

FUNDED BY THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

# Independent Final Evaluation of the Brighter Futures Program: Combating Child Labor Through Education in Nepal, Phase II

World Education

Cooperative Agreement Number: E-9-K-5-0046



2009

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This report describes in detail the final evaluation, conducted during March and April 2009, of Phase II of the Brighter Futures Program in Nepal. The report was prepared by ICF Macro, according to agreements specified in its contract with the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT). The evaluation of the Brighter Futures II project in Nepal was conducted and documented by Asmita Naik, an independent evaluator in collaboration with USDOL/OCFT staff, the Brighter Futures II project team, and stakeholders in Thailand. ICF Macro would like to express sincere thanks to all parties involved in this evaluation: the independent evaluator, World Education and its partners, and U.S. Department of Labor.



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

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AIN	Association of International NGOs in Nepal
BFI/BFII	Brighter Futures Program Phase I/Brighter Futures Program Phase II
CAAFAG	Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups
CAR	Children at Risk
CMC	Class Management Committee
EI	Education Initiative
EMIS	Education Management Information System
GATE	Girls Access to Education
GON	Government of Nepal
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPEC	International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NFE	Nonformal Education
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
QERP	Quality Education Resource Package
SEEP	Self-employment Economic Education Package
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMC	School Management Committee
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
VDC	Village Development Committee
VT	Vocational Training
WE	World Education
WFCL	Worst Forms of Child Labor
WTS	Welcome to School

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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This report is an evaluation of Phase II of the Brighter Futures Program (BFII) in Nepal, which aims to withdraw and prevent children from entering into exploitive child labor by expanding access to, and improving the quality of, basic education. The project is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) through a four-year cooperative agreement worth US\$3,845,000 with the grantee, World Education (WE).

### **Project Description**

The project, which runs from September 30, 2005 to September 30, 2009, has been established in 28 of 75 districts in Nepal and works with children from 10 different child labor sectors—carpet factories, transportation, domestic service, brick factories, entertainment, recycling, portering, and mining, as well as children associated with armed forces and armed groups (CAAFAG) and children at risk. BFII has three categories of intervention: nonformal education (NFE), formal education, and vocational education. Some activities under these three headings are direct education classes and training for children; indirect activities, such as parental support through microfinance and the development of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs); and policy-level work (in partnership with the government and the United Nations Children’s Fund [UNICEF]) to improve the quality of formal education through activities such as the development of teacher training materials, school enrollment campaigns, and education planning and monitoring.

### **Evaluation Methodology**

This evaluation was carried out in the first half of 2009 and involved a two-week country visit from March 23 to April 6, 2009. The project was assessed using the following evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. Evaluation methodology included document review, focus group discussions, interviews, observation, and stakeholder meetings. The evaluator saw a fair sample of WE’s work in the 13 days available for the country visit and was able to cover 5 of the 28 districts in which the project is working, 9 of 10 child labor sectors (all except the brick sector), and all three intervention areas. The evaluator met with 26 of 46 local partners, 183 beneficiaries (including children, parents, community members, and teachers), as well as other stakeholders, such as local and central government officials and representatives from international organizations.

### **Principal Findings**

BFII shows demonstrable impacts on the problem of child labor in Nepal. Project data show that it has succeeded in withdrawing 19,634 children from the worst forms of child labor (WFCL), prevented 14,585 children at risk from entering into WFCL, and provided services to 72,241 indirect beneficiaries. It has achieved this by providing specialized education and training interventions, which help children out of hazardous labor situations and into the school system or mainstream work. The project’s NFE courses have received high recognition at the national level, and its vocational education courses, especially those that combine training with self-employment, offer new directions to adolescents who may not have other prospects. School scholarships help give younger children a foothold in mainstream schools.

BFII's education services are leading to direct and tangible changes for children involved in WFCL. Child beneficiaries were unanimous and unequivocal that the project had improved their lives. At another level, BFII is working with the government and UNICEF to increase school enrollment through enrollment campaigns, improving educational quality through teacher training materials, reforming school governance, and improving education planning. These will have an important—if unquantifiable and indirect—effect on diminishing child labor in Nepal in the long term. It is worth noting that these achievements have been made against a difficult backdrop of political instability and economic decline. This has been a fallow period in terms of action on child labor by the Government of Nepal (GON) and mandated United Nations agencies, namely the International Labour Organization's International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), and the project has functioned without complementary inputs.

The project's interventions include a number of emerging best practices worthy of further development and documentation. Some interesting lessons emerging in this phase are—

- NFE is a particularly effective way of engaging children who may be difficult to reach or not in school. NFE is the largest service delivered by BFII. The project has developed a flexible modular approach, which seems to be the key to its success as the approach enables education materials to be adapted to the needs of different children, even within the same classroom.
- PTAs are a good way of building local ownership and improving education quality. The PTAs visited by the evaluator had made inventive and energetic efforts to improve transparency, to generate income for school improvements, and to foster a sense of common purpose among teachers and parents.
- Combining vocational training with self-employment can help children in WFCL build sustainable futures for themselves. The Self-Employment Economic Education Package (SEEP), part of the BFII vocational education portfolio, combines vocational education with the opportunity of self-employment for former child laborers, thus circumventing the main drawback of standard vocational programs, which tend to rely on finding regular employment after training.
- National-level education policy provides an important framework for tackling child labor issues. The project has contributed to various initiatives in this area alongside the government, UNICEF, and other organizations which have the potential to be best practices in combating child labor. The Welcome to School (WTS) campaign is a national annual school enrollment campaign consisting of awareness-raising activities such as publicity leaflets and posters, street theatre, and door-to-door recruitment. These activities have led to increased enrollment year after year among certain targeted groups and girls, as well as the improved quality of education in some districts. The Quality Education Resource Packages are a series of teacher training materials aimed at covering a cross-section of issues in a flexible and accessible way for teachers with little or no formal teacher training.

This report finds that the project has been effective in providing innovative and professional education services and in meeting its original targets. Its effectiveness in those terms is not in question. The issue, rather, is whether the project could have multiplied its effect and delivered its services in a more holistic, sustainable way with wider impacts. Some aspects of project implementation merit attention:

- Beneficiary selection was not always as precise as might be expected. Those receiving support were sometimes not eligible under USDOL criteria (e.g., not in WFCL or not children under age 18). These findings were made through focus group discussions and by testing a random sample of beneficiaries against the project database. Despite inaccuracies, the evaluation accepts that this has not affected the project's ability to meet its original targets for direct beneficiaries since these are substantially exceeded (by over 4,000), allowing considerable room for maneuver. In addition, the project deserves credit for having a comprehensive beneficiary database system as part of its system of beneficiary identification and tracking. Nonetheless, there is room for improvement in beneficiary selection methodology, training on child labor definitions, and monitoring by project staff.
- Services were not always delivered in the most complete or optimum way. The project could not provide follow-up or secondary services, had to limit the duration and access to modular classes and learning centers, and was unable to expand pilot efforts. Project activities were not always integrated; education/training courses, school scholarships, family support, and PTA development were sometimes carried out in fragmented ways in different locations.
- The project's activities were effective interventions in their own right, but they did not fully maximize links with child labor. The best PTAs are thriving centers of school improvement and parental engagement, but do not necessarily focus on the issue of child labor. Parents are enthusiastic about the income-generation opportunities provided through family support and the chances for education offered through school scholarships, but they do not always equate project support with a personal responsibility to keep their own children out of WFCL. The project's support to government education policy is well regarded, but opportunities to integrate child labor more explicitly into these initiatives were sometimes missed. Social mobilization activities appear limited in terms of their scope and durability, and wider sustainable community mobilization efforts did not take off until 2008, with the community-level child protection committees in the CAAFAG sector only.

The project's direct activities with children in WFCL have been effective, but there is an overall sense that the project could have made more of itself in other ways.

The project was constrained by the wide context and budget limitations. High inflation and the devaluation of the dollar meant that the project had fewer funds in real terms than it anticipated. An analysis of costs per head shows that WE was able to deliver tailored education services to individual children at a remarkably low cost and within these constraints. However, in addition to external factors, internal planning and management decisions also partly account for some issues in project implementation:

- Although the project had less money in real terms, it exceeded its original target by several thousand (both direct and indirect beneficiaries). This suggests that the same funds could have been used to provide a more effectively targeted and rounded service to a smaller number of beneficiaries.
- The scope of the project is very wide in terms of geography, target groups, and interventions. It is implemented in 28 of 75 districts in Nepal, in some very remote and geographically dispersed areas. The project covers children in 10 sectors, and seeks to provide a wide range of specialized services to 110,000 direct and indirect beneficiaries through 46 partners. The choices of where to work and what to focus on are not the decision of WE alone but also the result of USDOL preferences and GON requirements. Nonetheless, monitoring a project of this scale is a challenge for a staff team of 26. Despite their personal dedication and expertise in education, they cannot realistically plan, guide, and monitor partner activities to the desired level.
- Closer relations with other international implementing agencies would have been one way of responding to these widespread needs and facilitating the delivery of more holistic, rounded packages of beneficiary services. Although WE is engaging with other international agencies at some levels, one-to-one relations with other international non-governmental organizations specifically could be stronger.
- A greater emphasis on awareness-raising, advocacy, and empowerment at all levels (family, community, and government) would have fostered greater sustainability. The skills and learning acquired by individual children should endure, but the support of parents and communities is needed to ensure that these and other children stay out of WFCL. An approach that built up the capacity of families, communities, and government authorities to deal with the issue of WFCL would have better helped sustain the impacts of the project. In a poor developing country like Nepal, there is inevitably a limit to what responsibilities local and national actors can absorb, and external support will continue to be necessary. Nonetheless, the evaluator heard of examples showing that families, communities, and the government are ready to assume more responsibilities than the project has challenged them to do.

When assessed against its own objectives,<sup>1</sup> the project has made considerable progress with regards to some aspects, but not all. The project has fully met Objectives 2 and 3 related to improving the provision of educational services for children in WFCL, but its aim to mobilize parents, communities, and the government on WFCL has been less successful. The four goals of the USDOL's Child Labor Education Initiative (EI) are to—

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<sup>1</sup> BFII objectives are (1) greater parental and community participation in formal, nonformal, and vocational education for children removed from WFCL and children at risk of WFCL; (2) improved quality, relevance, and access to educational programs for children withdrawn from or at risk of entering into WFCL; (3) reduced barriers to the success of children withdrawn from or at risk of entering into WFCL in formal and alternative school systems; and (4) national education policy dialogue reflecting the needs of children engaged in WFCL and children at risk of becoming child laborers.

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

In assessing the project's achievements of the EI goals, the project has served the first two goals related to strengthening the importance of education and education systems very well; Goal 3 is partly addressed, as the project has strengthened policies on education but not those on child labor; and Goal 4, related to sustainability, is addressed at the education policy level but not at other levels.

In conclusion, the project has provided very real and tangible benefits to thousands of children in WFCL and needs to consolidate this achievement in its final months by putting measures in place to ensure that these impacts last. The issues that have arisen in this phase of the project largely seem to arise from the project being overstretched in terms of the geographic, sectoral coverage, and partnership management. A future phase of this project would benefit from taking a more concentrated geographical approach so that the project can deliver services/interventions in a more integrated way and work with other organizations to deliver a more holistic package for beneficiaries. Such an approach would also make the management task easier and enable tighter coordination and strategic oversight of the work being done. In addition, a stronger focus on family/community-level mobilization and advocacy toward government and political leaders would help foster greater sustainability. It's worth noting that the midterm evaluation reminded the project that it was well ahead of its targets in 2007 and advised a focus on strengthening the impact and sustainability of interventions for existing beneficiaries. The final evaluation finds that these aspects continue to be of concern.

## **Principal Recommendations**

The detailed findings arising from this evaluation cannot be adequately captured in a short executive summary, and readers are encouraged to review the full report for the full list of conclusions and recommendations. The final section of this report (Section IV) acts as a quick reference guide and provides conclusions and recommendations on all key issues. The executive summary highlights a few points of immediate relevance to stakeholders.

### ***USDOL***

- USDOL may wish to extend funding for a further phase of the Brighter Futures Project. Nepal still has high levels of child labor and WE is well placed to address this problem. It has a strong expertise in the delivery of education services and a solid reputation in providing NFE interventions, which are shown to work for children in WFCL. The project design, implementation, and management structure requires some revision to address the issues arising in this report and in order to ensure that a potential future phase can have optimum effect. In addition, USDOL may want to consider funding a complementary (rather than joint) program

involving organizations with different expertise and mandates so that the problem of child labor in Nepal can be tackled in a more holistic way.

## **WE**

- WE should pay immediate attention to the following matters that need to be addressed before the project ends:
  - The project should work with partners to ensure that measures are in place to maintain school scholarship funds for individual children to whom the project has made a commitment. This may involve seeking funds from elsewhere—district authorities, Village Development Committees, and other funders; having partners set up their own funds or income-generation activities; or ensuring that parents in family support programs understand their obligation to use increased income to pay for school costs.
  - Given that some age-related inaccuracies in the database were identified by the evaluation, the project should review its statistics for withdrawn from WFCL and, to the extent possible, make amendments to arrive at a more accurate final figure for submission to USDOL. The report proposes a tidying up of the database as the project closes and not a major review of any kind; it suggests that staff examine the database itself to remove the specific beneficiaries explicitly identified as being overage and carry out further verification during field visits, where feasible. As the project has substantially exceeded its targets for WFCL by approximately 4,000, this would not adversely affect the ability of the project to meet its commitments.
  - Staff should work more closely with partners in the final months to educate and mobilize existing PTAs on child labor issues and to encourage them to continue providing support to current beneficiaries and identify other vulnerable children in the future.
  - Staff and partners should make further efforts to ensure that SEEP/Vocational Training beneficiaries supported by the project are self-sufficient and able to stand on their own feet before the project ends.
  - Staff and partners need to work closely with family support groups in the final months to educate them about child labor and to embed a greater sense of personal responsibility for keeping their own children and other children in the community out of WFCL.
  - The project's knowledge and tools on NFE should be written up as a best practice suitable for global dissemination. Other potential best practices require further refinement and validation before they are disseminated—WTS and PTAs need to strengthen their explicit links to child labor, and the beneficiary database needs to better address the issues of data quality and software.

- WE and other actors in the field of child labor should take account of the conclusions and recommendations in this report in any future child labor projects. In particular, the project design should allow for an integrated and geographically concentrated approach:
  - Organizations should ensure that their own activities are fully integrated—education interventions should take place in contexts where other project activities such as PTAs and family support are also being carried out.
  - Organizations should work with local partners and other international organizations (both donors and implementers) and government authorities for complementary inputs in order to deliver a more holistic package to beneficiaries. These will be services that the organization itself is not specialized in delivering but that are needed by beneficiaries.
  - The design should take into account the need to build family and community ownership and government responsibility. This means situating education interventions alongside community mobilization activities and political advocacy. Ideally, these interventions should be carried out in collaboration with other actors.

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# **I PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

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## **1.1 USDOL CHILD LABOR INITIATIVES**

The project is funded as part of the U.S. Department of Labor's (USDOL) efforts to combat exploitive child labor in more than 80 countries around the world. Since 1995, the U.S. Congress has appropriated over US\$663 million to USDOL for efforts to combat exploitive child labor internationally. The Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking manages these interventions. Funds for the Phase II of the Brighter Futures Program (BFII) come through the Child Labor Education Initiative (EI), which has provided US\$230 million since 2001 to projects implemented by a wide range of international and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) aiming to eliminate the worst forms of child labor (WFCL) through the provision of education opportunities. EI projects<sup>2</sup> are designed to ensure that children in areas with a high incidence of child labor are withdrawn from that labor and integrated into educational settings, and that they persist in their education once enrolled. In parallel, the program seeks to avert at-risk children from leaving school and entering into child labor. The EI is based on the notion that the elimination of exploitive child labor depends, to a large extent, on improving accessibility, quality, and relevance of education; without this, children withdrawn/prevented from child labor may not have viable alternatives and could resort to other forms of hazardous work. Further details about USDOL child labor initiatives can be found in the terms of reference in Annex A.

## **1.2 PROJECT BACKGROUND**

Since 1997, USDOL has provided approximately US\$17 million to combating exploitive child labor in Nepal. These grants have been used to support the Government of Nepal's (GON) timebound program through support to the International Labour Organization's (ILO) International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) and specific sectoral programs to formulate legislation and policies in Nepal related to child labor, raise awareness of WFCL, and provide direct assistance to children and families to withdraw children from exploitive labor and prevent them from entering into such forms. GON's legislative and policy framework includes the ratification of relevant international instruments and the development of national plans on the eradication of child labor.

USDOL has granted US\$3,845,000 to World Education (WE) for the implementation of BFII: Combating Child Labor Through Education in Nepal. This project is a follow-up to Phase I of the project (BFI), a four-year project implemented by WE from April 2002 to March 2006. WE received US\$3.5 million from USDOL on September 30, 2005 for BFII through a cooperative agreement; this was supplemented on August 7, 2007 by an additional cost increase of US\$345,000 to expand sectors to include children associated with armed forces and armed conflict (CAAFAG).

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<sup>2</sup> The four goals of USDOL EI projects are to (1) raise awareness on the importance of education for all children and mobilize a wide array of actors to improve and expand education infrastructures; (2) strengthen formal and transitional education systems that encourage working children and those at risk of working to attend schools; (3) strengthen national institutions and policies on education and child labor; and (4) ensure the long-term sustainability of these factors.

The goals and objectives of BFII are—

***Goal:***

To reduce the worst forms of child labor in Nepal.

***Development Objective:***

To reduce the worst forms of child labor in Nepal through the following four immediate objectives:

- Greater parental and community participation in formal, nonformal, and vocational education for children removed from WFCL and children at risk of becoming involved in WFCL.
- Improved quality, relevance, and access to educational programs for children withdrawn from or at risk of WFCL.
- Reduced barriers to the success of children withdrawn from or at risk of WFCL in formal and alternative school systems.
- National education policy dialogue reflecting the needs of children engaged in WFCL and children at risk of becoming child laborers.

***Targets:***

The project targeted 15,400 children for withdrawal and 15,200 children for prevention from WFCL in 28 districts (see Annex B) in Nepal. The project works with 10 target sectors: portering, recycling, domestic service, carpet factories, mines, brick factories, transportation, entertainment, CAAFAG, and Children at Risk (CAR). Table 1 shows the total targets for BFII.

**Table 1: BFII Targets**

<b>Sectors</b>	<b>BFII (28 Districts)</b>
1. Child domestics	7,000
2. Child porters	2,500
3. Carpet factories	1,500
4. Brick factories (new sector for BFII)	1,500
5. Mining/quarry	800
6. Entertainment (former trafficking victims)	800
7. Recycling/rag-picking	500
8. Transportation (new sector for BFII)	400
9. CAAFAG* (400 WFCL, plus 200 CARs already added to totals)	400
10. Bonded child laborers (crosscutting; no specific BFII targets)	-
<b>Total WFCL</b>	<b>15,400*</b>
Children at risk (CAR) (Prevented)	15,200*
<b>Total Direct Beneficiaries</b>	<b>30,600<sup>3</sup></b>
BFI children receiving continued support	5,000
<b>Total Direct Beneficiaries</b>	<b>70,000</b>

***Intended Project Outputs:***

- Increase parental and community participation in the governance and management of educational programs.
- Improve access to relevant and quality educational programs.
- Reduce barriers including gender, caste, and religious discrimination, as well as those that are financial and work-related.
- Initiate national education policy dialogue and programs that reflect the needs of children working in exploitive forms of child labor or children at risk of becoming involved in child labor.

<sup>3</sup> Direct beneficiaries are defined by USDOL as children who are withdrawn or prevented from entering exploitive child labor, particularly its worst forms. Children withdrawn from exploitive work are those children that were found working and no longer work as a result of project intervention. This category also includes those children that were engaged in exploitive work and, as a result of a project intervention, now work shorter hours under safer conditions. Children prevented from entering work are defined as those children that are either siblings of former child laborers or children living in areas with a high incidence of exploitive child labor.

***Interventions:***

Objectives and outputs are achieved through three main interventions, which encompass a variety of direct and indirect activities:

- Nonformal education (NFE): NFE classes, modular NFE, Girl's Access to Education (GATE), and learning centers.
- Formal education:
  - School scholarships for children.
  - Parent mobilization through Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), Welcome to School (WTS) enrollment campaigns, child-friendly teaching learning, and income generation to support improvements.
  - Quality education partnership with the government and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) involving the development of Quality Education Resource Packages (QERP), training for government and NGO staff, WTS national enrollment campaign, supporting district planning through the Education Management Information System (EMIS) and School Improvement Plans (SIP), mainstreaming *madrassas*, and working with schools as zones of peace.
- Vocational education: Self-employment Economic Education Program (SEEP), Occupation Specific Vocational Training; apprenticeships; agroforestry interventions; and family support (including microfinance and income generation).

Annex C provides a table of project activities broken down by target age groups.

## II EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

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### 2.1 EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

The evaluation was carried out in accordance with USDOL cooperative agreements for all EI projects, which stipulate that independent midterm and final evaluations must be performed. Accordingly, this EI project, which began in September 2005, underwent a midterm evaluation in 2007 and then a final evaluation in 2009. The final evaluation assesses the achievements of the project in reaching its targets and objectives as outlined in the cooperative agreement taking into account issues of project design, strategy, implementation, management, lessons learned, replicability, and recommendations for current and future action. Its full purpose and specific evaluation questions are set out in the evaluation terms of reference (Annex A). The project was assessed according to the following criteria:

- **Relevance** of the project to the cultural, economic, and political context in the country, as well as the extent to which it is suited to the priorities and policies of the host country government and USDOL.
- **Effectiveness**, or the extent to which the project has reached its objectives, and the effectiveness of project activities in contributing toward those objectives.
- **Efficiency**, or an analysis as to whether the strategies employed by the project were efficient in terms of the resources used (inputs) as compared with its qualitative and quantitative impact (outputs).
- **Impact** on the target population (to the extent possible). The evaluation should assess the positive and negative changes produced by the project—intended and unintended, direct and indirect, as well as any changes in the social and economic environment in the country—as reported by respondents.
- **Sustainability**, or whether the project has taken steps to ensure the continuation of project activities after completion, including sources of funding and partnerships with other organizations and/or the government, and to identify areas where this may be strengthened.

### 2.2 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was carried out between March and June 2009 by independent consultant Asmita Naik, with the assistance of local interpreter Milan Adhikary. The evaluation methodology comprised document review, interviews, focus group discussions, observations, and stakeholder meetings. The methods used were largely qualitative but also included an analysis of preexisting quantitative data collected by the project. A preparatory desk review was carried out from the evaluator's home base. An evaluation instrument was developed to help structure interviews and focus group discussions (Annex D). This was followed by a country visit that took place between March 23 and April 6, 2009 involving meetings in Kathmandu and in field locations outside the capital (Pokhara and Nepalgunj). The terms of reference (Annex A) includes a methodology

piece developed by the evaluator, which should be referred to for further details, but an overview of methods used is as follows:

- **Document review** was performed of a range of internal and external documents (Annex E).
- **Interviews** were conducted with a variety of project stakeholders, including USDOL, WE staff, implementing partner staff, government officials at both local and national levels, representatives of other international organizations and civil society groups, and beneficiary populations (Annex F).
- **Focus groups** were an important feature of the evaluation and the primary methodology for soliciting information from project beneficiaries, such as children, parents and other family members, community members, and teaching staff.
- **Observation** took place opportunistically during visits to project sites where it was possible see at firsthand the situation of children, families, schools, and communities.
- **Stakeholder meetings** were held with WE staff, partner staff, beneficiaries and community members, and government/international organization representatives. Three meetings were held (two at district level and one at national level). Annex G provides the agenda and list of participants for each of these meetings.

The country visit lasted 13 days, and was composed of four days of meetings in the capital, Kathmandu, with staff and national/international counterparts followed by a nine-day field visit. Annex H provides the evaluation itinerary. The evaluation covered the following aspects of BFII:

- **Geographical scope:** 5 of the 28 districts in Kathmandu Valley, Pokhara, and Nepalgunj.
- **Sectors:** 9 of the 10 sectors. All sectors—carpet factories, transportation, domestic service, entertainment, recycling, portering, CAAFAG, mining, and CAR) were covered except the brick factories.
- **Partners:** 26 of the 46 local partners.
- **Beneficiaries:** 183 beneficiaries including children, parents, community members, and teachers. The evaluator asked the project to select representative samples of beneficiaries for focus group discussions on the basis of gender, ethnicity, age, caste, disability, and targeted groups. Overall, the evaluator met a good representation of gender, target groups, and castes/ethnicities. Child beneficiaries tended toward the older age range as new younger beneficiaries requiring long-term support have not been taken on in the final stages of the project. Most beneficiaries were children in WFCL and a limited number from CAR. Disability was not a particular focus.
- **Other stakeholders:** a selection of local and central government officials, and representatives from two international organizations.

- ***Areas of intervention:*** nonformal education, formal education, and vocational education. All three intervention areas were covered. Actual classes were over in most cases, but the evaluator met beneficiaries of most types of direct activities (NFE, scholarships, SEEP, vocational training, agroforestry, income generation, and bridging classes—but not open learning centers, coaching, or apprenticeships). Meetings were also held with stakeholders involved in all indirect activities—policy support (QERP, PTAs) and family support.

Given that the project covers a very wide range of partners, locations, interventions, and sectors, the evaluation visit achieved a fair coverage of the project's work in the limited time available and was able to reach conclusions of general application. The original intention was to supplement these methods with telephone/e-mail interviews with randomly selected local partners and a follow-up field visit by the local consultant. This was not possible in the end because of changes in the evaluation team, but it was not a limitation as the evaluator was able to access a sufficient range of independent perspectives without using these methods. Confidentiality was safeguarded in all meetings to enable respondents to express themselves freely. WE/partner staff did not participate in interviews and focus groups with beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

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## **III FINDINGS**

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### **3.1 RELEVANCE**

This section of the report presents findings on how relevant the project intervention is to the context in Nepal, whether it is justified by needs on the ground, what other actions are taking place and how BFII fits with this wider picture, and what challenges have impeded the work on child labor.

#### **3.1.1 Prevalence of Child Labor**

Nepal has one of the highest rates of child labor in the world. Measures to address this problem in recent years have included government activities, such as the development of a National Master Plan on Child Labor in 2000, the ILO-IPEC Timebound Program and other initiatives, the WE Brighter Futures Program (Phases I and II), and other projects by local and international organizations. These actions have resulted in a reduction of child labor. Estimates of 2.8 million working children in Nepal cited in the National Master Plan were revised to 1.8 million by the 2004 Labor Force Survey. Statistics from 2002 state that 127,000 children are estimated to be in WFCL. Data from the Brighter Futures Program confirms the following trends—

- Fewer young children, under age 12, are being identified in the worst conditions.
- Fewer children are in extreme work conditions.
- More children are attending school regularly—6.7 million children are now in school; out-of-school numbers continue to decline.
- There is delayed entry of children into the workforce.

Sectors experiencing the greatest reduction are carpet factories (child labor is said to be minimal) and domestic work, with some reductions in portering, mining, and brick factories. Some progress is being made in the recycling and transportation sectors. The entertainment sector remains a challenge. While significant progress is being made in some sectors, others, such as the zari industry (embroidered saris) and internal trafficking for sexual exploitation, are growing fast.

Although there are signs of progress in combating child labor, and WFCL in particular, significant numbers of children still need to be withdrawn. BFI, BFII, and the ILO-IPEC Timebound Program together have removed less than half of the children estimated to be in WFCL (57,000 out of a conservative estimate of 127,000). Prevalence levels still remain high, and the project intervention remains justified.

### 3.1.2 National Response

Recent years have been something of a fallow period in efforts to address WFCL, and several critical gaps remain in efforts to eliminate child labor in Nepal. Nepal has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), ILO Conventions 182 (on WFCL) and 138 (on the minimum age for work), and adopted a child labor Master Plan, which, in summary, prohibits all labor for children under 14 years, all hazardous forms of labor for those under 16 years, and all WFCL for those under 18 years. However, it has fallen behind in meeting its targets to eliminate WFCL by 2009 and all forms of child labor by 2014.

The main responsibility for addressing child labor lies with the Ministry of Labor and Transport Management, which has district-level labor officers. The Ministry's priorities have been with other issues in recent years, such as labor migration. The Ministry of Education also has some responsibilities in this area, and its policies—increasing school enrollment, increasing access to education (the government is introducing free and compulsory education up to age 13 as of April 2009), and improving the quality of education—have an important indirect effect on the elimination of child labor. The Ministry of Women, Children, and Social Welfare has a role in this issue, but the degree to which district officials are active on child labor varies from place to place. State services for child protection need strengthening overall and a number of international organizations are working to support the further development of these structures.

National stakeholders in the final evaluation workshop and in individual interviews identified the following gaps in the national response:

- **Law:** Despite efforts to harmonize legislation, it remains inconsistent in places and does not fully meet international standards (UNCRC and ILO Convention 182).
- **Policy:** The child labor Master Plan contains critical gaps and needs updating. Some districts with high prevalence rates, such as Sindhupalanchouk, are not included. Child labor is not adequately integrated into some policy areas, such as education and poverty alleviation. Other relevant government plans are not implemented in a coordinated way, such as the National Planning Commission Three-Year Interim Plan of July 2007 (only briefly mentions child labor), National Plan on Trafficking, Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (includes some indicators on child labor), and sectoral programs of different ministries (land reform, women). The five key ministries with responsibility for this issue require coordination and institutional development.
- **Monitoring, enforcement, and penalties:** Nepal only has eight labor inspectors who focus on the formal sector (some 10–12% of the economy), which means that most of the work in Nepal by its population of 28 million remains unmonitored. The vast informal sector is unregulated and a fertile ground for child laborers. No employers have been prosecuted for child labor in the past seven years. Likewise, in trafficking, there is a less than 5% conviction rate.
- **Awareness raising and campaigning:** There are no child labor campaigns aside from those taking place on World Day Against Child Labor.

- **Credible information:** Official statistics on child labor go back 10 years and need updating. ILO is carrying out a National Labor Force survey scheduled to be published in the summer of this year. This will provide an overall figure for child labor, but changes in particular sectors need to be researched through independent rapid assessments.

Government action in recent years has been limited, and the true extent of activity by donors, UN agencies, and the NGO community is not known because of the absence of central-level coordination. USDOL has funded two other child labor projects in Nepal: the ILO-IPEC Timebound Program and Winrock International's project, Community-based Innovations for the Reduction of Child Labor Through Education (CIRCLE I and II).<sup>4</sup> The Timebound Program ended in 2006 just at the start of BFII and CIRCLE. A national steering committee and an informal body, called the child labor coordination group, are mentioned in the National Master Plan, but these efforts appear to have fallen away. The National Master Plan also included an inventory (dated 2000), which listed around 20 international organizations working on the issue, plus dozens of local implementing partners. A mapping exercise is needed and could be done by the government's Social Welfare Council.

ILO-IPEC has only been able to carry out minimal activities on this area since the end of the timebound program, leaving behind a noticeable gap in coordination, advocacy, and legal and policy work. UNICEF is only working on trafficking and CAAFAG, but would like to address other child labor issues in the future, particularly in the context of strengthening district-level child protection systems. There is an interagency group on trafficking currently chaired by the International Organization for Migration and the Esther Benjamin Trust.

### **3.1.3 BFII Fit with National Approach**

The BFII approach fits under the National Master Plan, which identified the following areas of intervention—policy and institutional development, education and health, advocacy, networking and social mobilization, legislation and enforcement, income and employment generation, prevention, protection, rehabilitation, and research—and highlighted education as a crucial strategy for combating child labor. BFII mainly addresses child labor through education, though some of its supporting work also falls under the other areas of intervention. The sectors WE has chosen to work on also fall under the 16 WFCL priority areas identified by the National Master Plan—except CAAFAG, which is a new addition. A mapping exercise carried out in the national evaluation workshop indicated a variety of other ongoing initiatives; however, without a concerted national approach, the efforts of WE and others remain a piecemeal, ad hoc, and inadequate response to the problem. The project is relevant for meeting needs, and it is working within existing frameworks, but the lack of national-level leadership and coordination on child labor issues has left the project working in somewhat of a vacuum without the complementary

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<sup>4</sup> CIRCLE was a global project implemented by Winrock International from July 2002 to December 2007 (CIRCLE I) and April 2004 to April 2008 (CIRCLE II). Nepal was one of 23 project countries in which 90 initiatives were undertaken by over 80 community-based organizations. The project objectives were, first, to identify and promote innovative, locally developed, and community-based pilot projects that successfully addressed the prevention (or reduction) of child labor through education and, second, to document best practices and replicable aspects.

inputs needed to support and enhance its work. The USDOL EI goals<sup>5</sup> focus largely on strengthening national systems in a lasting way, particularly those concerned with education. The project approach of working at the education policy level seeks to meet these goals.

### **3.1.4 Constraints**

There has been tremendous political upheaval in Nepal in recent years, which somewhat explains the lack of desired progress in eliminating WFCL by 2009. The ruling monarchy was replaced in 2006 by a coalition government led by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists) following a decade-long civil war and several weeks of mass protests by all major political parties. The country is emerging from this difficult period and is faced with what it and multilateral/bilateral donors may see as more pressing issues, such as post-conflict reconstruction, poverty, health, and nutrition. Nepal has also faced severe economic decline and high inflation in recent years, continuing civil unrest, strikes, and problems with infrastructure and power supplies.

These problems have also hindered the project. A number of the logframe assumptions were not held. Although security improved in the project with the end of the conflict, some risks continue to disturb project activities. The government, particularly local government, is still not fully functional. Government decentralization has been slower than expected, and there is a high turnover among government staff. On the positive side, the government budget for schools increased, and the formal education system was able to cover more numbers.

The national economic problems impacted negatively on what the project could do. The devaluation of the dollar reduced the budget in real terms and prevented the provision of second services. In addition, the devaluation prevented the project from renting space in urban areas and reduced duration and access to modular classes and learning centers. It also hindered the expansion of pilot efforts. The physical context is hostile. The project works in some very remote areas lacking road access. BFII staff working in the Terai have to walk between two and five days to visit project sites and beneficiaries; at times, they may walk nine hours one way to attend meetings. In addition to these challenges, there are issues working with transient, hard-to-reach children who have many unmet needs.

Despite these constraints, there have also been encouraging developments. The new Maoist leadership is said to be supportive of ending child labor. Some child rights activists from local NGOs have also been elected to the constitutional assembly, giving child rights organizations access to political decision-making in a way not seen before. There is renewed activity in the Ministry of Labor and Transport Management, which has designated 5 million rupees toward combating child labor and appointed two child labor officers to work on specific projects, mainly focusing on the carpet factories sector. The future looks more promising, and this is a timely moment for renewed efforts to tackle the problem of child labor in a coordinated way.

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<sup>5</sup> The four goals of USDOL EI projects are to (1) raise awareness on the importance of education for all children and mobilize a wide array of actors to improve and expand education infrastructures; (2) strengthen formal and transitional education systems that encourage working children and those at risk of working to attend schools; (3) strengthen national institutions and policies on education and child labor; and (4) ensure the long-term sustainability of these factors.

**Recommendations**

**USDOL**

- USDOL should consider funding rapid assessments and data collection in order to update statistics on child labor in Nepal.

**WE**

- WE should take stock of the current situation and the work of other actors and revise the sectors and geographical areas where it is working.

## **3.2 EFFECTIVENESS**

This section of the report examines the extent to which the project has been effective in meeting its own targets, the approaches or interventions that were particularly effective, and the ways effectiveness could have been enhanced. It focuses on all aspects of project management including project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and external relations.

### **3.2.1 Targets**

The project is on course for meeting all of its targets according to its own data. The project aimed to withdraw 15,400 children from WFCL and prevent 15,200 at-risk children from entering into WFCL. It also aimed to continue supporting 5,000 beneficiaries from BFI and to provide support to 70,000 indirect beneficiaries. The rationale for fixing targets at these levels came from information on prevalence rates and the experience of BFI. Table 2 shows that the project—

- Exceeded its target of withdrawing children from WFCL by 4,234—15,400 planned and 19,634 reached.
- Was below its target for preventing children at risk from entering into WFCL by 615, but this was a conscious strategy to redeploy limited resources to WFCL.
- Was unable to locate and support many of the beneficiaries under BFI and fell short of the intended target by 2,133, again redeploying these resources to WFCL.
- Reached 2,241 more indirect beneficiaries than originally intended—72,241 instead of 70,000.

Table 2 also shows a breakdown by sectors, which indicates that the project has been particularly successful in exceeding its targets in the portering, mining, recycling, and CAAFAG sectors and that it has found transportation the most challenging (the only sector under target at this stage).

**Table 2: Targets Reached by Sector**

Sectors	BFI	Planned BFII	Reached BFII	Percentage of Target
1. Children in domestic work	12,279	7,000	8,059	115%
2. Child porters	5,091	2,500	3,669	147%
3. Children in carpet factories	1,454	1,500	1,781	119%
4. Children in brick factories		1,500	1,578	105%
5. Children in mining	1,084	800	1,698	212%
6. Children in entertainment	625	800	882	110%
7. Children in recycling	1,070	500	690	138%
8. Children in transportation		400	393	98%
9. CAAFAG		600	884	147%
10. Bonded child laborers	612			
<b>Total WFCL</b>	<b>22,107</b>	<b>15,400</b>	<b>19,634</b>	<b>127%</b>
11. CAR	55,353	15,200	14,585	96%
<b>Total direct beneficiaries</b>		<b>30,600</b>	<b>34,219</b>	<b>112%</b>
12. BFI children receiving continued support		5,000	2,867	57%
<b>Indirect beneficiaries</b>		<b>70,000</b>	<b>72,241<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>107%</b>

Source: World Education

The project appears on course for meeting its targets and is able to validate these figures through a comprehensive database system, which tracks all beneficiaries. The evaluator verified this database since the evaluation was reliant on project data for assessing the achievement of project targets. Some inaccuracies related to age were found. Data from a random sample of 11 direct beneficiaries from SEEP/Vocational Training (VT)/school support activities, whom the evaluator had met during the field visit, were crosschecked against the database in Kathmandu. The verification found that beneficiaries were sometimes counted as withdrawn from WFCL despite being ineligible under USDOL definitions: three individuals sampled were apparently not children when they first received support from the project—over age 19, according to the database itself and evaluation interviews; two appeared to have lied about their age—the database indicated that they were under 18, but they reported a higher age to the evaluator—they too were over 18 when they first received support; and details about the remaining six beneficiaries appeared accurate. It appears that some individuals over 18 have been counted as withdrawn from WFCL either because of project error on eligibility requirements or beneficiaries being dishonest about their ages. Regarding this sample of 11 direct beneficiaries, it should be noted that they did not include any CAAFAG beneficiaries—no issues of age were raised regarding this group. The sample did include some beneficiaries from the entertainment

<sup>6</sup> The figure for indirect beneficiaries provided during the evaluation visit was 75,516. This was updated by the project to a final figure of 72,241 in May after submission of the draft report.

sector, but all were consistent in reporting their personal data and no age inaccuracies were found.

The project is already aware of some of these issues, namely the problems of age determination because of lack of birth registration and beneficiary dishonesty, and identifies the following challenges in age determination in the Nepali context:

- Children and parents do not know actual dates of birth due to lack of birth registration, and it can be difficult to confirm age through other sources.
- The traditional Nepali method of age calculation is different from Western methods. Age is counted based on the year running, so a child who says he or she is 14 will in fact be 13 and is his/her 14th year, which can cause confusion.
- Even where birth registration documents are available, they may be false and there are no means for checking their veracity.
- Beneficiaries may be dishonest about their age for a variety of reasons—in order to protect themselves or to qualify for services.

Given these obstacles to effective age determination, the project itself allows for a 5% margin of error in its data. The random sample taken by the evaluator suggests the error rate could be higher as far as age-related criteria are concerned, though it is difficult to say by how much, as the sample was skewed to beneficiaries age 17/18 and older and to SEEP/VT activities (groups in which these inaccuracies are most likely to be prevalent).

These inaccuracies related to age may have some implications for the degree of progress against targets shown by the project database. Nonetheless, the project is still likely to have met its original targets of 15,400 children withdrawn from WFCL. This goal is still readily met, as 14,921 beneficiaries were under age 16 and not likely to be prone to age-related errors, and the remainder took the project over its target by some 4,000. The inaccuracies do not, therefore, affect the project's ability to fulfill its original targets, but they do raise questions about the selection criteria for beneficiaries and the ability of the project to verify age, as well as the accuracy of data entered in the system. There is not much the project can do about the lack of state-level systems for birth registration and personal identification. However, a monitoring approach emphasizing more interaction with beneficiaries could help pick up on some of these anomalies as the project is being implemented so that numbers can be adjusted as necessary. These issues are discussed below.

### Recommendations

#### WE

- Given that some age-related inaccuracies in the database were identified by the evaluator, the project should review its statistics for beneficiaries *withdrawn from* WFCL and, to the extent possible, make amendments to arrive at a more accurate final figure for submission to USDOL. The report proposes a tidying up of the database as the project closes and not a major review of any kind; it suggests that staff review the database itself to remove the specific beneficiaries identified as being overage and carry out further verification during field visits where feasible. As the project has substantially exceeded its targets for withdrawal by some 4,000, this would not adversely affect the ability of the project to meet its commitments. (Immediate recommendation)

### 3.2.2 Interventions

The project’s three intervention areas, formal education, NFE, and vocational training, encompass a broad range of different activities, many of which the evaluator did not see. Table 3 gives a breakdown of the number of project beneficiaries by type of intervention. The numbers do not match the overall numbers of beneficiaries, as some beneficiaries received more than one intervention. The table shows that NFE has been the largest intervention area, followed by formal school and then vocational education.

**Table 3: Number of Services by Intervention**

	NFE	Scholarships for formal school	Vocational education	Total services
<b>WFCL</b>	12,309	6,075	5,918	24,302 educational services provided to 19,634 children in WFCL—includes multiple services
<b>CAR</b>	14,216	1,471	506	16,193 educational services provided to 14,585 CAR—includes multiple services

Source: World Education

#### **Formal Education**

The formal education area includes activities that both directly and indirectly impact on child labor. School scholarships enable children in WFCL to attend school. Stakeholders see them as filling an important gap in the government scholarship system, which is based on quota systems rather than needs assessment. School scholarship children, parents, and staff all affirm the very tangible benefits gained from this support. The sustainability of this activity is taken up later in this report.

The project has sought to improve the quality of education by mobilizing parents to become involved in school life through PTAs, School Management Committees (SMCs) (or Class Management Committees [CMCs] for NFE), income generation for school improvements, and school enrollment campaigns. In one PTA visited by the evaluator, members had taken impressive steps to enhance transparency in the school (even budgets and expenditure details were painted on the school wall for all to see). PTAs are generating income—selling stationery or hiring out rickshaws—and reinvesting the proceeds for the benefit of the school. PTAs have

sought to foster a sense of ownership among parents. In one PTA, all parents and teachers are expected to contribute something to school improvement, no matter how small, even something as little as a flower pot. The creation of PTA networks and exposure visits to different associations is a very popular aspect. The project's efforts to mainstream Muslim children into government schools through work with *madrassa* PTAs is seen as a welcome and much needed initiative for a marginalized group.

Overall, working with PTAs is an excellent strategy to promote greater ownership and quality education at a local level, one that is also being pursued by UNICEF and other international NGOs. The evaluator saw some of the best examples of this, but as the project itself will concede, not all PTAs are working at the optimum level. This still remains an important intervention that merits expansion, but according to feedback from stakeholders and observations by the evaluator, the links to child labor need to be strengthened. In a focus group discussion with one thriving PTA, participants did not even mention child labor until the subject was raised by the evaluator toward the end of the meeting; even then, although they acknowledged the problem, they did not seem to know what to do about it. The evaluator met few parents of child laborers in the PTA meetings. This is partly due to the problem of elite capture, the lack of representation of poor women, and the difficulty engaging parents, but it is also due to the lack of project integration as PTA participation is not available to all parent beneficiaries of the project. For instance, members of one family support group met by the evaluator said they were not involved in the PTA at the school their children attend; it was later confirmed that the project was not supporting a PTA in that location. Some PTAs are more conversant with child labor issues than others, for example some are involved in door-to-door school enrollment programs, which involve enlisting child laborers. However, generally speaking, the PTAs/SMCs/CMCs do not appear to be as mobilized and aware of the issue of child labor as they could be.

WE has played an important role in supporting education policy through its partnership agreement with the government and UNICEF for improving the quality of schools. This encompasses work with PTAs and other activities—

- WTS—a national, annual school enrollment campaign, initially conceived as part of the joint partnership.
- QERPs—WE is credited with playing a key role in coordinating inputs into these teacher-training materials.
- EMIS—WE has deployed one full-time officer to support this initiative, which aims to build the capacity of district officers to collect data on schools.
- Other initiatives—including district-level school improvement plans, school report cards, and schools as zones of peace.

These activities are seen as effective. For example, UNICEF carried out a review of WTS in 2006 and found that it had led to increased enrollment, increased number of girls and children in target groups receiving basic education (girl/boy school attendance ratio increased from 83:100 in 2002 to 96:100 in 2007), and improved quality of education in some districts. WE's contribution to these joint ventures is highly regarded, making it a significant player in efforts to

bring quality education to Nepal, especially at the district level. WE's work on gender and education is particularly well recognized. Although there is no direct and quantifiable effect, WE's contribution to high-level policy work on quality education will no doubt help to reduce levels of child labor over time.

However, even at the national evaluation workshop, stakeholders commented that WE did not do enough to argue for a more explicit inclusion of child labor issues in the broader education agenda. WE points out that an explicit inclusion of child labor into broader structural-level initiatives, such as Education for All and EMIS, would not always be appropriate (generic documents, for example, do not refer to the needs of specific categories of children), but that lower-level initiatives (like the school sector reform policy, QERP materials, and the student tracking system piloted in two districts) do include information on child labor. USDOL-funded projects in other parts of the world have had considerable success in mainstreaming child labor concerns in national development frameworks. WE has a valid point to some extent, but nonetheless, could have done more through its close partnership with the government and UNICEF to bring child labor more to the fore. The UNICEF 2006 review on WTS, for example, only mentions child labor twice, in passing. WTS has occasional references to child labor but could have been an ideal vehicle for a national mainstream awareness-raising campaign on child labor. The annual WTS campaign has focused on different aspects each year, such as *dalit/janajalit* and economically poor groups, the most needy Village Development Committees (VDCs) in priority districts, regular attendance, and inclusion on the basis of ethnicity, caste, and socioeconomic status. While these may indirectly impact child labor, a more overt campaign linking child labor and education, particularly during the life of BFII, could have been an effective strategy.

### ***Nonformal Education***

NFE is the largest service delivered by the project. WE is widely regarded as a leader in Nepal on NFE. Government counterparts made a strong link between NFE and child labor, and see it as an invaluable means of bringing hard-to-reach child laborers into the formal education system. They see WE's monetary terms as small compared with other donors, but its expertise is seen as irreplaceable. The flexibility of NFE in terms of its modular approach, which enables education materials to be adapted to the needs of different children even within the same classroom, is much applauded. Some local partners have adapted the modules even further for the particular needs of their own target groups. One stakeholder, who had seen numerous WE NFE classes firsthand, called them "amazing," describing how children in some of the poorest areas of Eastern Nepal, illiterate when they enrolled, were able to write poetry by the end of the course. Two WE staff members have been awarded medals from the Ministry of Education for their work on NFE. The evaluator only visited one NFE class, a GATE/Bridging class in Nepalgunj, as most NFE classes were over by this stage of the project. Both the girls and their mothers rated the teaching and classes highly, and welcomed the chance to learn and the prospect of entering a formal school. WE program staff rated NFE interventions, particularly their flexibility in terms of timing and their modular nature, as one of the most effective aspects of the project.

Stakeholders suggested some further improvements to the NFE classes: increased life skills and income-generation components, more tailoring of modular aspects to individual needs, increased testing of new materials before launch, and strengthening links to formal schooling and

accreditation. The evaluator did not see enough of WE's NFE work to comment on these recommendations and notes that some suggestions, such as accreditation, may already have been addressed.

### **Vocational Education**

Vocational education covers a range of interventions directed toward children—SEEP, occupation-specific VT, and apprenticeships—and their families, agro-forestry,<sup>7</sup> family support, and income generation. The SEEP program is seen as a very good innovation, as it combines vocational education with the possibility of self-employment for former child laborers who might otherwise struggle in regular work. The evaluator met many different SEEP/VT groups. Beneficiaries were universally positive about the benefits of these courses but gave feedback indicating that the activities need fine-tuning in some ways:

- **Trainers/facilitators:** In one project site, beneficiaries complained that the trainers were lazy, kept them waiting two hours or more while they drank tea, or were disinterested in checking the work of trainees. In another project site, beneficiaries said the constant turnover of instructors was disruptive; one group said they'd had three different instructors. In an example of good practice, SEEP entertainment sector beneficiaries said their candle-making instructors were easy to talk to, as they were former beneficiaries themselves.
- **Follow-up support:** The need for ongoing support came up often. Beneficiaries wanted project staff to visit them once the course was over to monitor their work and give advice and guidance on how to handle their businesses. One boy, for example, said that his small street business only went well at night, but that he felt threatened being out alone at that time and didn't know what to do about it. It's understandable that these young people setting out in business for the first time would need ongoing support and mentoring. Facilitators in some SEEP projects do continue to monitor beneficiaries: entertainment sector beneficiaries felt they received good and regular follow-up support.
- **Market research:** The SEEP/VT projects have an interesting participatory approach to market research, wherein the beneficiaries themselves talk to local business owners, find out market needs, and then make a business plan based on their own research. Although a good idea, in reality this approach appears to be used in a limited way. The project should also commission professional market research specialists to supplement beneficiary activities in identifying new and emerging business opportunities.
- **Transparency:** Beneficiaries often appeared confused about the differences or similarities in budget allocations between different participants or other issues. For instance, beneficiaries in one place complained that they had researched a certain kind of business to start with and ended up being trained in another kind without knowing why.

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<sup>7</sup> The project typology actually lists agroforestry as a separate type of activity, but it is included here under the group of activities that concern vocational education and income generation.

Family support and agro-forestry are discussed together as one category of intervention, as they are both a means of helping families generate income and keep their children out of the labor force and in school. These projects involve giving capital and training to local groups/cooperatives, which then manage savings and give loans for small businesses. WE did not initially plan to carry out this activity (ILO was meant to do so) and requested USDOL support after the project had started to offer this support to a limited number of families—about 2,000.

Beneficiaries of the family support groups are very positive about these credit/savings systems. The idea of family support is a good one, but implementation needs strengthening. Although the groups are functioning well and resulting in personal benefits, the links with child labor seem weak. Some participating parents appeared oblivious to the reason they were receiving this support; during a meeting with one family support group, for example, the participants almost exclusively discussed the running of the business itself. Little connection was made to child labor, and the two women in the group with children in WFCL seemed unaware of the need to remove them—one mother said her child was going to school in the afternoons and working both mornings and evenings in WFCL, a heavy burden from the evaluator’s viewpoint. It did not appear that the partner managing the project was discussing with parents the status of individual children in these family support families with a view to improving their situation.

The setting up and facilitation of these groups does not place sufficient emphasis on awareness-raising and engendering a sense of responsibility among parents of what they are supposed to do with the support they have received. Some parents receive both school support and family support, and the mode of transition from one to the other is not clear. In fact, the monitoring process does not track the status of individual children in family support groups; the database covers changes in assets/savings of the family and other indicators, such as numbers of children in the family who are enrolled in school and who have returned from WFCL, but there is no further information on children—ages, names, and circumstances. Even general indicators on children are not always completed according to the evaluator’s spot check of the database, and local partners say that they don’t go into detailed discussions with families on the status of their children.

### Recommendations

#### **WE**

- Develop methodologies for making sure that the links to child labor are more explicit in education activities.
- Explore the possibility of adopting a child labor theme for a future WTS campaign, as it seems the ideal vehicle for nationwide awareness-raising.
- The project’s knowledge and tools on NFE should be written up as a best practice suitable for global dissemination. Other potential good practices require further refinement before they are disseminated. WTS and PTAs need to strengthen their explicit links to child labor, and the beneficiary database needs to address the issues of data quality and software. (Immediate recommendation)
- Staff and partners should make further efforts to ensure that SEEP/VT beneficiaries supported by the project are self-sufficient and able to stand on their own feet before the project ends. (Immediate recommendation)
- Consider how the SEEP/VT methodology can be refined in the future to address issues such as training quality, follow-up, and market research.

### 3.2.3 Beneficiary Selection

#### **Targeting**

The evaluation visit highlighted questions on the targeting of beneficiaries. Although beneficiaries seemed to come from *worthy* groups, such as underprivileged or unemployed youth, they did not necessarily always qualify under USDOL definitions. There were various examples of this—

- In a focus group with a sample of 16 women from a family support group, only two reported having children who were currently working or had ever worked. The remainder said they were selected to participate in the project on the basis of their energy and enthusiasm to join, rather than whether their children had worked or not. According to the beneficiaries, only half the overall members of this group had working children. The women came from a poor community but their children did not necessarily fit USDOL target definitions concerning children in WFCL.
- In various SEEP/VT projects, some beneficiaries were over age 18 to start with (as discussed above). In addition, they appeared relatively better off; for example, one youth had bought land in his own village from savings made before and after the SEEP/VT project. However, in another case, an unemployed youth looking for work in Kathmandu was being financially supported by his father.
- In the GATE/Bridging project, the beneficiaries did not seem to exactly fit with the USDOL definition of *children at risk*—the children said that they had never worked and didn't know any other children in their community who did. When asked what they were doing before the course, some said they were “playing” or “helping out at home.” The mothers confirmed this in a separate meeting and gave the impression that it was not usual practice in their community to send children out to work. They hadn't sent the girls to school before because they did not have the money. They appreciated the value of education and did not plan to send the girls to work at any age, hoping instead to marry them off at age 18—indicating no change in attitudes about the role of women in the workplace. The local partner and WE, however, say that there is child labor in that community.

WE points out that these anomalies may be because the project is almost at its end, so these beneficiaries are atypical of those who participated earlier. The project says that children in need of NFE are now found in scattered locations, and that more flexible programs are needed to cater to boys and older girls who are out of school. The project appears to say that children in WFCL are scattered across Nepal and a more concentrated approach is not feasible. On the other hand, child labor and WFCL still prevail in many districts in Nepal, and staff and local partners speak of many unaddressed needs in the locations where they are working as well as the dilemma of turning children away. One method the project currently uses for identifying beneficiaries, along with door-to-door house visits and community mapping, is the snowball technique, which involves asking beneficiaries to lead them to others in the same situation. Although the snowball method may be useful in some ways, it also gives advance notification of project requirements and opens up the potential for overage beneficiaries to come forward and lie about their ages in order to receive project support.

### **Recommendations**

#### **USDOL**

- USDOL may wish to carry out a review and statistical analysis to see how the use of child labor definitions by grantees is impacting the accuracy and quality of data USDOL receives about child labor rates and withdrawal/prevention statistics.

#### **WE**

- WE should separate its program and reporting needs from the task of awareness-raising and develop a simpler awareness-raising message for families and communities about child labor.

### ***Definitions and Child Labor Spectrum***

Understanding child labor definitions continues to be problematic. In a revealing exercise, separate groups made up of government representatives, NGO partners, PTA members, and beneficiaries participating in a district-level stakeholder workshop were asked to define child labor. Each group came up with a different definition:

- Hazardous work for children age 10 to 14.
- Work under age 16 under national law and under age 18 under international law.
- All children who are out of school.
- Work under age 16 in both national and international law, but work for limited hours permissible between ages 14 and 16, and no work under age 18 under international law.
- Any working child under age 14 and any child engaged in hazardous/WFCL below age 18.
- Any working child under age 10.

Clearly, there was no common understanding among participants. The WE staff explanation, though true to the project definitions, came across as rather complex. Beneficiary knowledge was also tested in some interviews, and again answers varied.

USDOL definitions, based on international agreements and national laws, are complex. The project has struggled through the development of the child labor spectrum to convey these definitions to its staff, partners, and beneficiaries. Staff appeared uncomfortable when explaining the definitions. The evaluation suggests some ways in which the use of the spectrum could be simplified:

- The project has taken the child labor spectrum and modified it for each separate sector. The modifications are almost negligible, and it is debatable whether it will be useful to try and adapt the spectrum for each sector in this way. Since the spectrum is not intended to give a definitive answer on the situation of working children, it might be easier for the project to teach stakeholders how to better use their discretion, taking into account UNCRC principals (such as the best interests of the child) and a few basic guidelines (such as labor should not interfere with schooling and labor should not damage health or cause injury).

- The child labor spectrum (Annex I) used by the project staff to help NGOs identify and target children in the most hazardous situations and to track changes and improvements in work status could be modified to take advantage of the full provisions that exist under Nepali law on child labor. Although the law in Nepal requires further clarification and enhancement to make it completely conform with international standards, it does appear to set the minimum age for employment at 14. The project should modify the spectrum in order to give a clearer message that the minimum age for all types of employment is 14. Current versions of the spectrum for the brick (Annex I), carpet, domestic service, entertainment, mining, and transportation sectors show that “nonhazardous” work (including “light work with or without pay”) is “completely acceptable” for children under age 14. The spectrum for the portering sector adds the requirement that ‘loads should be suited to a child’s weight.’ The spectrum for the recycling sector says that working under age 14 is ‘never completely acceptable due to extreme health risks.’ The project should also review its awareness-raising activities among beneficiaries, families, and communities to ensure that they are in accordance with any revisions to the spectrum.

It is clearly an immense challenge for staff to convey the complexity of the USDOL definitions of *withdrawn* and *prevented*; they are not suitable for general consumption and may serve to compound the problems of identification, targeting, and accurate data described above. The definitions would benefit from revision and simplification, and USDOL may wish to examine to what extent this negatively impacts the quality of statistics it ultimately receives about WFCL. USDOL is already aware of many of these issues through its regular audits.

If this is not feasible—and it may be intractable given that child labor definitions are based on international agreements and national laws—the project itself should think more carefully about what exactly beneficiaries, communities, and partners need to know about the definition of child labor. The project is currently conflating two separate issues, its own programming and reporting needs for USDOL—which require very specific definitions (not only *WFCL* but also *withdrawn* and *prevented*)—and an awareness-raising message about what is or should be acceptable. Some key national stakeholders summarized the legal position under Nepali law as no work for children under age 14 and no WFCL for children under age 18. Although this does not necessarily capture all nuances that may exist in national law, it could be useful to develop a simpler awareness-raising message for children, families, and communities along similar lines: no work for children under age 14 and no WFCL for children under age 18, with some basic guidelines on what constitutes hazardous work and WFCL. It may not be necessary to give the partners much more information about definitions that pertain to reporting to USDOL specifically, given that local NGOs are working with other donors who have different definitions and since WE itself makes a determination on withdrawal and prevention on the basis of facts submitted to it by local partners.

### **3.2.4 Scope**

#### ***Geographical Scope***

The project is implemented across a very geographically dispersed area, in 28 of 75 districts in Nepal, spread across the whole of the country. It sometimes only works in a limited number of VDC areas within each district, for example in Parvat, the project is implemented in 5 of 55 VDCs with child porters, and in 43 of 55 VDCs with both child porters and CAAFAG. The project says that it was required to work in so many districts because the government and USDOL wanted to cover as many of the 35 districts identified as being prone to child labor in the National Master Plan as possible. In fact, BFII scaled up districts and sectors but decreased the number of beneficiaries. The result is that the project is overstretched and carrying out piecemeal interventions here and there.

#### ***Tailored Service Delivery***

The project prioritizes tailored, individualized services for beneficiaries. The range of different activities developed by the project is a testament to the way it is tailoring its services to the specific needs of different target groups. Activities like the modular NFE approach allow a flexible approach to learning. The technical progress reports, project documents, and discussions with staff show that they have a deep understanding of the needs, issues, and challenges working with different sectors and using a range of education interventions to target their needs. The database enables WE and its partners to track individual progress in detail. There are also good examples of the project adapting as it progresses—realizing that children need support and socialization before they are ready for NFE, the need to coach children working in brick factories to prepare them for formal schools, or being vigilant to new needs, such as children from Indian circuses.

The project is succeeding in giving tailored services on the ground, but perhaps not to the extent it would like. Partners referred to gaps in programming before follow-up options could be offered or sometimes to the lack of follow-up courses altogether. In other cases the partners complained that the course duration was too long—NFE courses could be completed in six months instead of nine months—or that courses were too short. They asked for a greater availability of options and more flexibility in delivery, such as enabling partners to run simultaneous instead of consecutive courses—Open Learning Center in the first year and vocational training in the second year. The midterm evaluation also noted similar situations where follow-up interventions were not available—GATE classes held in places where local schools were unable to absorb children afterward—and recommended better planning to carry out interventions where there was follow-up capacity.

The problems of gaps in services, issues over targeting and identification, and complaints from beneficiaries over lack of follow-up suggest that the project is not able to deliver the fully individualized service it would like. On the other hand, there are limits to how individualized the project can be; inevitably with limited resources there is a tradeoff between individual services and more general services with wider scope. Some partners appeared to have unrealistic ideas about being able to deliver any kind of training children asked for. In addition, there is also the need to maintain coherence across program interventions. One stakeholder who had seen

services on the ground commented that he felt they lacked homogeneity and that there was too much scope for individualized approaches by different tutors. The struggle to provide individualized services may partly answer why the project design appears scattered.

### ***Holistic Programming***

A closely related point is that of holistic programming. The project focuses on education- and training-related interventions, but beneficiaries often have other needs, such as psychosocial support, shelter, and health care. WE tries to respond to these issues by working with other providers, in some cases over referrals, like trying to secure shelter for children working in the recycling sector. In other cases, local partners themselves have created rounded packages for beneficiaries by securing donations from other funders. For example, in one site visited, the beneficiaries receive education/skills training from WE and benefit from training on child rights, child participation, and child advocacy—radio, TV, and presentations to constituency members—from initiatives funded by other donors. The positive impact on children achieved from accessing a range of services in this way was noticeable, but not all partners have the capacity to develop packages in this way and more support from WE is needed to do so.

### ***Concentrated Design***

The project would benefit from more geographically concentrated and integrated interventions. This means first ensuring that its services are offered in an integrated way, direct education and training interventions taking place in a context where activities like family support, community mobilization, and PTAs are being offered. Second, it means working more closely with local partners and other international organizations, both donors and implementers, to develop packaged approaches supported by different organizations. Stakeholders at the national evaluation workshop made a similar recommendation, saying that WE should take more of an “area” approach and seek to eliminate 70% of WFCL in a particular location, regardless of the sector. Such an approach would enable the project to complete its work in certain areas and then move on to different districts in further phases. The midterm evaluation raised a similar issue and recommended that the project focus on more linked interventions, such as providing NFE in places where follow-up school places are available or where family support can be linked to PTAs. The project was reluctant to adopt this recommendation, fearing that it would be an ethical dilemma and would mean neglecting some vulnerable areas where government services are not available.

The project favored retaining services and taking on more advocacy instead, to lobby the government for increased provision. There are various points in response to this. First, reining in may seem to be a dilemma given the vast numbers of unmet needs in terms of locations, sectors, and ages, a need for youth support over 18, but the project is already making hard choices by turning children away or not being able to provide follow-up, so a more manageable scope need not necessarily mean less numbers or less needy children. Second, the lack of integration was evident even in the accessible areas visited by the evaluator. Some parents receiving family support did not have the opportunity to participate in the PTAs supported by the project despite the feasibility of connecting the two. Finally, the dilemma of meeting the needs of vulnerable communities supports the argument for better integration and links with other types of interventions supported by other international organizations, both donors and implementers, such as community watchdogs.

Standalone education services are not the most effective approach, and the project would do well to find ways of integrating its services and linking to those provided by others (see page 36 for suggestions on how the project can link with the work of other international NGOs). The section on sustainability discusses other issues related to project design and choice of approaches.

#### **Recommendations**

- WE and other actors in the field of child labor should take account of the conclusions and recommendations in this report for any future child labor projects. In particular, the project design should allow for an integrated and geographically concentrated approach:
  - Organizations should ensure that their own activities are fully integrated; education interventions should take place in contexts where other project activities, such as PTAs and family support, are also being carried out.
  - Organizations should work with local partners and other international organizations, both donors and implementers, and government authorities for complementary inputs in order to deliver a more holistic package to beneficiaries. These will be services that the organization itself is not specialized in delivering but that are needed by beneficiaries.
  - The design should take account of the need to build family and community ownership and government responsibility. This means situating education interventions alongside community mobilization activities and political advocacy. Ideally, these interventions should be carried out in collaboration with other actors.

### **3.2.5 Monitoring and Evaluation**

#### ***Beneficiary Database***

The M&E system includes a database for tracking the progress of individual beneficiaries; information is collected by partners on standard formats, which is then centrally collated and managed by WE. The database is a very good initiative in many ways, and the level of information WE is able to provide on so many beneficiaries stands out as a best practice for other development projects. The value of the database is readily visible in reports and discussions with key project staff; the degree to which key staff have such beneficiary statistics as age, gender, and ethnicity at their fingertips is impressive and demonstrates a mastery of the information they have before them.

The project has given the system careful thought, taking confidentiality into consideration by using pseudonyms/ID numbers for beneficiaries, especially trafficking victims, and creating rules on data sharing, dissemination, and informed consent for use of photos or stories. The project has built on and learned from other data collection systems developed by USDOL and ILO through a process of trial and error during BFI. One of the key issues with the USDOL/ILO systems provided to the project in BFI was that they collected more items of information on each beneficiary than appeared necessary from the project's perspective. There has been an active critique among WE staff of the BFII database itself, resulting in what is now seen as an appropriate amount of information. The BFII database includes information on district, NGO, program, child ID, name, age, school, year, class, vocational services, follow-up work status, earnings made, loans/savings, and type of business. The system is now being recommended to a USDOL-funded project in Guinea. The CAAFAG sector uses a separate database developed by UNICEF.

Local partners appreciate the value of the database and are readily able to articulate its usefulness in terms of helping them to better plan and understand the needs of children. Many partners reported using the same system for non-WE projects. The project provides intense training to partners on data management through the use of a “data processing manual of baseline survey” and several accompanying instructions. Stakeholders see the database as a rich resource on trends in child labor in Nepal, but the project is aware that this is a selective—rather than random or statistical—sample, which may make it difficult to draw an overall picture of prevalence rates.

Overall the system is much improved since Phase I of the project. The system is good, and the data collected are well used for project reporting. The main question is the quality of the data entering the database in the first place. As discussed earlier, a random sample of beneficiaries crosschecked against the database by the evaluator highlighted age-related inaccuracies, which highlights the need to review methods of beneficiary identification and data collection by partners and monitoring by BFII staff. Database staff members say they have a strict control system, which involves randomly checking 10–20% of the sample and triangulating figures with the program team. They are aware of some weaknesses to be addressed, such as the need to improve training of partner staff and beneficiary identification, and they estimate a 5% margin of error in their figures. The potential margin of error revealed by the evaluator’s random sample as far as age-related criteria are concerned appears higher and suggests that the process is not working as well as it should. It indicates a gap in the adequate verification of the database by other WE programs, M&E, and management staff. Database staff commented that no one had looked at the database as the evaluator had done in seven years, despite the fact that the checks made by the evaluator were easily done and took very little time. It was stated that USDOL auditors checked the database in a different way by verifying lists.

Another issue raised by local partners was a plea for a different software system for data entry. The software is too complex, difficult to use, and not always functional. The project has opted for specialized software called Boroland: Dbase V. It would be better to use more common software like Excel or Access since they are easier to use, more accessible, and will train partners on a system that is of wider use to them. The project says it has tried other software, but they are open to others. The project should again try to use more common software and find other techniques to avoid data manipulation, such as more spot-checks by WE and better education of partners. A final point is that WE refers to the initial child assessment as a baseline, a term normally used to refer to a project’s overall starting point rather than that of individual beneficiaries, which can be confusing. It is also a limitation to rely on individual baselines alone. A proper project baseline, involving a sample study on the prevalence of WFCL as well as a collection of baseline values against project logframe indicators, would have been a good way of measuring project progress.

### ***Internal Monitoring***

Monitoring of the project by WE occurs in various ways. Program staff members regularly visit partners and project sites. There are also M&E staff members who make occasional visits and collect best practices and lessons learned. Monthly internal meetings allow for reflection within the program, and quarterly project review meetings engage partners and beneficiary representatives. Senior management provides guidance on planning monitoring visits and methodologies. As the project draws to an end, staff members have strengthened focus on

lessons learned/best practices. The M&E team tries to identify these issues through discussions with project staff, and some are written up in the technical progress reports and also in the story collection.

The procedure for producing technical progress reports is excellent and results in comprehensive and well-written reports, which are much appreciated by the donor. The technical progress report process takes two months: the M&E team collects both quantitative and qualitative data from the program team, and then they produce a draft report that is reviewed and revised by senior management and WE Boston. Although the reports are excellent and diligently produced, the evaluator felt there was sometimes a mismatch between the high quality of the report and the actual situation on the ground. Future reports should include an increased focus on internal constraints, problems identified, and ways they are dealt with in order to give the donor a more realistic picture of the progress made.

Although M&E procedures are in place, it is doubtful that they are all working as well as they should. All staff members carry out regular visits, and some show immense dedication in doing so (walking for many days in some cases to visit project sites). Some questions remain, such as—*What do they do once they are there? What questions do they ask? What methods do they use? What do they look for?* WE staff could improve their M&E procedures; partners have said that when some WE staff visit, they only talk to NGO staff, instead of also talking to beneficiaries independently and privately (as the evaluation has done). Also, they do not make unannounced spot-checks. The need for all WE staff members to carry out independent monitoring is a responsibility that should go up through the staff hierarchy and be understood at all levels, from program officers to monitor partners. The project coordinator and M&E specialist should monitor the work of program officers independently, and the project leadership should also monitor the work of the core team independently. This requires the staff to have the know-how and skills, an understanding of M&E techniques, and language skills (or access to independent interpreters). There is a need for increased capacity building to ensure that staff members make the most of their site visits.

The project holds quarterly review meetings with partners. This is a good system, but the project should be aware that not all issues can be raised in a forum of this kind. For example, partners at one stakeholder meeting said that they were unsure about how *critical* they should be of WE, and this same kind of self-censorship is likely to happen in quarterly review meetings. Given the inevitable limitations of these methods and the inability to monitor everything, the project should consider setting up complaint mechanisms to enable both beneficiaries and local partners to give feedback without fear of reprisals. Such a system might have alerted WE to the complaint about the SEEP/VT trainer who habitually kept beneficiaries waiting for hours while he drank tea and the local partner who failed to deal with that situation properly. Development agencies are increasingly setting up such mechanisms.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> For an example, see the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership website: <http://www.hapinternational.org/projects/complaints-handling.aspx>.

## **External Monitoring**

BFII is subject to numerous external monitoring visits. Aside from the evaluations prescribed by USDOL funding, there are evaluations by donors of adjacent projects. While the evaluator was present, WE was contributing to a UNICEF evaluation of the joint quality education work and was also awaiting a visit from a private donor concerning matched funding. It has been suggested that future technical progress reports include key findings from related evaluations.

As far as USDOL external evaluations and audits are concerned, WE has followed up on some recommendations but not all. It carried out a study on retention following the USDOL audit of BFI, and it integrated learning from the final evaluation into the design of BFII, especially strengthening M&E. The BFII midterm evaluation included several recommendations, and responses were included in a plan annexed to the technical progress report dated August 2008:

- ***Specific project target sectors and interventions:*** This refers to sectors such as brick factories, entertainment, transport, and scholarships. The plan shows how the project intended to follow up on these recommendations. The final evaluation did not look into these individual recommendations in depth so that the project could be reviewed from a broader perspective.
- ***Ensuring interventions can be linked:*** This refers to the need to assess the impact of project interventions and focus more future project activities on those interventions or linking to those interventions. According to the midterm evaluation, “linking interventions better” meant running NFE classes where there was a possibility of enrolling graduating children in school, or in the case of family support, providing this where PTAs could provide long-term support. The project said it was reluctant to adopt this recommendation as it would leave vulnerable communities unaddressed, and instead chose to carry out increased advocacy toward government policy. The evaluator agrees with the conclusion of the midterm evaluation, calling for better integration (to be discussed later) and did not see the results of project’s plan to increase advocacy in place of refocusing project activities.
- ***End-of-project targets:*** As end-of-project targets had almost been achieved, the project should pay more attention to maximizing impact and sustainability by focusing on PTA networks, use of QERP, teacher training, and working with a national-level data system. The project’s midterm evaluation follow-up plan confirms more focus on these aspects. The final evaluation found that these elements were being addressed, but that other aspects of sustainability were missing (to be discussed later).
- ***Follow-up participant information:*** This refers to improving monitoring systems to track children after they leave the project to ensure that they remain out of exploitive labor. The evaluator agrees with the project that this remains unfeasible at this time (see further discussion under the section on sustainability).

### Recommendations

#### WE

- WE needs to review ways that program staff can further engage in verifying the beneficiary database on a regular basis.
- The software needs revamping and replacement by a more commonly used, accessible software if it is to have wider replication.
- The beneficiary database system should be written up as a best practice once some of the issues of data quality and software have been ironed out.
- Staff members need capacity building on M&E techniques to ensure that all follow best and standard practices during monitoring visits.
- A complaints/feedback mechanism for stakeholders, particularly beneficiaries and partners, should be set up.
- Terminology should be revised in future proposals so that *baseline* refers to the project's starting point and *assessment* refers to individual children. The project should carry out a sample study on the prevalence of WFCL in its projects sites and then use this as the basis for measuring progress.
- More regular and direct interaction between WE staff and beneficiaries should be a key part of monitoring activities.

### 3.2.6 Management

#### ***Staff Capacity Building***

The project is implemented by a team of dedicated, loyal staff members who have been working for the project for years. They seem to work well together as a team. There do not appear to be any major internal problems, as testified by the fact that most staff inputs into the evaluation related to technical issues and improving the quality of services for beneficiaries, rather than management or personal complaints.

There is a need for increased capacity building of staff. Staff members appear to receive little training, and some had not had any training courses in the project at all. The project team needs to have knowledge of a wide range of issues in order to guide and monitor local partners effectively. They receive training on education interventions, participate in regular review meetings and in-house orientations, take part in occasional exposure visits, and teach themselves by using orientation materials. Some staff members felt that they had not received adequate training/refresher sessions even on the project's direct interventions like SEEP/VT. Capacity building on many noneducation aspects relevant to their work appears lacking, aspects such as project management (planning, M&E, fundraising), related interventions (child participation, advocacy, community mobilization, and microfinance), and wider development issues (rights-based approaches). During the finalization of the evaluation report, the project reported that staff members had received much training. The overall impression acquired by the evaluator was that staff knowledge and experience was strong on direct education interventions, but weaker in other relevant areas. The project has a good-sized and committed team of 26 staff members, but the staff's capacity could be maximized through increased investment in training, and improved direction and supervision. The project could draw on experience within the project to address these capacity-building needs; for example, some local partners are very strong on certain issues

such as advocacy and rights. There may also be other ways of informing staff members about wider development issues, such as a Nepali equivalent of brown bag lunches.

### **Staff Retention**

Staff turnover has been a challenge. It is difficult for the project to remain competitive when other organizations are paying more. Most staff members leave for jobs with other international NGOs rather than the government. There is ongoing work in the Association of International NGOs in Nepal (AIN) to harmonize salaries. The project tries to match salaries to government scales, but may want to reconsider this as government jobs offer more security and project salaries need to compensate for this lack of security. It could also consider incentive/rewards structures for staff that stay.

### **Management Structure**

It is not clear whether the implementation problems identified by this evaluation were noticed and, if they were noticed, whether they were acted on. Discussions with staff show that they are aware of a number of weaknesses in the project, but at some level there appear to have been gaps in management oversight and direction. The evaluator is not in a position to make a determination about what these gaps are but raises this as an issue for the project to reflect on. What is clear is that staff members are very knowledgeable about the details of education activities and target sectors, but an overarching strategic perspective seems missing to some degree. As a separate point, WE also needs to review staff roles, as there appeared to be a mismatch in some cases between job titles and the roles staff members actually play in the project.

### **Staff Code of Conduct**

The project does not have a written code of conduct regulating staff behavior toward children, but does give verbal guidance on this aspect. This issue came up not because any concerns were raised, but because other stakeholders have taken the initiative in this area and WE should follow suit and be in a position to lead. One of WE's local partners has been very progressive in incorporating a code of conduct into staff bylaws. The district government in one area is encouraging all its partners to adopt codes. WE did not seem much aware of the increasing practice by international organizations of adopting contractually binding codes of conduct—most UN agencies, and some international NGOs like Save the Children, have them. The evaluator was given ethical guidelines on interacting with children by ICF Macro for her work on the evaluation. During the finalization of the evaluation report, the project stated that codes and memos had been circulated among partners on the use of child labor and the confidentiality of beneficiary information.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Examples of broader child protection policies that may be of interest can be found at <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/safeguarding-children.pdf>.

## **Project Design**

The project incorporates consultations with partners and staff members on an ongoing basis through review meetings. However, some staff members and partners expressed that they would like more say in the project design and that the process was too “top-down” compared with other donors who are more consultative. The project has regular review meetings where partners can input their views, but WE agrees that the process could be more participatory, subject to the constraints of the solicitation process (time limits and set objectives). Management says that there are already sufficient opportunities for inputs from staff.

The project documents (narrative, logframe, and work plan) give a compelling situation analysis and justification of the problem and are generally of a high standard. The evaluator felt that the project could present itself in simpler ways sometimes. The project document is repetitive and project terminology is sometimes used in a confusing way: *outputs* and *objectives* are used interchangeably to describe the same thing; there is a layer of *strategies* above the activities that are similar but not identical to the wording of *objectives*; *direct/indirect* are used in two different ways to describe beneficiaries and also types of interventions; the project work plan headings refer to *strategies* that do not directly link to the logframe; and reporting under the technical progress report narrative comes under progress against strategic goals, operational objectives, and indicators, but these headings do not clearly match the logframe. This project’s depiction of itself has improved as the project has progressed, and the presentations made to the evaluator during the visit were very clear, but there is still a tendency for the project to keep recasting its approaches and activities in slightly different ways, making the project appear more complicated than it actually is and impeding effective monitoring and reporting.

### **Recommendations**

#### **WE**

- Carry out management review to see if management and administrative systems can be strengthened to pick up on the types of issues identified in this evaluation at an earlier stage.
- Carry out more staff training on a wide range of issues—project’s education interventions, related interventions, and wider development issues.
- Provide management feedback to both staff and partners on what ideas were taken forward in future proposals.
- Simplify and harmonize project documents (project descriptions, log frames, and work plans) in future phases in order to facilitate better monitoring.
- Develop a code of conduct for staff.

### **3.2.7 External Relations**

#### ***Local Partners***

Relationships with local partners are good. Partners did not generally have complaints about working with WE and felt that they benefited from the partnership. They were appreciative of the quality of the education work and the down-to-earth manner in which WE related to them. Some partners asked for more capacity building on organizational development, particularly for small rural organizations. These needs will likely vary from partner to partner, as some are more established than others. WE says it has provided training on finance and proposal writing. In the case of the CAAFAG program, WE reports an enormous amount of capacity development on the three central facets of that intervention: child rights/community participation, psychosocial support, and educational assessment. The partners met by the evaluator mainly appeared to be strong independent organizations, which raises another question about whether the project should also choose some weaker partners and help build their capacities (WE agrees and says it is seeking to support new survivor organizations). Some partners requested better coordination, as they were not always given adequate notice of activities requiring implementation (such as being asked to deliver rice to beneficiaries at the last minute without time for proper planning) or of WE visits—they accepted that spot-checks were necessary but said that WE did not even notify them when they were coming to give training.

#### ***USDOL Grantees***

Relations with USDOL partners have not been as close as they could have been, and the solicitation process seems to cause rifts and divisions. Relations with ILO were awkward to start with, and the first phase involved joint implementation of projects, which led to complications and delays because of differences in the administrative systems of both organizations. Relations between ILO and WE have improved, and they are working well together over such activities as combating bonded labor and preparing USDOL visits. Relations between WE and Winrock were also strained—again by the solicitation process—and sharing, cooperation, and support between both organizations was very limited.

In terms of wider collaboration between grantees outside Nepal, USDOL facilitates biennial grantee meetings in Washington DC, which are convened over a period of three to four days and enable global sharing and learning. WE finds these meetings useful for hearing about new ideas, such as the child labor spectrum, which was picked up at one of those meetings. Likewise, other grantees are reported to have shown an interest in WE work. Ongoing sharing between meetings could perhaps be facilitated in other ways. Overall, USDOL could see if it will help foster better relations between its grantees and ensure that learning from USDOL-funded projects is used and built upon. WE felt that the relationship with USDOL was very positive, appreciating the promptness with which USDOL dealt with matters, especially given its lack of country presence.

### **International Organizations**

Relations with UNICEF are excellent. UNICEF is a donor for WE CAAFAG work and a joint partner for WE quality education work. UNICEF is very appreciative of WE work, both on quality education and CAAFAG, and sees WE as an efficient partner, ready and quick to respond to queries. WE participates in various interagency forums, such as the trafficking forum—currently chaired by the International Organization for Migration and the Esther Benjamin Trust—and the CAAFAG group chaired by UNICEF. The project director has also taken over as chair of the association of 84 international NGOs (AIN), and staff participates in task forces convened within that group. The project also collaborates with other providers over referrals.

At one level, WE is engaging with other international agencies, but one-to-one relations with other international NGOs primarily could do with strengthening. Staff members seemed to lack awareness of what others were doing and the mutual benefits of closer collaboration. When the evaluator asked WE which other international organizations were working on child labor in Nepal, staff either said no other organizations or named only one or two. Conversely, when the same question was put to external stakeholders, they could name several organizations, including Rugmark, Underprivileged Children Education Program, ILO, UNICEF, Concern Nepal, Action Aid, Plan International, Save the Children, GTZ, Winrock, and others on bonded labor—Lutheran World Foundation, CARE, Foundation of Netherlands Volunteers, and Helen Keller. The question is not whether this list is correct but perceptions internally and externally about related and relevant counterparts. The 2000 National Master Plan lists 20-plus international organizations supporting work on child labor. During report finalization, the project stated that it had collaborated closely with the International Rescue Committee, Nepalese Youth Opportunity Foundation, Save the Children U.S., Caritas International, Room-to-Read, and others to set up strong planning and referral systems.

The lack of interaction and collaboration is not the fault of WE alone. As the section on relevance noted, there is no central-level coordination at this time. Moreover, competition for funding between organizations tends to make them wary of each other. The lack of knowledge is mutual. Child specialists in Nepal, who are not stakeholders of the project, were unaware of WE's work on child labor and identified it as an education organization only.

Overall, the project appears to have been rather closed to the work of other agencies. This may have led to some missed opportunities. WE has come to the concept of community mobilization as a strategy for addressing child labor rather late—groups called child protection committees, child labor committees, community watchdogs). The 2008 Technical Progress Report describes the process of setting up community child protection mechanisms in the CAAFAG sector and refers to these as a relatively new type of intervention, only initiated after the cessation of the country's long-term conflict and political unrest. Other international organizations in Nepal have been implementing this approach for years. UNICEF says it has been following this strategy for 10 years and that Nepal is a best practice example. ILO has been implementing it for five to six years, Save the Children for several years.

Greater collaboration with other international NGOs would benefit WE in many ways. It should pursue partnerships in areas where it does not have clear expertise, such as advocacy, microfinance, human rights, child participation, corporal punishment, and sexual harassment,

rather than seek to go it alone. It was often found that other international NGOs, especially Save the Children, were funding the same partners and better collaboration would help with the delivery of more holistic interventions for beneficiaries, enable a sharing of capacity building of partners. The project director concurred that more could be done.

### Recommendations

#### USDOL

- USDOL may wish to consider whether it can take any steps to foster a better relationship between its grantees. For example—
  - Require new grantees to demonstrate during the design stage how they are building on lessons learned and best practices from previous USDOL-funded projects, at least in the same country, if not across the board.
  - USDOL staff should hold joint meetings with all past and present grantees during country visits.
  - Consider solicitations that involve complementary but not necessarily joint programs to tackle WFCL in a particular context involving different organizations.
  - Facilitate contact between grantees globally in between grantee meetings, such as through listservs.
  - Carry out a meta-analysis of past evaluations to identify common lessons learned and best practices that can then be used for critiquing and advising on new proposals.

### **3.3 EFFICIENCY**

This section of the report considers the extent that funds received by the project were put to the optimum use. Table 4 shows how the cost per head varied with the type of intervention being carried out:

- NFE ranged from US\$31 for GATE courses, US\$54 for modular courses, and US\$120 for child learning centers.
- Formal school interventions ranged from US\$79 for scholarships to US\$1,298 for PTAs per school (US\$3 per child).
- Vocational education—SEEP was the cheapest activity at US\$53, family support came to US\$94, and the most expensive interventions were coaching (US\$327), agroforestry (US\$423), and apprenticeships (\$331).

NFE, school scholarship, SEEP, and family support, which form the majority of project interventions, are low cost and come out on average at US\$58 per beneficiary. GATE and SEEP cost US\$31 and US\$53 per child, respectively, for courses lasting six to nine months for two hours of instruction per day six days a week. The project concluded that NFE, SEEP/VT, are more cost-effective than learning centers, center-based vocational training, and coaching, and made a conscious effort to focus on lower-cost interventions. CAAFAG is a separate category and more expensive at US\$934 per beneficiary, as it is necessary to provide support to the community as a whole rather than only benefit individual children associated with armed forces.

Some interventions, like apprenticeships, are very costly and labor-intensive but have a lasting impact in removing children from exploitive labor.

Overall the costs are low given that the beneficiaries receive a direct tangible benefit that increases their skills and knowledge. Project data show that beneficiary income increased after the project intervention. The investment in SEEP/VT courses is readily made back; graduates from these courses earn approximately US\$32 to US\$96 per month, easily exceeding the initial outlay.

In a country where the average annual income is \$200 per annum, the costs may still seem high but are, in fact, very reasonable compared with other local costs. Given that the project is providing individualized, tailored learning, the costs compare well with other education interventions—US\$60 for lower secondary schools per year ranging up to US\$250 and US\$2,000 for high-end schools. Residential care works out to around US\$1,000 per year.

**Table 4: Cost of Interventions per Head**

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Number of Beneficiaries</b>	<b>Cost per Beneficiary (US\$)</b>	<b>Unit</b>
GATE	12,415	31.73	Child
Scholarship	4,989	79.10	Child
PTA	225	1,298.11	School
SEEP	5039	53.37	Child
Child Learning Center	2,707	120.57	Child
Coaching Center	69	327.38	Child
Modular	7,573	54.76	Child
Agroforestry	225	423.80	Child
Vocational	578	329.15	Child
Apprenticeship	95	331.39	Child
Family Support*	3,072	65	Family
CAAFAG**	636	943.71	Child
<b>Total</b>	<b>113,139</b>		

\* Note: includes 1,034 beneficiaries supported by matched funding from World Education Australia.

\*\* Note: 300+ CAAFAG children were supported to attend formal school. The schools they attended were provided with 8,000 rupees per CAAFAG, resulting an additional 60,000 indirect beneficiaries in formal schools estimated at an average of 200 children per CAAFAG.

Staff members observed one of the ironies of their work: instead of becoming more efficient over time, their work becomes less efficient as they are left with the most hard-to-reach children. There is little doubt that the project has succeeded in providing effective education services at very low cost.

The question, in fact, is not whether the project has spent too much, but whether it has spent too little. Partners frequently complained that the budget was too limited to be able to deliver project activities in the best way possible and to retain skilled staff. Some partners say that WE expects too much for a limited budget and that they might not be able to afford to work with WE in the future. There were insufficient funds to provide follow-up services and support to beneficiaries and to invest in staff and partner capacity building. Many of the shortfalls identified by WE program staff relate to inadequate funds to provide holistic services to existing beneficiaries—lack of interventions for beneficiaries and, particularly, a lack of links to follow-up on programs such as GATE to SEEP/VT, or VT to employment; lack of long-term support; inability to work in districts of origin; lack of residential support; inadequate support for families; and an inability to track beneficiaries. Staff salaries are also on the low side. There is insufficient allocation for staff transport; the time needed to get around project sites is difficult to avoid given the lack of roads and infrastructure in Nepal, but obliging staff to use public transport or to go on foot when vehicle access is possible can come at the cost of spending more time onsite carrying out effective monitoring activities.

Although the cost per head is low, this does not necessarily equate to the most efficient use of funds, and some of the implementation issues raised in this report—issues of identification and targeting of beneficiaries, holistic sustainable programs, and adequate staff capacity—might have been eased to a degree had the project been more generously budgeted. Agroforestry, for example, is the most expensive intervention at \$424 per child but is not sufficiently targeted to WFCL from what the evaluator could see. A greater investment might have yielded more holistic and sustainable interventions in the long run.

The project says that it is not only the original budget that was constraining but that unanticipated external economic shocks had a severe impact on implementation. This was a period of high inflation, and the devaluation of the dollar meant the project had fewer resources than it expected. It dealt with this by reapportioning resources from CAR to WFCL, as well as unused funds from BFI follow-up to WFCL. The problem of devaluation, inflation, and targets was discussed with USDOL. USDOL indicated that more funding could not be provided. Both WE and USDOL agreed that a downward revision of targets was not necessary, as the bulk of the additional WFCL were in easier-to-reach sectors. This issue came up at the final workshop meeting and WE explained the dilemma it was in: as it had already made commitments to children by the time the dollar devalued, it needed to deliver the promised interventions even if it meant further follow-up was not possible.

It seems, however, that the lack of funds for partners and beneficiaries also had to do with planning and management, not just external shocks. The dollar devaluation and inflation occurred in first years of the project, which meant that though these factors were originally unforeseen, the project had time to revise its planning for subsequent years to ensure more holistic services to each beneficiary. In addition, despite the devaluation, the project has exceeded its overall beneficiary targets:

- Direct beneficiaries by 114% (30,600 planned, 34,219 reached)
- Indirect beneficiaries by 107% (70,000 planned, 72,241 reached)
- WFCL by 127% (15,400 planned, 19,634 reached)

A lack of adequate funds should have meant that the project struggled to meet its original targets; instead it exceeded them by far, suggesting that the issue was also partly about the way resources were deployed, rather than simply a lack of availability. The same resources might have been used for a more concentrated, rounded, and sustainable intervention for a smaller number of beneficiaries. The midterm evaluation reminded the project that it was well ahead of its targets in 2007 and advised a focus on strengthening the impact and sustainability of interventions for existing beneficiaries. The final evaluation finds that these aspects continue to be concerns.

Most of the project's interventions are discreetly and separately funded, without overlaps from other funding sources, so the question of tracking funds is not really an issue. USDOL has already confirmed that beneficiaries are only counted once in the entertainment sector to ensure that there is no double funding. There are a few projects that are funded by multiple donors—children's clubs and child labor-free villages in the Nepalgunj area. The project confirms that funding for the eradication of bonded child labor in Western Nepal is kept separate and the organizations involved fund different activities, records of which are maintained in a common database.

#### Recommendations

##### **WE**

- Future proposals should be more realistically budgeted.

### **3.4 IMPACT**

Impact of the project can be assessed at various levels: beneficiaries, families, communities, local partners, and government. The project's impact can be seen most readily at the beneficiary level. In one of the evaluation meetings, program officers were asked to think of the most important example of project impact known to them: 11 thought of impact on individuals, two on government policy and families/communities, and one on local partners. Other stakeholders repeated this pattern of response. As the project is providing direct educational services to children, there is ample evidence of changes in the skills, abilities, and circumstances of individual children. Change becomes more difficult to demonstrate moving up from family/community level through local NGOs and up to government. These stakeholders receive less direct services and, as larger complex social groups and organizations, are influenced by a variety of other factors. A common problem at these higher levels is knowing what outcomes can fairly be attributed to the project and when its activities segue into interventions carried out by others.

### **3.4.1 Children**

There are plentiful examples of the project's positive impact on the lives of beneficiaries. The children's groups were always unanimous in insisting that the project had made a big difference to them. The SEEP/VT beneficiaries said that the project had helped them to become more self-reliant, learn about business, develop a savings habit, be practical, and solve problems around the house. Beneficiaries frequently talked about keeping savings and the comfort it gave them to have something to fall back on. Examples of impact at the individual level are now very well documented in technical progress reports and the story collection. The school support children also confirmed that their lives had improved through the opportunity to go to school; even the CAAFAG children, though generally difficult to draw out, were unanimous in saying they were happy to be in school. The NFE/GATE beneficiaries said their lives were much more interesting since they started classes and that they'd like to attend for many more hours each day. The evaluator met one group of children benefiting from school support and other child participation activities funded by other donors. Their knowledge of child rights, sexual abuse, and their confidence in speaking up in the focus group was a positive statement of the way the local partner had packaged together BFII interventions with components funded by other donors, enhancing both sets of activities.

### **3.4.2 Parents**

Impact on parents in terms of changes in behaviors and attitudes appears more mixed. All parents with children receiving school support, or receiving family support directly, expressed gratitude to the project. They were pleased that their children were attending school and felt it enhanced their own lives. For example, one mother of a girl attending a *madrassa* school said she was happy to hear about her daughter's school day as she felt it made her own life more interesting.

Some parents demonstrated that their attitudes to child labor had changed. The CAAFAG parents, for example, said the project had changed their attitudes to children and work; they used to send their children out herding but now recognized the importance of education and encouraged them to go to school. Parents in one SEEP/VT group said they don't ask children for support anymore, even in harvesting season, preferring to take the additional burden on themselves. Staff members report that parents of children in NFE changed their priorities as they learned to value education—they may enroll younger siblings in school so that they have no need of NFE. Despite these testimonies of the impact on parental behavior and attitudes, there were other groups and individuals where the project did not appear to be making much difference. Parents receiving family support were usually pleased with the business opportunities opened to them and the possibility of making savings but did not always link the support received to a personal responsibility for keeping their children out of work.

### **3.4.3 Schools**

At the school level, meetings with PTAs confirmed important changes to the school environment, school transparency, a greater sense of ownership by parents, increased financial security, and opportunities for income generation. Where the PTAs were functioning well, they had done much for general school improvements. Impacts in terms of awareness or action on child labor were less noticeable.

#### **3.4.4 Communities**

Evidence of impact at the community level appeared limited. There were a few secondhand testimonies from project participants that communities were supporting cooperative groups set up under the project. The PTA/SMC/CMC structures habitually include one or two community members, but wider outreach into the community does not seem to have occurred. Aside from the CAAFAG sector, community mobilization approaches have not been fully utilized by the project. This matter will be further discussed in the section on sustainability.

#### **3.4.5 Partners**

Impact on partners includes increased capacities in database management, reporting, and in the delivery of education interventions. Some local partners are hoping to continue SEEP and NFE interventions through funding from other donors. One local partner, who had not worked on child labor at all before, credited WE with raising staff awareness in the first place. This partner has now gone on to become the leading child labor/child rights NGO in its district and is carrying out initiatives beyond what WE is directly supporting.

Changes in partner knowledge and behavior can be difficult to attribute to WE, as a number of partners, certainly most met by the evaluator, are strong independent organizations. Claims about the impact and influence of the project cannot always be linked directly to project funding. Staff members said that an example of WE impact was that one partner had managed to secure the support of 11 municipalities to work on child labor; upon further enquiry, it emerged that the partner in question has been working on child rights/child labor since the early 1990s, before the project, and these were its own actions carried out independently of the project. In another example, a technical progress report stated that partners were responding to abuses by police and army officers, as an example of BFII activity, but these interventions did not appear to be stimulated by WE. It must be stressed that these examples are not in any way deliberate attempts by the project to claim credit for work it has not done, but rather indicative of a lack of experience and understanding among staff of measuring and attributing impacts.

#### **3.4.6 Policy**

There is noticeable impact of the project on education policy but not in other policy areas. WE can claim a significant role in improving quality education—QERP, WTS, PTAs, SIP, EMIS—through its joint partnership with UNICEF and the government. WTS as a joint venture can show increased enrollment in schools, particularly for girls. Some materials that WE has helped to develop are being mainstreamed; the National Center for Education and Development has adopted the QERP materials for in-service and pre-service training. WE has also been an important voice among others, calling for educational reform such as free and compulsory education.

In terms of NFE, the project can claim some specific impacts by itself, as it is recognized as a leader in NFE in Nepal. It has, uniquely among NGOs in Nepal, achieved equivalence for its curriculum up to primary school within the government curriculum. Local partners are working with local authorities and using the model curriculum and text materials. The project reports that other organizations are also using its NFE materials. WE programs in other countries like India, Egypt, and Cambodia are replicating the BFII project's NFE activities.

## **Recommendations**

### **WE**

- The story collection is a best practice for tracking changes in individual lives in an in depth way. The project should review how it can track changes at other levels also.

## **3.5 SUSTAINABILITY**

Sustainability can be examined from different levels: continuing personal benefits for those that have received services; the continuation of interventions that have already been implemented; and the expansion of direct interventions offered by the project to new beneficiaries through new donors and providers. The project's overall approach to sustainability also merits attention.

### **3.5.1 Sustainability of Personal Benefits**

There is no doubt that individual beneficiaries will enjoy some kind of a lasting benefit from the services and teaching they've received. The direct education interventions have given the participants new skills and knowledge that cannot be taken away, but the support of families and communities is needed to keep these children out of WFCL. Whether and how this will benefit them later in life is difficult to say, as the project does not track beneficiaries for the long term. There is an ongoing debate about whether the project should track in the long term, as this would be a very costly and labor-intensive exercise. Ultimately, the government should have a child protection system that can track vulnerable children, which would be more cost-effective for WE to ensure delivery of its interventions in a more holistic and sustainable way. WE should also work with UNICEF and others to promote an effective national system of child protection, rather than go down the route of long-term tracking by itself. A small sample study would be useful to see what kinds of long-term impacts the project has.

### **3.5.2 Sustainability of Services Already Provided**

Most direct interventions are only for a limited period of training—SEEP/VT—and do not require instruction to continue. Ongoing monitoring and support is desirable, and some NGOs have declared that they are willing to do this as part of their normal work, though it is not clear that all partners will be able to do so. SEEP beneficiaries have been given a start to self-employment and should be able to sustain this alone, but some are floundering already without follow-up support. There were one or two examples of communities stepping in to provide support, but not necessarily as a result of the project; community funds were committed to support a SEEP duck farm, and a community member donated land to an agroforestry project.

The PTAs will be sustainable in places where they are working well. Stakeholders are confident that these will continue without the project. It is now government policy to have PTAs in each school, which gives added prospects for sustainability. The income-generation activities provide a foundation for continued activity. In meetings with the evaluator, PTAs frequently pleaded for extra funds, but the project strategy of making them self-financing appears to be the right one. The main issue regarding PTAs is that they are not mobilized enough on child labor to make a sustainable difference to the issue. As a separate point, WE's wider work on quality education is

sustainable, as there is full ownership by government of that agenda as well as funding/support from UNICEF and the government itself.

The family support and agroforestry activities should continue, as these are savings/credit schemes run through cooperatives. However, it is uncertain whether families and communities are aware that increased income should be used to send children to school. The project rightly identified that family support is a critical vehicle for the sustainability of children's education services but has not implemented these initiatives in a way that bodes well for keeping children out of WFCL (see page 21 for further discussion). As the project winds to a close, final efforts need to be made to mobilize existing family support groups to ensure that proceeds are used to keep children in school and out of WFCL. Earlier action was also desirable in some cases. The GATE initiative identified the need for a family support plan in the midterm evaluation but it is only just being put in place.

School scholarship is the one intervention that requires ongoing financial support. The provision of assistance has created a dependency, as school support children will need help until they finish school. This may not necessarily be an overwhelming problem. As of April 2009, GON has initiated a policy of free and compulsory education up to age 13. However, there are concerns over implementation, as some costs may still accrue and, moreover, there are still fees for children over age 14. The project recognized the problem of school scholarships early on and initiated the family support program as a way of helping families increase their income so that the project would be free to support new children. As family support is not yet a sustainable way of ensuring school support, some local partners have been thinking ahead and planning for alternative forms of support:

- Linking children to formal government scholarships.
- Creating funds for school support—one partner has dedicated 1% of profits from microfinance activities to a school support fund, as well as some part of the organization's overhead. Another local partner is charging Re. 1 for business tax and then allocating the proceeds to child labor projects.
- PTAs have sometimes been successful in arguing for an exemption of fees from local schools.
- For domestic workers, local partners have succeeded in persuading employers to pay fees in some cases.

Local partners with concrete plans are few. Most are operating in the realm of ideas, and WE needs to sit with them to make specific plans for the children they are supporting. Other ideas include—

- Asking VDCs to give 15% of the budget they receive from the government to the education sector, but there is no mobilization around that and time is now short.
- Accessing district government funds—again, time is short.
- Pursuing child sponsorship initiatives.

As the project phases out, it is a matter of urgency that plans are made for individual school support children.

### **3.5.3 Sustainability of Direct Intervention Activities**

The actual direct services being provided by the project cannot be expanded and offered to new beneficiaries without new funding. There was one example of a local partner succeeding in obtaining local government funding to carry out NFE classes, but otherwise the future of these activities looks bleak. Local partners, when asked which activities will flounder without project support, unhesitatingly pointed to NFE and SEEP/VT.

### **3.5.4 Sustainability of Work on Child Labor**

As for other activities on child labor, it is clear that work funded by other donors will continue and that stakeholders are independently engaged in various activities not funded by the project, which address child labor. The evaluator asked participants of two stakeholder workshops to map out what they were doing on child labor and what would/would not continue without project support. It was surprising to see that most of the activities listed were being carried out independently of WE, including initiatives related to advocacy/awareness-raising, rescue and rehabilitation, children's clubs, coordination, school enrollment, and events. District authorities also reported various initiatives, including coordination, work on children's clubs, budget allocations for child labor activities such as internal advocacy for access to central labor ministry budget for child labor, data collection (in Nepalgunj through a fund of 14,000 rupees supported by UNICEF, Save the Children, and Plan International), and rescue and rehabilitation work.

### **3.5.5 Sustainability of WE Work on Child Labor**

WE has been successful in leveraging some matching funds for its work on child labor. These have been smaller amounts than the USDOL contribution, but in total amount to nearly US\$2 million over the life of the project. Table 6 shows these matched funds.

**Table 6: Matched Funding for the BFII Project  
Period: October 2005 to September 2009**

Donors	Program	As of February 2009 (USD)
Private donor	GATE	196,449
Dorothy Taylor	GATE	17,695
Private donor	GATE	68,676
Private donor	GATE	92,382
UNICEF	QERP	421,036
UNICEF	CAAFAG	470,789
UNICEF	QERP	302,215
UNICEF	Schools as Zones for Peace (SZOP)	130,115
UNICEF	QERP	109,888
WFP	Food Program I	18,663
WFP	Food Program II	70,084
Private donor	Safe Migration	8,695
<b>World Education Australia</b>	<b>Family Support</b>	<b>10,000</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,916,687</b>

Source: World Education

WE states that the issue of child labor is mainstreamed through other work: families with children in child labor are given priority for inclusion in WE's health program; the community mapping of out-of-school children and those in child labor has been mainstreamed into the new joint initiative with the Nepalese Youth Opportunity Foundation and Backward Society Education (BASE) for children in bonded labor; and the issue of minors in sexually exploitive work is mainstreamed and prioritized in the work of trafficking. There are also examples of how learning from other projects has influenced BFII: the family support idea came from Sustain Income for Women, a program funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development; the GATE program was adapted for the project; the Life and Livelihood program provided the strategy for CAAFAG; health issues came from Health Education and Adult Literacy; Starting New Lives led to learning on trafficking; and the Farmer Field schools led to the project's work on agroforestry.

### 3.5.6 Sustainable Approaches

Underlying this discussion about sustainability is a deeper question about the appropriateness of the project approach. The project has met its original targets, and its interventions have been well regarded and successful in working with children in WFCL. The question is not whether the project has been effective in its activities and stated targets, but whether it could have multiplied its effects by adopting different strategies that foster greater family, community, and governmental responsibility for the issue—namely strategies that focus on individual

empowerment, public awareness-raising, and advocacy toward political bodies to influence policy. Stakeholders identified this as a key gap in the project's repertoire. The project did include a sustainability plan in its design, but the plan did not fully encompass this broader approach, nor was it sufficiently tied to the sustainability of efforts on WFCL, but rather to the education interventions. The plan was called a sustainability matrix and did not refer to an exit strategy. The project's approach could have been different at various levels.

### **Child Level**

The project adopts a child participation approach to some extent, though not necessarily labeling it as such. Children are consulted over various aspects of the training and education given to them. Before materials and courses are finalized, the children make decisions about what they learn, carry out participatory market research on SEEP/VT courses, engage as child representatives in some PTAs, and participate in project review meetings. Child participation occurs in the project, but its quality could be enhanced. The evaluator met many groups of children and found that those receiving services from local partners specializing in such approaches were more confident, aware of their rights, knowledgeable about how to protect themselves, and better able to give their opinions. One partner carrying out child participation activities funded by another donor was convinced that the WE NFE intervention would be less effective without this supplementary work on child participation.

The evaluator also observed that, although children attended the district-level evaluation workshops, they were unable to formulate their thoughts and contribute effectively, except in one case where they were assisted by local partner staff. The project has taken steps toward giving children the space to participate, but needs to do more to adopt techniques to enhance the quality of their participation. Some groups, such as CAAFAG, are very diffident and require special attention. Staff members sometimes appeared skeptical about the need for child participation or unaware of the need to improve their approach—"it's easy to set up children's clubs," "it's not possible to get much out of them," or "children only come up with shopping lists." Clearly, there are issues about how child participation is managed, particularly for child laborers. It should not become a burden, obligation, or a protection risk. Nonetheless, such techniques can help to give children personal power, an ability to protect themselves, and foster sustainability in a very personal way. It is worth noting that child participation is highlighted in the National Master Plan as an important strategy for building self-esteem and empowering children to make decisions to protect themselves.

### **Family Level**

Parents of school support children and family support beneficiaries expressed gratitude for the services they received and have an increased recognition of the importance of education. However, the project is not fostering an adequate sense of personal responsibility. The evaluator met a few parents who said they avoid sending their children out to work and one mother who said she would make personal sacrifices and take on more work herself to ensure her child could continue her education. These were only a few cases, however, and most of the parents were looking for continued support. In fact, after the GATE/Bridging course visit, one parent came up to the evaluation team to ask for handouts, indicating that the project had not really fostered a sense of personal responsibility among parents at all. In some cases, parents exhibited very little awareness and understanding of child labor.

### **Community Level**

Social mobilization at this level could have been stronger through the establishment of community watchdogs, called child protection committees or child labor monitoring committees. During preparation for the mission, the evaluator specifically asked to see examples of community mobilization and was informed that community awareness-raising activities are mainly carried out through PTAs, WTS, and World Day Against Child Labour. The pilot child protection committees were mainly in CAAFAG districts. During the field visit, the evaluator found other sites/sectors where local partners are working with child protection committees implemented through other donor funding, such as Children and Women in Social Service and Human Rights. Similar approaches were mentioned by WE staff working with CAR, but it was difficult to ascertain the scope of this and how much was solely funded by WE. The project is also involved in initiatives where other collaborators such as UNICEF are taking responsibility for this aspect. The 2006 WTS Review mentions an increased sense of ownership among some communities, as the WTS campaign involves mobilizing child rights protectors and education promoters supported by the Ministry of Education and local NGOs.

The evaluator came across some examples where community members had stepped in to provide support. One community member donated land for five years to support agroforestry work but said that it was his own desire to support underprivileged groups rather than the result of sensitization from the project. The evaluator also heard of one successful example of community mobilization by the project that merits replication. SEEP facilitators in Pokhara said that they had sensitized the community from the start and that it would need to financially support children's businesses, like duck farms, after the project's end.

PTAs are the main vehicles through which the project can reach into the community and instill this kind of approach. The PTAs/SMCs/CMCs include community representatives, and there was some evidence of outreach work; however, even with thriving PTAs, the focus is very much on school improvement and the importance of education, rather than community awareness-raising on child labor, let alone community-level monitoring and referral. The project's social mobilization activities, village orientation meetings, and CMCs were used during startup and project implementation to draw child laborers and their parents into the project. These activities took place some time ago and do not appear to have left a lasting legacy. External stakeholders who had seen this work in action remarked that opportunities were missed to turn project structures into sustainable community-level child protection mechanisms with wider ownership. The CAAFAG work is often cited as an example of the project's success in community mobilization, but this only started in 2008 and only covers one sector—even local partners say it is too soon to judge its effectiveness. Other international organizations that have used this approach for years say it is a very cost-effective and sustainable methodology.

### **Government Level**

Some stakeholders are critical of WE for failing to take stronger advocacy with the government on child labor issues and that its education only strategy is not enough. The project participates in interagency forums on trafficking and CAAFAG as well as meetings convened by the government. On the broader question of advocacy, there is a distinct difference between education policy and labor as well as other relevant policy areas. As far as education policy is

concerned, WE plays a key role in supporting policy change through its partnership agreement with UNICEF and the education department. This policy work has been at both the district and central levels, and has involved measures outlined earlier on school enrollment (WTS) and quality education (QERP materials, PTA, SIP, EMIS, and student tracking system).

This project's role in the education sector can be described as supporting policy development. It is not perceived as a traditional advocacy/lobbying role, rather one of technical cooperation. Some stakeholders felt WE could have done more to challenge the government education department to include child labor as a more explicit issue in its initiatives or to advocate for the mainstreaming of QERP materials or compulsory implementation of PTA policy. Advocacy and policy influence on other ministries appears absent. There is minimal engagement with the labor ministry and some engagement with the district social welfare departments, but this varies from place to place and depends on the district departments themselves. The evaluator met active participants in the stakeholder meetings, but this is not expected to be the case everywhere. There are also largely unexplored possibilities of working with other branches of the district government on issues such as economic development. The project points to the lack of a functioning local government—there are administrators but no elected political leaders—but other stakeholders report successes when working with municipalities and say that WE, working through and with its partners, should be doing more to make links now for when local government is fully functional.

The project and USDOL EI goals and objectives both emphasize approaches that build local ownership and sustainability. When assessed against its own objectives,<sup>10</sup> the project has fully met Objectives 2 and 3 related to improving the provision of education services for children in WFCL, but its aim to mobilize parents, communities, and government on WFCL has been less successful. The project's direct activities with children in WFCL have been effective, but there is an overall sense that the project could have made more of itself in other ways. The project has served the first two goals of USDOL EI<sup>11</sup> on strengthening education systems very well, but Goals 3 and 4 related to child labor policy and ensuring sustainability, have been less addressed.

Advocacy, awareness-raising, and social mobilization are not panaceas but long-term strategies that need to be carried out in conjunction with civil society and international actors. In a poor developing country like Nepal, there is going to be a limitation to what responsibilities local and national actors can absorb, and the need for external support will remain. Nonetheless examples show that families, communities, and government are ready to assume more responsibilities than the project has challenged them to do.

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<sup>10</sup> BFII objectives are (1) greater parental and community participation in formal, nonformal, and vocational education for children removed from WFCL and children at risk of WFCL; (2) improved quality, relevance, and access to educational programs for children withdrawn from or at risk of entering into WFCL; (3) reduced barriers to the success of children withdrawn from or at risk of entering into WFCL in formal and alternative school systems; and (4) national education policy dialogue reflecting the needs of children engaged in WFCL and children at risk of becoming child laborers.

<sup>11</sup> The four goals of USDOL EI projects are to (1) raise awareness on the importance of education for all children and mobilize a wide array of actors to improve and expand education infrastructures; (2) strengthen formal and transitional education systems that encourage working children and those at risk of working to attend schools; (3) strengthen national institutions and policies on education and child labor; and (4) ensure the long-term sustainability of these factors.

The next question involves the capacity WE has to carry out this type of work. At the family and community levels, this should be an essential complement to its education interventions and easily done through its existing interventions, such as PTAs and family support, providing they are more geared toward it. The project should not seek to duplicate existing mechanisms. The evaluator was aware that there are already community mobilization activities funded by other donors (child-friendly villages, villages free of child labor), so the focus should be on ensuring that child labor is covered by these existing activities or initiating new structures, preferably in partnership with other international organizations, where these initiatives do not already exist. Child labor needs to be situated in the context of the wider child protection issues if it is to have any sustainable support at the community level.

In terms of the capacity to carry out advocacy toward government and political leadership, WE does not have the experience, expertise, or mandate to lead and coordinate others in an advocacy campaign on child labor. Although it has contributed successfully to government education policy, including the WTS public awareness campaign, this is as a respected advisor/supporter and on its core area of expertise (education). WE itself may not be comfortable with a more activist confrontational advocacy role and needs to decide what type of advocacy player it can be and in what ways it will work in partnership with others on this issue. For instance, some local partners are very experienced at rights approaches and advocacy initiatives and, ideally, a national campaign should be coordinated by an organization like ILO, which has the mandate and expertise to do so. In any event, WE needs to strengthen its own internal capacity on such approaches as an important complement to its service delivery.

All of this speaks to what might be described as a rights-based approach, as one of the key strengths of such strategies is their potential for achieving sustainability by advocating the responsibility of governments to uphold the human rights standards to which they have subscribed. The project never mentioned this approach until the evaluator raised it. Generally, there was a lack of awareness about the need to know about rights—program staff did not mention that they needed training on this. Advocacy could occur without a rights-based approach, but effective advocacy needs an underlying framework, and development agencies are increasingly adopting rights-based approaches as a means of providing more holistic sustainable interventions. ILO, UNICEF, and various other international NGOs have adopted rights-based approaches. In fact, many aspects of WE's work would already fit into the key elements on a rights-based approach (participation, discrimination, and accountability) but are not conceptualized: participation—parental involvement through PTAs; nondiscrimination—strong focus of the project on addressing marginalized groups; and accountability—school report cards; etc. WE should review whether a rights-based approach would enhance its work and audit itself against rights-based approach criteria to see what gaps remain.

## Recommendations

### WE

- Review plans with partners for providing ongoing support to school scholarship children and ensuring that measures are in place to maintain funds for individual children to whom the project has made a commitment. This may involve seeking funds from elsewhere, such as district authorities, VDCs, and other funders; having partners set up their own funds or income-generation activities to continue supporting school scholarships; or ensuring that parents benefiting from family support programs understand their obligation to use increased income to pay for school costs. (Immediate recommendation)
- Staff should work more closely with partners in the final months educating and mobilizing existing PTAs on child labor issues and encouraging them to continue providing support to current beneficiaries and to identify other vulnerable children in the future. (Immediate recommendation)
- Staff and partners need to work closely with family support groups in the final months to educate them about child labor and to embed a greater sense of personal responsibility for keeping their own children and other children in the community out of WFCL. (Immediate recommendation)
- Future project designs should take account the need to build family, community ownership, and government responsibility. This means delivering education interventions alongside community mobilization activities and political advocacy.
- Future project designs may also consider making sustainability a responsibility under one of the project staff positions.

## 3.6 EMERGING BEST PRACTICES

This section is a short compilation of observations on best practices by the evaluator. Key practices that merit replication and are likely to be of interest to others working to combat WFCL can be summarized as follows:

### ***Nonformal Education***

The project's work on NFE using a modular and flexible approach was highly regarded and seen as an ideal methodology for engaging hard-to-reach children and integrating them into the school system. This methodology has been replicated by WE programs in other countries. WE should consider writing up the methodology and materials in a way that can be accessed and used by a global audience seeking methodologies for working with WFCL in other countries.

### ***Quality Education Initiatives***

The project is contributing to a number of national education policy initiatives alongside the government, UNICEF, and other organizations. The WTS enrollment campaign, PTAs, and QERP materials are making an important contribution to improving school enrollment rates and the quality of education in Nepal. These efforts also merit being written up as best practices, though the project needs to refine the direct link with child labor before doing so.

### **Beneficiary Database**

The project has developed an excellent database capable of tracking a large number of beneficiaries on the basis of key indicators. The overall system and procedures are sophisticated and well thought out. This initiative is a best practice and should definitely be written up for a wider audience. The project should refine the methodology for checking the quality of data entered into the system and also adapt the database to a more commonly used software—Excel or Access—to ensure its use more widely.

USDOL/WE may wish to consider having these practices fully researched and written up for wider dissemination as case studies once the points raised by this report have been addressed. The best practice case studies should pull together the rich technical knowledge and insights of staff members working on these issues. The development of case studies would benefit from some external inputs, as this would help validate the examples as best practices for the wider development community.

## **VI CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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### **4.1 CONCLUSIONS**

BFII can show demonstrable impact on the problem of child labor in Nepal. Project data show that it has succeeded in withdrawing thousands of children from WFCL and prevented many others from entering into WFCL. The project's interventions, particularly its NFE courses but also its work on vocational education and formal education/education quality, are highly regarded. Its education services are leading to direct and tangible changes for children in WFCL. The issue is not whether the project has been effective in meeting its original targets or in providing professional education services. Rather, the question is whether the project could have multiplied its effect and delivered its services in a more holistic and sustainable way with wider impact. Some aspects of project implementation merit attention: beneficiary selection was not as precise as might be expected; services were not always delivered in the most complete or optimum way possible; and the project's indirect activities were effective interventions in their own right, but they did not fully maximize links with child labor.

The project was partly held back by the overall context and the limitations of its budget, but internal planning and management decisions also account for some of these issues in project implementation. The project funds might have been used to provide a more effectively targeted and rounded service to a smaller number of beneficiaries. The scope of the project is very wide in terms of geography, target groups, and interventions, making it difficult to manage effectively. An approach that emphasized awareness-raising, advocacy, and empowerment at all levels—family, community, and government—may have fostered better sustainability of the many benefits the project has provided to individual beneficiaries. The midterm evaluation came to similar recommendations concerning the need for more linked interventions and a greater focus on impact and sustainability. The following section summarizes the key findings under each evaluation criteria and makes recommendations for WE and USDOL. Immediate recommendations aimed at bringing BFII to a conclusion are marked. All other recommendations are directed toward future programs on child labor in Nepal.

### **4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **4.2.1 Relevance**

Such a project ideally needs to be situated in an enabling external environment where there is a harmonized attempt by different actors to tackle the problem of child labor. The project has been implemented in something of a fallow period externally, where neither government departments nor mandated UN agencies, namely ILO-IPEC, have been able to lead a coordinated effort on this issue. The work of both WE and other international and national organizations (both government and NGO) on child labor has occurred in a piecemeal, isolated way and without the benefit of a coordinated effort. The project intervention has served to reduce levels of WFCL, but national statistics are several years out of date and require updating. Education alone is not a sufficient strategy, and direct education interventions need to be supported by legal and policy action on child labor issues.

## USDOL

- USDOL may wish to extend funding for a third phase of the project. Nepal still has high levels of child labor and WE is well placed to address this problem. It has a strong expertise in the delivery of education services and a solid reputation in providing NFE interventions, which are shown to work for children in WFCL. The project design, implementation, and management structure require some revision to address the issues arising in this report and to ensure that a potential future phase has optimum effect. In addition, USDOL may want to consider funding a complementary, rather than joint, program involving organizations with different expertise and mandates so that the problem of child labor in Nepal can be tackled in a more holistic way.
- USDOL should consider funding rapid assessments and data collection to update statistics on child labor in Nepal.

## WE

- WE should take stock of the current situation and the work of other actors and revise the sectors and geographical areas in which it is working.

### 4.2.2 Effectiveness

#### **Targets**

The project has met its targets according to its own data and appears to have done so comfortably, having exceeded targets on withdrawal from WFCL by some 4,000.

## WE

- Given that some age-related inaccuracies in the database were identified by the evaluation, the project should review its statistics for *withdrawn* from WFCL and, to the extent possible, make amendments to arrive at a more accurate final figure for submission to USDOL. The report proposes a tidying up of the database as the project closes and not a major review of any kind. The evaluation also suggests that staff members review the database itself to remove the specific beneficiaries identified as being overage and carry out further verification during field visits where feasible. As the project has substantially exceeded its targets for WFCL by some 4,000, this would not adversely affect the ability of the project to meet its commitments. (Immediate recommendation)

#### **Key Intervention Areas**

WE's expertise on education is highly regarded. Its efforts to increase school enrollment and access to quality education through initiatives such as WTS, QERP materials, PTAs, and EMIS, which are carried out in partnership with UNICEF and the Ministry of Education, are positively regarded. These will ultimately help to reduce child labor, albeit in an indirect and unquantifiable way. The school support intervention enables individual children in WFCL to access school, results in tangible changes in individual lives, and is widely seen as filling a hole left by government scholarship initiatives that do not always cater to the neediest.

NFE is widely seen as WE's strongest area of expertise and an ideal strategy for reaching children in WFCL. Its flexible and modular approach is seen as particularly innovative. The vocational education activities are also appreciated but require some fine-tuning. The SEEP interventions, which combine training with self-employment, are a good solution for children who might otherwise find it hard to locate paid work but need some refinement to address issues of training quality and follow-up support. The family support activities, including agroforestry, are rightly identified as a way of ensuring sustainability of withdrawn children from WFCL. The interventions work in their own right; beneficiaries are pleased to participate, glad to make savings, and have the opportunity to start businesses. However, the link to child labor is inadequate. The project does not explain sufficiently what is expected from parents in return for the support they are given in terms of keeping children out of WFCL. The database and monitoring systems do not track the fate of individual children sufficiently.

#### **WE**

- Develop methodologies for making sure that the links to child labor are more explicit in education activities.
- Explore the possibility of adopting a child labor theme for a future WTS campaign, as it seems the ideal vehicle for nationwide awareness-raising.
- The project's learning and tools on NFE should be written up as a best practice suitable for global dissemination. Other potential best practices require further refinement before they are disseminated; WTS and PTAs need to strengthen their explicit links to child labor, and the beneficiary database needs to address the issues of data quality and software. (Immediate recommendation)
- Staff and partners should make further efforts to ensure that SEEP/VT beneficiaries supported by the project are self-sufficient and able to stand on their own feet before the project ends. (Immediate recommendation)
- Consider how the SEEP/VT methodology can be refined in the future to address issues of training quality, follow-up, and market research.

#### **Beneficiary Selection**

Targeting is not always as precise as it might be, and while project beneficiaries may be underprivileged, they do not always qualify under the strict definitions of USDOL—poor communities but without children in WFCL, beneficiaries who are over age 18 and are not children, or beneficiaries who were not *at risk* in accordance with USDOL criteria. These problems with targeting may in part be because of a lack of a shared understanding among stakeholders of child labor definitions. The project has tried hard to convey USDOL definitions through the use of a child labor spectrum, but this continues to be a challenge. USDOL, through its own audits and assessments, is aware of the challenges facing grantees and knows that USDOL definitions, derived from international agreements, are difficult to convey to a wide audience. The project may wish to consider how it can develop some simpler awareness-raising messages and make the child labor spectrum easier to understand.

## **USDOL**

- USDOL may wish to carry out a review and statistical analysis to see how the use of child labor definitions by grantees is impacting the accuracy and quality of data USDOL is receiving about the child labor rates and withdrawal/prevention statistics.

## **WE**

- WE should separate its program and reporting needs from the task of awareness-raising and develop a simpler awareness-raising message for families and communities about child labor.

## **Scope**

The scope of the project is very wide in terms of geography, target groups, and interventions. The project is geographically stretched and working in 28 of 75 districts in Nepal. It has carried out a wide range of education interventions over time and is working with beneficiaries from 10 target sectors. The project would benefit from taking a more geographically concentrated approach, integrating its own services better and working with partners and other international organizations to deliver other services and packages to beneficiaries. This would make for a more holistic, sustainable package.

The current picture is one of piecemeal interventions—a course here, a course there (NFE, school support, SEEP) but not always supported by parallel PTA, community mobilization, and family support activities in the same place. The project's desire to take a tailored individualized approach may be part of the reason. The project does have an impressive understanding of the needs of individual groups as testified by its many reports and discussions with project staff. However, the individualized approach is not necessarily being delivered on the ground as seen by issues over targeting, definitions, data, and gaps in services. Some partners, but not all, are able to develop a more packaged approach themselves. The midterm evaluation raised similar concerns and called for more linked interventions. The project was reluctant to accept this recommendation on the basis of needing to reach vulnerable communities. There is an inevitable tension between reaching wider numbers and providing more intensive support to smaller numbers. Standalone education services do not appear to be the most effective approach and the project needs to find better ways of integrating its own services and linking to those provided by others. This may possibly have implications for the numbers of partners and staff engaging with the project.

## **WE**

- WE and other actors in the field of child labor should take account of the conclusions and recommendations in this report in any future child labor projects. In particular, the project design should allow for an integrated and geographically concentrated approach:
  - Organizations should ensure that their own activities are fully integrated. Education interventions should take place in contexts where other project activities, such as PTAs and family support, are also being carried out.

- Organizations should work with local partners and other international organizations, both donors and implementers, and government authorities for complementary inputs in order to deliver a more holistic package to beneficiaries. These will be services that the organization itself is not specialized in delivering but that are needed by beneficiaries.
- The design should take account of the need to build family and community ownership and government responsibility. This means situating education interventions alongside community mobilization activities and political advocacy. Ideally, these interventions should be carried out in collaboration with other actors.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The beneficiary database is a very good system in many ways, well thought out, with optimum amounts of information, and much valued by partners who are replicating it for other projects. However, the age-related inaccuracies identified in the database highlight the need to look at the systems for reviewing the quality of data entered into the system and the role of project staff in monitoring and validation. The technical progress reports are excellent but could perhaps add more information about internal challenges to give donors a more realistic picture of how the project is progressing. Staff approaches to monitoring vary, and there appears to be room for capacity building.

#### **WE**

- WE needs to review how program staff can further engage in verifying the beneficiary database on a regular basis.
- The software needs revamping and replacement by a more commonly used, accessible software if it is to have wider replication.
- The beneficiary database system should be written up as a best practice once some of the issues of data quality and software have been ironed out.
- Staff members need capacity building on M&E techniques to ensure that all follow best and standard practices during monitoring visits.
- A complaints/feedback mechanism for stakeholders, particularly beneficiaries and partners, should be set up.
- Terminology should be revised in future proposals so that baseline refers to the project's starting point and assessments refer to individual children. The project should carry out a sample study on the prevalence of WFCL in its projects sites and then use this as a basis for measuring progress.
- More regular and direct interaction between WE staff and beneficiaries should be a key part of monitoring activities.

## **Management**

The findings of this evaluation suggest that the project has been missing some strategic oversight and management. It is unclear whether the issues noted in the evaluation were identified earlier and, if so, whether they were acted on. The evaluator was not able to probe this issue further and leaves it to the project to reflect on management gaps. Staff working on BFII are a dedicated and loyal team who need a wide range of knowledge and skills on education, child labor, related interventions, and wider development issues in order to plan interventions and guide partners effectively. There appears to be insufficient investment in staff capacity building, and consequently, the project is not making the most of its staff resources. Other staffing issues that merit attention include problems with staff retention and the need for a staff code of conduct. Project design could be more participatory and the project document, including the logframe and work plan, could be more simplified and harmonized in the future to facilitate monitoring.

## **WE**

- Carry out management review to see if management and administrative systems can be strengthened to pick up on the types of issues identified in this evaluation at an earlier stage.
- Carry out more staff training on a wide range of issues, such as project's education interventions, related interventions, and wider development issues.
- Management feedback to both staff and partners on what ideas were taken forward in future proposals.
- Simplify and harmonize project documents—project descriptions, logframes, and work plans—in future phases in order to facilitate better monitoring.
- Develop a code of conduct for staff.

## **External Relations**

Relations with local partners are good, but some may require increased support and capacity building. Relations with other USDOL grantees have been strained at times and lacking in cooperation, support, and exchange, partly due to the solicitation process. The joint project in Phase I between ILO and WE didn't work well because the interventions were too entangled and interdependent, but a more complementary arrangement with distinct and independent roles may work better. International donors currently funding WE speak highly of its work. In terms of other international organizations, WE participates actively in interagency forums on trafficking and CAAFAG, and the project director is now chair of a group of international NGOs called AIN. Although WE is engaging with other international agencies at some levels, one-to-one relations with other implementers, primarily international NGOs, could do with strengthening. The lack of awareness of what other organizations are doing is mutual, as child specialists in Nepal unassociated with the project were also unfamiliar with WE's work on child labor. Good relations are no doubt hindered by a sense of competition over funding. Nonetheless the project would benefit from opening up and collaborating with other international organizations on project planning, capacity building, and learning. Closer relations with other international

implementing agencies to develop holistic and rounded packages of beneficiary services would be beneficial.

#### *USDOL*

- USDOL may wish to consider whether it can take any steps to foster a better relationship between its grantees. For example—
  - Require new grantees to demonstrate during the design stage how they are building on lessons learned and best practices from previous USDOL-funded projects, at least in the same country, if not across the board.
  - USDOL staff should hold joint meetings with all past and present grantees during country visits.
  - Consider solicitations that involve complementary, but not necessarily joint, programs to tackle WFCL in a particular context involving different organizations.
  - Facilitate contact between grantees globally in between grantee meetings, through such actions as the use of listservs.
  - Carry out a meta-analysis of past evaluations to identify common lessons learned and best practices that can then be used for critiquing and advising on new proposals.

#### **4.2.3 Efficiency**

The project interventions are undoubtedly low cost, particularly in light of the very tangible benefits received by beneficiaries in terms of increased knowledge, skills, and qualifications. Staff members and partners both said that the budget was too low for the services needed to be delivered. Although the project was low cost, the main issue is whether it could have been more efficient had it been more generously budgeted. The project faced external financial constraints, as inflation and the devaluation of the dollar meant that it had less money in real terms to spend on interventions and follow-up services. Nonetheless, since it still met and far exceeded its original targets, this suggests that resources might have been used differently to provide more holistic services to a smaller number of beneficiaries.

#### *WE*

- Future proposals should be more realistically budgeted.

#### **4.2.4 Impact**

There are plentiful examples of positive project impacts on the lives of child beneficiaries. Impacts at the family and community level are less perceptible, as these groups do not appear to be as mobilized over child labor as might be expected. Partners say they have learned about education interventions and beneficiary data collection from the project, but it is difficult to attribute changes in partner behavior to the project, as many local partners are strong, autonomous organizations. The project has contributed to the development of education policy

through its partnership agreement with UNICEF and the government, but its impacts on other policy areas are lacking.

*WE*

- The story collection is a best practice for tracking changes in individual lives in an in-depth way. The project should review how it can track changes at other levels also.

#### **4.2.5 Sustainability**

The personal benefits received by beneficiaries from the direct education interventions will stay with them and should help in their future lives. Training and startup support for interventions like SEEP/VT and family support should be enough to enable beneficiaries to continue these activities by themselves. However, individual child beneficiaries will need the support of their families and communities if they are to remain out of WFCL. The project's work on quality education—PTAs, WTS, QERP, and EMIS—is now fully owned by the government and UNICEF. The need for continuity of school scholarships for individual children to whom the project has made a commitment is critical. With the introduction of free and compulsory education up to age 13 in April 2009, the problem may not be as severe, but there are still likely to be some costs associated with going to school, as well as fees payable for education beyond age 14. It is also necessary to ensure that existing project interventions are sufficiently linked to the problem of child labor. Family support groups and PTAs need to be mobilized on this issue so that they can play a monitoring and safeguarding role once the project has ended. Overall, prospects for sustainability of child labor efforts appear tenuous, and the project might have multiplied the effects of its interventions and fostered better sustainability if it had adopted a model more strongly grounded in family/community-level awareness-raising/mobilization, and advocacy at government/political levels.

*WE*

- Review plans for providing ongoing support to school scholarship children with partners and ensure that measures are in place to maintain funds for individual children to whom the project has made a commitment. This may involve seeking funds from elsewhere: district authorities, VDCs, and other funders; having partners set up their own funds or income-generation activities to continue supporting school scholarships; or ensuring that parents benefiting from family support programs understand their obligation to use increased income to pay for school costs. (Immediate recommendation)
- Staff should work more closely with partners in the final months educating and mobilizing existing PTAs on child labor issues and encouraging them to continue providing support to current beneficiaries and to identify other vulnerable children in the future. (Immediate recommendation)
- Staff and partners need to work closely with family support groups in the final months to educate them about child labor and to embed a greater sense of personal responsibility for keeping their own children and other children in the community out of WFCL. (Immediate recommendation)

- Future project designs should take account of the need to build family, community ownership, and government responsibility. This means delivering education interventions alongside community mobilization activities and political advocacy.
- Future project designs might also consider making sustainability a responsibility under one of the project staff positions.

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# ANNEXES

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# **ANNEX A: TERMS OF REFERENCE**

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**Terms of Reference  
for the  
Final Evaluation  
of the Brighter Futures Project Phase II**

Cooperative Agreement Number:	E-9-K-5-0046
Financing Agency:	U.S. Department of Labor
Grantee Organization:	World Education
Dates of Project Implementation:	September 30, 2005 to September 30, 2009
Type of Evaluation:	Independent Final Evaluation
Evaluation Field Work Dates:	March 23-April 6, 2009
Preparation Date of TOR:	February 2009
Total Project Funds from USDOL Based on Cooperative Agreement:	US \$3,845,000
Vendor for Evaluation Contract:	Macro International, Inc., Headquarters 11785 Beltsville Drive Calverton, MD 20705 Tel: (301) 572-0200 Fax: (301) 572-0999

## **BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION**

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

Since 1995, the U.S. Congress has appropriated over \$663 million to USDOL for efforts to combat exploitive child labor internationally. This funding has been used to support technical cooperation projects to combat exploitive child labor in more than 80 countries around the world. Technical cooperation projects funded by USDOL range from targeted action programs in specific sectors of work to more comprehensive programs that support national efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor as defined by ILO Convention 182. USDOL-funded child labor elimination projects generally seek to achieve five major goals:

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

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

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

In the appropriations to USDOL for international child labor technical cooperation, the U.S. Congress directed the majority of the funds to support the two following programs:<sup>12</sup>

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

Since 1995, the US Congress has earmarked some \$371 million to support the International Labor Organization's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (ILO/IPEC), making the U.S. Government the leading donor to the program. USDOL-funded ILO/IPEC projects to combat child labor generally fall into one of several categories: comprehensive, national Timebound Programs (TBP) to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in a set time frame; less comprehensive Country Programs; sector-specific projects; data collection and research projects; and international awareness raising projects. In general, most projects include "direct action" components that are interventions to remove or prevent children from involvement in exploitative and hazardous work. One of the major strategies used by IPEC projects is to increase children's access to and participation in formal and non-formal education. Most IPEC projects also have a capacity-building component to assist in building a sustainable base for long-term elimination of exploitive child labor.

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<sup>12</sup> In 2007, the US Congress did not direct USDOL's appropriations for child labor elimination projects to either of these two programs. That year, USDOL allocated \$60 million for child labor elimination projects through a competitive process.

## *2. Child Labor Education Initiative*

Since 2001, the US Congress has provided some \$230 million to USDOL to support the Child Labor Education Initiative (EI), which focuses on the elimination of the worst forms of child labor through the provision of education opportunities. These projects are being implemented by a wide range of international and non-governmental organizations as well as for-profit firms. USDOL typically awards EI cooperative agreements through a competitive bid process.

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

### *Other Initiatives*

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

## **Project Background**

Since 1997, USDOL has provided approximately USD 17 million to combat exploitive child labor in Nepal. These grants have been used to support the Government of Nepal's (GON) time bound program through support to ILO-IPEC and specific sectoral programs. Through these projects, funds have been used to formulate child labor-related legislation and policies in Nepal, raise awareness against the worst forms of child labor, and provide direct assistance to children and families to withdraw children from exploitive labor and prevent children from entering such forms. These projects have withdrawn and prevented over 120,000 children from exploitive child labor.

Despite a decade long conflict, a transition to a democratic Nepal, extreme poverty, and environmental hazards, the GON has remained committed to eradicating exploitive child labor. The GON's legislative and policy framework include the ratification of ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor and ILO Convention 138 on the Minimum Age for Work; the Ministry of Labor and Transport Management's (MoLTM) Master Plan on Child Labor (2004-2014); National Planning Commission interim plan on child labor (2007/08-2010/11); National Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking; the Poverty Reduction Strategy (2002-2007); and the Education for All National Plan of Action.

Most notably, the MoLTM national Master Plan on Child Labor, 2004-2014 calls for eliminating the worst forms of child labor by 2009, and all forms of child labor by 2014. The National Planning Commission implemented its interim plan on July 16, 2007, which includes a

commitment to implement the National Master Plan on Child Labor. The Master Plan targets 16 worst forms of child labor to be eliminated and is the primary framework guiding the Nepal time bound program and supported by the ILO-IPEC and other organizations aimed at combating child labor.

It is within this context that USDOL has provided US \$3,845,000 to World Education (WE).

### Brighter Futures Program Phase II: Combating Child Labor through Education in Nepal

On September 30, 2005, World Education (WE) received a 4-year Cooperative Agreement worth \$3.5 million from USDOL to implement the second phase of an EI project in Nepal aimed at withdrawing and preventing children from exploitative child labor by expanding access to and improving the quality of basic education and supporting the goals of the USDOL's Child Labor EI as outlined above. On August 7, 2007, World Education received a cost increase of \$345,000 to expand the targeted child labor sectors to include children affected by armed conflict. World Education was awarded the EI project through a sole source process.

As stipulated in the Cooperative Agreement and subsequent revisions, the project is targeting 15,400 children for withdrawal and 15,200 children for prevention from hazardous work. The sectors from which children are withdrawn or prevented include: porters, recyclers/rag-pickers, domestic servants, carpet factory workers, mine/quarry workers, former bonded laborers (engaged in several occupations), brick factory workers, transport workers, restaurant-entertainment workers (vulnerable to trafficking), and children affected by the civil war in 27 districts.

The Goals and Objectives of the Brighter Futures Phase II project include:

Goal: Worst forms of child labor (WFCL) in Nepal reduced.

Objectives:

Greater parental and community participation in formal, nonformal and vocational education for children removed from WFCL and children at risk of WFCL;

- Improved quality, relevance and access to educational programs for children withdrawn from or at risk of WFCL;
- Reduced barriers to the success of children withdrawn from or at risk of WFCL in formal and alternative school systems; and
- National education policy dialogue reflects the needs of children engaged in WFCL and children at risk of becoming child laborers.

The Brighter Futures project aims to meet these objectives through improving access and quality of education for working and at-risk children in the target areas; engaging communities, civil society and local governments in promoting education and the eradication of child labor; strengthening national institutions and policies to effectively address the issues of child labor and

education; and ensuring the sustainability of project activities and benefits to the primary stakeholders.

## **Midterm Evaluation**

A midterm evaluation was conducted in December 2007 by an independent international consultant. The evaluation consisted of document review; individual and group interviews with project staff, donor representatives, policymakers and government agencies, NGO partners, children, parents, teachers, and community leaders; site visits (observation) in Kathmandu Valley, and Western Terai and surrounding hills (Daulagiri region); and stakeholder workshops. The midterm evaluation noted that the BFII project is complex because of the relatively large number of target sectors and the multitude of direct and indirect interventions. As a result, the evaluator was only able to visit one or two project sites in any one sector affecting the evaluator's ability to assess the breadth of project activities. Similarly, as the additional funds to provide services to children in armed conflict were new to the project at the time of the evaluation, this component of the project was not assessed in the midterm evaluation.

The midterm evaluation found that the project had exceeded its midterm targets and was close to meeting its life of projects targets for withdrawing and preventing children from exploitive labor. By the midterm the project had already reached 81% of its targets. The sector that proved most difficult for the project to withdraw or prevent children in exploitive labor was the transport and entertainment sectors. While the evaluator noted that the project was exceeding its midterm targets, she also noted that the project was challenged in the retention and completion of children in the identified programs.

The midterm evaluation also noted that the policy and quality education initiatives, especially the *Welcome to School*, PTAs, and PTA networks, have been one of the most effective indirect interventions and are most likely to have a sustainable long-term impact on the educational systems and child labor elimination. The project has also made a positive impact in building the capacity of several local NGOs to combat child labor.

The midterm evaluation noted several issues affecting the project such as the devaluation of the US dollar and the increased inflation rate in Nepal. It also noted the project's inability to obtain leveraged funds as expected. The midterm evaluation included several recommendations including recommendations for specific project target sectors and interventions (*i.e.* brick factories, entertainment, transport, scholarships); the need for an assessment of the impact of project interventions and focusing more future project activities on those interventions or linking to those interventions; and improving monitoring systems to track children after they leave the BFII program to ensure they remain out of exploitive labor.

## **PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF EVALUATION**

OCFT-funded projects are subject to midterm and final evaluations. The BFII project in Nepal went into implementation in September 2005 and based on its revised end-date, is due for its final evaluation in March 2009.

The **scope** of the evaluation includes a review and assessment of all activities carried out to date under the USDOL Cooperative Agreement with WE. All activities that have been implemented during September 30, 2005 through September 30, 2009, from project launch to one month prior to evaluation fieldwork should be considered. The evaluation should assess the achievements of the project toward reaching its targets and objectives as outlined in the cooperative agreement and project document.

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

The **purpose of the final evaluation** is to:

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

This final evaluation should provide USDOL, WE, other project specific stakeholders, and stakeholders working to combat child labor more broadly, an assessment of the project's experience in implementation and its impact on project beneficiaries. The evaluation should also provide documented lessons learned, potential good practices, and models of intervention that will serve to inform future child labor projects and policies in Nepal and elsewhere, as appropriate. It will also serve as an important accountability function for USDOL and WE. The final report will be published on the USDOL website, so the report should be written as a standalone document, providing the necessary background information for readers who are unfamiliar with the details of the project.

Specific questions that the evaluation should seek to answer are found below, according to five categories of issue. It should be noted that the evaluation will cover the types of issues raised by the questions listed below but that the degree to which the evaluation can cover each question will vary depending on the availability of information and time/logistical constraints; as such not all questions will be tackled in equal depth. The wording of the questions should also be taken as indicative of the type of aspects to be covered rather than precise wording which needs to be followed exactly.

## **Relevance**

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

1. Relevance to context
  - a. What is the context affecting child labour and what are the main obstacles or barriers that the project has identified as important to addressing child labor in Nepal? (i.e. poverty, lack of educational infrastructure, lack of demand for education, etc.)
  - b. Is the project design appropriate for the cultural, economic, and political context in which it works? Was the project's design affected by the complex conflict/post-conflict environment in Nepal? Were the project's objectives and outputs relevant and realistic?
2. Fit with government/national plans
  - a. How does the project fit within existing programs to combat child labor, especially government initiatives including the GONs Master Plan on Child Labor, and the GONs Education for All strategy?
  - b. What have been the challenges and opportunities for EI project implementers to work within the framework of a broad government program (time bound program) implemented under the leadership of ILO/IPEC?
  - c. How has local and national government developed policy over the course of BF II? How do WE, partners, communities, government view government policies and implementation?
3. Fit with USDOL approaches: does the project design seem to be adequately supporting the five EI goals? If not, which ones are not being supported and why not?
4. Lessons learned/best practices: what lessons learned and best practices are there on the issue of relevance?

## **Effectiveness**

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

### 1. Design

- a. What are the main project strategies/approaches/activities designed toward meeting objectives in withdrawing/preventing children from WFCL? What is the rationale behind using these strategies?
- b. Were the project assumptions accurate?
- c. Did the project adjust implementation and/or strategy based on the findings and recommendations of the midterm evaluation?

### 2. Achievements

- a. Has the project achieved its targets and objectives as stated in the project document?

[Objectives:

- Greater parental and community participation in formal, nonformal and vocational education for children removed from WFCL and children at risk of WFCL;
- Improved quality, relevance and access to educational programs for children withdrawn from or at risk of WFCL;
- Reduced barriers to the success of children withdrawn from or at risk of WFCL in formal and alternative school systems; and
- National education policy dialogue reflects the needs of children engaged in WFCL and children at risk of becoming child laborers.

Targets: see logframe]

- b. Assess the effectiveness of the “direct action” activities/interventions, including the education interventions provided to children (i.e. scholarship program, bridging classes, coaching, vocational education etc. and especially non-formal education, GATE). Did the provision of these services result in children being withdrawn/prevented from exploitive child labor and ensure that they were involved in relevant educational programs?
- c. Assess the effectiveness of the project in being able to meet and adjust to the needs of specific sectors (*i.e.* child domestic workers, child porters, carpet factories, brick factories, mining, recycling etc and particularly the entertainment sector). To the extent possible, determine which activities/interventions have been most effective for different

categories of child workers (age, ethnicity, gender, geographic regions etc) and differing circumstances (including children *prevented* or *withdrawn* from exploitive labor).

- d. Particularly focus on assessing the effectiveness of project objective (2) concerning the improvement of educational quality (see also Q Impact 2).
3. Factors affecting achievements
    - a. What internal factors contributed to the success and/or underachievement of each of the objectives?
    - b. What external factors contributed to the success and/or underachievement of each of the objectives? How did the political situation and general upheaval in the country affect implementation in terms of participation as well as NGO and government commitments and capacity? What obstacles were there in the external context and has the project been successful in addressing these obstacles?
  4. Coordination: was BF II successful in delivering on the cross cutting/more coordinated approach to service delivery in terms of other USDOL partners, non-USDOL funded organizations, international and/or multilateral organizations, national NGOs and/or community-based organizations. What have been the opportunities and challenges in these relationships?
  5. Targeting: did the project accurately identify and target children engaged in, or at risk of working in, the target sectors identified in the project strategy?
  6. Monitoring: what monitoring systems did the project use for monitoring the work status of children? Were they feasible and effective? Why or why not?
  7. Management: What are the management strengths, including technical and financial, of this project? Did changes in key personnel since the midterm evaluation affect the project's implementation, effectiveness or efficiency?
  8. Lessons learned/best practices: What lessons learned and best practices are there on the issue of effectiveness? Are there any sector specific lessons learned regarding the types and effectiveness of the services provided?

### **Efficiency**

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

1. Was the project cost-efficient? Were the project strategies efficient in terms of the financial and human resources used, as compared to its outputs?
2. To the extent possible, assess which strategies have been most cost effective and how has this changed over the life of the Brighter Futures II?

3. What alternatives were there to the strategies adopted which might have made a difference to cost-efficiency?
4. Lessons learned/best practices: What lessons learned/best practices are there on efficiency?

### **Impact**

The evaluation should assess the positive and negative changes produced by the project – intended and unintended, direct and indirect, as well as any changes in the social and economic environment in the country – as reported by respondents. The evaluation is unable to determine causal relationships, as it is limited by the presence of baseline data, and as a result it cannot formally assess the project’s impact. Findings regarding impact are based on information reported by beneficiaries, stakeholders, and project staff. Specifically, the evaluation should address:

1. Beneficiaries: What appears to be the project’s impact, if any, on individual beneficiaries (children, parents, teachers, etc) taking into consideration duration of services provided and other relevant factors, if any?
2. Education quality: Assess the impact, to the extent possible, of project activities/strategies on education quality (both formal and non-formal interventions). How has the education quality improvement component been received by the government and the communities?
3. Local organisations: What appears to be the project’s impact, if any, on partners or other organizations working on child labor in the country (NGOs, community groups, schools, etc)?
4. Government policy: What appears to be the project’s impact, if any, on government and policy structures in terms of system-wide change on education and child labor issues?
5. Lessons learned/best practices: What lessons learned/best practices are there on impact?

### **Sustainability**

The evaluation should assess whether the project has taken steps to ensure the continuation of project activities after the completion of the program, including sources of funding and partnerships with other organizations and/or the government, and identify areas where this may be strengthened. Specifically, it should address:

1. Design: Was an exit strategy and sustainability plan integrated into the project design? What did it envisage?
2. Likelihood of sustainability
  - a. Which interventions appear to be sustainable without DOL project funding? Will the *Welcome to School*, PTAs, and PTA networks, monitoring systems, and other committees/groups and systems created by the project be sustainable?

- b. How are these interventions likely to be sustainable? By local communities? By local government? By Local NGOs?
  - How many local NGOs were engaged in capacity building activities in preparation for service delivery? How many staff (office and field) were trained? What is the perceived level of NGO capacity to implement similar programs in the future if funding were available?
  - What has been the government capacity to support these interventions by local and community groups? How has local and national government responded to the increased community participation (parental) in formal education as well as NFE offerings?
  - What have been the major challenges and opportunities, if any, of initiating and maintaining coordination with the host country government, particularly Ministries of Education and Labor, as well as other government agencies active in addressing related children's issues?
- c. How successful has the project been in leveraging non-project resources? Are there prospects for sustainable funding?

### 3. Future

- a. What recommendations are there for the future?
- b. What are the new areas of concern related to worst forms of child labor that are emerging at the end of BF II? Are NGOs, communities and local and national government in a position to respond to these issues?

- 4. Lessons learned/best practices: What lessons can be learned of the project's accomplishments and weaknesses in terms of sustainability of interventions?

## **EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND TIMEFRAME**

The evaluation methodology will comprise of a variety of activities such as documentary review, interviews, focus group discussions, observation and stakeholder meetings. The methods used will largely be qualitative but may also include an analysis of pre-existing quantitative data collected by the project. A preparatory desk review will be carried out from the evaluator's home base consisting of initial phone conversations with USDOL and WE, documentary review and analysis, and preparation of evaluation tools and methodologies. This will be followed by a country visit taking place between March 20 to April 7 and comprising meetings in Kathmandu and in field locations outside the capital.

### ***Document Review***

The following types of documents will be reviewed:

Project document and revisions, Cooperative Agreement, Technical Progress and Status Reports, Project Logical frameworks and Monitoring Plans, Project design workshop reports,

Work plans, Correspondence related to Technical Progress Reports, Management Procedures and Guidelines, research or other reports undertaken (baseline studies, previous evaluation reports, monitoring reports etc.), and project files (including school records, records of children prevented/withdrawn) as appropriate.

A list of key documents used in this evaluation will be provided in the annex to the report. Documentary review will take place at all stages of the evaluation: there will be extensive review of documents prior to country visit, further onsite collection and verification of documentation, and analysis of documentation during report-writing.

### ***Interviews***

Interviews will be carried out with a range of project stakeholders. As a preliminary, initial telephone conversations with USDOL will take place concerning expectations of the evaluation as well as views on project performance. The itinerary and evaluation objectives will be discussed with WE in advance. During the visit, face-to-face interviews (both individual and group) will be carried out with WE staff, implementing partner staff, government officials at both local and national levels, representatives of other international organizations and civil society groups, and child protection/or education experts.

### ***Focus Groups***

Focus group discussions will be an important feature of the evaluation methodology. Focus groups will be the primary methodology used for soliciting information from project beneficiaries including children, parents and other family members, community members, teaching staff etc. This is a preferred methodology for these groups over individual interviews in order to enable the participation of as wide and representative a membership as possible and also to avoid unduly intimidating individual beneficiaries. The participants will sometimes be selected at random and onsite where feasible; at other times, it will be necessary to select participants in advance, in which case the evaluator will request project partners to gather a representative sample of participants taking into account issues of gender, ethnicity, age, caste, disability etc. The evaluation will endeavor to hold focus group discussions in each site visited. The groups may range in size from several people to twenty or so and break-out groups will be formed in larger meetings in order to optimize the participation of all attendants. Focus groups with children will seek to be age/culture appropriate and may include teacher or peer-led discussions, or group activities e.g. group drawing/murals/maps/photos.

### ***Observation***

Observation will focus on aspects of the projects that may not be recorded in reports, including the general health and wellbeing of the children, actual or potential exclusion of certain children, and the relationship between the school, project and social context. The evaluator will take the opportunity to observe activities as they take place and in an opportunistic way e.g. class room activities, non-formal education initiatives, meetings of PTAs etc.

### ***Stakeholder Meetings***

A larger scale stakeholder meeting will be held at the end of the country visit and include WE staff, partner staff and representatives from government, international organizations and civil society as appropriate. This meeting will be an opportunity to present initial findings and emerging issues, obtain additional information from stakeholders, including those that were not interviewed individually earlier, and discuss recommendations and future courses of action. District level stakeholder meetings may also be held in certain locations and involve a wider range of stakeholders including project beneficiaries (children, families etc.), community members, school staff, local government officials, civil society, international organizations and child experts. The decision on whether to hold such meetings will depend on the itinerary and the time available to the evaluator.

### ***Field Site Selection***

The project covers a very wide range of partners, locations, interventions and sectors. As such and given the limited time available (less than 10 days for field visits), the evaluation will seek to visit a representative sample taking into account different sectors, types of activities, population composition, geographical areas, areas where the project has been successful and those where it has faced challenges, sites which have not been visited before by previous evaluations and USDOL visits etc. While these are the ideal selection criteria, the evaluation will need to make pragmatic choices on the basis of accessibility and proximity given the limited time available for fieldwork. In each site, interviews will be carried out with key school staff, local officials etc. plus focus groups or group interviews with teachers, students, parents, and other relevant stakeholders.

### ***Additional Methods***

Given the limitations of the fieldwork, it will be difficult for the evaluator to make general findings across the program on the basis of these visits alone. As such, the evaluator may, with the assistance of a local consultant, deploy additional methodologies aimed at enabling an inclusive approach to the evaluation and to maximize its coverage. These methods are to be decided but may include an email invitation to all partners introducing them to the evaluator and providing contact details for inputs; telephone/email interviews with a selection of randomly selected stakeholders across the country; supplementary field visit by a local consultant after the evaluator's visit has concluded to selected areas which the evaluator was unable to visit, convening group meetings with all WE staff from across the country etc.

### ***Confidentiality***

The evaluation mission will observe utmost confidentiality with regards to the information elicited. To ensure that implementing partners, stakeholders, communities, and beneficiaries are able to express themselves freely, interviews and focus groups will be held in confidence and without the presence of WE or implementing partner staff or any other persons who may influence the discussion by their presence. However, WE and/or implementing partner staff may accompany the evaluator to make introductions whenever necessary, to facilitate the evaluation

process, make respondents feel comfortable, and to allow the evaluator to observe the interaction between the implementing partner staff and the interviewees.

### ***Other Ethical Considerations***

The evaluation will in particular pay heed to the UNICEF guidelines on ethical reporting standards with regards to children. In fact, ethical standards (e.g. Social Research Association, British Psychological Association, University of Birmingham/School of Education, USDOL TORs etc.) will apply to all respondents, recognizing that they may face professional and political vulnerabilities. Specific care will be taken to avoid conduct that may immediately harm projects, their participants and staff. If, however, any abusive practice is noticed, this will immediately be reported to Macro. Although all efforts will be made to put respondents at ease, the reality is often that some people (particularly women and children) may be suspicious of outsiders and wary of speaking openly. Assessment of data will be cognizant of these problems.

### ***Evaluation Instruments***

The questions contained in the draft terms of reference will be consolidated to avoid duplication. A guide or aide memoire for use during interviews and focus group discussions will be developed incorporating key areas of concern and attached as an annex to the final report. The interviews and focus groups will take a semi-structured form which ensures some key questions are raised on each occasion but also allow the discussion to be adapted by the evaluator or the respondent as appropriate. In addition, the question matrix developed as a requirement of the evaluation outlines the sources of data for each evaluation question and will act as a reference for raising specific questions with particular respondents. The matrix will help the evaluator to decide how she is going to allocate time in the field, to ensure that all possible avenues for data triangulation are followed, and to maintain a record of where findings are coming from. For the stakeholder meeting, the agenda, participant list and workshop documents will be developed during the visit through consultation between the evaluator and WE.

### **Timetable and Workplan**

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

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Proposed Date(s)</b>
Phone interview with DOL and Grantee Headquarters	Macro, DOL, Grantee, Evaluator	March
Desk Review	Evaluator	March
Question Matrix and Instruments due to Macro/DOL	Evaluator	March 10
Finalize TOR and submit summary to Grantee	DOL/Macro/Evaluator	March 16
International Travel		March 22
Introductory Meetings with Project Staff and National Stakeholders	Evaluator	March 23-25
Field Site Visits	Evaluator	March 26-April 2

Activity	Responsible Party	Proposed Date(s)
National Stakeholder Meeting		April 6
International Travel		April 7
Draft report to Macro for QC review	Evaluator	May 6
Draft report to DOL & Grantee for 48 hour review	Macro	May 8
Draft report released to stakeholders	Macro	May 13
Comments due to Macro	DOL/Grantee & Stakeholders	May 27
Report revised and sent to Macro	Evaluator	June 10
Revised report sent to DOL	Macro	June 12
Final approval of report	DOL	June 19
Finalization & distribution of report	Macro	June 30

## EXPECTED OUTPUTS/DELIVERABLES

A first draft evaluation report will be submitted to Macro by May 6. The report should have the following structure and content:

- a. Table of Contents
- b. List of Acronyms
- c. Executive Summary (providing an overview of the evaluation, summary of main findings/lessons learned/good practices, and three key recommendations)
- d. Evaluation Objectives and Methodology
- e. Project Description
- f. Relevance
  - i. Findings—answering the TOR questions
  - ii. Lessons Learned/Good Practices
- g. Effectiveness
  - i. Findings—answering the TOR questions
  - ii. Lessons Learned/Good Practices
- h. Efficiency
  - i. Findings—answering the TOR questions
  - ii. Lessons Learned/Good Practices
- i. Impact
  - i. Findings—answering the TOR questions
  - ii. Lessons Learned/Good Practices

- j. Sustainability
  - i. Findings—answering the TOR questions
  - ii. Lessons Learned/Good Practices
- k. Recommendations
  - i. Key Recommendations—critical for successfully meeting project objectives
  - ii. Other Recommendations—as needed
    - 1. Relevance
    - 2. Effectiveness
    - 3. Efficiency
    - 4. Impact
    - 5. Sustainability
- l. Conclusions
- m. Annexes—including list of documents reviewed; interviews/meetings/site visits; stakeholder workshop agenda and participants; summary TOR; etc.

The total length of the report should be a minimum of 30 pages and a maximum of 40 pages, excluding annexes.

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

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

**After returning from fieldwork, the first draft evaluation report is due to MACRO on May 6, as indicated in the above timetable. A final draft is due after receipt of comments from ILAB/OCFT and stakeholders (May 27) and is anticipated to be due on June 10, as indicated in the above timetable. All reports including drafts will be written in English.**

## **EVALUATION MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT**

Macro International, Inc. has contracted with Ms. Asmita Naik to conduct this evaluation. Ms. Naik has over two decades of experience working in the field of international development and evaluation with a specialization in human rights, child labor and protection. She most recently conducted an evaluation of the ILO HIV/AIDS SIDA programme on HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa and has conducted numerous evaluations in Nepal, Indonesia and India. She holds a MSc in Public Policy from the London University (Queen Mary). The contractor/evaluator will work with OCFT, Macro, and relevant World Education staff to evaluate this project.

Macro International, Inc. will provide all logistical and administrative support for their staff and sub-contractors, including travel arrangements (e.g. plane and hotel reservations, purchasing plane tickets, providing per diem) and all materials needed to provide all deliverables. Macro International, Inc. will also be responsible for providing the management and technical oversight necessary to ensure consistency of methods and technical standards.



## **Annex A: Principles for Ethical Reporting on Children**

Reporting on children and young people has its special challenges. In some instances the act of reporting on children places them or other children at risk of retribution or stigmatization.

UNICEF has developed these principles to assist journalists as they report on issues affecting children. They are offered as guidelines that UNICEF believes will help media to cover children in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner. The guidelines are meant to support the best intentions of ethical reporters: serving the public interest without compromising the rights of children.

### **I. Principles**

1. The dignity and rights of every child are to be respected in every circumstance.
2. In interviewing and reporting on children, special attention is to be paid to each child's right to privacy and confidentiality, to have their opinions heard, to participate in decisions affecting them and to be protected from harm and retribution, including the potential of harm and retribution.
3. The best interests of each child are to be protected over any other consideration, including over advocacy for children's issues and the promotion of child rights.
4. When trying to determine the best interests of a child, the child's right to have their views taken into account are to be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity.
5. Those closest to the child's situation and best able to assess it are to be consulted about the political, social and cultural ramifications of any reportage.
6. Do not publish a story or an image which might put the child, siblings or peers at risk even when identities are changed, obscured or not used.

### **II. Guidelines for interviewing children**

1. Do no harm to any child; avoid questions, attitudes or comments that are judgmental, insensitive to cultural values, that place a child in danger or expose a child to humiliation, or that reactivate a child's pain and grief from traumatic events.
2. Do not discriminate in choosing children to interview because of sex, race, age, religion, status, educational background or physical abilities.
3. No staging: Do not ask children to tell a story or take an action that is not part of their own history.

4. Ensure that the child or guardian knows they are talking with a reporter. Explain the purpose of the interview and its intended use.
5. Obtain permission from the child and his or her guardian for all interviews, videotaping and, when possible, for documentary photographs. When possible and appropriate, this permission should be in writing. Permission must be obtained in circumstances that ensure that the child and guardian are not coerced in any way and that they understand that they are part of a story that might be disseminated locally and globally. This is usually only ensured if the permission is obtained in the child's language and if the decision is made in consultation with an adult the child trusts.
6. Pay attention to where and how the child is interviewed. Limit the number of interviewers and photographers. Try to make certain that children are comfortable and able to tell their story without outside pressure, including from the interviewer. In film, video and radio interviews, consider what the choice of visual or audio background might imply about the child and her or his life and story. Ensure that the child would not be endangered or adversely affected by showing their home, community or general whereabouts.

### **III. Guidelines for reporting on children**

1. Do not further stigmatize any child; avoid categorizations or descriptions that expose a child to negative reprisals - including additional physical or psychological harm, or to lifelong abuse, discrimination or rejection by their local communities.
2. Always provide an accurate context for the child's story or image.
3. Always change the name and obscure the visual identity of any child who is identified as:
  - a. A victim of sexual abuse or exploitation,
  - b. A perpetrator of physical or sexual abuse,
  - c. HIV positive, or living with AIDS, unless the child, a parent or a guardian gives fully informed consent,
  - d. Charged or convicted of a crime.
4. In certain circumstances of risk or potential risk of harm or retribution, change the name and obscure the visual identity of any child who is identified as:
  - a. A current or former child combatant,
  - b. An asylum seeker, a refugee or an internal displaced person.
5. In certain cases, using a child's identity - their name and/or recognizable image - is in the child's best interests. However, when the child's identity is used, they must still be protected against harm and supported through any stigmatization or reprisals.

Some examples of these special cases are:

- a. When a child initiates contact with the reporter, wanting to exercise their right to freedom of expression and their right to have their opinion heard.
  - b. When a child is part of a sustained program of activism or social mobilization and wants to be so identified.
  - c. When a child is engaged in a psychosocial program and claiming their name and identity is part of their healthy development.
6. Confirm the accuracy of what the child has to say, either with other children or an adult, preferably with both.
  7. When in doubt about whether a child is at risk, report on the general situation for children rather than on an individual child, no matter how newsworthy the story.

*Sources: The Convention on the Rights of the Child; Child Rights and the Media: Guidelines for Journalists, International Federation of Journalists; Media and Children in Need of Special Protection, (internal document), UNICEF's Division of Communication; Second International Consultation on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights, United Nations Secretary-General.*



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## ANNEX C: TABLE OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

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### Direct Education Interventions

<b>Working Children</b>	<b>Program Intervention (most but not all interventions)</b>
Ages 10–14/14+ (boys/girls in school)	Scholarships
Ages 10–14 (boys/girls not in school)	Modular NFE, then bridge course, then school enrollment with scholarship (if able to support for multiple interventions)
Ages 10–14 (girls only, not in school)	GATE, then bridge course, then school enrollment with scholarship (if able to support for multiple interventions)
Ages 14–17 (out of school)	SEEP, or Vocational Training, or Apprenticeship
<b>Children at Risk (CAR)</b>	<b>Program Intervention (most but not all interventions)</b>
Ages 10–14	Modular NFE, then school enrollment (possible scholarship)
Ages 10–14 (girls only)	GATE or other NFE, then school enrollment (possible scholarship)
<i>Other for CAR or WFCL</i>	Agroforestry, Open Learning Centers, and Coaching

### Indirect Interventions

PTAs	Formation and training, mobilization of parents and funds, improvement of school, increased enrollment, and retention.
Development of Quality Ed Resource Package (QERP)	Review existing materials, development of pilot materials and field testing, revision, distribution to schools, and training of facilitators.
Policy Interventions	Participate in policy dialogue. Organize policy-review workshops based on field experience.
Family Support	Work with individual and groups of families. Address 'opportunity recovery costs' families face when sending their children to school.

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## **ANNEX D: EVALUATION INSTRUMENT**

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### **Evaluation Guide: Questions for interviews/focus groups**

#### **A. International Organisations/Government partners**

1. What work do you do on child labour? What types of policies/projects/activities do you have? (briefly)
2. What have been your lessons learned from these experiences? What has worked well and what has not?
3. Do you work with BFII? if so in what way? How do you find the relationship and the collaboration?
4. What do you think of the BFII project? Are there any particularly positive or negative aspects that you would like to comment on? e.g. achievements, fit with national plans etc.
5. Are there any changes you would like to see to your relationship with BF II?
6. What thoughts do you have for the future direction of work on child labour in Nepal? What about the sustainability of BFII interventions?

*See Question Matrix for more specific questions*

#### **B. Local NGO Partner staff/Teaching staff**

1. What is your role and involvement in the project? (Briefly describe)
2. What has the project achieved? What hasn't it achieved?
3. What factors (internal and external) have affected its progress?
4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the project? e.g. strategies, methods, approaches, organisation, management etc.
5. How are your relations with BF II and WE?
6. What has been the impact of the project on children's lives? Consider the difference that has been made to children by the project e.g. education, health, emotional and psychological well-being, social relationships, opportunities and life chances. Are there any other factors which may have caused these changes in children's lives?
6. What has been the impact of the project in the communities it is working in? How has it changed the attitudes of communities and parents to children at risk? How has it helped communities and parents to help these children?

7. What difference has the project made to you as an organisation and to other partners (e.g. capacity building, approaches, work, sustainability)
8. What have been the constraints facing the project? How were these overcome?
9. What are the lessons learned/ best practices?
10. Should the project continue/be changed in the future? If so, why? If so, how?

***See Question Matrix for specific questions***

**C. Children, parents, families and communities**

1. What do you think of the project? What do you like about the project? Why? What don't you like about the project? Why?
2. What difference has the project made to the lives of children? What difference has it made to their health and well-being, how they feel, how they relate to other people, their family, friends, neighbours? What new opportunities do they have as a result of the project (especially education)? What difference has it made to their future?
3. What difference has the project made to the families and communities being supported by the project? How have they benefited? How are they better able to look after children as a result of the project?
4. Should the project continue/be changed in the future? If so, why? If so, how?

***See Question Matrix for specific questions***

**D. Staff**

Staff will be asked general questions on the achievements of the project, strengths, weaknesses, constraints and difficulties, lessons learned/best practices, future directions.

***See Question Matrix for more specific questions***

## **ANNEX E: LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED**

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### **Basic Project Documents**

- BF II, Project Document, Final, ‘footnote’ date November 17, 2006
- Logical Framework (draft)
- Performance Monitoring Plan – Annex B
- BF II Hazardous Child Labor Spectrum and versions adapted to different sections
- BF II, Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups (CAAFAG) Component Workplan, November 2007
- BF II, ILAB Technical Cooperation Project Summary (2007)
- BF II, Sustainability Matrix, November 2007
- Improving Country Capacity to Address Child Labor (III.C)
- BF II Project Revision Form (Final)
- BF II Revised ANNEX D
- Sect III of the TPR revised Friday (2)
- List of implementing partner organizations
- List of current staff and time effort
- Map of geographical scope and operating districts

### **Evaluation/Audit Reports**

- BF I, Final Independent Evaluation Report, April 2006
- Examination of Cooperative Agreement Report submitted by Williams, Audley and Co., December 2006
- BF II, Mid-term Evaluation Report, December 2007

### **Technical Progress Reports**

- BF II, *Technical Progress Report*, September 2005 – February 2006, and DOL comments
- BF II, *Technical Progress Report*, March 2006 – August 2006, and DOL comments
- BF II, *Technical Progress Report*, September 2006 – February 2007, and DOL comments
- BF II, *Technical Progress Report*, March 2007 – August 2007, and DOL comments
- BF II, *Technical Progress Report*, September 2007 – February 2008
- BF II, *Technical Progress Report*, March 2008 – August 2008
- USDOL comments and WE responses, May 7, March 2008, September 2008,

### **Datasets**

- BFP II, PMP Data, Period 4 Final (submitted to Mid-term evaluation)
- BF II, PMP Data for Third Technical Report (submitted to Mid-term evaluation)

- BF II, Revised Tables III b 1 2 – Sept 08 (EXCEL) (submitted to Final evaluation)
- Additional sample data sheets on VT/SEEP, family support groups
- Tables:
  - Participants by programme and sector; services by sector;
  - Participants by sector, year, age group and sex;
  - Status of project targets;
  - Direct education interventions;
  - Current and long-term targets for withdrawn and prevented;
  - Life of project through 1/3/09;
  - Distribution of children by programme, sex, age group and type of labour;
  - % participants by interventions;
  - Programme intervention by frequency of service;
  - Distribution of children by programme, sex, age group and type of labour;
  - Indirect services
- Training materials on database
- Financial report by intervention

#### **Legal documents**

- DOL OFAC License Application, March 8, 2007
- Nepal OFAC License Final
- Signed Cooperative Agreement, dated September 27, 2005

#### **Miscellaneous**

- OCHA – NEPAL, Operational Space, February 2007
- BF II List of implementing partner organizations
- BF II Map of BF program districts
- BF II List of current staff and time effort in BF program
- Nepal National Materplan for the elimination of child labour
- WE Storybook success
- WE concept note ‘Child labour – changing times changing needs’
- Welcome to School Information sheet
- ‘Before and after – 5 years of effort to address gender equity’
- Sample School Profiles
- Miscellaneous information materials from local partners including Sath Sath Listening magazine on ‘Children, child rights and constituent assembly’
- Final evaluation presentation – introductory meeting and final workshop
- Nepal’s per capita income grows by 9%, press article from Deutshce Presse-Agentur, 2007

# **ANNEX G: STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP AGENDA AND PARTICIPANTS LIST**

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## **Pokhara District Stakeholder Workshop Agenda**

### Group work

Participants organized into 5 groups—government education department; government other departments; PTA/community members; local NGO partners; beneficiary children.

### Group work exercises

#### Exercise 1

- (1) What has worked well in the BFII project?
- (2) What needs improvement?

#### Exercise 2

- (1) What recommendations would you like to make for the future?

These exercises were carried out in small group sessions and then key points were presented to the plenary followed by general discussion.

## **Kathmandu National Stakeholder Workshop Agenda**

Opening remarks by Chij Shrestha, World Education Project Director

Overview of Brighter Futures project, Helen Sherpa, Educations Specialist

Overview of evaluation, Asmita Naik, Consultant

Workshop Exercises

Exercise 1

Each organization mapped its main activities relating to child labour under the areas of intervention identified by the Government of Nepal Master Plan on Child Labour.

Exercise 2

Participants were divided into 3 groups:

- Government and international representatives
- Local NGO partners
- World Education staff

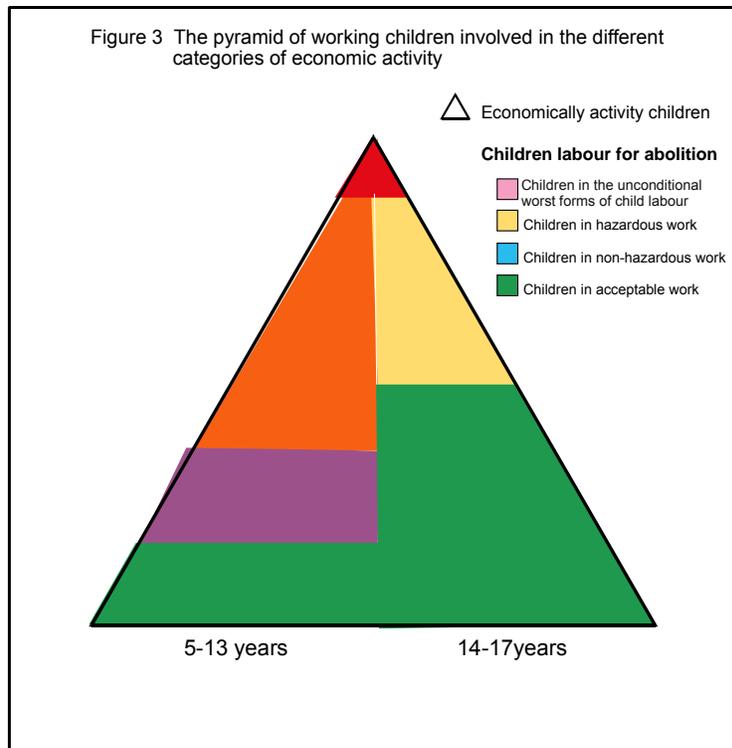
The following questions were discussed in each group and key points presented to the plenary:

- (1) What are the gaps in addressing child labour in Nepal (based on previous mapping exercise and other knowledge)
- (2) What needs to be done? By who?
- (3) What should WE do? What recommendations are there for WE? What is it doing well that it should continue? What is it not doing that it should start to do? What is it not doing well that it should stop?

# ANNEX I: CHILD LABOR SPECTRUMS USED BY BFII

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Child labour spectrum displayed during presentations made by the project during the evaluation visit.



Note: This figure appears here as it appears in the original, including the colors in the legend that do not match the colors used in the figure.

## Under 14

### Brick Maker Porter

#### CHILD LABOR

##### A.1. Hazardous

###### - Child Needs to Be Withdrawn

- Work hours/tasks in excess of child's capacity—likely to damage health
- In bondage or slavery-like work conditions
- Child is a victim of violence and/or sexual abuse
- Engaged in work that requires use of dangerous equipment, chemicals, or other identified occupational hazards
- Biological infections, physical injuries, and passive smoking

##### A.2. Potentially Hazardous

###### - Tolerated Under Certain Conditions

- Not of legal age and working full time—extended hours of work negatively impacting schooling/education
- Work environment may not meet all minimum standards for occupational safety and health (i.e., adequate light, ventilation, drinking water, and sanitation)
- Inadequate living conditions

#### CHILD WORK

##### A.3. Not Usually Hazardous

###### - Acceptable But Needs Monitoring

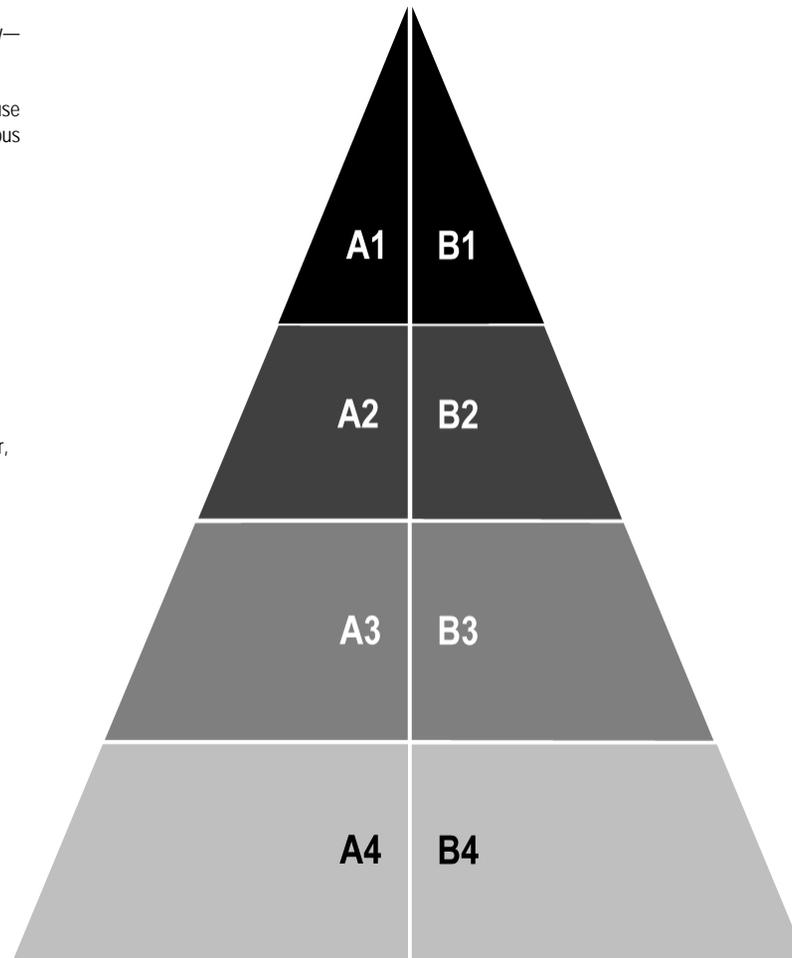
- Part-time hours and work not interfering with schooling/education
- Work environment meets minimum standards for occupational safety and health
- Adequate living conditions

##### A.4. Not Hazardous

###### - Completely Acceptable

- Part-time hours and work not interfering with schooling/education or affecting health
- Light work with or without pay
- In family situation with parental support and supervision
- Exposure to infections and smoke reduced

## Brick Factory Spectrum



## Legal Working Age 14–17

### Brick Maker Porter

#### CHILD LABOR

##### B.1. Hazardous

###### - Child Needs to Be Withdrawn

- Work hours/tasks likely to impact child's health
- In bonded or slavery-like work conditions
- Child is victim of violence and/or sexual abuse
- Engaged in work that requires use of dangerous equipment, chemicals, or other identified occupational hazards

##### B.2. Potentially Hazardous

###### - Tolerated Under Certain Conditions

- Working more than 8 hours a day—extended periods of work negatively impacting schooling/education but child is of legal working age
- Is aware of basic protection issues for own health
- Work environment may not meet all minimum standards for occupational safety and health (i.e., adequate light, ventilation, drinking water, and sanitation)
- Adequate space provided and adult ensures worker is inside moving vehicle

#### CHILD WORK

##### B.3. Not Usually Hazardous

###### - Acceptable But Needs Monitoring

- Working full-time hours or less hours per day and work not likely to adversely affect health
- Work environment meet minimum standards for occupational safety and health
- Adequate living conditions
- Load suited to child's weight
- Fair remuneration

##### B.4. Not Hazardous

###### - Completely Acceptable

- Part-time hours and work not interfering with schooling/education or affecting health
- Light work with or without pay
- In family situation with parental support and supervision