



International Labour Organization

IPEC International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour

IPEC Evaluation

**Midterm evaluation of the
“Country Program for combating the worst forms
of child labour in Panama”**

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An internal evaluation

**Geneva
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NOTE ON THE EVALUATION PROCESS AND REPORT

This evaluation was managed by ILO-IPEC's Design, Evaluation and Documentation Section (DED) following a consultative and participatory approach. DED has ensured that all major stakeholders were consulted and informed throughout the evaluation and that its independence was not compromised during the process.

The evaluation was carried out by Caspar Merkle, from DED.

The field mission took place in November 2004. The opinions and recommendations included in this report are those of the author and do not compromise the ILO or any other organization involved in the project.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AP	Action Program
APSO	Action Program Summary Outline
CSEC	Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children
CDW	Child Domestic Work
CONEP	National council of private enterprise
CONATO	Workers National Council
IFARHU	Institute of Vocational Training of human resources
INAFORP	National Institute of Vocational Training
MEDUC	Ministry of Education
MIDA	Ministry of Agriculture
MINJUMNFA	Ministry of Youth, Women, Children and Family
MINSA	Ministry of Health
MITRADEL	Ministry of Labor
NC	National Committee for the Eradication of Child Labour
SIMPOC	Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour
SPIF	Strategic Programme Impact Framework
WFCL	Worst Forms of Child Labor

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and purpose of the evaluation

The project “Country Program for combating the worst forms of child labour in Panama” was launched in September 2002 with the goal to contribute to the eradication of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL) in Panama. It is funded through a contribution by USDOL of US\$ 1,000,000 and a local contribution of US\$ 599,659. The project is currently expected to terminate in December 2005.

At the national level, the program focuses on 1) strengthening the national capacity to develop policies and programs for the prevention and elimination of the WFCL and 2) improving the effectiveness of law enforcement mechanisms. This is achieved mainly through strengthening inter-institutional coordination, and through providing support to the elaboration of a National Plan for the Eradication of Child Labor.

At the local level, the program is supporting model interventions to prevent and withdraw children and adolescents from the worst forms of child labor. Direct action at the local level focuses on three areas: i) enrolment and retention of children in the education system, ii) changing the values among targeted families and mobilizing the community, and iii) increasing family income. To accomplish this objective, one direct Action Program (AP) in a rural area and another AP in the urban area are being implemented by an NGO. It is expected that these APs will validate models of intervention to be replicated by the country in the future.

It is important to take into consideration the fact that elections were held in Panama in May 2004. This had a significant impact on the implementation of the project in the sense that many public officials were removed from their posts and replaced by others after the elections. The evaluation will elaborate on this more thoroughly in the subsequent sections.

This mid-term evaluation is mandatory according to the project document and the agreement with the donor. The general purpose is to provide an analytical and independent analysis of the outcomes and the results with regard to the objectives of the project. More specifically, the evaluation is considered as an opportunity to 1) analyze progress and obstacles in the implementation of activities and the achievement of objectives so far; and 2) derive recommendations and possible lessons learned that allow for corrective action of the strategy and approach of the project. The evaluation conceptually covers all interventions that have been implemented under the project in Panama, both at the national level and at the local level. This includes an analysis of the project as a whole as well as of the two APs that are being implemented as part of the project.

1.2 Methodology of the evaluation

After consultation with stakeholders of the project it was decided to organize this exercise as an internal evaluation. The assessment was carried out by an IPEC expert with no previous involvement in the planning and / or implementation of the project. The evaluation was managed by the Design, Evaluation and Documentation Section (DED) of IPEC in Geneva.

The methodology of the evaluation included the following three main steps:

Desk Review

This included a review of the project document and documents from Action Programs, work plans, progress reports, studies and other documents that were produced through the project, reports from seminars and workshops, and other produced material. A respective bibliography is provided in the Annex of this evaluation report.

Field Work

The evaluator traveled to Panama City and held individual interviews as well as group discussions with the following people: IPEC staff, current and former staff of relevant Ministries, people from the previous National Committee for the Eradication of Child Labour, staff from NGOs, researchers and consultants, and people from the media. In total, 38 persons were interviewed in the course of one week. A list of people interviewed as well as the agenda of the mission is provided in the Annex of this evaluation report.

Stakeholder workshop

The purpose of the stakeholder workshop was three-fold: First, to discuss the preliminary findings of the evaluation with the main stakeholders. This was done through a presentation of initial findings and a subsequent plenary discussion. Secondly, the workshop aimed at gathering additional information, through a questionnaire that was to be completed by the workshop participants. The questionnaire format is provided as an Annex to this evaluation report. Thirdly, the workshop served the purpose of reviewing and validating the logic of the project within the overall country framework. This was done following IPEC's Strategic Programme Impact Framework approach (SPIF), through a presentation of the country framework and subsequent discussion in plenary. The suggested changes regarding the outcomes to be achieved within the overall country framework are further specified in an Annex. In total 20 people participated in the stakeholder workshop. A list of workshop participants is also provided as Annex.

Assessment of the evaluation methodology

It is important to mention the time constraints the evaluator was facing due to the duration (1 week) of the evaluation mission. However this was dealt with, and partly compensated, through the arranging of several group discussions that allowed the evaluator to meet and talk to a considerable number of people in a short period of time. Another means to make maximum use of the time available was the use of a questionnaire. This allowed for additional data collection during the stakeholder workshop.

Regarding the stakeholder workshop and in particular the review and validation of the Program Framework it is essential to note that at this workshop, there was only participant who had also attended the initial planning workshop to validate the design of the project, that had been carried out in 2002. This highlights the context in which the project has been operating, in particular the high turnover and replacement of people in key positions in the government. The stakeholder workshop was particularly useful to explain the strategy and key components of the Country Program to the (new) project stakeholders. It thus played an essential role in "putting everyone on the same page" with regard to the approach and the current status of the project.

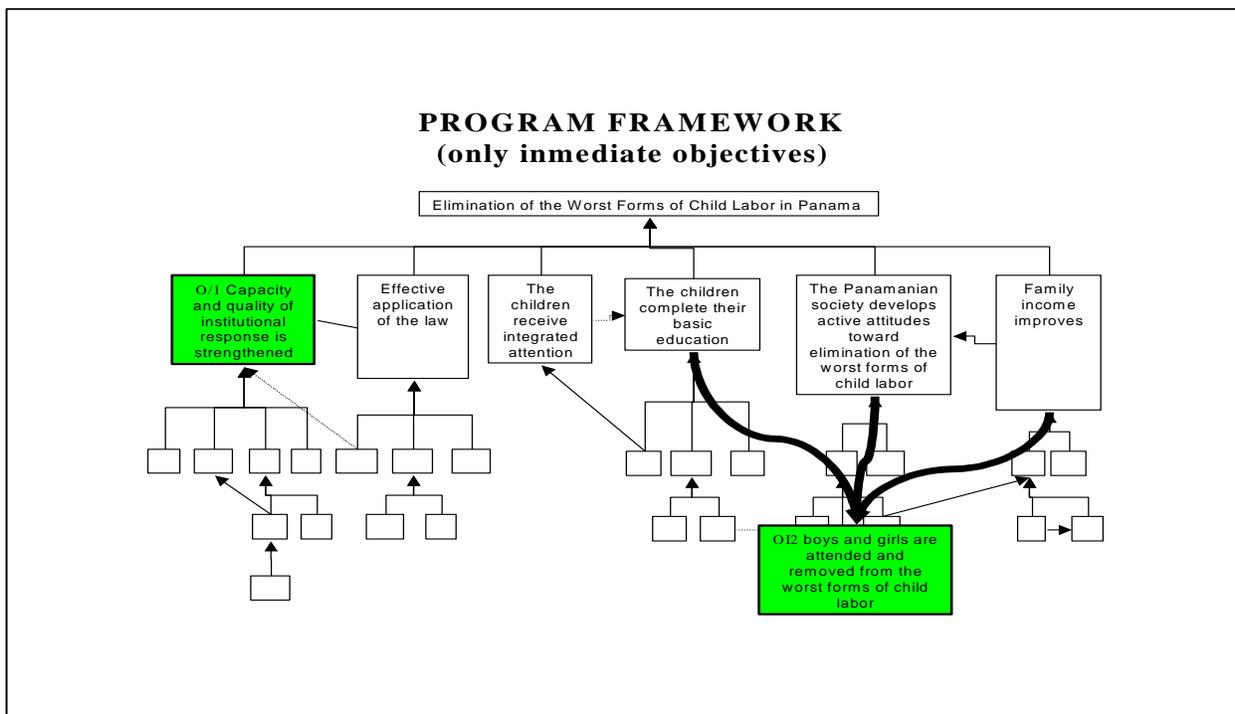
In this regard the workshop and in general this mid-term evaluation can be considered particularly valuable with regard to learning and training amongst the stakeholders of the project. The fact that it was carried out by IPEC staff and not by an outside consultant allowed for exchange of information and experience between IPEC HQ and IPEC field, and thus contributed to the learning process.

2. Design of the project

2.1 Overall project design

The project was designed in 2002 based on the findings from the SIMPOC Panama National Child Labour Survey from 2000 as well as other studies that had been carried out in Panama, such as the World Bank Living Standard Measurement Survey (LSMS) and the World Bank Poverty Assessment from 2000. In July 2002, a stakeholder workshop was carried out to validate the preliminary project design. More than 40 stakeholders from the Ministry of Labour (MITRADEL), Ministry of Education (MEDUC), Ministry of Youth, Women, Children and Family (MINJUMNFA), Employers organizations (CONEP), Workers organizations (CONATO) and other key stakeholders from Government and civil society organizations participated in this workshop. The main element of the workshop was a strategic planning exercise using the SPIF methodology. The following diagram shows the impact areas of the project within the overall country framework, and highlights the 2 Immediate Objectives of the project that are further specified in the following sections.

Diagram 1: Framework for the Panama Country Program



The project has the following two Immediate Objectives, which were identified during the strategic planning exercise:

Immediate Objective 1: By the end of the program, the institutional capacity and quality of response for action against the worst forms of child labor will be strengthened

The main elements contributing to the achievement of Immediate Objective 1 are the following:

- Awareness raising and training on child labour issues for mass media, employers, authorities, civil and community organizations
- Improvement of coordination mechanisms at the national and provincial levels, mainly through supporting the National Committee for the Eradication of Child Labour as main entity responsible for inter-institutional coordination
- Development of a National Plan for the Eradication of Child Labor
- Expansion and enforcement of the legal framework

Immediate Objective 2: By the end of the program, 1000 children will have been removed from the worst forms of child labor in Panama and reintegrated into the education system

The key outcomes contributing to the achievement of Immediate Objective 2 are the following:

- Adaptation of the school system to the needs of child laborers
- Awareness raising and mobilization at the community level
- Establishment of a local monitoring system at the local level
- Improvement of employment conditions for adults and adolescents between 15-17 years

Looking at the country framework presented in the diagram above and the logical framework of the project, the strategy of the project is clear and sound. Objectives, outputs and activities are formulated in a precise manner, and they are logically linked to each other. The project strategy responds to the 2000 SIMPOC findings¹ through a Direct Action Program in the province of Chiriquí, where child labour in coffee production is prevalent. The project design can thus be considered relevant to the child labour situation in Panama.

2.2 Indicators

Regarding the usefulness of the indicators for monitoring and measuring impact at the **project level**, generally speaking the seven (7) indicators formulated for Immediate Objective 1 are useful to provide information on the key impact areas of the project, namely awareness raising, institutional capacity and institutional responses towards child labour, child labour policies and legislation:

Table 1: Indicators for Immediate Objective 1

Indicator for Immediate Objective 1		provides information on:	
1	Number and contents of articles and reports on the subject of child labor, especially in its worst forms, published or broadcasted	⇒	Awareness raising
2	Number of NGOs, employer and worker organization that are designing and implementing initiatives to eliminate the worst forms of child labor, outside the scope of this project	⇒	Institutional capacity and quality of response
3	Number of public institutions which have incorporated initiatives to eliminate the worst forms of child labor into their programs, in coordination with the National Plan		
4	Percentage of expanded coverage in social programs aimed at areas where child labor is a problem, according to National Plan		
5	Number of proposals for legal reforms either approved or under discussion in the Legislative Assembly	⇒	Policies and Legislation
6	Capacity and knowledge in trained institutions concerning child labor issues, including applicable legislation		
7	Number of complaints presented and sanctions applied relative to labor exploitation of children		

¹ According to the SIMPOC survey (2000), most of the working children in Panama are engaged in agriculture.

However, when looking closer at the indicators and particularly at their use, some specification is necessary: The phrase ‘scope of the project’ (indicator 2) is vague and allows scope for different interpretations. In fact, in the Project Monitoring Plan (PMP) project activities and non-project activities are both used for reporting on this indicator. For example, the PMP lists both the activities carried out by implementing agencies and by the “Universidad Especializada de Las Américas” (UDELAS)², that is no implementing agency. The evaluation recommends being more precise when it comes to reporting on this indicator.

According to the PMP, the project so far has begun to monitor progress on Indicators 1, 2, 3 and 7 of Immediate Objective 1. For the Indicators 4, 5, 6 certain activities, such as development of the National Plan and training of respective institutions, need to start in order to allow for reporting. Regarding the baseline for Indicator 6, the evaluation recommends to use the Capacity Needs Assessment “Conocimiento y Necesidades de Capacitación en torno al Trabajo Infantil en Panamá (2003)”³ as a baseline, since it can be regarded as a useful assessment of the knowledge and capacity of different actors on the issue of CL at the time of project initiation.

Regarding Indicator 7 the experience of the project has shown that reporting is difficult because of the availability of specific statistical information on the part of the responsible entity MITRADEL. The evaluation recommends including other means of verification such as reports from judicial administrators (once they are trained) to improve reporting on this indicator.

Regarding the usefulness of the indicators for monitoring and measuring impact at the **Direct Action Program level**, five (5) indicators are formulated for Immediate Objective 2:

Table 2: Indicators for Immediate Objective 2

Indicators for Immediate Objective 2	
1	Number of children removed from the worst forms of child labor
2	Percentage of children reintegrated in school that stay or complete the education system by the end of the project
3	Number of working adolescents between 15-17 who successfully complete vocational training programs
4	Number of parents of children removed from child labor who increase their income with income generation alternatives
5	Capacity and knowledge of target groups concerning child labor issues

In the two Action Program Summary Outlines (APSOs) for the urban and rural area the Indicators 1, 2, 3 and 4 formulated at the project level materialize as indicators at the AP level. This is a useful strategy insofar as it allows aggregating information from the Action Programs at the level of the project. Regarding Indicator 5, the Project Document suggests the implementation of a “Pre- and Post assessment of capacity building and awareness raising activities.” However it would be useful to specify how, and when these assessments will be carried out. If these assessments involve some survey type of activities it is important to plan and budget accordingly.

² More detailed information on activities of UDELAS is provided subsequently in the text.

³ The Capacity Needs Assessment is an output of the project. The study is based on primary information obtained through interviews with 112 officials and key actors from 68 state agencies, NGOs, trade unions and business organizations in the provinces of Panama.

Regarding Indicator 2, in the urban APSO it serves both as indicator and for defining output 1.3. While this provides little added information as such, the evaluation recommends maintaining this indicator because it significantly facilitates reporting at the project level.

3. Main findings of the evaluation

3.1 *The political context of the project*

Due to the fact that the political environment and context had a significant bearing on the implementation of the project, the evaluation will briefly outline some of the main developments in that respect.

At the time of the launch of the project (September 2002), the main support to the project at the governmental level came from the Office of the First Lady. Other governmental institutions such as MITRADEL and MINJUMNFA gradually started being involved, but it was in 2003 when MINJUMNFA and MITRADEL actively started to support the project, mainly because of the personal involvement of key individuals. The main achievement of IPEC during that period was preparing the ground in terms of awareness raising and building alliances with key people in the government. Informant interviews as well as the questionnaires confirm that the design of the project as such was relevant to the CL situation in Panama. However the project faced a difficult context at the beginning because it was only a few committed individuals at the governmental level who supported the project.

Towards the end of 2003 the pre-electoral process started in Panama and from then on dominated the agenda in the media and in the news. Public attention was focused on the forthcoming elections in May 2004. For the project this meant that training seminars with authorities at the national and provincial level were not carried out, because it was uncertain if government officials would remain in key positions. Work on the National Plan with the National Committee was delayed for the same reason. The pre-electoral and electoral processes were amongst the main reasons for the rescheduling and the delays of activities of the project.⁴

Currently however, there is indication that with the new government the project is operating in a much more favorable political context than before. The project has successfully established working relationships with the new authorities, in particular with the Office of the First Lady, MINJUMNFA and MITRADEL. Key informants from the Office of the First Lady, MINJUMNFA and MITRADEL express enthusiasm about the issue of CL and show clear willingness to cooperate and to support the IPEC project in the combat against CL. The group discussions carried out during the evaluation mission confirm that overall speaking, there is significantly more interest of the new authorities regarding the issue of CL.

Regarding existing financial commitments for children's issues by the government, it is worthwhile mentioning the program to assist girls working as domestic servants by MINJUMNFA, and the aid programs for youth and working children carried out by the office of the First Lady. A further indicator of existing commitment is the fact that the Institute for Vocational Training of Human Resources (IFARHU) has expressed willingness to provide 1000

⁴ This is confirmed by results from the questionnaire: The majority of the workshop participants think that the government change was amongst the key external factors that affected the implementation of the project.

scholarships to working children: 500 of these scholarships will benefit children identified for the urban Action Program, and 500 scholarships will be negotiated for the rural Action Program.

3.2 The process of project start-up

The project was officially launched in September 2002 but faced considerable difficulties in hiring a coordinator for the project. The main reason was the lack of suitable candidates in the country. ILO IPEC advertised the job position 3 times without finding a candidate who would 1) fit the profile and 2) would be willing to work under the conditions offered by ILO IPEC.

The current project coordinator assumed responsibility in June 2003. Until then, IPEC staff in Panama assigned to other projects (Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Child Domestic Work), IPEC staff in San José and personal in other ILO programs (ILO/SIAL) had been providing support to the project. The office infrastructure was established in October 2003.

The capacity constraints from June to November 2003 affected the overall performance of the project in the way that the project coordinator was occupied with hiring personnel and setting up the office infrastructure, with less time available for technical work.

Today, in addition to the project coordinator, the project is staffed by 3 people: A secretary paid by MINJUMNFA who works as a receptionist and provides secretarial support. This contribution through MINJUMNFA can be seen as an important indicator of commitment by the Government to support the IPEC project. Further there is a technical assistant who assists the coordinator in the planning, implementation and technical monitoring of the project. Finally the administrative assistant is in charge of financial management and internal accounting.

Summarizing this one can say that both the political context and the lack of IPEC personnel in the start-up phase of the project can be considered key factors for the delay of subsequent activities in the work plan.

3.3 Achievements in awareness raising

The Country Program strives to change social attitudes through the generation and dissemination of information on the magnitude and characteristics of the WFCL. Activities to be carried out include the production and dissemination of research reports as well as a series of workshops with different audiences such as government, employers, workers, public institutions, NGOs and the media.

The project reports that there is a regular production of press reports that make use of ILO IPEC studies such as the Panama National Child Labour Survey (2000) and the Urban Baseline Survey. The IPEC Panama office is maintaining a thorough record on the distribution and use of Child Labour data in Panama. For example, in the period February to November 2004 on average 16 persons per month came to the IPEC office to request information on CL⁵. The documents that were predominantly handed out were the following:

- Information on ILO Conventions 138 and 182

⁵ Source: registry of IPEC Panama office

- Informe nacional de la encuesta TI en Panamá
- Resumen ejecutivo de la Encuesta TI en Panamá
- Análisis cualitativo de la situación del TI en Panamá
- Análisis a profundidad de la Encuesta del TI en Panamá
- Síntesis de análisis del TI en América Central y República Dominicana

During the period February to November 2004 the Panama National Child Labour Survey was distributed to 10 public institutions, 4 NGOs, 2 international organizations, 3 embassies, and 5 other organizations such as Universities, Lawyers' and Workers' Associations. The data was used for planning of interventions (e.g. Action Programs), reference in policy documents (e.g. 'Plan Nacional de Acción de la Niñez y la Adolescencia 2003-2006'), reference in legal proposals, production of newspaper articles and media reports, research activities, and training for university students, amongst others.

The project was very visible in the context of the June 12 activities (World Day against Child Labour), with various articles on the issue of Child Labour appearing in the newspapers. The activities had previously been prepared by the project through workshops with journalists.

The interviews and group discussions during the evaluation mission show that in general, society in Panama is increasingly aware of the issue of CL. The issue is much more present in the media and in public discussions than 5 years ago. The questionnaire results show that 81% from the workshop participants think that in general, the issue of CL currently either has a very high or an average presence in the public discussion in Panama. They also think that CL has a very high or average presence in the institution they represent. It was also noted that the information on CL today has a different quality: The image of the 'poor child' has been replaced by a more detailed knowledge on the numbers of child workers, as well as the causes and consequences of CL in Panama. The SIMPOC studies have played a key role in this respect.

This illustrates the demand for information on CL in Panama and show that the IPEC office plays an important role in providing such information. To date, most of this information consists of material produced by the IPEC SIMPOC project. Hence the SIMPOC project and the Country Program clearly complement each other regarding the production and dissemination of CL information.

However there is comparably little information on the Country Program itself, and awareness raising material produced by the Country Program. Informant interviews indicate that there is considerable scope for enhancing the visibility of the project. The project has responded to this through the elaboration of a Communication Plan (Plan de Divulgación del Programa País para combatir las Peores Formas de Trabajo Infantil en Panamá) in September 2004. This Communication Plan targets workers and employers organizations, the government, the media, the National Committee, and others. The principle purpose of the Communication Plan is to provide information on CL to these target groups, raise awareness and gain their support to the project for combating the WFCL. The main elements of the Communication Plan are 1) advocacy and lobby work (mainly with the National Committee and the Legislative Assembly), and 2) production and dissemination of material in both print and electronic format. It also includes a detailed 1-year work plan and a list of indicators⁶ to monitor progress of activities.

⁶ The Communication Plan acknowledges that the indicators listed in the document are in fact outputs, or milestones of the plan (Plan de Divulgación del Programa País, 2004, p. 3)

Currently the project is in the process of hiring a communication expert who will be responsible for implementing the Communication Plan.

The Communication Plan provides clear guidance on the key steps that are necessary to reinforce awareness-raising and advocacy work, and can be regarded as a useful tool to enhance the visibility of the project. It has good potential for guaranteeing that communication activities of the project be more continuous. The evaluation recommends that the communication strategy of the project also include ‘non-traditional’ partners such as the private sector and churches in order to upscale the mobilization process and include a wide range of different actors.

3.4 Achievements in capacity building

The strategy of the Country Program to build and improve capacity includes activities such as workshops and forums with key institutions at the national and at the regional level. The approach the project is taking towards capacity building underlines the importance of having enough time to prepare for and carry out training activities. In the view of the project, the training should provide trainees with quality methodologies and tools that allow them to work as multipliers, i.e. put them in the position to eventually give training on CL themselves. Training needs to be useful enough to allow for replication.

This implies that the training be thoroughly designed, and geared and adapted towards the necessities of the different audiences. In contrast to this, if training activities are carried out in an ad-hoc manner they might have an awareness raising effect but not necessarily a training effect, with insufficient guidance for specific actors (ministries, NGOs etc.) on potential approaches to combat CL. The project follows this approach because it increases the likelihood that capacity building achievements are sustainable.

To date, the project estimates that 412 persons have either been made aware and / or trained on issues of CL, including: media people, professors and students, representatives from workers’ organizations, representatives from employers’ organizations, NGOs, functionaries from the public sector, the women’s movement, and churches.

For example, the project in conjunction with ILO ACTRAV has realized workshops with the Workers National Council (CONATO). As a result of the workshops, CONATO has developed and approved guidelines for a Worker’s Plan to eradicate child labour. Two focal points have been designated at the level of CONATO to deal with CL issues, and there is a focal point for CL in each of the 12 syndicates. CONATO has publicly declared (via TV) that the organization is willing to support action against CL.

Technical assistance has also been provided to the Child Labour Unit (Departamento de Atención al Trabajo Infantil y Protección al Menor Trabajador) in MITRADEL through installation of the SIMPOC database for monitoring child labor in Panama. Training in the use of the database use was given, and a workshop on methodologies for child labour monitoring for inspectors was carried out.

In October 2003, the Universidad Especializada de Las Américas (UDELAS) carried out a 2-day workshop on CL as a module of the postgraduate course ‘Derechos de la Niñez y Maltrato Infantil’. The goal of the workshop was to train professionals in different ways to mainstream the

issue into public policies and in effective attention models for combating child labor. The module had previously been elaborated in conjunction with IPEC and the Centre for Family Studies (CEFA). The workshop was attended by 35 participants from the following sectors: University students, representatives from the judicial sector, Ministries, the National Police, schools, representatives from the health sector, and NGOs. The workshop with UDELAS was rated very positively by the participants. Apart from capacity building on CL, a major result of this workshop was the creation and strengthening of linkages and alliances between IPEC and key actors that have a potential role as multipliers in supporting the combat against CL.

The results from the questionnaire handed out during the evaluation stakeholder workshop show that 71% from the workshop participants in general rate the training they have received through the project either very useful or useful. The training helped them to gain an integral view and in-depth knowledge on causes and consequences of CL and on potential strategies to combat CL. However, only 33% of the workshop participants think that there is high financial capacity in their institution to carry out action against CL, and 29% think the financial capacity is medium. This illustrates that despite of the training, the financial resource situation in national institutions might be a constraint to carrying out action against CL.

The project also contributed to developing the capacity of IPEC and IPEC partners' staff in Panama. The sub-regional IPEC office played a mayor role in providing training and technical support during various phases of project implementation. Through this, IPEC staff in Panama increased their practical experience in how to implement ILO technical cooperation programmes and in how to deal with the issue of child labour in the country.

Due to the election process and the installment of the new government the project is behind schedule regarding training activities. In particular new public officials need to be trained in the forthcoming months. The project currently is working on a training plan, together with the Sub-regional Office in San José and based on the Capacity Needs Assessment (2003)⁷. Amongst the ideas is to develop different training modules that allow adaptation of content and methodology to the respective audience.

3.5 Achievements in improving coordination mechanisms

The National Committee for the Eradication of Child Labour

According to the project document, the main component for improving coordination mechanisms at the national and provincial level is through providing support to the National Committee for the Eradication of Child Labour (NC), as the main entity responsible for inter-institutional coordination.

The NC in Panama was created in 1997 through the Decree No. 25 with the following main purposes:

- advise, coordinate social and labour oriented policies and programs
- contribute to the elaboration, supervision and evaluation of a National Plan of Action for eliminating CL

⁷ The Capacity Needs Assessment (2003) is a study of high quality and provides a useful basis for the forthcoming work.

- strengthen the coordination between public and private as well as national and international institutions to find alternatives and strategies to eliminate the basic causes of CL.

As per Decree 25, the NC includes representatives from 25 institutions such as the Office of the First Lady, MITRADEL, MINJUMNFA, MEDUC, MINSA, MIDA as well as NGOs and workers and employers organizations. According to Article 4 of the Decree the NC should meet every 3 months. The responsibility for convening the NC is with the Office of the First Lady.

The Technical Secretariat, as the operative branch of the NC includes the following 6 (government) institutions: Office of the First Lady, MITRADEL, MINJUMNFA, MEDUC, MINSA and MIDA. IPEC has an observer and advisory role in the Technical Secretariat.

To date, the experience of the project shows that although the National Committee is in a position to play a key role in coordinating inter-institutional action, to date it has not been very active. Amongst the reasons was lack of resources and of capacity, uncertainty regarding the role and responsibilities, as well as lack of commitment of the representing institutions. While it can be said that the members of the Technical Secretariat met on a regular basis⁸, the National Committee only met twice since the start of the project.

In order to improve the effectiveness of the National Committee, the project in conjunction with specialists from ILO-IPEC carried out a series of technical consultation sessions with the Technical Secretariat of the NC, in order to share good strategies and lessons learned from other experiences regarding the role and functioning of the NC. In this context, representatives of the NC attended the first Tri-partite Sub-regional Meeting of National Committees that was promoted by IPEC and held in Tegucigalpa, Honduras in March 2004.

Among the issues on the agenda of the meeting in Honduras were:

- the national legislations in the sub-region regarding the application of the Conventions 138 and 182
- the role played by the National Committees in each country in relation to the designing and monitoring of a National Plans against child labour
- the involvement of the workers' and employers' organizations in the activities of the NC, and the need to strengthen their role.

The meeting was highly relevant for the representatives from Panama because it allowed for exchange of information between the countries, and it provided insights on how to proceed in the development of a National Plan.

Due to the change in government the NC in Panama is currently in the process of both re-establishing and restructuring itself, in order to improve its catalyst function and the coordination between key actors. Draft proposals have been elaborated that include a modification of Decree 25 on how to restructure the NC and, above all, its Technical Secretariat. A main question in the discussion is on how to make the Secretariat more representative, i.e. include organizations from civil society (NGOs), workers' and employers' organizations, the private sector as well as other public institutions that have a potential role to play in combating

⁸ For instance, during the selection of the target areas in mid 2003, the Technical Secretariat of the NC met once a week.

CL. Another question is on who in the Technical Secretariat should have the responsibility for convening the NC. A potential solution would be to hire a full-time, independent person in the Secretariat for that purpose. The issues are currently discussed in a very dynamic and lively debate between representatives from government, workers' and employers' organizations as well as civil society⁹, and it is expected to reach some type of agreement towards the beginning of 2005. However at this point it is difficult to predict the final outcomes of this process.

REDTIP

A further important coordination mechanism in Panama is the Health and Safety in Child Labour (Red de Seguridad y Salud contra el Trabajo Infantil Insalubre y Peligroso, RED TIP) under the auspices of MITRADEL. It was created in 2003 as a sub-regional network including the countries Panama, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras and the Dominican Republic.

RED TIP has the following mission:

- Support the NC in areas related to health in child labour and hazardous child labour
- Contribute to capacity building for legislation on hazardous child labour
- Facilitate the exchange of experience on issues related to health and safety in child labour
- Develop and disseminate tools that allow to identify and monitor hazardous child labour

RED TIP includes governmental and non-governmental organizations, research institutions and organisations from civil society involved in the combat against CL. ILO IPEC provides technical support to the process in the respective countries. In Panama, the Country Program has encouraged the active participation of RED TIP in the National Committee. For example, there is a proposal to include a RED TIP member in the Technical Secretariat of the NC. This would facilitate the process of defining the hazardous forms of child labour and thus be a key input to the formulation of the National Plan for the Eradication of CL. However, this process depends on the outcomes of the discussion around the restructuring of the NC, ongoing at the time of the evaluation.

Coordination between the Country Program and other IPEC interventions

Regarding the relationship between the Country Program and other IPEC interventions in Panama it is important to mention the SIMPOC project, the project on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) and the project on Child Domestic Work (CDW).

The main output of the SIMPOC project (funded by USDOL) is the Panama National Child Labour Survey (2000) that includes a quantitative as well as a qualitative analysis. As mentioned above, the Country Program has been instrumental in disseminating the results of the SIMPOC project amongst key institutions at the national level in Panama, and there is clear indication of synergies being created by the 2 projects.

Regarding the CSEC and the CDW projects it is important to clarify that the 1st project is part of the sub-regional project to combat Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (funded by USDOL), whereas the 2nd project is part of the sub-regional project to combat Child Domestic Work, funded by Canada. This implies that the CSEC / CDW projects and the Country Program are characterized by 3 different reporting lines towards the sub-regional IPEC office in San José.

⁹ As an example, the composition of the Technical Secretariat was one of the main topics of discussion during the stakeholder workshop on November 22.

Both the CSEC and the CDW project are operational since 2000 and have made important achievements in Panama, in particular regarding awareness raising and putting the issue of CL on the public agenda. When the current coordinator assumed responsibility for the Country Program in June 2003, there was an introduction and exchange of information between the CSEC / CDW projects and the Country Program.

While the design and strategy of the Country Program as such can be considered relevant with regard to the existing IPEC interventions in Panama, the interviews during the evaluation suggested that there is room for improving the coordination of activities between the CSEC / CDW projects and the Country Program, which would allow for more efficient use of resources. The evaluation recommends increasing the level of coordination particularly for activities related to communication, social mobilisation and capacity building.

3.6 Achievements in the development of a National Plan

National Plan for the Eradication of Child Labor

The National Plan for the Eradication of Child Labor is considered the fundamental policy development tool for defining programs directed to prevent and withdraw children and adolescents from the WFCL. It's main goal is to focus social policies (education, health, programs dealing with poverty, etc.) on working children and adolescents, through integrating them with social programs already being carried out by the respective government.

Essential in this process is that the different institutions define priorities, clarify their responsibilities and assign resources to make the National Plan operational. The NC and it's Technical Secretariat as a platform for inter-institutional coordination have a key role to play in this, i.e. they have to operate in an effective and efficient manner.

The National Plan further requires the establishment of mechanisms and regulations to monitor the WFCL, in particular in the informal sector. Usually a first step is the definition of the WFCL, followed by a tripartite consultation process at the national and provincial level that includes government agencies, employers and workers, civil society organizations, international cooperation agencies, and others.

In Panama the consultation process on the WFCL started in the provinces of Veraguas and Coclé, but since then has been postponed due to the electoral process in the country. The project plans to re-initiate the consultation process on the WFCL at the beginning of 2005. It is important to note that the results of the baseline study on hazardous child labour in urban areas in Panama City¹⁰ are expected to also provide valuable input for defining the WFCL in Panama.

The IPEC Country program has meanwhile re-established contacts with the new authorities of MITRADEL, MINJUMNFA, MEDUC and the Office of the First Lady in order to promote their involvement and commitment in the development of the National Plan for the Eradication of Child Labor. These institutions have publicly reiterated their will to support the formulation of a National Plan and there is good prospective that this support will continue in the future.

¹⁰ “Estudio para la determinación de línea de base trabajo infantil peligroso en áreas urbanas”, completed in May 2004

National Strategic Plan on Children and Youth

In November 2003, MINJUMNFA together with UNICEF presented the National Strategic Plan on Children and Youth (Plan Estratégico Nacional de la Niñez y la Adolescencia, 2015). The Plan provides an overall long-term vision on children and youth in Panama and it outlines the following main goals regarding CL¹¹:

- Until 2006, elaborate a list of hazardous child labour, and make operational a National Plan for Eradicating CL
- Until 2006, elaborate a proposal for monitoring adolescent work
- Until 2006, elaborate a technical proposal for MINEDUC regarding the reinsertion of working children in school
- Until 2006, strengthen the National Committee for the Eradication of CL and its Technical Secretariat
- Until 2006, reduce CL by 40%, giving priority to its worst forms
- Until 2015, reduce CL by 80% in most deprived areas

Based on the framework of the National Strategic Plan, the National Action Plan on Children and Youth ('Plan Nacional de Acción de la Niñez y la Adolescencia 2003-2006') was developed subsequently. Both plans were consulted with ILO IPEC. The National Action Plan on Children includes a 2-page section with general guidelines on eliminating CL and monitoring adolescent work. These guidelines call for designing and implementing a national policy to eliminate CL, as well as the formulation of a legal framework to protect children from exploitation.

However, neither the National Strategic Plan nor the National Action Plan on Children include specific short-term objectives regarding the elimination of CL. There is no identification of priority target groups, main programme areas or types of interventions. There is little specific information on the institutional actors to be involved. As such, both Plans can be considered relevant, but they remain too general to constitute a viable plan of action against the WFCL. They do not substitute for developing and implementing a National Plan for the Eradication of Child Labor.

3.7 Achievements in improving the legal framework

The legislation on children's issues in Panama is regulated through different frameworks such as the Political Constitution, Code of the Family, Code of Work, Code of Agriculture, etc. These frameworks only partly comply with international obligations that Panama has acquired through ratification of ILO Conventions 138 and 182, including the respective recommendations 146 and 190. In many cases there are contradictions or inconsistencies between the legislations, for example between Article 66 of the Political Constitution and Article 716 of the Code of the Family, regarding the issue of work in agriculture and in households.

Enforcement of legislation in Panama is in many cases limited due to capacity constraints in governmental institutions. For instance, in MITRADEL the number of labour inspectors has been reduced from 80 inspectors in 1980 to 25 inspectors today. Enforcement of legislation and monitoring CL is particularly challenging in the informal sector, where the majority of children in Panama work.

¹¹ "Plan Estratégico Nacional de la Niñez y la Adolescencia (2015), pages 97-100

To date, the main elements of the legislation in Panama with regard to CL are the following:

- Ratification of Convention on the Rights of the Child in November 1990
- Memorandum of Understanding between ILO and Panama in June 1996, renewed in March 2004
- Ratification of ILO Conventions 138 and C. 182 in 2000
- Approval of the Executive Decree No. 25 in April 1997, which allowed for creation of the Committee for the Eradication of Child Labour and the Protection of Working Adolescents, under the auspices of MITRADEL. The Decree No. 25 was modified in April 1998 through Decree No. 9 and through Decree No. 18 in July 1999
- Approval of the Plan Estratégico Nacional de la Niñez y la Adolescencia (2015) in November 2003. The sixth strategic area of the Plan ‘Respecting and Reconstituting Rights’ includes general guidelines on eliminating CL and monitoring adolescent work.
- With support from the IPEC CSEC project, Law 16 has been elaborated and has been approved in March 2004. The Law 16 includes specific measures for the prevention and specification of offenses against sexual integrity and freedom of children and adolescents, and it modifies and complements corresponding articles in the Penal and Judicial Codes. The approval of Law 16 represents an important step in accomplishing with the International Conventions on the protection of children’s rights.
- With support from UNICEF, several proposals for a ‘Ley de Protección integral de la Niñez y Adolescencia’ have been elaborated. This law is expected to include a specific chapter on rights and protection for adolescent workers above 14 years. The Commission for Children’s issues in the National Assembly is currently promoting the reactivation of this process.

In August 2004, the project produced a first draft of a comparative analysis between the national and the international legislative framework on CL. The report includes recommendations on how to harmonize the existing legislation, and is currently being reviewed. The proposal will subsequently need to be endorsed by the National Committee. Training and awareness raising for judicial administrators and magistrates are planned to be carried out as soon as the revision of the legislative reforms is completed.

Representatives of Panamanian institutions also participated in the sub-regional inter-parliamentarian workshop to review the legal framework from the scope of the C. 182¹². A key output of the workshop is the ‘Declaration of Tegucigalpa’ that calls for more cooperation on the issue of CL between parliaments in the sub-region, legislative reforms in the context of C. 182 and C. 138, a minimum working age of 15 years, and the establishment of a list of hazardous work according to C. 182.

The project was successful in strengthening the alliance with the Women Movement in Panama, through including the elimination of CL in Article 1 of the Third National Pact on Women and Development (2003). The pact aims at promoting institutional processes to reduce the discrepancies between economical and social policies in Panama from a gender perspective. It can be considered a joint result from the Women and Development Forum, the Committee for Integral Development, the National Indigenous Women Committee and the National Board of

¹² The workshop took place in March 2004 in Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Women Lawyers. It was signed by the presidential candidates in March 2004 and includes a formal commitment that is to be addressed by the current government.

3.8 Achievements in the rural and urban Action Programs

The main elements in both the rural and the urban Direct Action Program are increased enrolment and reintegration of working children in school, awareness raising and social mobilization at the community level, the establishment of local monitoring systems, as well as the improvement of employment conditions for adults and adolescents between 15-17 years. Both Action Program Summary Outlines (APSOs) were approved by HQ Geneva in November 2004. The direct Action Programs are the project component with the lowest level of implementation in the Panama Country Program. The following provides a brief analysis of the process, in order to learn from this experience and improve future AP formulation and development.

Selection of target regions and target groups

The process of selecting geographical areas for Action Programs initiated in mid-2003, through consultations between national and sub regional IPEC staff and national authorities. The criteria for selecting target regions that guided the discussions in particular with the National Committee were the following:

- Poverty level
- Incidence of CL
- Capacity at the community level (level of awareness, human resources etc.)
- Infrastructure at the community level (health, education, nutrition, etc.)
- Existence and capacity of governmental institutions and NGOs
- Government strategy (priority of intervention area, priority of thematic issue, political willingness to provide resources, conditions to intervene in specific areas, etc.)
- ILO IPEC strategy (existence of previous studies, cost per child for withdrawal / prevention, replicability, etc.)

As a result of these discussions, in June 2003 the province of Chiriquí and the city of Panama were selected as target areas for direct interventions. Baseline surveys were planned to determine the selection of specific target groups within that target areas.

Given the lack of NGOs with the necessary capacity and experience to develop Action Programs in Panama and to minimize over-head costs, IPEC decided to select one NGO to carry out both APs in the rural and in the urban area. The NGO preselected by IPEC was Fé y Alegría, pending approval of the Technical Secretariat of the NC and anticipating that negotiations between IPEC and Fé y Alegría would be successful.

However due to capacity reasons in September 2003 the NGO Fé y Alegría withdrew from the rural area. This made it necessary to look for a different NGO to carry out the rural AP. IPEC Panama carried out a mission in October 2003 to identify other potential NGOs in Chiriquí, using the following selection criteria:

- Non-governmental organization in the area of social development

- At least 5 years experience in managing and implementing direct intervention projects
- Experience in direct intervention projects with street children and / or child labour
- Office and minimum infrastructure in Chiriquí
- Experience in testing models of intervention
- Knowledge and work experience in Chiriquí and with different sectors and social actors
- Availability to work for about 1.5 years in preventing and withdrawing 500 children from hazardous work
- Registered as a judicial entity

As a result, Casa Esperanza was identified as potential implementing agency for the rural AP and in November 2003, the IPEC project succeeded in overcoming the resistance of the National Committee to work with Casa Esperanza.

Meanwhile in August 2003 work on the urban baseline had started. When it became clear that that the target population was geographically more dispersed than initially assumed, the NGO Fé y Alegría withdrew their proposal for the urban area. Similar to before, IPEC had to look for a different partner to carry out the urban AP. In December 2003 IPEC and the National Committee agreed to work with Casa Esperanza in both the rural and the urban area.

An analysis of processes in the period June to December 2003 shows that the main bottleneck was the lack of a potential implementing partner with the necessary profile, capacity and experience to carry out the direct action programs. The initial resistance from the National Committee to work with a certain NGO aggravated this situation. The criteria for selecting target regions and implementing agencies can be considered relevant. It is mainly contextual factors that caused the delays in the pre-formulation phase of the Action Programs.

Formulation of Action Program proposals

Casa Esperanza began elaborating proposals for both the rural and urban AP at the beginning of 2004. As initial briefing material the NGO received the Project Document, the DED Guidelines on Project Design, and examples from APSOs elaborated in the context of an IPEC project in Nicaragua.

In January 2004 Casa Esperanza submitted first draft proposals for both APs. The proposals were based on data that was available at that time, such as research carried by Casa Esperanza, and previous studies carried out mainly by the University of Panama and the Instituto Panameño de Estudios Laborales (IPEL), e.g. “Los Jóvenes Empacadores de los Supermercados”, amongst others. The results of the urban baseline study were not yet available at that time.¹³

IPEC Panama reviewed these documents using a checklist of 148 technical criteria that were derived from the DED Guidelines on Project Design. These 148 technical criteria were grouped according to the main elements 1) Background and Justification, 2) Target groups and partners,

¹³ The final report of the urban baseline was handed over in May 2004. The baseline is based on interviews with 529 children and 222 fathers, mothers or guardians of children, as well as interviews that were carried out in health care centres and schools. The study is of very high quality and, despite of the delay, has provided useful information to the IA to identify beneficiaries and to focus the strategy of the intervention.

3) Project Strategy, 4) Project implementation, 5) Institutional framework and project management, 6) Inputs, 7) Planning Monitoring & Evaluation, 8) Budget, and 9) Gender as a crosscutting issue. ILO IPEC gave technical assistance to the formulation of the proposals mainly through telephone and e-mail. In total, seven (7) versions of the rural APSO and four (4) versions of the urban APSO were submitted by the implementing agency, as can be seen in the diagram 2 below.

The main issues that needed clarification were the following:

- selection of appropriate indicators
- clarification of the budget and distinction between local and IPEC contribution
- inclusion of gender concerns
- consideration of tripartite structure of the ILO
- use of tables on beneficiaries
- distinction between beneficiaries, direct recipients and partners
- consideration of work situation and income generation for parents of working children
- completeness of bibliography
- consideration of existing legislation on education
- synergies with other IPEC projects and partners

In April 2004 a 2-day workshop was carried out in David, Chiriquí to validate the proposal on the rural Direct Action Program. The specific objective of this workshop was to raise awareness amongst key actors at the local level (representatives from communities, government, NGOs, coffee sector), to discuss the model of intervention and to gain ownership and commitment. According to the evaluation questionnaire, at the end of the workshop participants were highly satisfied in terms of content, methodology and relevance of the workshop. A similar workshop was carried out in June 2004 in Panama City to present and validate the model of intervention for the urban Direct Action Program.

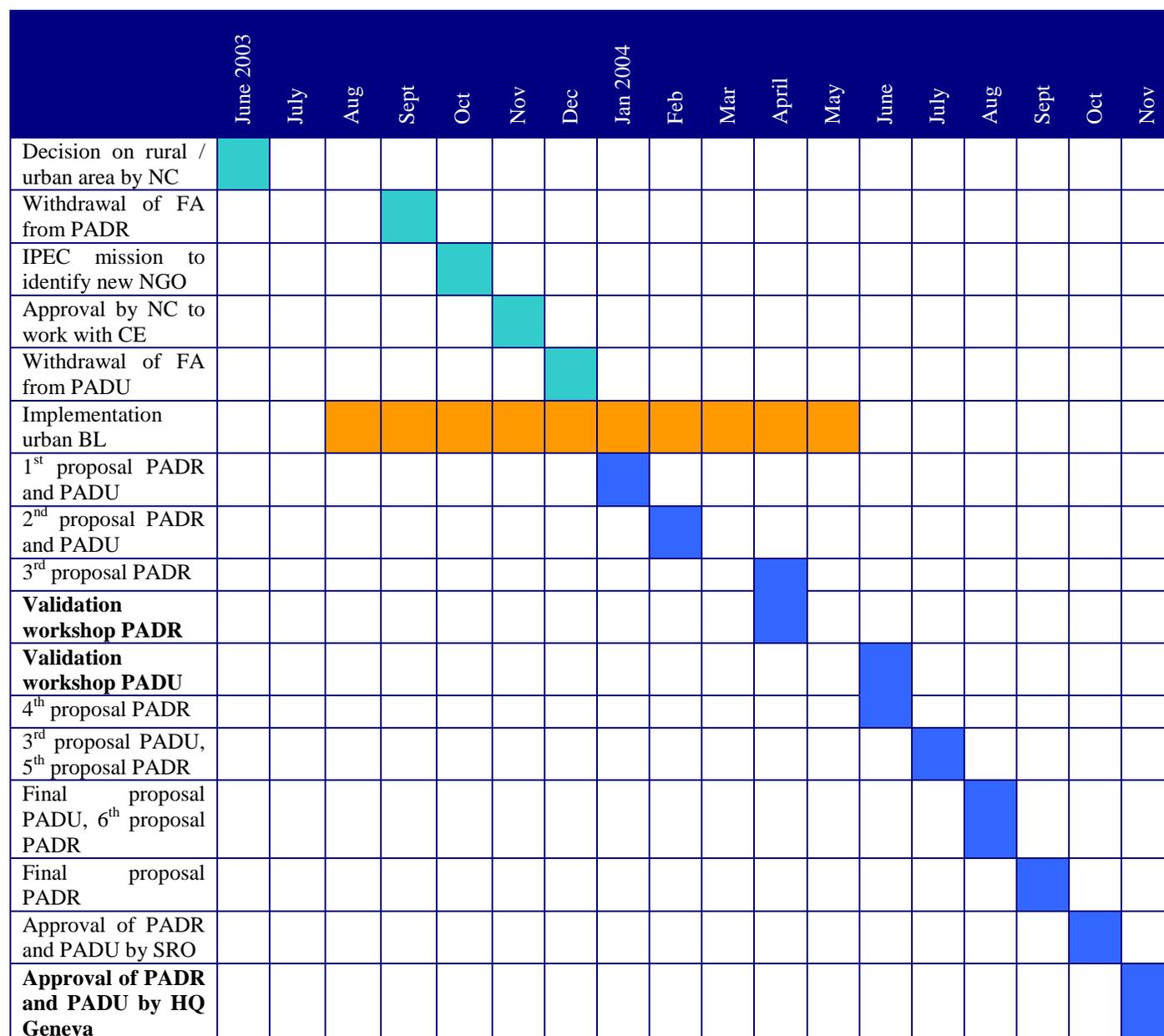
An analysis of processes in the period January to November 2004 shows that the various rounds of consultations and the resulting delays on the hand rooted in capacity issues on the part of the implementing agency, on the other hand there were high exigencies with regard to project design on the part of IPEC. IPEC took the DED guidelines for project design almost verbatim, while at the same time the implementing agency perceived the guidelines as little user-friendly. In the case of the urban AP, the fact that the results of the urban baseline were not available at the beginning of the project formulation were another reason why the APSO had to be rewritten.

The evaluation clearly acknowledges the high quality of the final project documents. The participatory approach taken through the workshops in April and June 2004 significantly contributed to improving understanding and commitment on the part of the stakeholders. This commitment will be crucial in terms of sustainability of the interventions. The interviews carried out during this evaluation also confirm that the implementing agency highly appreciated the learning experience.

However and in terms of efficiency, for future Action Programs the evaluation recommends reconsidering the amount of time to be spent in the elaboration of APs. IPEC quality requirements need to be carefully balanced against the need to formulate APs timely and efficiently.

A further lesson illustrated through this experience is the need for more and practical guidance on APDesign, both at the level of IPEC as well as at the level of the implementing agency. This can be realized through e.g. training on AP design, and through the development of user-friendly guidelines on AP Design.

Diagram 2: Process of selecting target regions and formulating Direct Action Programs



Explanation:

	Selection of target regions and target groups		Formulation of Action Program proposals
NC	National Committee for the Eradication of Child Labour	PADR	Programa de Acción Directa Rural (rural AP)
FA	NGO Fe y Alegría	PADU	Programa de Acción Directa Urbano (urban AP)
CE	NGO Casa Esperanza	SRO	Sub-regional Office San José

Coordination with non-IPEC initiatives at the local level

Regarding other local initiatives in the area of child labour and education it is important to mention the USDOL / Education Initiative funded “Destino” project that is coordinated by Creative Associates and implemented by Casa Esperanza. The “Destino” project has a duration of 4 years and was started in 2004, after a preparatory phase of 3 months. It targets rural areas and includes similar components as the IPEC Action Program, e.g. tutorial programs and educational support for working children. However it covers different communities and thus, from the perspective of Casa Esperanza, allows for a wider coverage.

At the directorial level the EI and IPEC projects will be coordinated by the same staff in Panama City. This will allow for direct feedback, and exchange of information and experience between the projects. This exchange of experience during implementation will facilitate learning and eventual adjustments to the strategies of both projects, in order to improve their performance. However, at the activities level different staff will be used to work with children and to provide direct attention and support services.

4. Sustainability

At the overall project level, the sustainability of the achievements of the project to a large extent depends on the commitment of institutions at the national, provincial and local level to continue providing support to working children. Taking into account the recent government change and the fact that many key actors in ministries have been replaced, it is difficult for the evaluation to precisely determine the likelihood that activities will be continued or extended to other regions or sectors in Panama.

However there is indication that the Country Program has provided the ground for some key elements that will contribute to the sustainability of the achievements of the project. For example, the fact that CONATO is in the process of elaborating a Worker’s plan to eradicate child labour can be regarded as such an element. Another example is the Child Labour module in the postgraduate course ‘Derechos de la Niñez y Maltrato Infantil’ by the university UDELAS, that will guarantee continuous training for university graduates who can then work as specialists in the field of CL, both in Panama and in the region.

At the direct action level, since the APs are just about to commence this mid-term evaluation cannot determine with certainty if the activities will be sustained after the closure of the project. However the current phase-out strategy¹⁴ indicates that after project closedown the children will continue receiving support by the NGO, and that the costs for this support will be provided by the NGO.¹⁵ The scholarships that will be provided to 500 children targeted by the Direct Action Programs by the Institute for Vocational Training (IFARHU) also show that there is a basis for sustaining the achievements at the local level. Another important element in the rural area is the Local Committee for eradicating Child Labour. Once established, it is expected to be the key platform for coordinating and sustaining inter-institutional action against CL.

¹⁴ Outlined in the Action Program Summary Outline (rural and urban) and confirmed in group interview.

¹⁵ On a separate note and more generally speaking, one needs to take into account that in the long term the services provided by an NGO should not and cannot substitute the role of public institutions, such as MITRADEL and MEDUC, regarding monitoring CL and providing children with adequate education.

Apart from institutional and financial support, a key factor is that the Action Programs link up with key people in the community from the start, and that a critical mass be created that can impact on the local political agenda. The mobilization of a wide range of actors at the beginning increases the chance that these actors feel being part of the process, and assume long-term responsibility. In this respect, the 2 validation workshops carried out during the formulation of the Action Programs played a fundamental role. This initial mobilization now needs to be continued and taken further, both in the urban and rural area. The experience with the Action Programs in the province of Veraguas under the sub-regional project to combat CDW can be seen as successful model of such a sustained mobilization process.

5. Conclusions

The evaluation showed that since the start, the project has gone through two time periods that were different both in terms of project set-up (i.e. recruitment of staff) and political context and environment. This is an important fact to bear in mind when assessing the overall performance of the project. The project de facto started in June 2003 rather than in September 2002 and it was confronted with a challenging environment in the way that the pre-electoral process initiated at the end of 2003, and from then on dominated the public agenda.

Despite of the initial delays, the project has made progress towards achieving its objectives, particularly in the areas of awareness raising and capacity building for specific key actors. The products of the projects, e.g. the Urban Baseline Study on hazardous work and the Capacity Needs Assessment are of high quality. It is important to highlight that in the context of the new government the development of project activities is accelerating considerably. The project has been successful in (re-) establishing strategic alliances with actors at different levels who have a role to play in the combat against CL. There is now clear indication of commitment from key people in the government.

The openness towards reforms e.g. with regard to restructuring the National Committee can be considered a window of opportunity for the project. The reform of the National Committee will greatly improve its effectiveness and will facilitate the development of key activities such as the National Plan for the Eradication of Child Labour.

At the direct intervention level the project has provided a solid basis for carrying out two potentially very successful Action Programs. The comprehensive and participatory approach during the preparatory phase, as well as the experience of the implementing agency in working with children¹⁶ will improve the likelihood that the achievements of the APs will be sustained in the long term.

6. Recommendations and lessons learned

6.1 Recommendations at the project level

- a) It is recommended to extend the project for at least another year to allow continuing and sustaining the initiated activities. An important momentum has now been created and expectations have been raised on the part of the new government, the implementing

¹⁶ Casa Esperanza began providing support to working children in 1992.

agency and (last but not least) the children that have been identified for the direct Action Programs. It is key to keep up this momentum, in particular since the environment of the project is much more favorable than before. (addressed to: IPEC / donor)

- b) It is recommended to prioritize activities in the work-plan of the project. The evaluation considers the elaboration of the National Plan and the successful implementation of the two Action Programs as top priorities. (addressed to: project / National Committee / NGO)
- c) It is recommended to continue increasing the communication component of the project in order to make the issue of CL - and the Country Program itself - more visible to the general public. The project should make improved use of existing communication networks created by the IPEC CSEC and CDW projects. (addressed to: project)
- d) It is recommended to further reactivate and strengthen the National Committee for the Eradication of Child Labour in order to make it more operational through 1) making it more representative and 2) clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the institutions represented in the NC. (addressed to: National Committee / project)
- e) It is recommended to make maximum use of material, tools, and methodologies that are already available for capacity building at the sub-regional level. This is crucial for efficiency reasons and taking into account the overall project budget. Training for new public officials should start as soon as possible, to take advantage of the current situation and to keep up the momentum that has been created. (addressed to: project)

6.2 Recommendations at the Action Program level

- f) For future Action Program formulation, it is recommended to use the implementing agency for collecting the baseline information on the target population, since it allows establishing the first contact with the target population and focusing the strategy of the intervention. The evaluation acknowledges that IPEC had initially planned for this, but for the reasons outlined above this did not materialize because it would have further delayed the process. (addressed to: IPEC)
- g) It is recommended to review the process of Action Program formulation and to decide on how to realize necessary adjustments e.g. through improved training and / or guidelines on AP design, in order to improve the process of AP formulation and make it more efficient. (addressed to: IPEC)
- h) It is recommended to make use of the experience of the AP under the CDW project in the province of Veraguas. While taking into account the different target group, this AP can be seen as a model of a successful local mobilization process that has shown impact in terms of awareness raising, and that has a probability of being sustained. (addressed to: project / IPEC)

6.3 Lessons learned

- i) The initial delays of the project underline the importance of a thorough assessment of the political and institutional context and conditions before deciding for an intervention in a given country. In the case of Panama, the context (or external factors) include 1) the readiness, willingness and commitment by a wide range of political stakeholders to support the IPEC project in combating the WFCL. The context as well include 2) the existence and availability of implementing agencies and institutions that have the necessary infrastructure and experience to successfully carry out Action Programs.

7. Annexes

7.1 Assessment of achievement on main project outputs

Component	Outputs (reported by project)	Status of outputs	Assessment of outputs
FORTALECIMIENTO INSTITUCIONAL	<p>1) Actores claves de la sociedad panameña sensibilizados y con capacitación inicial sobre las consecuencias negativas del trabajo infantil (TI).</p> <p>a. Un total estimado de 412 personas ha recibido sensibilización y/o capacitación inicial sobre la problemática del TI, incluyendo: personal de medios masivos, profesionales y estudiantes involucrados en temas de niñez, integrantes de sindicatos, sectores empresariales, ONG, funcionariado del sector público, movimiento de mujeres, iglesias.</p> <p>b. Con base en la capacitación el sector sindical inicia la elaboración de un Plan Operativo ETI en su sector.</p> <p>c. La asistencia y dotación de información a la Unión Nacional de Abogadas deriva en una iniciativa para introducir reforma constitucional para aumentar la edad mínima de admisión al empleo (aunque la propuesta fue denegada y no se debatió en la Asamblea Legislativa).</p> <p>d. Como efecto de “bola de nieve”, 95 personas han solicitado la Encuesta Nacional de Trabajo Infantil, producida por el gobierno con apoyo de IPEC-SIMPOC, reportándose usos diversos (elaboración de propuestas técnicas, informes, memorias, documentos de políticas públicas, investigaciones académicas y consultorías, dotación para bibliotecas, capacitación a estudiantes universitarios, insumos para Legisladores/as, consulta para organismos de Derechos Humanos, consulta de organismos culturales, abogados/as, partidos políticos, empresarios, sindicatos)</p>	<p><i>In process, advancing towards intermediate phase</i></p>	<p><i>Completed training has been useful</i></p>
	<p>2) Fortalecidos mecanismos de coordinación interinstitucional por procesos de concertación y capacitación</p> <p>a. La membresía de la Secretaría Técnica del Comité ETI, integrada por representantes de 6 instituciones estatales con competencia en Derechos de la Niñez, recibe asistencia técnica y capacitación permanente por parte de OIT-IPEC para desarrollar sus tareas y para coordinar sus acciones sectoriales. Actualmente se está planteando la reestructuración y ampliación del Comité con nuevos actores y renovadas dinámicas.</p> <p>b. Se ha facilitado asistencia técnica para determinar las necesidades de capacitación en torno a TI, por distintos actores gubernamentales y civiles.</p> <p>c. Se ha emprendido lobby y negociaciones para asegurar las contribuciones de instituciones claves al Proyecto. Actualmente se gestionan, con buenas perspectivas, becas para 1000 NNA de los Programas de Acción Directa.</p>	<p><i>In process, advancing towards intermediate phase</i></p>	<p><i>Current restructuring of the National Committee is expected to make it more effective</i></p>
	<p>3) Se avanza hacia la determinación de las PFTI y hacia la formulación del Plan Nacional ETI.</p> <p>a. El Plan Nacional de Acción de la Niñez y la Adolescencia 2003-2006, fue aprobado en noviembre de 2003, y consultado con OIT-IPEC. Su sexto eje “Defensa y Protección: Respetando y Restituyendo Derechos”, contempla una sección sobre “Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil y Monitoreo del Trabajo Adolescente”.</p> <p>b. La Política Pública de Juventud de Panamá, contó con amplia información suministrada por OIT-IPEC. En su componente de Derechos Económicos, Sociales y Culturales, Tema 8/Trabajo, contempla estrategias de adecuación de la normativa laboral vigente para regular los derechos laborales de la juventud, protección efectiva de sus derechos laborales, y acciones de información y divulgación para su promoción.</p> <p>c. Se ha facilitado Asistencia Técnica para recoger información sobre trabajo infantil peligroso</p> <p>d. Se han hecho 2 consultas provinciales tripartidarias sobre TIP.</p>	<p><i>In process, in initial phase</i></p>	<p><i>There is commitment from government to support the development of the National Plan</i></p>
	<p>Achievements (reported by project)</p> <p>Se avanza hacia fase intermedia en la generación de una masa crítica de actores con competencia en la temática que inician el proceso de dotación y/o fortalecimiento de capacidades y establecimiento de sinergias para dar respuesta, desde sus espacios de trabajo, y en forma concertada y organizada, al problema del trabajo infantil en Panamá. Se avanza también en la introducción del tema ETI en políticas y planes nacionales.</p>	<p>Assessment of achievements</p> <p><i>The project is picking up speed in a much more favorable environment</i></p>	

Component	Outputs (reported by project)	Status of outputs	Assessment of outputs		
LEGISLACION	<p>1) <i>Se generan condiciones básicas para ampliar el marco legal nacional, desde la temática ETI,, para proteger y restituir los derechos de la niñez y adolescencia.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Creación por Resolución Ministerial , el Departamento de Atención al TI y Protección al Menor Trabajador en MITRADEL. b. Creación de la Red de Seguridad y Salud contra el Trabajo Infantil Insalubre y Peligroso (Red TIP) por Decreto Ejecutivo de 2003. c. Renovación del Memorando de Entendimiento entre el Gobierno de Panamá y OIT respecto a ETI, el 4 de marzo de 2004 d. El movimiento de mujeres compromete a candidatos presidenciales, a través del “Pacto Mujer y Desarrollo”, con la erradicación del TI con perspectiva de género. e. Se provee Asistencia Técnica para realizar el estudio comparativo de la legislación nacional e internacional vigentes sobre T.I. y procurar su armonización con participación de actores sociales competentes en la materia. f. Actores claves de las instancias legislativas han participado en eventos de capacitación nacional y regional sobre la aplicación de la legislación y el cumplimiento de los Convenios 138 y 182 de la OIT, y se han dotado de instrumental pertinente. g. Se integra al Comité ETI de la actual administración gubernamental, a la Comisión para formular la Propuesta de Ley de Protección Integral de la Niñez y la Adolescencia. h. En el marco de la nueva Administración Gubernamental se revisa el Decreto de creación del Comité ETI, procurando una mejor definición de funciones para cumplir con los Convenios, y la ampliación de su membresía 	In process, advancing towards intermediate phase	The project has been partially successful		
	Achievements (reported by project)			Assessment of achievements	
	<i>Se inicia el proceso para fortalecer el marco legal nacional armonizándolo con los Convenios, a fin de dotar al país de instrumentos legales idóneos y de calidad para combatir el trabajo infantil.</i>			<i>The current comparative analysis between legislative frameworks provides first inputs</i>	

Component	Outputs (reported by project)	Status of outputs	Assessment of outputs		
SENSIBILIZACION Y MOVILIZACION	<p>1) <i>Actores claves de la sociedad panameña se sensibilizan e inician a movilizarse para el combate a las peores formas del TI.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Campaña pública a nivel nacional y local del 12 de junio como día mundial contra el T.I. b. El tema de TI ha sido visibilizado en los medios de comunicación en diversas formas. c. Las cifras del SIMPOC y del Estudio de Línea de Base, son manejadas y publicadas por periodistas como fuente principal de sus reportajes, artículos y noticias sobre trabajo infantil. d. Se provee Asistencia Técnica para formular e impulsar un Plan de Divulgación para Combatir las Peores Formas de Trabajo Infantil en Panamá. 	In process, advancing towards intermediate phase	Awareness raising has been successful		
	Achievements (reported by project)			Assessment of achievements	
	<i>El tema del trabajo infantil está en la agenda y debate público y se está generando una opinión y movilización en su contra.</i>			<i>Awareness raising has been the achievement where most progress has been made</i>	

Component	Outputs (reported by project)	Status of outputs	Assessment of outputs
<i>EDUCACION</i>	<p>1) <i>Sistema de educación y atención a la niñez y adolescencia adaptado a las necesidades de personas menores trabajadoras</i></p> <p>a. Se suministra asistencia técnica a ONGs para la formulación de Programas de Acción Directa Urbana y Rural para el retiro, prevención y reintegro de NNA al sistema educativo.</p> <p>b. Se suministra asistencia técnica al Comité ETI para la selección de áreas de intervención para los Programas de Acción, para la identificación y selección de Agencia Ejecutora, y para el proceso de revisión técnica y aprobación de las propuestas presentadas.</p> <p>c. Se crean condiciones con actores locales de las áreas de intervención para vencer resistencias y/o establecer compromisos en apoyo a la ejecución de los Programas de Acción próximos a ejecutarse.</p>	<i>In process, in initial phase</i>	<i>The process of AP formulation was delayed due to external and internal factors</i>
	<p>Achievements (reported by project)</p> <p><i>Los programas de Acción Directa, que propiciarán la generación de modelos para el retiro de NNA del TI y reinserción en el sistema educativo, cuentan con las condiciones de formulación técnica y apoyo local e institucional para su próxima implementación.</i></p>		

7.2 Itinerary of the mission

Lunes 15	Martes 16	Miércoles 17	Jueves 18	Viernes 19	Sábado 20	Domingo 21	Lunes 22
9:00 a.m.- 6:30 p.m. Entrevista Individual con personal de OIT-IPEC- Panamá y provisión de documentos adicionales para la lectura	Espacio para lectura y análisis de documentos	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. Jesús López (Entrevista Individual) 10.00 a.m. Rosabel Vergara Jaime Moreno Tibaldo Chú (Entrevista Grupal)	11:00 a.m. - 12:00 m Entrevista con Reynaldo Rivera Ministro de Trabajo y Desarrollo Laboral (Entrevista Individual)	9:00 a.m.- 11:00 a.m. Carlos Lee Yariela González Astrid Salazar (Entrevista Grupal)	5:00 p.m Margarita Aquino (Entrevista Individual)		8:30 a.m. a 4:30 p.m. Taller de Partes Interesadas 5:30 p.m. a 7:30 p.m. Entrevista con Tina Faulkner en la oficina de OIT-IPEC Nacional de 7:30 a 8:30 p.m. Cena con personal de OIT- IPEC
	2:00 p.m. -5:00 p.m. Entrevista Grupal con Casa Esperanza en el local de Bella Vista	Entrevista Grupal con miembros del Comité ETI Anterior 2.00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. Marta de Correa Egipcia Lezcano Mariano Gasteazoro Elba Vásquez 5:p.m.- 6:00 p.m. Lesbia Arrocha (Entrevista Individual)	2:00- 4:00 p.m. Entrevista Grupal Mariblanca Staff Silma Pinilla Díaz Sofía Izquierdo Alexis Rodríguez Luz Graciela Cruz 5:00 p.m. Entrevista con Illiane de Lacayo y Dalys de Pérez en representación del Despacho de la Primera Dama de la República	3:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. Entrevista con Leonor Calderón Ministra de La Juventud, la Mujer, la Niñez y la Familia (Entrevista Individual)			

7.3 Questionnaire used in the stakeholder workshop

TALLER DE EVALUACIÓN MEDIO TÉRMINO DEL PROYECTO DE LA OIT-IPEC: “ERRADICACIÓN DE LAS PEORES FORMAS DEL TRABAJO INFANTIL (TI) EN PANAMÁ”

(Por favor marque con una X, en cada caso, la opción que le parezca más apropiada)

1. Organización / Institución que representa Ud.:

IPEC	GOBIERNO	COMITÉ PARA LA ERRADICACION DEL TI	ONG	TRABAJADORES	EMPLEADORES	OTRA (ESPECIFIQUE)

2. ¿Ud. ha recibido algún tipo de capacitación / apoyo por el proyecto OIT-IPEC?

NO	SI → Por favor indique el tipo de capacitación / apoyo recibido:

3. En caso positivo, el apoyo / la capacitación por el proyecto ha sido / está siendo

MUY ÚTIL	ÚTIL	NO DEMASIADO ÚTIL	INÚTIL

4. ¿Porqué? Por favor de más detalle.

5. ¿En su institución, cuál es la probabilidad de que el conocimiento adquirido por la capacitación / apoyo sea utilizado?

ALTA	MEDIA	BAJA	NULA	NO SE

6. Por favor indique el uso previsible o ya definido por su institución:

7. ¿En su opinión, hay una presencia del TI entre los temas de discusión en Panamá en general?

ALTA PRESENCIA	MEDIA PRESENCIA	BAJA PRESENCIA	NULA PRESENCIA	NO SE

8. ¿En que medida hay una presencia del TI en las agendas, planes y programas de su institución?

ALTA PRESENCIA	MEDIA PRESENCIA	BAJA PRESENCIA	NULA PRESENCIA	NO SE

9. Por favor de más detalle.

10. Por favor valore el nivel de la coordinación existente entre su institución y otras instituciones y actores en el área del trabajo infantil

ALTA	MEDIA	BAJA	NULA	NO SE

11. En su institución, valorar la capacidad técnica para llevar a cabo acciones contra el TI.

ALTA	MEDIA	BAJA	NULA	NO SE

12. En su institución, valorar la capacidad financiera para llevar a cabo acciones contra el TI.

ALTA	MEDIA	BAJA	NULA	NO SE

13. Por favor valore las relaciones entre el Programa de País de OIT-IPEC y otras intervenciones de erradicación TI implementados por IPEC:

ALTA SINERGIA	MEDIA SINERGIA	BAJA SINERGIA	NINGUNA SINERGIA	NO SE

14. Por favor valore las relaciones entre el Programa de País de OIT-IPEC y otras intervenciones de infancia implementados por otras organizaciones en Panamá:

ALTA SINERGIA	MEDIA SINERGIA	BAJA SINERGIA	NINGUNA SINERGIA	NO SE

15. ¿Cuáles factores externos han afectado / están afectando la implementación del proyecto y el logro de sus objetivos, y en qué medida?

FACTOR EXTERNO (positivo o negativo)	ALTO EFECTO	MEDIO EFECTO	BAJO EFECTO

16. ¿Cuáles serian sus recomendaciones al proyecto IPEC?

3 recomendaciones para mejorar el proyecto en el futuro:	
1	
2	
3	

----- MUCHAS GRACIAS -----

7.4 List of people interviewed

Name	Institution
	ILO IPEC Panama
	ILO IPEC HQ Geneva
	ILO IPEC SRO San José
	NGO Casa Esperanza
	Previous Ministry of Labour
	Previous Ministry of Labour - Labour Inspection
	Previous Ministry of Youth, Women, Children and Family
	Previous National Committee - Technical Secretariat
	Previous National Committee - Ministry of Health
	Previous National Committee - Ministry of Education
	Previous National Committee - Technical Secretariat
	Ministry of Labour
	Ministry of Youth, Women, Children and Family
	Consultant / Research: Estudio Legal
	Consultant / Research: Estudio de Necesidades de Capacitación / Estudio de MAPEO TIP
	Consultant / Research: Plan de Divulgación de Programa de País
	Consultant / Research: SIMPOC
	Consultant / Research: Memoria del Seminario Nacional Sindical
	Consultant / Research: SIMPOC / Línea de Base Urbana
	Office of the First Lady
	US DOL
	Media: Canal 5
	Media: Diario Panamá América
	Media: Sub-commission for Communication for June 12

7.5 List of workshop participants

Name	Institution
	ILO IPEC Panama
	ILO IPEC SRO San José
	Casa Esperanza
	CONEP
	UDELAS
	MITRADEL
	Asamblea Nacional
	IFARHU
	MINJUMNFA
	CONATO
	DEC
	Creative Associates
	Despacho de la Primera Dama
	US DOL

7.6 Sources of information

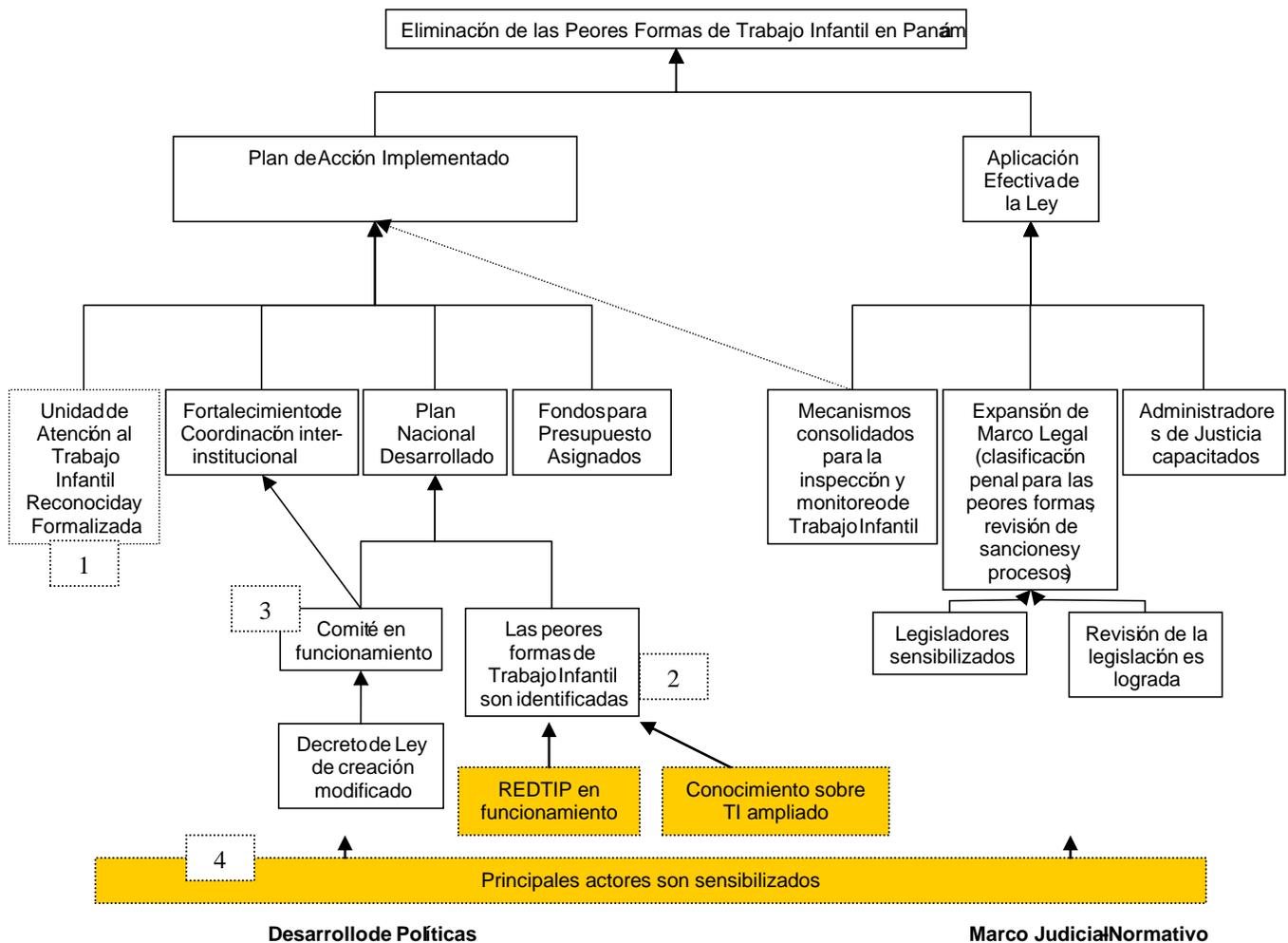
- Project Document ‘Country Program for combating the worst forms of child labour in Panama’ (P 260.08.241.050 PAN/02/P50/USA)
- Technical Progress Reports September 2002 – 2004, Work Plans, Project Monitoring Plans
- Propuesta para la Implementación del Programa de Acción Directa Rural para Contribuir a la Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil en la Comarca Ngöbe Buglé (2004)
- Propuesta para la Implementación del Programa de Acción Directa Urbana para Contribuir a la Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil en los Distritos de Panamá y San Miguelito (2004)
- Síntesis de los Resultados de la Encuesta de Trabajo Infantil en Panamá (2004)
- Estudio para la determinación de línea de base trabajo infantil peligroso en áreas urbanas (2004)
- Estudio Diagnóstico de la Dimensión, Naturaleza y Entorno Socioeconómico del Trabajo Infantil y de la Adolescencia Trabajadora en el sector del café en la Provincia de Chiriquí (2002)
- Plan Estratégico Nacional de la Niñez y la Adolescencia 2015 (2003)
- Plan Nacional de Acción de la Niñez y la Adolescencia 2003-2006 (2003)
- Decreto Ejecutivo 25 de 15 Abril de 1997 / Propuesta de Modificación al Decreto Ejecutivo 25
- Conocimiento y Necesidades de Capacitación en torno al Trabajo Infantil en Panamá (2003)
- Plan de Divulgación del Programa País para combatir las Peores Formas de Trabajo Infantil en Panamá (2004)
- Visión regional de las legislaciones de Centroamérica, Panamá y República Dominicana en material de trabajo infantil (2004)
- Sistematización seminario subregional tripartito “Comisiones Nacionales para Erradicación del trabajo infantil” (2004)
- Análisis comparativo entre la legislación nacional e internacional en torno al trabajo infantil (Borrador, 2004)
- Other documentation provided by the project: working documents, correspondence, records on use of SIMPOC data, press releases, workshop reports, etc.

7.7 Overall country framework: Key outcomes to be achieved in the areas of policies, legislation, education, awareness and family income

Overall speaking, the country framework and the key outcomes to be achieved were confirmed by the participants of the stakeholder workshop on Nov. 22, 2004. It was discussed that a general limitation of the framework (in particular of the direct action components) was that it did not sufficiently reflect differences between RURAL and URBAN areas.

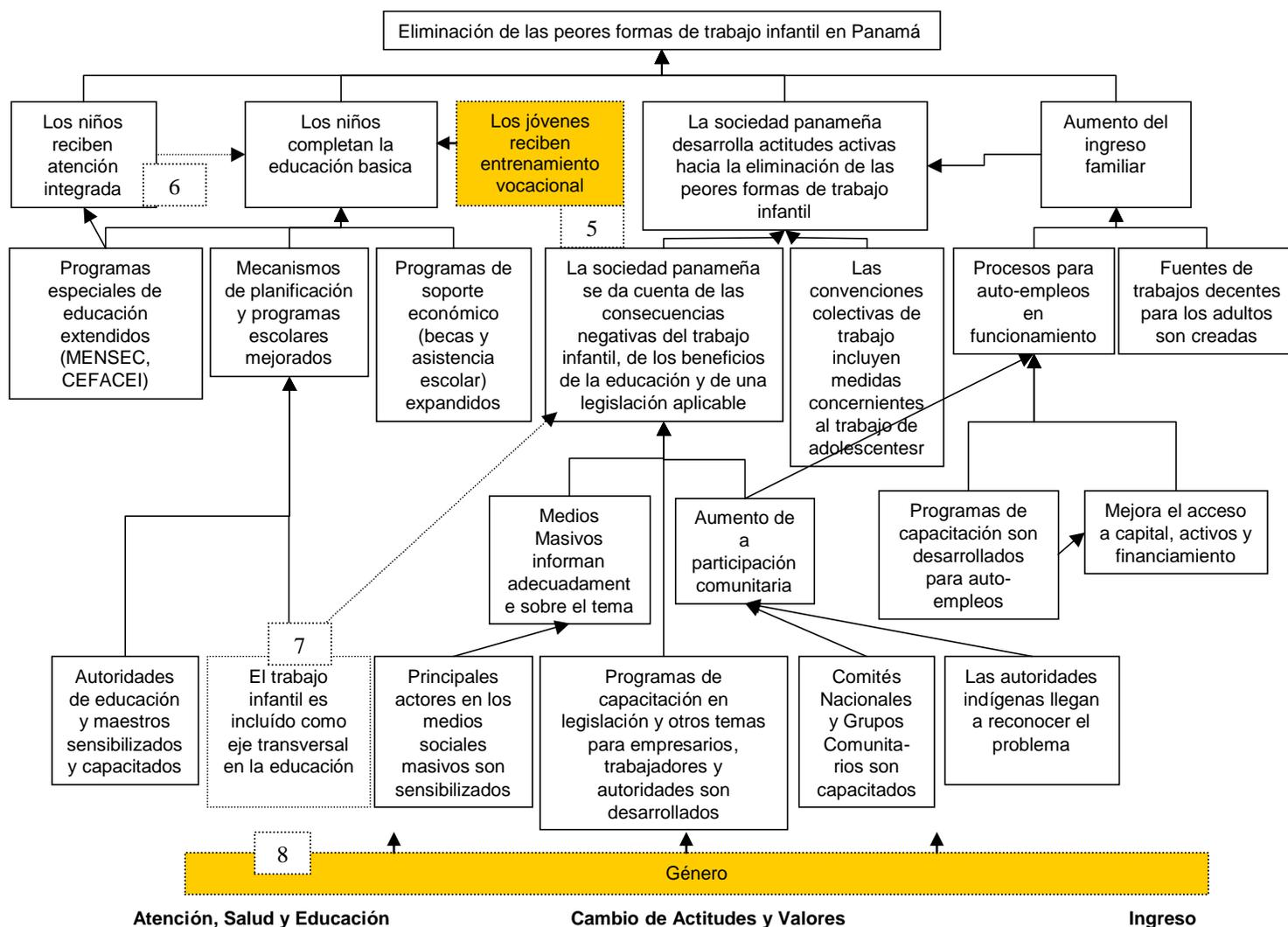
The following visualizes the main issues that were raised during the discussion. The highlighted boxes reflect new elements to be considered in the country framework.

Componentes Desarrollo de Políticas y Marco Legislativo



- 1: The Child Labour Unit in MITRADEL has meanwhile been established
- 2: More research and knowledge on CL is necessary to determine the worst forms of CL. REDTIP is expected to play a role in this process.
- 3: The effective functioning of the National Committee is the basic strategic outcome within the overall country framework
- 4: Awareness raising is an important cross-cutting element, in particular in the context of the new government in Panama

Componentes Educación, Sensibilización y Ingreso Familiar



- 5: Vocational training should be included in the framework, because formal education is not relevant for all working children
- 6: When providing services to children, it is crucial to take into consideration migration patterns of the target population and seasonality.
- 7: The postgraduate course 'Derechos de la Niñez y Maltrato Infantil' by the university UDELAS is contributing to this outcome
- 8: Gender is an important cross-cutting element