in the previous section. • A regular and transparent review process needs to be established to take into account the effects of the extraordinarily high rate of inflation in Guinea on project budgets. • The incoming country director/ project manager needs to have a good understanding of the Guinean or West African context and be able to rapidly gain the trust and confidence of the project team. The project was audited in March 2007 and its management procedures were subsequently improved (for example, the reporting was improved). 	<p>During the final evaluation, it was noticed that the project information (including budgetary information) was well documented and organized.</p> <p>The new country director and project manager has a very good understanding of the Guinean and West African context and has gained the trust and confidence of the project team.</p>

(v) Sustainability

Recommendations from Midterm	Follow-up by the Project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project team needs to refine its strategy for strengthening the CCC, CCR, CCP network and ensure that it has sustainable links with APEAEs and Nafa center management committees, with the aim of leaving an established and functioning national child protection network in place when the project finishes in 2008. • The project team needs to continue to develop capacity-building strategies to promote ownership of child protection and education objectives and initiatives at community, district, and national levels. 	<p>The first recommendation will be repeated in this final evaluation document. As noted above, much more remains to be done to guarantee the autonomy of the coordination committees.</p> <p>The project has successfully developed strategies to promote ownership of child protection and education objectives and initiatives at community, district, and national levels. At all these levels, the stakeholders were enthusiastic and very committed to the project activities.</p>

5.2.8 Other Design and Implementation Issues

Selection of target schools and Nafa centers

The selection of target schools and Nafa centers were decided in work sessions during which project staff and the district and regional staff finalized the choice of schools. The criteria for selection of target schools and Nafa centers included the following:

- Existence of WFCL in agriculture, commerce, and mines
- Weak rate of school enrollment
- High dropout rates
- Low access to schools

In general, it was found that the selection procedures were adequate, although some of the choices of target communities may be questioned. For example, 10 of the communities receiving support for Nafa centers did not receive any help for the local primary schools. It followed that some children wanted to transfer to the Nafa center, where they would receive educational kits and project support. It may have been better to help both Nafa centers and schools in the same community, and thereby help strengthen the Nafa centers' function as a bridge program from nonformal to formal schooling (instead of creating a reverse tendency). In other words, it may have been advantageous to support both formal and nonformal schools in each target community (otherwise, most interviewees said that the geographic targeting of the project was adequate, although an extension of activities was asked for in most regions of project intervention).

Girls' networks (réseaux filles)

The project organized nine girls' networks, which helped organize 200 young mothers in the 14-18 age group to conduct income-generating activities. The girls received some training from the Nafa centers in embroidery, how to prepare soap, hairdressing, or dyeing. These training sessions were not part of the Nafa centers' usual 3-year curriculum, but were specifically organized to support these girls. The sessions were conducted during 30 days of training for embroidery, 15 days for soap making, and 3 weeks for the dyeing. After the training, the young mothers organized themselves in associations to sell their products. The project provided some assistance for them to purchase small basic materials (e.g., dyeing equipment). The activities were generally well received. However, many of the girls felt ostracized in their home communities (early pregnancy and being a single mother is frowned upon in traditional Guinean communities), and many of the girls had left to other cities. It was therefore difficult for the project to track the long-term impact of this activity.

Tutorat: The project also aimed at associating the young mothers with *mères modèles* (model mothers) who could help the girls in case of problems (especially if the girls were abandoned or did not have their family in the same community). Only about 70 of the girls were successfully connected to a model mother. This was due to the fact that some of the girls moved out of the community (this phenomenon was largely connected to the problem of stigma); others did not like the work requested by the model mother, and sometimes there were household money problems if the girl lived in the same house as the mother-model. In other cases, the problems were connected to the girls' wish to be free to come and go as they wanted. These young mothers were not well accepted in the communities (early pregnancy is frowned upon in Guinea) and in most cases, the fathers of the children were not known. According to the information received, the early childbearing of these mothers was generally not due to violence and/or rape, but rather to a lack of knowledge about childbearing. It should be noted that abortion is not allowed in Guinea.

The girls' networks is an unusual activity, and continued piloting of these or similar efforts should be considered since young mothers without any outside support are (i) likely to engage in WFCL to feed their children; and (ii) in turn, they may perpetuate WFCL in an intergenerational cycle of poverty since they will not have the resources to provide for adequate schooling and upbringing of their children.

APEAE management structures

The evaluator noted that APEAEs were generally composed of men, with the exception of one or two women in each association.¹⁶ Some international experiences (e.g., from Benin, Burkina Faso, and Mali) have shown that the setup of parallel women's associations (mothers associations/*association des mères*, or similar) have strengthened the APEAEs role (since these committees were generally closely associated to the APEAEs); has strengthened women's voices in the community; and has led to more interest for women's education. Moreover, it has strengthened the protection role of the APEAEs, since mothers are generally closer to the children than men—in the cultural context of West Africa.

Further, as noted in project documentation and by Save the Children staff, the training modules were exclusively offered to APEAEs, not to the district or regional APEAE management structures. Since APEAEs are government institutions in Guinea, they belong to a strictly defined management structure. With the project, paradoxically, the community APEAEs have better knowledge of APEAE-required functions and roles than the management structure of the APEAEs. This, in some cases, has created knowledge gaps and asymmetries that were subject to some criticism from the APEAE district and regional committees.

5.3 PARTNERSHIP AND COORDINATION

5.3.1 Challenges of Initiating Partnerships in Support of the Project

The CCLEE team has succeeded in sharing information and building relationships with other organizations working in the domain of child protection and combating child labor and child trafficking. For example, the USAID education team expressed their appreciation for the work of the project and said the project had contributed to their knowledge about child labor and trafficking in the country.

Also, the project works directly with a number of organizations, including CECOJE—a national youth organization structure that is successfully coordinating youth clubs set up and trained by CCLEE.

5.3.2 Challenges and Opportunities of Implementing Coordination with the Host Country Government

The evaluator was able to meet with representatives of three ministries during the course of the evaluation:

- Education

¹⁶ The fact that most APEAEs were men did not affect the project implementation negatively. However, the setup of mothers associations may have further strengthened project implementation, and it may also have strengthened women's situation in the community.

- Social Affairs, Women and Children

- Employment and the Civil Service.

All these representatives expressed support for the work of the project and for the CCLEE team. All appreciated the importance of the Central Consultative Committee put in place by CCLEE and the contribution that the project was making to improving formal and nonformal education opportunities. However, in the conversations there was an underlying understanding: In the current political situation, with the lack of available resources and any serious political leadership, the possibilities for effectively tackling issues related to child protection and education are severely curtailed.

The project team expressed some frustration concerning working with certain government agencies due to two factors: (i) frequent rotation of key government staff, and (ii) their degree of preoccupation with financial remuneration for any involvement in project activities. In spite of this, core partners, especially members of the consultative committees and interviewed civil servants met during the evaluation mission, seemed well informed and enthusiastic about project activities. Government officials at different levels made reference to Conventions 182 and 183; they were also generally quite aware of problems related to child labor and trafficking.

The CCC is primarily perceived by government officials as existing to support the CCLEE objectives through support of the project itself. While this presents no problems during the life of the project, if followed to its logical conclusion it would mean the disappearance of the CCC when the project comes to an end. If the CCC and the parallel organizations at the regional and district level are to meet their potential, they need to be perceived and to act as the beginning of a state national child protection network that can coordinate the work of all agencies concerned with related issues. Both CCLEE staff members and members of the CCC are now looking into the possible institutionalization of the committees to become national coordination committees for child labor and protection through education.

Representatives from the ministries of Social Affairs, Education, Employment, and Justice met with the evaluator in their capacity as members of the management committee of the Central Consultative Committee, and two of them traveled to Kankan for the stakeholders' meeting at the end of the evaluation. Representatives from the consultative committees have participated in all key project events, including the launch of the project, training activities, media events, and field visits. It would seem important that Save the Children can capitalize on this resource in new projects and also continue the work to institutionalize the committee as a national child protection committee with a specific cross-ministry and cross-organizational mandate (during a meeting with the CCC, it was suggested that this specific mandate should be linked to child protection through education).

5.3.3 Challenges in Working with Local NGOs and Other Organizations

As noted previously, the project is built on a *faire-faire* partnership structure. The initial bidding process generated some 70 proposals, of which five were selected to implement the project. This procedure ensured that only the best of a large number of proposals were selected. One problem with partnerships, however, is the asymmetric information between the principal (Save the Children) and the agent (the five local NGOs). In many West African *faire-faire* partnership programs, this has led to a substandard project with little effective monitoring. Save the Children has avoided this problem by keeping a very close relationship with the five NGOs; this can be demonstrated by the case of one of the NGOs responsible for the Boké and Conakry districts, which was not providing the services requested by Save the Children in a satisfactory manner (in particular, it did not follow the financial reporting requirements). Subsequently, the organization was changed and replaced with a more effective NGO that had initially not been selected through the bidding process. The project implementation pace and structure in the concerned regions did not appear to have been further delayed after the problem had been addressed. The *faire-faire* partnership procedures adopted by Save the Children therefore seem very adequate for this type of project setup.

The NGO partners were crucial to the success of the project, and Save the Children invested considerable time and resources to support and facilitate their work. This, combined with the commitment and competence of the NGOs themselves, resulted in exceptionally effective partnerships characterized by good communication and mutual respect, trust, and cooperation. Save the Children initially facilitated an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of each partner organization and helped them to develop a plan to enable capacity building and shared learning that made use of the competencies available within the group. NGO partners were very appreciative of the training received and emphasized the good relationship with Save the Children on several occasions during the evaluation. In general, the evaluator was impressed by the quality of the relationships between fieldworkers and communities, and by the degree to which the training offered by the project has been understood and assimilated by community groups.

5.4 MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

5.4.1 Management Strengths of This Project

The project's management structure, based on *faire-faire* partnerships with local NGOs, as indicated above, has generally been very good. In terms of budgeting and reporting, the project management team, consultative committees, and partner NGOs did not signal any specific problems or issues. In reporting, the consultative committees (CCP, CCD, and CCC) give the national context in terms of child labor, whereas Save the Children in coordination with the NGOs reports on project performance. Due to initial confusion about key indicators, some of the reporting has been weak (as identified by the midterm evaluation and by the project audit). However, at the time of the final evaluation, the project management structure, the partnering NGOs, as well as the budgeting and tracking of students seemed understood by the project team.

5.4.2 Management Areas That Could Be Improved

The midterm evaluation noted some challenges in Save the Children's management structure, the weak team-building skills of a former manager, and inaccuracies in reporting. The management of the organization and of the project has subsequently improved with the arrival of a new project manager. The final evaluation could not systematically verify the accuracy of the reporting, but (in view of the improved report format and better project administration) the evaluator believes that the reporting structure of the project has now improved. With the difficult internal transport in Guinea and the short time allocated to the evaluation, the evaluator spent only 3 days in the field and had no means to make a detailed verification of reporting accuracy. However, meetings with Nafa center personnel and school representatives systematically confirmed the accuracy of Save the Children's reporting, and the evaluator therefore has grounds to believe that the reporting is now of good quality and that it reflects the project implementation with accuracy.

One aspect of the management that can be improved, as noted earlier, is the reporting on the working status of the children, which is not corresponding to USDOL standards.

5.4.3 Leveraging Non-project Resources

The project has not been able to leverage additional funds to broaden CCLEE activities. However, partner NGOs have been trained in resource mobilization and have successfully managed to leverage funds for education and protection activities.

5.5 SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT

5.5.1 Strategies for Sustainability of Activities Beyond the Life of the Project

The project's strategy for sustainability focuses on capacity building through training and support for NGOs, community organizations (primarily APEAEs and Nafa management committees), teachers, and members of consultative committees. The training being offered is of high quality and is being successfully assimilated by the parties concerned. Moreover, certain training modules (e.g., training on resource mobilization) are inherently contributing to sustainability by assisting the organizations to become capable of searching for resources by themselves.

5.5.2 Adequacy of the Project's Initial Strategy for Sustainability

The initial strategy for sustainability has not changed since the start of the project. It is appropriate in that it aims to build the competence and capacity of existing organizations or those created during the life of the project. Whether it is adequate will depend on a variety of factors, many of which are beyond the control of the project. The challenge presented by the degree of poverty experienced by the vast majority of the population in Guinea means that significant numbers of children will continue to work rather than go to school. The political situation in the country and the resulting poor governance and inflation will inevitably have their effect on this.

Leaving aside these factors, improvements to child protection and education are likely to continue as long as APEAEs and Nafa management committees feel that their responsibility remains after the end of the project. This commitment depends on the degree to which they have taken ownership of project objectives and the activities they are involved in. In general, during the final evaluation, it was felt that the population “owned” the project, insomuch as the APEAEs and Nafa management committees were clearly committed to fulfilling their mandate. Also, the evaluator was impressed by the high level of community involvement the project had generated (e.g., elders and religious leaders). The community-focused and participative strategies of the project clearly had enhanced community ownership and sustainability.

5.5.3 Impact to Date

Individual beneficiaries (children, parents, teachers, and others)

The project has had a significant impact on the lives of the 4,800 children who have been enrolled in primary school or a Nafa center as a result of being registered as being at risk. Of the direct beneficiaries in Nafa centers, over 30 percent have transferred into formal education, and this will significantly change their prospects for the future.

The impact has also been felt by parents and community members—first and foremost those who are part of a management committee or APEAE and those whose children are now receiving education. Second, the impact of the project can be felt by all students in the schools, since (i) teachers have been trained in course and class planning, and the quality of education is therefore believed to have improved; (ii) APEAEs and Nafa management committees have been trained and are therefore improving the school management, with the result being that the education experience of each individual child is better; and (iii) the project has contributed to help the educational environment and improved infrastructure in the schools.

All interviewees underscored the positive impact of the project. One former Nafa student said:

“We were attending class without doing or learning anything, when the project came. The project reenergized the center—and helped us. After finishing the course, I opened a sewing workshop in town. Now I’m a member of the Nafa committee. When I heard that you [the evaluator] was coming, I made myself a new dress.”

There are some potential negative impacts of the project on those *not* being a direct beneficiary of the project: During the evaluation, some of the teachers and community leaders indicated that the children not receiving direct educational aid in the form of a school material kit had been jealous and for a while even disinterested in the classes. It was also reported that parents (of nonbeneficiary children) “had been very angry” and verbally abused the school management. The broad community involvement in the project helped overcome these possibly negative effects of the projects. In one community, for example, religious leaders said they had explained the reasons for the assistance in the mosque, to raise awareness on the issue and to reduce sentiments of jealousy.

There are two related and possibly unfavorable issues in terms of impact. USDOL and the project’s definition of direct beneficiaries (those receiving direct educational assistance) to a

certain extent clashes with the community's experience of the direct assistance. For the community and especially the children, the education kits constitute a gift (*cadeau*) they receive as an encouragement to go to school. Hence, they themselves, as well as their schoolmates do not always understand the underlying reason for the assistance. Secondly, when the reasons for the distribution are explained (in terms of poverty, orphanage, child labor, etc.), it must be questioned to which extent this discourse is disempowering for the beneficiary child, who is now labeled by the community as "vulnerable." Also, such labeling may lead to possible perverse effects of the projects. For example, in other West African countries, the evaluator has noted that certain families actively seek the label of "vulnerable" to attract assistance (or "gifts") from international projects. These questions obviously go beyond the scope of a simple evaluation—and are raised here only as potential issues that merit further investigation.

Partner organizations (local NGOs, community groups, schools, and others)

In terms of improved school management, APEAEs will be able to continue functioning much more effectively at the end of project than they did before the project arrived. It seems likely that this will also be true for child protection activities, including the continuous monitoring of children at risk, but this will also be influenced by the availability of formal and nonformal education opportunities. It is clear that APEAEs have understood the importance of education and protection, and now better understand their role within the community education system, not only as related to the project, but also as a community organization.

In the 10 communities where there are both primary schools and Nafa centers benefiting from the project, the APEAE and management committee work closely together. Girls' support networks link community organizations to local authorities and CCPs bring representatives of civil and municipal bodies together. These links are beginning to create wider awareness of child protection issues, and there is evidence of concerted action in particular cases. The project clearly had a positive impact in this area, as these links did not exist in the past. It is now important to ensure that they become an established part of local government and civil society collaboration.

The project has had an important impact on most of the revitalized Nafa centers; many of them were barely functioning before the start of the project and they are now virtually full and have two or three teachers each. The centers have skilled and functioning management committees and are providing a much needed service to their communities. The only problem is that there are not enough of them to meet demand.

In terms of demand, it should be noted that in communities where only Nafa centers received assistance, school authorities said that certain children wished to discontinue their schooling and instead transfer to the Nafa center (in which the children would receive "gifts" and in which they could learn vocational skills). Such transfer, however, has been refused:

"Secondary school children want to drop out and come to the Nafa center. This is a common request—but we refuse. It is well known that three girls had finished their Nafa education and have opened sewing workshops in town."

The example is noted here to demonstrate the visibility and impact of the project in the community, and also to which extent it may impact institutions not receiving aid. In the same vein, in one Nafa focus group interview, the interviewees noted that a Nafa teacher in a neighboring community had been so discouraged (*découragé*) by his failure to attract project funding that he became disinterested in his job and stopped teaching Nafa classes regularly:

“Parents regularly ask that the project extend activities toward other Nafa Centers. Other centers, again, are discouraged; one teacher (animateur) doesn’t care anymore (s’en fiche), and says he isn’t interested in the center any more. He’s going to the center in the morning, and then he leaves for town.”

A final issue on the possible effect of the project in non-assisted areas: The project has successfully campaigned for the transfer of teachers to the beneficiary schools and Nafa centers that were understaffed. However, it should be noted that the total number of teachers in the country remains the same, and that other schools or Nafa centers may perceive as unfair that project target schools and Nafa centers not only receive project support to function better, but also to a certain extent may put a strain on other schools’ resources. Again, these questions go beyond the scope of the evaluation—and are raised as potential issues that merit further investigation.

There is no doubt that NGO capacity to deal with child labor has been enhanced through the received training in child protection. All five NGO partners have developed a commitment to child protection and an understanding of the role that education can play, whereas previously they were more focused on education as an end in itself. The project has broadened their understanding of child development and children’s needs and developed their administrative and technical capabilities. Results have been consistent across geographic areas. One of the strengths of the project has been its choice of locally based NGOs with knowledge of the specificities of their regions.

Government and policy structures (in terms of system-wide change on education and child labor issues)

The establishment of the CCC, CCRs, and CCPs is a step toward a national child protection network bringing together the different ministries and agencies concerned. It remains to establish or reinforce links between community organizations on the ground with authorities at the district level so that community groups are formally tied into the national network.

5.5.4 Lessons Learned in Terms of Sustainability of Interventions

First, the project’s use of participatory approaches to generate community support to the project has helped to custom tailor the project to the stakeholders’ needs and thereby contributed to community ownership, which is necessary to make the project actions sustainable.

Second, the project’s systematic use of the module format of training efforts at all levels of project implementation has contributed to raise capacity at all levels of project intervention. This capacity-building effort has been very successful and is likely to lead to sustainability, inasmuch as the knowledge generated is long-lasting and contributes to behavioral change. Moreover, as

noted above, certain training modules (such as training on resource mobilization) are inherently contributing to sustainability by assisting the organizations to become capable of searching for resources by themselves.

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VI LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

The project's difficulties in understanding common indicators and reporting requirements might have been avoided by (i) a systematic translation of all project information into *good* French;¹⁷ and (ii) a more initial training by USDOL for key project staff in project reporting and other administrative requirements. Although the project participated in several annual grantee workshops that included extensive discussions on the indicators, received technical assistance during a USDOL site visit, and benefited from a USDOL-sponsored in-country workshop at the beginning of the cooperative agreement, it was still felt that more initial training from USDOL would have been beneficial for the project implementation.

In this evaluation's view, the project's use of participatory approaches, starting from an initial community participatory diagnostic to create a work plan for activities in the community, is an example of best practice that can be emulated in other projects. The project's participatory approach has helped to custom-tailor the project to the stakeholders' needs and ensure community ownership. It has also helped the project overcome a number of challenges, such as non-recipient children's jealousy of beneficiary children, and their initial non-understanding of selection criteria of the project. The involvement of community elders and religious leaders has been particularly positive in this regard. The use of participatory approaches is an example of a positive project design feature that had a positive impact at the implementation level, as well as for the ownership of the project, and thereby becoming a main factor for ensuring sustainability.

The project's use of learning modules is another example of best practice that can be used elsewhere. In particular, the evaluation noted the project's cooperation with local teacher training colleges to ensure that the modules targeted at teachers' training was of a sufficient high quality. Moreover, the subjects of the teacher training modules were established through participatory sessions in the beginning of the project implementation, thus ensuring that the module corresponded to the teachers' needs.

As for management, the projects' use of *faire-faire* partnerships with local NGOs is an example of best practice. Save the Children's implementation and management of these partnerships have avoided some of the most common problems noticed in partnerships of this type (as identified by New Institutional Economics' analysis): asymmetric information leading to moral hazard and opportunistic behavior by the agent (the NGO implementing partner).

The project's use of existing community organizations, in particular APEAEs and Nafa management committees, are examples of best practices insomuch as it is inherently helping the sustainability of the project—since these committees belong to national networks that will continue beyond the project. Likewise, the use of local NGOs as partners not only ensures that these organizations know the local area and can adapt the program to local realities, but also help build civil society.

¹⁷ Project staff noted that the translation of some core concepts into French had been difficult to understand.

Finally, the integrated nature of the project is an example of best practice and its work at multiple levels: both in a horizontal way through offering integrated community services promoting child protection, education, and health, but also through vertical interventions at community, district, regional, and central (policy) levels.

VII CONCLUSIONS

7.1 DESIGN

The CCLEE project design was to a large degree relevant and adapted to both needs and existing government efforts. The project was in large part designed on request by the government. Also, the design is a “mature” one that capitalizes on three former Save the Children projects in the region.

The particular strengths of the project design include—

- An *integrated* project design
- Use of *faire-faire* (partnership)
- Capacity building at all levels
- Use of participatory approaches
- Working at both *community* and *policy* levels.

The main weakness in the project design was its failure to address the poverty that is the daily reality for its target communities. A second weakness with the project design was connected to its own success: In raising awareness about the importance of schooling, the project generated community interest in education, thus creating a demand for education that exceeded the school places offered in the area.

7.2 IMPLEMENTATION

In general, the evaluation found that the project has adequately supported all the five Education Initiative goals. First, CCLEE has successfully raised awareness on the concept of exploitative child labor and on the need for education. It was felt that the awareness-raising messages were not only understood, but that they had also led to behavioral change. This achievement also underlines the importance of the use of participatory approaches by the project, which helped make the awareness-raising messages adequate and understandable to the communities. The involvement of community leaders such as elders and religious authorities in the awareness raising helped strengthen the impact of the awareness raising.

The project has contributed to awareness raising through its presence in national media, including the organization of eight regional fora on child-related issues as well as participating in 100 “roundtable sessions” during which radio journalists asked child-related questions from key project stakeholders. In terms of services, the project (*i*) provided school materials to beneficiary children at Nafa centers and primary schools; (*ii*) built capacity of teachers, Nafa management committees, and APEAEs; (*iii*) improved school infrastructure (latrines and water pumps) and provided equipment to Nafa centers (sewing machines, dyeing and embroidery equipment, etc.); and (*iv*) provided small grants to APEAEs and Nafa management committees to implement their action plan to strengthen community education services. Further, the project’s coordination

committees, especially the committee at central level (CCC) have ensured a high visibility of the project's mandate at policy level, and thereby contributed to heightened awareness on the necessity of policy work related to exploitative child labor and child trafficking. The CCC also helped support the application decrees for the enactment of ILO Conventions 138 and 182 (ratified in 2003).

The project has collected data and capitalized on lessons learned, both from this project and from former Save the Children initiatives in the region, as well as contributing to research by its use of *positive deviance* methods, investigating which positive characteristics leads to a healthy life. In establishing 11 training modules, the project conducted background research for the creation and write-up of these modules. The project successfully used *faire-faire* partnership methods for implementation and built capacity at all levels. Some of the participating NGOs already had obtained outside funding to strengthen their child protection activities, and repeatedly indicated that they would not have obtained such funding without the prior training received from CCLEE. Further, APEAE, Nafa committees, and youth organizations received training in resource mobilization (one of the 11 training modules covered this subject).

In analyzing the project document and budget, and comparing with activities in the field, it was found that the project purpose and outputs were generally adequate. The fluctuation of the Guinean Franc and inflation (the average inflation rate in 2005 was 30.9%) led to some difficulties in budgeting.

It was found that at the time of the final evaluation the project stakeholders had a clear understanding of USDOL common indicators of withdrawal and prevention, as well as of definitions of direct educational services. The Nafa management committees and APEAEs assisted by NGO project staff identify the direct beneficiaries and track their educational and working status. The tracking of the work status of children is largely informal and qualitative—and does not systematically and quantitatively track the children's work status and does not fully comply with the specific USDOL requirements of *regular* tracking of the work status of each child.

The project has successfully enrolled 4,800 children in a formal or nonformal education program (i.e., Nafa center) including 200 young mothers in a nonformal educational program (organized by the project through the Nafa centers, offered specifically to these young mothers). The project was quality-focused rather than driven by quantitative requirements and supported educational quality at various levels. First, the project indirectly supported educational quality in Nafa centers and schools by providing equipment and school supplies. Second, the project improved education quality through support to the APEAE and Nafa committees' work plans. Moreover, the project assisted 34 schools with construction and rehabilitation work of their latrines and water pumps (although it was found that many project schools and Nafa centers still do not have sufficient and adequate infrastructure).

In terms of implementation, many of the recommendations from the midterm evaluation were followed, and it was found that these recommendations were beneficial to the project's outcome. In particular, project staff underlined that the midterm evaluation was conducted as a learning and participatory exercise and enabled them take "a step back" and understand project challenges and strengths.

7.3 PARTNERSHIP AND COORDINATION

The CCLEE team succeeded in sharing information and building relationships with other organizations working in the domain of child protection and to combat child labor and child trafficking.

Core project partners, especially members of the project's consultative committees (CCC, CCR, and CCP) and interviewed civil servants met during the evaluation mission seemed well informed and enthusiastic about project activities. Representatives from the consultative committees have participated in all key project events, including the launch of the project, training activities, media events, and field visits. It would seem important that Save the Children can capitalize on this resource in new projects and also continue the work to institutionalize the committees as a national child protection coordination structure with a specific cross-ministry and cross-organizational mandate.

The *faire-faire* partnership with local NGOs adopted by Save the Children seems very adequate for this type of project setup. The NGO partners were crucial to the success of the project and Save the Children invested considerable time and resources to support and facilitate their work. This, combined with the commitment and competence of the NGOs themselves, resulted in exceptionally effective partnerships characterized by good communication and mutual respect, trust, and cooperation.

7.4 MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

As indicated above, the project's management structure, based on *faire-faire* partnerships with local NGOs, has generally been very good. Moreover, despite the fact that the final evaluation could not systematically verify the accuracy of the reporting, it is believed that the management and reporting structure of the project is now adequate. One aspect that can be improved is the reporting on the working status of the children, which is not corresponding to USDOL standards.

The project has not been able to leverage additional funds to broaden CCLEE activities. However, partner NGOs have been trained in resource mobilization and have successfully managed to leverage funds for education and protection activities.

7.5 SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT

The project's strategy for sustainability revolves around capacity building through training and support for NGOs, community organizations, teachers, and members of consultative committees. It has not changed since the start of the project and is appropriate in that it aims to build the competence and capacity of existing organizations or those created during the life of the project. During the final evaluation, it was felt that the population "owned" the project, and it was noted that the project had generated a high level of community involvement. The community-focused and participative strategies of the project clearly enhanced community ownership and sustainability.

The project has had a significant impact on the lives of the 4,800 children who have been enrolled in primary school or a Nafa center as a result of being registered as being at risk. The impact has been noted among parents and community members who are part of a management committee or APEAE and those whose children are now receiving education. The impact of the project can also be felt by all students in the schools because the quality of education is better, the management structure of the schools has been improved by the training of APEAE and Nafa management committees, and the project has contributed to improved infrastructure in 34 schools (mainly water and latrines).

In terms of improved school management, APEAEs will be able to continue functioning much more effectively at the end of project than they did before the project arrived. It seems likely that this will also be true for child protection activities, including the continuous monitoring of children at risk, but this will also be influenced by the availability of formal and nonformal education opportunities. It is clear that APEAEs have understood the issues and their role, not only within the project, but also as a community organization.

The project has had an important impact on most of the revitalized Nafa centers, in that many of them were barely functioning before the start of the project and they are now virtually full and have two or three teachers each. The centers have skilled and functioning management committees and are providing a much needed service to their communities.

Further, NGO capacity to deal with child labor has been enhanced through the training in child protection. All five NGO partners have developed a commitment to child protection and an understanding of the role that education can play. The establishment of the CCC, CCRs, and CCPs is a step toward a national child protection network bringing together the different ministries and agencies concerned.

VIII RECOMMENDATIONS

Note: These recommendations correspond partly to the request of Save the Children that the evaluation “address the gaps from the current project and help design new strategies/approaches for further interventions and/or projects in Guinea” (see the evaluation’s Terms of References in Annex 4).

8.1 DESIGN

Participatory Approaches. This project has demonstrated the positive outcomes related to the use of participatory approaches. It is recommended that new projects (either through USDOL recommendation/requirement and/or Save the Children design) systematically make use of participatory approaches in its design and implementation phases. It is believed that the use of such approaches will lead to better designed project, more community buy-in and ownership, and activities that correspond better to local needs.

Integrated Research Design. This project (and current development research) has demonstrated the positive effects of an integrated project design, which combines protection, literacy, health, and other services. It is recommended that new projects (either through USDOL recommendation and/or Save the Children design) investigate the feasibility of integrating activities where and when it is possible in terms of proper project implementation. In other words, the integration should not be so complicated (and cover so many areas) that the delivery becomes inefficient.

Non-project Beneficiaries. This project has demonstrated that non-project beneficiaries may not understand why direct services are being offered to target beneficiaries and target communities, and that this in some cases may cause sentiments of jealousy and lack of interest in education or in teaching. It is recommended that USDOL and project partners during the design phase of future projects investigate if there could be (and how to avoid) any possible negative impact of the project on non-target communities and non-project beneficiaries.

Child Trafficking: Focus on Trafficking Flows. The project design is focusing on non-migrant child labor. While this is a very valid purpose, child trafficking is also becoming a major issue in Guinea. It is recommended that future projects investigate the possibility of working on trafficking axes (departure areas, transport routes, and host areas) to reduce the trafficking problem.

8.2 IMPLEMENTATION

Creation of “Mothers’ Associations” to Complement the Work of APEAEs. The APEAEs are largely composed of men. It is recommended to test the creation of parallel structures, such as women’s associations (mothers’ associations/*association des mères*: AMEs, or similar ones) that can strengthen the APEAEs function and especially its protection role.

Training of District and Regional APEAE Managers. The training modules were exclusively offered to APEAEs, not to the district or regional APEAE management structures. It is

recommended to extend training to district and regional APEAE management structures to avoid knowledge gaps and asymmetries.

Creation of Study Areas or “Study Points” in Target Communities. To strengthen the monitoring of children’s activities (and to prevent WFCL, and/or child trafficking), it is recommended to investigate the creation of “study areas” in communities where high school or college students can help the younger students with their homework and revisions—and which can also facilitate the organization of work-play-learn activities during weekends and holidays. Such study areas (*points-étude*) have successfully been set up in other countries, and typically require very little materials or initial investment (a blackboard, a lamp, a mat to sit on, etc.).

Income-Generating Activities to Alleviate Poverty. The project was at times unsuccessful in preventing the children from exploitative work because of the poverty of the regions in which the project operate. It is recommended that the project explore the financing of income-generating activities and training to improve the sustainability of project activities and to ensure that children are effectively withdrawn from WFCL.

Child Trafficking: Focus on Trafficking Flows. As noted, CCLEE was created to address and to prevent abusive child labor in communities in Guinea. However, child trafficking is a growing concern in Guinea. The trafficking patterns are local, national, and international. Guinea is a transit country, a departure zone, and a host area. Upcoming protection projects may decide to work with this particular problem, in which case it should focus on trafficking flows; to avoid that, the trafficking routes are changed as a result of project intervention in a particular departure zone.

Awareness Raising for Child Labor Users. Protection work sometimes results in direct contact between projects and users of children’s services. This means that the language of the awareness-raising messages needs to be studied and specifically adapted to users of children’s services (for example, moralizing messages may be counterproductive; it may in some cases be more appropriate to try to sensitize employers of children in WFCL on the necessity of guaranteeing basic security measures for the children, and advocate for the gradual introduction of playtime and education in the children’s workday).

8.3 PARTNERSHIP AND COORDINATION

Institutionalization of the Coordination Committees. The project has successfully created and trained very dynamic coordination structures at all levels through the coordination committees. It is recommended to clarify the non-project mandate and terms of references of these committees and work with the aim of institutionalize them.

Coordination with UNICEF and Other Key Protection Agencies. The project has successfully built coordination structures, both through the coordination committees and through the NGO networks. However, cooperation with certain key institutions, such as UNICEF, has been limited. It is recommended to set up a more systematic coordination structure with a few key agencies in the domain of protection to ensure that activities are not duplicated; it is also recommended to capitalize on each other’s experience (for example, the training modules developed by the project could be shared with partners).

8.4 MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

Use of Faire-Faire Partnerships for Project Management. The *faire-faire* partnership with local NGOs adopted by Save the Children was very adequate for this type of project setup. The NGO partners were crucial to the success of the project. It is recommended that Save the Children and USDOL try to use similar structures for implementation of other projects in Guinea and internationally. The *faire-faire* structure not only ensures that local associations with knowledge of the cultural and social environment implement adequate services, but it also helps build civil society.

Faire-Faire Partnerships and Procedures Manual. This project has demonstrated some very good outcomes in the use of *faire-faire* partnerships. It is recommended to make continuous use of the *faire-faire* modalities and procedures established by this project and in particular the monitoring procedures to avoid asymmetric information related problems leading to moral hazard. If the project is expanded, the selection and implementation procedures should be regulated by a precise procedure manual (World Bank established procedures manuals for *faire-faire* partnerships for literacy service delivery in Guinea or in Senegal could be advantageously used for comparison).

Translation, Understanding of Common Indicators and Reporting Requirements. It is recommended that all relevant project documents are systematically translated into French at the project's beginning. Although USDOL requires that the project director be fluent in English, it would be valuable if USDOL could develop training materials in French and conduct an initial training session for key project staff (in French) to explain USDOL definitions, indicators, administrative requirements, as well as tracking and reporting requirements.

Monitoring of Working Children. The monitoring of working children is not done systematically as required by USDOL standards. The project should develop an easy and straightforward work-monitoring tool that APEAEs (and/or possibly AMEs) could use in the monitoring of the children's work status.

Avoid a Simplistic Definition of "Direct Services." The services offered need to be well designed and they need to take into consideration both the stakeholders' poverty situation and educational needs. To adapt the services to the actual needs of each group of beneficiaries, it is necessary to use participatory approaches involving the whole community in the project planning process. New projects need to avoid a simplistic definition of direct educational services; the distribution of school supplies ("gifts") does not always protect from child trafficking and from exploitive child work. In some cases, the follow-up from parents and APEAEs, awareness raising, and distribution of school supplies may provide a reasonable protection of children (as it seem to be the case in many communities covered by this project), but new projects in particular should investigate the combined effect of all the services given to the beneficiary families. It would seem important to avoid a situation noted by a project stakeholder in Guinea:

"The families are even poorer now that we have withdrawn their children from WFCL."

8.5 SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT

Exit Strategy. The exit strategy of the project is centered on the transfer of capacities to local institutions. It is recommended that the project develop a very clear exit strategy and, for future projects, evaluate the possibility of integrating income-generation activities for poor people to compensate the opportunity costs lost when children are withdrawn from work.

Impact on Those Not Beneficiating from the Project. The project may have had a negative impact on those *not* being a direct beneficiary of the project: children not receiving direct educational aid in the form of a kit of school materials or teachers that had failed to obtain aid. It is recommended that future projects use participative research methods to identify and minimize possible negative effects of the project. In particular, such research could focus on (i) the effects of the project among non-recipients; and (ii) the possible effect of the discourse of the project on the beneficiaries, and especially whether the project classification may become disempowering for the beneficiary child, who is now labeled as “vulnerable.”