



International Labour Organization

IPEC

International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour

IPEC Evaluation

**Prevention and gradual elimination of
Child Labor in Agriculture in Central
America, Panama, and the Dominican
Republic**

**Phase II: RLA/03/P50/USA
P26008200056**

An independent mid-term evaluation by an external consultant

October 2005

NOTE ON THE EVALUATION PROCESS AND REPORT

This independent 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 the evaluation was carried out to highest degree of credibility and independence and in line with established evaluation standards.

The evaluation was carried out by an external consultant *. The field mission took place in September 2005. The opinions and recommendations included in this report are those of the authors and as such serve as an important contribution to learning and planning without necessarily constituting the perspective of the ILO or any other organization involved in the project.

Funding for this project evaluation was provided by the United States Department of Labor. This report does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the United States Department of Labor nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the United States Government.

* Edgar Briceño Rosales

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
List of Acronyms	13
INTRODUCTION	14
I. DESIGN AND RELEVANCE	17
1.1. <i>Relevance in the project design</i>	17
1.2. <i>Suitability of the selection of specific communities and geographic areas, and the feasibility of the beneficiary goals</i>	19
1.3. <i>The project's relation with the national strategies for child-labor eradication, poverty reduction, child protection, and education</i>	22
1.4. <i>Project's design and the needs of the target population</i>	24
II. PROJECT PERFORMANCE	26
2.a) Interaction among the implementing agencies and project administration	26
2.1. <i>Effective scheduling, stage overlap, and efficacy of the follow-up control tools and outcomes</i>	26
2.2. <i>Efficiency of the administrative systems to support implementation and coordination</i>	30
2.3. <i>Efficacy of the coordination mechanism, information dissemination, and quality of the beneficiary follow-up</i>	32
2.b) Interaction between the project and the representatives of the government, trade union, and employer sectors	35
2.4. <i>Commitment levels from the government, trade unions, and employers</i>	35
2.5. <i>Materialization of the financial commitments of the government and other organizations, and their influence in the project's implementation</i>	41
2.6. <i>Wide and decisive participation of the community and the NGOs in the project</i> .	46
2.7. <i>Adequate performance of the implementing agencies and use of the selection criteria</i>	48
2.8. <i>Adequate transfer of knowledge from the project to the implementing agencies regarding the design, follow-up, evaluation, and paradigm for the eradication of child labor</i>	50
III. PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS	53
3.1. <i>Possibility of achieving the project's objectives and goals</i>	53
3.2. <i>The main outcomes to date guarantee compliance with the goals by the end of the project, and the maturity of a series of noticeable products in each country which would be useful to replicate in others</i>	54
3.3. <i>Investment vs. outcomes: A reasonable cost-benefit ratio</i>	60
3.4. <i>Unexpected outcomes</i>	65
IV. SUSTAINABILITY	66
4.1. <i>Specific measures already initiated</i>	66
4.2. <i>Good institutional commitment to sustainability, but conditioned by the financial capacity of the governments</i>	67
4.3. <i>The sustainability of the monitoring system dependent on the continuity of the actions</i>	69
V. CONCLUSIONS	71
VI. RECOMMENDATIONS	77
ANNEX	82

Executive Summary

1. Evaluation conditions

According to the USDOL/ILO agreement for the implementation of the Project *Prevention and Gradual Elimination of Child Labor in Agriculture in Central America, Panama, and the Dominican Republic (Phase II)*, a midterm independent evaluation was to be carried out in the third trimester of the second year of this project.

This evaluation was carried out in the months of July and August of this year, following the methodology outlined in the “*Guidelines for the preparation of independent evaluations of ILO programs and projects*”¹. This guide distinguishes four areas that the consultant has to analyze. Each area includes a set of 38 questions or specific topics to be discussed. This document summarizes the processes to cover the aforementioned requirements and emphasizes the main outcomes through conclusions and the most important recommendations.

To carry out the evaluation, the consultant first reviewed the many documents related to the project, starting with the Project Document and the evaluation report of Phase I. The desk study continued with the summary outlines of the bridge programs, the documents of the Action Plans developed in each country, the documentation related to IPEC/San José management, the budgets, progress reports, and control and monitoring forms. The consultant also had access to consultancy documents and reports addressed to IPEC/ILO and USDOL.

As part of the revision task, a field visit to the four participating countries was made. This had the purpose of interviewing a large number of the actors, including the target population and their relatives, institution representatives, project and agency coordinators. All of this was aimed at verifying onsite the special conditions in which the project components had been being carried out through the Action Plans, the revision of the support structures, and the interaction between the project and the target population and between the project and the institutions. This work also included a detailed revision of specific aspects with the project CTA and the program officers.

In general, information was gathered individually for each Action Plan and organized according to the four areas: *Design and Relevance, Performance, Outcomes, and Sustainability*. This information was organized by country. A next step was to abstract the information for the whole project which was then used for the final appraisal of each of the 38 aforementioned topics. This document first presents the general information, followed by a synthesis for each country that reveals the differences found throughout the evaluation.

¹ As verified when reviewing the terms of reference, the topics and questions to respond in the evaluation include the totality of themes included in the Guidelines, which were prepared by the Evaluation Unit of IPEC in November 1997.

2. Overview of the project and its instruments:

The second phase of the project is closely related to the first. The interventions were designed in the first phase and have been refined to achieve the required conditions for Phase II. The delays in the program and the development of Phase I have impacted significantly the performance and schedule of Phase II.

Some of the most important aspects to stress per country are the following:

- ***In Guatemala***, the project has focused on the educational component with the support of a well respected national agency—FUNCAFÉ. It is located in San Marcos. Emphasis has been placed on institutionalizing the Active Rural School (ARS) model, which is highly participatory and flexible. This model contributes to improving the quality of education and makes promotion conditions more flexible to adapt them to the circumstances of teaching in a rural area. In addition, the intervention uses many involvement activities, on the one hand, to involve the institutions and to raise parents', employers', and children's awareness, and, on the other, to provide vocational training to adolescents as an alternative to generate income in their own communities.
- ***In the Dominican Republic***, the project is carried out through two Action Plans which use two agencies with vast experience, credibility, and solvency: ADESJO in San José de Ocoa and Visión Mundial in Azua. This project has also focused on the educational component, but includes awareness and income generation activities. Two of its products deserve special attention. One of these products is the “*salas de tareas*” [homework rooms] methodology, a space that allows keeping children busy after school hours and leveling those that are behind. The other product is related to the generation of income. The “**greenhouses**” project provides an excellent option to involve female household heads and poor farmers in activities with a higher productivity and schedule flexibility.
- ***In Nicaragua***, two Action Plans are operating in Chontales; one is run by UNAG and the other by the church group Pastoral. The main component of these plans is education, followed by awareness actions. An interesting product to stand out is the awareness-raising strategy carried out by the Catholic radio, the homily, and the Delegados de la Palabra (church representatives).
- ***In Costa Rica***, the implementing agency in charge of the Action Plan is CEFÉMINA. The main component is ***vocational training and the development of an entrepreneurial spirit*** as alternatives for adolescents to go back to formal high school and dangerous labor in which they were before being recruited. Like the other Action Plans, it includes activities to prevent younger siblings from dropping school. The central intervention axis is the regional support platform. Although it was recently created, it is being used to coordinate institutions' productive actions and the participants' vocational training.

The project's total budget is US\$3.0 million. In addition, it is expected to get contributions from the counterpart for US\$644,561 (17.7% of the total), mostly in the form of scholarships. This budget has to cover direct activities organized by the General Directorate in San José with the support of the national coordinators and others prepared by the action programs. These activities are linked to the three basic objectives: i) training and mobilization; ii) support to the child-labor eradication legislations; and iii) withdrawal and prevention from dangerous child labor.

The goals expect to attend 4,400 direct beneficiaries, including children withdrawn from dangerous child labor and children who remain in school. The indirect beneficiaries (total 8,015) include the children of Phase I who are being monitored and are currently receiving scholarships, especially in Guatemala and Nicaragua, and the families with productive alternatives that were trained on issues dealing with the eradication of child labor. In total, the beneficiaries are more than 12,400 persons.

Although these benefits are important and evident, there are others of a qualitative nature that may be even more valuable from the point of view of the government's, employers', and trade union representatives' support to eradicate child labor. The main contributions at the national and regional levels include the enactment of legislation and its enforcement; parents' awareness; the visibilization of the problem, and the contribution to the making the institutions aware and be ready to fight against child labor.

3. Conclusions

In general, the evaluation concluded that, despite the many delays in the development of the actions in favor of objective ii) that deals with support to the legislation, Phase II is a very valuable complement to consolidate the efforts made and to increase the likelihood to sustain its impact at the regional level. The conclusions reached are summarized below:

3.1. Project design and Relevance:

- It is believed that the project was well conceived as it was based on a good diagnosis and the lessons learned in the first phase, the local realities, and the institutional responses to the problem. The approach and strategy are compatible with the diagnosis. The strategy shows that the project perception is adequate and used the right instruments.
- The design incorporated most of the recommendations from the first evaluation. It took into account the target population and the main actors by using highly participatory methodologies within a logical framework and strategic planning. The design was also flexible and was adapted to the presence of new actors and resources and based on appropriate assumptions and hypothesis.
- The selection of the communities, geographic areas, and goals was very appropriate. The main reason for this is that it took advantage of the investment made in entering poor communities where the problem of CL is critical. To continue working with the same communities or those around them was a good decision. Since some of the

population in these communities had not been attended, this decision allowed taking advantage of the investment made in the area during Phase I.

- In most cases, the project is closely related to the national strategies for the protection of children, the poverty-eradication programs, and, in particular, the efforts to improve education as the main engine for children's growth.
- The project design did not allot funds to meet some basic needs of the target population: health and assistance. This was decided according to the recommendations of the evaluation of Phase I. However, these needs are being covered to a great extent by some of the government institutions or cooperating agencies.

3.2. Project performance

- Two integration levels were noticed. On the one hand, the vertical integration between the Directorate and higher-ranking entities and the national agencies and coordinators. On the other, the horizontal integration of the Action Plans and the agencies with the regional and national institutions.
- In general, it may be said that there are some control and management tools, some of which need to be simplified. Nevertheless, the double administrative figure of IPEC/ILO and the ILO/Donor relations involve a complex tripartite implementation mechanism of eleven steps that generates an exchange or reports and documents that compete for the coordinators' time to the detriment of the good implementation of the project while taking away some of the freedom of the project CTA.
- Although it is acknowledged that with the progress of the second phase this complicated relationship was eased due to the participants' good will, the difficulty prevails as the procedures may become complicated again. Nevertheless, they follow the operation manuals.
- Regarding the horizontal interaction between the project and representatives from the government, employers, and trade unions, it is believed that both phases have contributed to the ratification of Conventions 138 and 182. This interaction also favored the enactment of national legislations and their enforcement, the incorporation of the issue of child labor in the national agendas, and the development of the strategic planning for the eradication of child labor.
- The trade unions and employers have joined the actions for the eradication of child labor undertaken by the project. The trade unions have contributed by supporting some activities to the mobilization and awareness of parents. The employers' support varies from country to country, but they have been somewhat involved in the Project's implementation. They are now aware of the dangers of child labor, the low cost-benefit ratio of child labor from a business

point of view, and the risks of being discredited internationally by those looking for socially responsible products. Two of the six implementing agencies involved in the project are employers' organizations.

- In all cases, each group of actors that has committed to contribute resources to the project has fulfilled their promises.
- The project has been using a participatory strategy that includes community leaders, parents, children, municipalities, and NGOs, which have organized awareness activities which have, in turn, been used for feedback and empowerment.
- As a result of the work done in both stages, it was possible to have institutions adopt some of the design, evaluation, and monitoring tools used in the project. These tools are very useful for the interaction between the project implementers and the community and among the agencies, the community, and the institutions.
- Maybe the aspect where the least transfer of knowledge has occurred is the cooperation between agencies, or between Action Plans. In this respect, several outstanding aspects have been identified that should be shared at the horizontal level.

3.3. Outcomes:

- Since this is a midterm evaluation, it is not possible to identify definite results since the Project Document itself does not consider midterm products. Yet, in terms of the direct beneficiaries, the goal of 4,400 has already been met by the Action Plans in terms of identification, recording, and incorporation of this population. Therefore, there is no reason to expect that by the end of the intervention period the process would not result in success. This is also true for the number of indirect beneficiaries.
- Nevertheless, what is valid for the action programs does not apply to the central management of the project. That is, some of the activities in the Project Document were not included in the Action Plans or have been delayed considerably. These activities include mainly those related to objective (2) which deals with the support to the improvement of the legislation about child labor in the countries. This is mostly due to the effect of overlap between the stages which affected the utilization of human resources. The recovery of time now requires extending the project for at least two months after the original closing date.
- With regards to the ratio between investment and outcomes, it is concluded that the variability in the cost-beneficiary ratio is linked to conditions of economies of scale, differences in the products of each action plan which bring about different production options, and price differences in each one of the countries. This situation does not allow stating if these differences are reasonable. What is clear, especially in the countries where the project has been running longer, is that the amounts

invested per beneficiary are very low when compared with the many benefits received by the target population for a period of two years.

3.4. Sustainability:

- Each of the governments is willing to support the continuity of activities to eradicate child labor. However, this commitment to continue national efforts does not mean they will continue doing so in the areas where the project has been implemented. And there is no guarantee that the resources allocated for this purpose in the national budgets will be used to sustain the effort in the selected communities.
- In addition, the evaluation acknowledges that children's and parents' motivation is necessary to continue this process. However, this condition is not sufficient to make children's education a sustainable activity.
- The fate of the monitoring system is tied to the possibility of finding a substitute to undertake the project activities in the area, and is also tied to the intervention capacities of the agencies. To the extent that there is a possibility for this substitution, the efforts which are made in order to monitor the activities of the project, to maintain the withdrawn or prevented target population in the same condition, and to measure the project's impact will make it necessary to maintain the monitoring activities.

4. Recommendations:

4.1. Design and Relevance:

- Although because of the delay in scheduling the activities related to Objective (2) it might be considered to cut the budget and to end the project on the foreseen day, this possibility is not recommended, especially when dealing with the support to the enactment of legislation for the eradication of child labor. These activities are necessary to reinforce Objective (1) about mobilization and awareness, contribute to the strengthening of the institutions, and secure the sustainability efforts of the project actions.
- It is recommended to support the regional initiatives that promote the creation of "dialog tables" or interinstitutional coordinating commissions in order for them to assume the coordination of efforts to eradicate child labor after the end of the Project. It is important to make the work of these institutions more effective and, if possible, they should be encouraged to assume the sustainability of the child labor monitoring systems.
- Strengthen as much as possible the coordination with other programs to create synergies that allow support to the target population. This may be done by using the unused resources from some activities (see section 2.3 of the report). In particular, this may include the design and implementation of "productive options" and

vocational training for working adolescents. They could also be used to facilitate the integration of the health component into the education component at the level of governmental institutions.

4. 2. Performance

2.a) Vertical coordination between the agencies and the project's general directorate

- Given the stage of project implementation, it is advisable to request ILO/IPEC/Geneva to review the mechanism to approve Action Plans and bridge programs to allow introducing a reform or expansion of these instruments in an easier manner. This also means clarifying the CTA level of decision-making power and responsibility for the project, once the Project Document is approved.
- It is also advisable for the agencies and the General Directorate to contribute to overcoming the hurdles in the process of modifying or extending a project, and to review its budget. Efforts should be made to start the approval process earlier, taking into account the critical dates in order to guarantee the continuity of project activities.

2.b) Horizontal Interaction between the project and the government, trade unions, and employers

- The CTA, the program officers, and action plan coordinators should devote more time and effort to strengthening their relationship with institutional representatives and to keep them informed about the project's progress, including matters not strictly under their competence. This should be used to monitor activities of appropriation and support for the project's sustainability.
- Inter-agency cooperation may contribute to increasing significantly the impact of some of the activities of the action programs. Outstanding aspects of the projects have been identified in all countries that could be replicated. For this purpose, the central management should promote horizontal cooperation. Specific examples of this type of cooperation are described below:
 - Cooperation between Guatemala and Nicaragua to support the development of the methodology of Active Rural Schools in Nicaragua: lessons learned and model. Nicaragua is now attempting to begin utilizing a similar model, whereas Guatemala has been using this model since 2004.
 - Cooperation between Nicaragua and all other participating countries in order to disseminate the mechanisms used by the Pastoral church group to spread the message promoting the eradication of child labor by using the church radio station and the church sermons, as well as meetings of the "Holy Word Delegates."

- Cooperation between the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica so as to be able to develop a system of small greenhouses that would be especially aimed at improving the beneficiary families' income, with particular attention being paid to fostering the participation of female heads of households.
- Cooperation between Guatemala and all other countries in order to transfer the model for the strategic establishment and operation of the official Comité Departamental de Apoyo a la Niñez [Provincial Committee to Aid and Support Children].
- Cooperation between the Dominican Republic and Guatemala so as to be able to transfer the knowledge gained about the organization and methodology of the "homework rooms." Although this methodology is used more often in cities than in rural areas, such as in San Marcos, there are communities other than those involved in the project that could benefit from this model in order to review topics, bring children up to level, and keep children at-risk learning in the classrooms during vacation periods.

4.3. Achievements

Although there is no doubt about the achievement of the quantitative goals related to the attention of withdrawn or prevented children (direct beneficiaries, their families, etc.), the delay justifies an extension of the project that could be used to:

- Make up for lost time to implement the activities that are behind and that are mostly related to Objective (2) which deals with the improvement of the legislation for the eradication of child labor.
- Match the end of the project with the end of the school year, at least in Guatemala and the Dominican Republic. It would be useful for the program in the Dominican Republic to be extended until August 2006.
- Undertake systematization and horizontal cooperation activities that would allow expanding the impact of some of the components on the target population.
- An expansion would imply a revision of the budget and the reallocation of some resources that will be sub-contracted and that amount to almost 9% of the budget.

For future intervention projects, it is recommended to match the closing date of the direct intervention activities with the dates when main activities of the target population conclude. In this particular case, the intervention in favor of children at risk of working in dangerous work should end at the same time as the school year, which is the main activity of this population.

4.4 Sustainability

- Request the coordinators of the project to include in their agendas activities to guarantee that a substituting agency will take over the intervention, thus assuring the sustainability of the project's impact on the target population and the local institutions.
- Encourage the coordinators of the project and agencies to strengthen linkages with institutions that support the actions to eradicate child labor, and to identify the actors that could continue the work and the monitoring activities.
- An effort should be made so that the monitoring system of the project is not only useful to the project, but also to other actions in favor of children. This would increase the possibilities that the monitoring system be assumed by the coordinating commissions that support children. This requires an additional coordinating effort that has not yet started.

List of Acronyms

Acronym	Description
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
ILO	International Labor Organization
IPEC	International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor
SPIF	Strategic Program Impact Framework
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
CL	Child Labor
PRODOC	Project Document
INFOTEP	Institute for Vocational and Professional Training
FUNCAFE	Coffee Producers Foundation for Rural Development
CONAPINA	National Council of Attention and Integral Protection of Children and Adolescents
MTSS	Ministry of Labor and Social Security
IMAS	Institute of Social Welfare
BICSA	International Bank of Costa Rica
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
CEFEMINA	Female Association of Training and Action
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
SECO	Commerce Secretariat
SJO	San José
MEP	Ministry of Public Education
UNAG	National Union of Farmers and Cattle Breeders
TBP	Time-Bound Programs
ANACAFE	National Association of Coffee Producers
COESPA	Spanish Cooperation
FODE	Development Fund
MECD	Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sports
PANI	National Childhood Welfare
ADESJO	Association for the Development of San José de Ocoa
MTPS	Ministry of Labor and Social Prevision
MITRAB	Ministry of Labor
CECOECO	Center for the Ecological Competitiveness

INTRODUCTION

At the end of 1999, and with the financial support of the United States Department of Labor (USDOL), the first project aiming at eradicating child labor in the Coffee Sector was started. Another similar project was started in 2000, aiming at eradicating child labor in Commercial Agriculture Sectors of Central America, Panama, and the Dominican Republic. The final design of these two projects included a final budget of US\$10.3 million. This budget would be implemented through the two mentioned sub-regional projects, which in turn operated in six countries and included twenty-eight action programs. These were expected to be concluded in 24 to 30 months between the years 2001 and 2002.

In October 2003, Phase II of the Project officially started, and its name was changed to "Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor in Agriculture in Central America, Panama, and the Dominican Republic." This second phase, derived from the requirement to continue the efforts that had been implemented in Phase I, had a total budget of US\$3.0 million, which was contributed by the same donor. It is estimated that it will last 33 months, a term that will conclude at the end of June 2006.

The implementation strategy was designed to operate in four countries (Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica) through bridge programs (which met the requirements to be used as such) while the six definite "action programs" were designed (two each in the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua, and one apiece in Guatemala and Costa Rica).

According to the PRODOC, the continuity would take place so as to be able to attend to the particular conditions of each country. Thus, for Guatemala, the effort would focus on education and some elements of the income-generation component, along with other efforts from the awareness-raising component. In the case of the Dominican Republic, one plan focuses on education and the other includes education and income generating actions. In Nicaragua, the main action plan is also focused on education, with the second plan dealing with awareness-raising and mobilization. The efforts in Costa Rica are focused on vocational training and entrepreneurial strategies for working teenagers as an alternative in order to make it possible for them to be withdrawn from dangerous child labor, as well as actions aimed at keeping their younger siblings in school.

There were some obstacles at the beginning of the second phase that delayed the formal start of the Action Plans until December 2004. The main reasons for this were the delays occurring during the implementation of the first phase, which overlapped with the beginning of the second phase. During the months of October 2003 and April 2004, the activities carried out were mainly related to managerial actions of the first phase. Beginning in April, and up until November, the second phase was characterized by the use of the aforementioned "bridge programs," these being mechanisms that allowed small projects to be used in order to be able to carry out the preparations that ultimately led to the "action programs."

This situation created a different and complex style in the project's implementation, one that overlapped the first phase under the same Directorate, but with a much smaller team than the one used in Phase I.

In this context, the donor requested the midterm evaluation provided for in the PRODOC, and the financing agreement for the months of July and August of 2005.

This evaluation was done using the methodology suggested by ILO in the document: *Guidelines for the preparation of independent evaluations of ILO programs and projects*, published by the Evaluation Unit (PROG/EVAL) (Programming and Management Office, November, 1997).

According to this methodology, the evaluation should include four areas: Design and Relevance, Performance of the Project implementation, Project achievements, and Sustainability. Each of these areas has a set of guiding questions or specific issues about the project that the evaluation has taken into account: 11 questions about its design and Relevance, 15 questions about its performance, eight questions about the project's achievements, and four questions about its sustainability. The evaluation responded to all of these questions individually, first for each country and then in a general manner to evaluate the project as a whole.

The main results of the evaluation may be summarized in four fundamental aspects:

- a) The project's design has been pertinent in that it has adapted to the new budget conditions, taking advantage of the lessons learned in Phase I for the new design, and it has proposed realistic goals; it incorporated the target population and the agencies into the creation of the Action Plans, and has used the strategic planning tools and a logical framework in most cases.
- b) Regarding the implementation performance, it was noted that in most cases there was good vertical coordination among agencies and the Directorate, with some problems that have emerged in dealing with the double administrative figure of IPEC/ILO, as this complicates approval processes and project modifications. The horizontal coordination among the agencies and the actors that participate in the eradication of child labor is excellent, especially among the national project coordinators and the local actors. In every case, it has been possible to create mechanisms to integrate the project with the national efforts to fight against poverty, to eradicate child labor, and to protect children.
- c) Regarding the outcomes, the overlapping of the phases has delayed the actions taken, this being due to the saturation of a smaller group of the General Directorate. Although this aspect set back the implementation of the Action Plans, it is not believed that it will affect the terms of their implementation. The main delays in the actions are related to objective (2), which supports the eradication of child labor. It is believed that better outcomes may still be achieved if some resources from the sub-implementation and transfer of entries are devoted to horizontal cooperation actions among the countries involved, as that may help expand the impact of the

Action Plans in these countries. In addition, some benefits may still be expanded, and the needs of the target population not covered in the design may still be met. In this sense, it is recommended that the program be extended, using these entries which amount to a total which is close to US\$268 thousand. This amount would make it possible to conclude all the activities set forth in the PRODOC, as well as to make adjustments in the Action Plans with an extension of no more than five to six months.

- d) Finally, regarding sustainability, the outcomes allow to conclude that there is the necessary governmental will and commitment toward this issue to continue the efforts nationwide. But this does not mean that this is necessarily going to contribute to the continuity of the local efforts. The appropriate selection of agencies with expertise and reputation may help. The same is true for the awareness-raising efforts, and the pressures that children and their parents can exert. The fate of the monitoring systems is tied to the possibilities of relaying the project's activities and the agencies' intervention capacities.

In general, it is seen that the project has developed reasonably well according to the expectations of the PRODOC, especially if the difficulties caused by the overlapping of phases are taken into account. It has been very useful to strengthen the national support initiatives for the gradual eradication of child labor, as this support has provided improved tools and resources in the poorest areas, where child labor is a chronic evil. The efforts made so far allow for the strengthening of the work done in Phase I, in particular the contribution to the development of institutions and the raising of society's awareness about the importance of eradicating child labor.

Regarding the report's organization, it is divided in the four areas included in the evaluation. Each section first states which specific evaluative questions are discussed in that section of the report.² Then, a general presentation of the conclusions is made, which is drawn from the total number of the questions related to a specific topic in the evaluation that the evaluator considered valid for the project as a whole, and for the four countries in particular.

Whenever possible, details are presented about the differences found in each country for each aspect, that is, differences that deal with the national realities and the development status of the action plan in each particular case.

The country section starts with Guatemala, where the project is most complex in terms of number of components. This is followed by the Dominican Republic, as this country has the complexity of having two programs in different areas. Then, the information about Nicaragua is discussed, and the section ends with Costa Rica. These country summaries are based on the individual actions that respond to each question proposed in the evaluation.

² The Annex includes a list of the questions considered in each of the sections; it uses the same numbering system used throughout the document.

I. DESIGN AND RELEVANCE

1.1. Relevance in the project design (1.1. to 1.6)

This section deals with the first six aspects that had to be taken into account in the evaluation of the design. The evaluation verified whether or not the design had been suitable and coherent with the situation and conditions of the regions where it has been applied, and whether it has been flexible in terms of these realities and the previous experiences. Also assessed was the extent to which the design was adjusted according to the recommendations of the evaluation of the first phase; if the logic framework model and the strategic planning tools such as the Strategic Program Impact Framework (SPIF) were used in its formulation; if the assumptions were identified adequately, and finally, if a gender approach was included in the project design.

The project design of the second phase was well conceived from its inception, as can be seen in its components: a) background and rationale; b) project approach and strategy; c) target population; d) objectives, outcomes, and activities; e) institutional framework; f) input; g) monitoring and evaluation; and h) schedule.

In the evaluator's opinion, the background and rationale include a good diagnosis based on the lessons learned, the local context and conditions of child labor in the regions where the project was to be developed, and the response of the existing institutions.

The approach and intervention strategies are fully compatible with the diagnosis, the initial conditions, and the outcomes of the first phase. In point two, it was possible to notice the model's logic and strategy through an overall view or perception that integrates the instruments with the sense of opportunity afforded by the strategy. The definition of the target population is clear and consistent with the conditions that are required in these regions, as defined and confirmed during Phase I of the project. The objectives, outcomes, and activities evidence the use of a proven strategy as well as an adjustment made to the budget resources. This aspect, as stated later, was further defined in the action programs. The action programs confirm that the design is adequate, realistic, and flexible, which allowed the objectives and goals to be aimed at from the beginning.

To this end, *the design incorporated most of the recommendations* included in the evaluation of the first phase, specifically adjusting the available resources for the implementation of those components that would be most effective in assisting the target population, or making the necessary adaptations given the particular conditions of each country.

When the recommendations were not incorporated, such as in the case of the education component, the corresponding justifications were included. They were mostly related to the fact that, as a concept, education is always present in the countries. The problem is that some inputs are lacking to guarantee access to education or its improvement. In this sense, it was considered that, if the goal was to gradually eradicate child labor in the selected communities, the alternative place for children to be was in school. Thus, schools had to be made attractive by providing the conditions that facilitate access to education.

The designs of the PRODOC and Action Plans were flexible, as they were adjusted to the presence of new actors and resource providers while the target population needs were being met.

In all cases, with the exception of Costa Rica where the Implementing Agency was changed, *the elements of the logical framework and strategic planning were incorporated since the beginning*, that is, from the moment the process of designing the Action Plans started. In this respect, the use of these tools was encouraged both for the participatory development of the Action Plans and for the need and convenience of incorporating strategic thinking in the development of the programs. The consultation of the coordinators and other social actors involved proved to be very useful.

Regarding the gender approach, the PRODOC acknowledges that “although the studies [mentioned] made an effort to take into account the gender perspective, there is still much remaining to be done in this sense: the available knowledge about the tools needed is still not sufficient ...”³. This situation is being worked on by carrying out a special study in the second phase that deals with the issue of farm work from a gender perspective.

Meanwhile, since its inception the PRODOC was clear about the traits of the different roles assigned to children based on biological differences and cultural beliefs. For instance, the following are generally acknowledged:

- i) Although in general terms, more boys than girls work in agriculture, this difference is not always significant. For instance, in Costa Rica and Guatemala, girls represent 47% and 40% respectively of youngsters involved in child labor. It is believed that these figures tend to hide the reality.
- ii) This situation does not portray the unpaid and risky labor conditions to which girls are exposed when they have to travel long distances between plantations to take food to their relatives who are working in the fields.
- iii) Culturally, it is acceptable to delegate tasks to girls that are “simple and easy,” and to put them in charge of domestic chores. This situation conditions them from childhood to work a double shift.

Because of these reasons, and due to it not having been considered as a cross-sectional axis in the project design, the gender approach did not play an explicit role. Yet, it is also acknowledged that it is not easy to make an issue explicit in the outcomes that could be part of the processes, but whose manifestations are qualitative rather than quantitative.

This is what has led other projects or interventions that have a gender approach to include attention quotas per sex as an alternative in order to guarantee that the benefit for women will at least be present in terms of specific goals.

³ See pages 9 and 10 of the PRODOC.

As a cross-thematic axis, the gender approach could be clearly noted in the visits that took place in the communities where the action programs are being implemented, and also in the data gathering instruments used to feed the target population monitoring systems.

Within the project context, the assumption is that at-risk children are distributed in proportion to their sexes, and that the distribution of working children likely to be withdrawn follows similar patterns to the economically active population (EAP), which is comprised of 1/3 women and 2/3 men.

The PRODOC design for the region took into consideration a 50-50 quota. However, the PRODOC design in each country followed the local patterns of potential beneficiaries. The final result for the project as a whole was 50/50, taking into account that there was explicit mention of the beneficiaries' gender⁴.

Regarding the validity of the assumptions and hypothesis for the project formulation, it may be stated that in general the experience of Phase I of the project made it possible to incorporate adequate assumptions or assumptions for the Action Plans. For the evaluation's purposes, the four assumptions related to all the objectives at a general level were included, as well as the two assumptions related to the mobilization objective; the two (2) related to the law enforcement and regulatory expansion objective; and the eight (8) assumptions related to the child-labor withdrawal and prevention objectives.

Overall, these assumptions are related to the political will of the governments, and to the priority assigned to the issue by the governments' administrations and the institutions.

1.2. Suitability of the selection of specific communities and geographic areas, and the feasibility of the beneficiary goals (1.7- 1.8)

The evaluation concluded that in all the countries and overall, ***it was appropriate to continue working with the communities that participated in Phase I of the Project, or with their neighboring communities.*** This is mainly due to the following two reasons:

- a) The outcomes of an intervention process such as that of Phase I transcend to later periods because the products achieved (withdrawn or prevented children) do not necessarily end their learning cycle or need for schooling during the life of the project; nor were the sustainability principles for the action firmly established for that time when the intervention of Phase I was to be ended.
- b) Taking into account this continuity, it is estimated that there is no sense in starting over in other communities, especially considering the high cost of entry and the preparatory work needed to gain the trust of the families and to encourage their participation. This is further reinforced by the fact that the budget of Phase II is much smaller than that of Phase I.

⁴ There was no information about the distribution of boys and girls for the two Action Plans being carried out in the Dominican Republic.

In this context, it is believed that to the extent possible, the organizational base has to be taken advantage of as a great many resources have been invested in order to create it. Additionally, it should be mentioned that a change of communities would only make sense if it were possible to confirm that the rescue work and the prevention of school desertion due to child labor were irreversible, or that a distribution of the benefits of both phases in other communities would mean a significant increase in the overall coverage of the participating country.

The facts reveal that there is little that may be done from scratch with the short implementation times and with fewer resources. They also reveal that the expansion of the coverage of the beneficiaries is minimal when compared with the benefit that may be brought to neighboring communities in the areas where the Project has been operating.

On the other hand, *regarding whether the goals are realistic*, it may be stated that there was enough information to adjust the goals to the new budget of the action programs. The various implementation components made it possible to separate the beneficiaries into two levels: a) direct beneficiaries and b) indirect beneficiaries.

The first group included those children who are expected to be withdrawn or prevented from engaging in child labor. The latter group comprises the families of the children receiving the intervention as long as they are participants in the productive action programs that aim at improving their income levels in order for them to have alternatives to the wages generated by their children's labor. These programs also make it possible for them to have additional income to cover the educational expenses of their children that are not covered by the intervention model. This group is also comprised of other children who were part of the Project in Phase I, but who are now only being monitored. This condition is especially valid for Guatemala and Nicaragua.

Chart No. 1 shows the situation of the goals for the direct beneficiaries in the PRODOC and the Action Programs of Phase II, which is subject of this evaluation. As it may be noticed, the figures in the PRODOC are very similar to those used by the various action programs. Chart No. 2 shows the indirect beneficiary goals included in the six Action Programs, these being grouped according to participating country.

In Guatemala, the indirect beneficiaries include 600 cases with income generating options. Originally, the overview stipulated only 250 cases, but to reach the goal of withdrawing and preventing a total of 1,600 children it was necessary to increment the number of indirect beneficiary family to 600, although not all of them received the full range of services. In this sense, these 600 beneficiaries should be subdivided into two sub-groups: i) those that will be informed and motivated to start productive alternatives (600 cases), and ii) those expected to undertake productive enterprises, as well as being informed and motivated (only 300 cases, which include 250 families and 50 adolescents who have vocational training for independent work).

Moreover, the monitoring of the cases of Phase I who are receiving scholarships from the Ministry of Education as part of the follow-up of the sustainability efforts started in this

phase, increases the number of indirect beneficiaries (there are 240 cases being monitored and receiving the Peace Scholarships).

Chart No.1

IPEC/PROYECTO ERRADICACIÓN DEL TRABAJO INFANTIL EN LA AGRICULTURA BENEFICIARIOS DIRECTOS PREVISTOS EN EL PRODOC Vrs PLANES DE ACCIÓN

Detalle	Total	Retenidos	Prevenidos
1. Presupuesto (PRODOC)	4,400	1,400	3,000
San Marcos (Guat)	1,600	600	1,000
Azua (RD)	1,300	300	1,000
SJO-Ocoa (RD)	400	100	300
Total RD.	1,700	400	1,300
Chontales (Nic)	700	300	400
Turrialba (Cri)	400	100	300
2. Efectivo (Planes de Acción)	4,442	1,610	2,832
San Marcos (Guat)	1,600	600	1,000
Azua (RD)	1,300	300	1,000
SJO-Ocoa (RD)	400	300	100
Total RD.	1,700	600	1,100
Chontales (Nic)	732	300	432
Turrialba (Cri)	410	110	300

Fuente: Planes de Acción; PRODOC; y entrevistas directas con los coordinadores

In the case of the Dominican Republic, the data about the Action Plans indicate that in addition to the direct beneficiaries, there are a total of 438 indirect beneficiaries (172 families in Ocoa and 266 families in Azua) of the income generation actions. Furthermore, it is believed that the awareness-raising campaign will reach 30,000 people, and that 600 of these cases will receive training on issues dealing with the eradication of child labor and related labor regulations.

Chart No.2

IPEC/PROYECTO ERRADICACIÓN DEL TRABAJO INFANTIL EN LA AGRICULTURA BENEFICIARIOS INDIRECTOS PREVISTOS EN LOS PLANES DE ACCIÓN

Detalle	Total	Familias Opc.Prod.	Capacitados ETI	Seguim. Etapa 1era.
Presupuesto Planes de Acción				
San Marcos (Guat)		600		2400
Azua (RD)		266		
SJO-Ocoa (RD)		172	600	
Total RD.		438		
Chontales (Nic)		100		3617
Turrialba (Cri)				

Fuente: Programas de Acción y entrevistas con los Coordinadores Nacionales

In Nicaragua, the original goal mentioned 700 children withdrawn and prevented from participating in child labor activities who would comprise the group of direct beneficiaries. Nevertheless, 1,080 cases have been identified in the records. These records also include 732 cases that are now being monitored.

The indirect beneficiaries of the income generation component are estimated to amount to a total of 1,000 families. In addition, in Nicaragua, 3,617 children who participated in Phase I are being monitored.

In Costa Rica, the commitment of the Action Plan mentioned 100 adolescents trained in productive activities or for work positions, and 300 siblings prevented from engaging in child labor. The identification of adolescents for the purposes of the implementation of the Action Plan was finally consolidated, this amounting to 110 cases.

What these data reveal is that the Project's goals of assisting 4,400 direct beneficiaries may actually be reached as they have already been identified, with their data recorded and stored in files, and they are receiving the Project's benefits.

1.3. The project's relation with the national strategies for child-labor eradication, poverty reduction, child protection, and education (1.9)

With the exception of Costa Rica, the project is being implemented in the poorest regions of the countries which have a high proportion of families living below the poverty line, and where the problem of child labor is most severe.

In every case without exception, the evidence shows that the issue of the eradication of child labor is receiving priority at the governmental level. Based on the work carried out by ILO to ensure that Conventions 182 and 138 would be ratified, these governments have been promoting complementary regulations and creating the necessary infrastructure through the national commissions for the protection of children and the eradication of child labor.

Since all children should attend school, the improvements being made in the educational system and the efforts to increase the possibilities for children to enroll and stay in school received special attention during the evaluation team's visits in these countries.

In Guatemala, the National Plan for the Eradication of Child Labor placed the issue on the strategic agenda of the current administration. The council for the eradication of child labor ranks so high in the administration that it is chaired by the Vice President of the Republic. Unfortunately, this has not been completely satisfactory, since the Council's high ranking has led it to be confused with the Social Council, which is in charge of a larger array of issues.

The impact of education on the eradication of child labor relates this topic with the efforts being made by the governments in education itself. The government's will is evidenced in the priority granted to basic education by the last two administrations. The officials in

charge of the Action Program have taken advantage of this attitude in order to create the necessary synergies.

It was also noticed that the authorities of the ministries of Education, Labor, and Agriculture participate actively, and have placed the eradication of child labor in a privileged position on their agendas. This was evidenced by the governmental contributions.

It was also possible to observe that there is good positioning of the Action Plans at the national and provincial levels. In particular, this was evidenced by the protagonist role of the Project's work team at the provincial level in the coordination of the Dialog Table that was held in March 2005 with representatives of the Ministry of Labor, the Prosecutor's Office, the Office for Attention to Victims, the Ministry of Education, Caritas Diocesan de San Marcos, and FUNCAFE.

Since the implementation of Phase I, liaisons *in the Dominican Republic* have been being strengthened at the provincial and national levels with the State Secretariats of Education and Labor, which are highly committed to the issue of child-labor eradication and which clearly support the project.

The change of governmental administration has not modified the priority given to the issue of child-labor eradication; this continued commitment is clear as it was included as a strategic axis in the governmental plan for the next five years.

This inclusion allowed for its continuity because the new government adopted the same plan, with only a short suspension of activities while the new administration took over⁵.

The Project's offices in Azua are located in the building of the Regional Directorate of the Department of Education. In addition, the Department of Agriculture and INFOTEP are coming aboard, that is, joining the larger efforts⁶.

With the start of Phase II and the change in the Administration, it has been possible to increase the number of liaisons in the government. Initially, the coordination was carried out with the natural counterpart of ILO (the Labor Department), but this coordination now also includes the Departments of Education and Agriculture.

In Nicaragua, the intervention will take place within the framework of the National Action Plan for Childhood and Adolescence 2002-2011, as well as under the coordination of the Consejo Nacional de Atención y Protección Integral a la Niñez y Adolescencia or (CONAPINA) which comprises 21 institutions.

⁵ Interviews held with José Ramón Fadul; Cristian Herrera; Patria Minerva de Cotes; Washington González, and Jacobo Miguel Colón, officials of the Labor Department in charge of the Child Labor Unit, and advisors to the Sub-secretary, 07/11/2005.

⁶ Interview held with Ramón Coyazo and Leandro García (Directors of Rural Administration and Extension of the Department of Agriculture, respectively)

This plan includes collaboration with public and related institutions. Such coordination also involves the regional work being done in Chontales⁷. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the local organization shows high participation of all decentralized public agencies at the provincial level, it was not possible to verify whether or not the regional effort in Chontales has any nationwide impact.

In Costa Rica, the Project fits in very well with the national strategy for the eradication of child labor and sexual exploitation, as the Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social (MTSS) [Ministry of Labor and Social Security] is making a strong effort in the Turrialba area, both with respect to dealing with the eradication of child labor and the commercial sexual exploitation of children. This intervention is framed within the second strategic plan to eradicate child labor, a plan which has been updated and that will be in force until 2010.

Nevertheless, as regards the fight against poverty, the Program has little linkages with the strategies fight to reduce poverty, but it is integrated with other programs of the MTSS, such as Pronamype and the IMAS/BICSA/Banco Nacional trust, all of which are aimed at supporting productive initiatives in favour of groups with limited resources.

In general, it may be stated that the issue of the eradication of child labor has become a priority in the national strategies, and that the participating countries are attempting to develop regulations and the necessary infrastructure so as to be able to carry out this task.

The program for eradication of child-labor in agriculture in most cases demonstrates specific efforts having been undertaken and their measurable effects, which have allowed this program to transcend beyond the communities where it is being implemented.

1.4. Project's design and the needs of the target population (1.10;1.11)

In most countries, the needs of the target population were included in the Project's design through the incorporation of the communities into the strategic planning process, as well as the application of the SPIF methodology.

During the diagnostic processes and strategic planning, the populations voiced their needs with regards to the activities for the eradication of child labor. The priorities of these needs were considered at the time of creating the Action Plans; the degree of their incorporation was restricted by the recommendations from the evaluation of Phase I, and the availability of resources.

Because the success of withdrawing children from child labor or preventing them from becoming working children depends on their access to education, the quality of this education, the children's nutrition and health, and the economic situation of their parents, a failure to take into account any of these aspects becomes a real restriction, even when some services may be of assistance.

⁷ Interview held with Bertha Rosa Guerra (IPEC/Managua Coordinator), 23/07/2005.

In this sense, it can be said that some of the needs of the target population have not been met by the Project design. Yet, somehow these needs have been taken care of through supplementary activities and funds obtained from the participation of additional actors in the Project.

These unmet needs include those that were eliminated or redefined as a result of the incorporation of the recommendations of the evaluation of Phase I: the assistance component related to health and the provision of goods, as well as school supplies and uniforms. These needs are now being covered through the joint efforts of the institutions involved in the Dialog Table, and through the support of the national coordination team.

Two components that are considered basic needs of the target population have not been dealt with properly by the Project: a) health care services and b) productive options. In the first case, it makes sense not to include them because of their high cost and because of the possibility that the ministries or health departments may already offer these services. On the other hand, productive options are not properly covered in the design of the national plans.

In Guatemala, the health component has been covered as a result of the integration efforts. Some of the population's needs included in the Project are not being met with funds from IPEC, but rather due to the coordination effort with other 21 participating institutions.

The fundamental problem is that these health care services being offered are both of very poor quality and are not always available. A contribution of the program—together with the public offer of these services—might be to improve their quality and greatly increase their availability.

In the Dominican Republic, in the communities where the project is being developed, the public nutrition and health services programs are very limited, and their absence or lack affect children's performance in school. The exclusion of these assistance services derived from the recommendations of the evaluation of Phase I. Alliances with other organizations are now being created in order to try to include them.

In Nicaragua, most of these services were included in the SPIF. Nevertheless, the recommendations of the evaluation of Phase I, coupled with the restrictions arising from a lower budget in Phase II, resulted in the forced exclusion of the health services, but which are now being covered with other efforts and funds from the Government.

In Costa Rica, these needs had already been identified in previous projects thanks to the experience of the Project's Director and through direct consultation with key informants. These needs were incorporated when the Action Plan was designed. The health services are covered either through alliances with private organizations, or through direct referrals to the health centers of Caja Costarricense de Seguridad Social (the Costa Rican Social Security Services Administration).

II. PROJECT PERFORMANCE

Two types of interaction were taken into account:

a) *vertical interaction* among the agencies and the project coordination team at the IPEC/Costa Rica level, which defines a series of relationships that allow the performance of the implementation mechanism of the Action Plan of each country that integrates both efforts to be assessed; and

b) *horizontal interaction*, which reveals the mechanism through which the Action Plan relates to the local/regional/national institutionality of public institutions, non-profit private organizations, employers' organizations, and trade unions.

2.a) Interaction among the implementing agencies and project administration

2.1. *Effective scheduling, stage overlap, and efficacy of the monitoring tools and outcomes (2.1; 2.2. and 2.3)*

From an official point of view, Phase II started in October of 2003, thus affecting to a great extent the coordination activities among the implementing agencies, as well as the project's general coordination. The basic coordination team was significantly reduced as the activities of Phase I concluded, but their closing of such activities which overlapped with the preparation of the second phase caused problems regarding the revision and approval of the Action Plans.

The other aspect which was considered was the delay in the implementation of the Action Plans of Phase I, which brought about problems for the teams of the local agencies that had to try to sustain the interest in the communities and in the actions of this phase for a longer period of time.

Given the situation of overlap and the difficulties that it caused, the administration decided to use the "bridge program" modality in order to start the preparatory actions for Phase II.

In most cases, this worked by making possible the continuity of the teams created by the combined efforts of the implementing agencies and IPEC. There were two cases of failure in the coordination dealing with organization that had worked well in the first phase, but that for a number of reasons failed in the second one.⁸

Chart No.1 below shows the delays undergone by the project in terms of the fact that the central administration started operations while still occupied with closing the sub-projects of the first phase. It should be noted that from October 2003 to June (inclusive), the efforts were mostly devoted to making up for the time lost in the first phase, as well as in the

⁸ Caritas Diocesana in San Marcos, Guatemala, and ACSOL in Turrialba, Costa Rica

The approval took place in the month of November. The main delays in this case are related not to the implementation, but rather to the disbursement of the resources. The consequences have been minor for two reasons:

- a) The implementing NGO had both the willingness and economic solvency needed in order to handle the delays; and
- b) The use of the bridge program modality itself favored an adequate link between both stages.

The first aspect led to the right linkage between the first and second phases.

The bridge programs, which are mechanism facilitating quick solutions, made closing Phase I in an orderly fashion possible, as well as issuing the reports and managing the resources to keep the team working on the preliminary tasks, all this having been carried out while the summary schedule for the second stage was being negotiated.

In the case of Guatemala, overlapped project activities of Phase I and Phase II had no significant impact as significant overlap per se (with a few exceptions) basically did not occur. Phase I officially ended in the first half of July of 2004, and Phase II started with the first bridge program on July 15, 2004.

This continuity represented, rather than overlapped efforts as such, a synergy, since when the activities of the second phase had started, the team was highly motivated. The exceptions were caused by delays in the disbursement of resources for the implementation of the final activities, which required delivering materials (library reinforcement, desks, and teaching materials for the education component) and delivering input for the productive activities (seeds, chickens, ovens, and raw materials). The resources arrived two months before the closure of Phase I, and their distribution continued up to September 2004.

It may not be said that the work loads had a delaying affect on initiating the first phase, but there were some complications attributable to expenses incurred in the period of connecting both phases, these being expenses that had to be assumed by the implementing agency. Another reason for the overlap was the drafting of the closing reports of Phase I.

Regarding the scale of the budgets allocated, as the second-phase activities have a lower scope than those of the first, it can be stated that this contributed to creating economic difficulties for the project. In Guatemala, this situation is not so evident because twenty communities are still being monitored. These aspects are discussed in further detail later.

In the Dominican Republic, there has been a delay due to two main reasons:

- a) The change in the government administration caused important delays in the implementation of Phase I, and the change of liaisons required an additional effort in order to induct the new authorities, and this also set back some negotiations.
- b) The approval process of the Action Programs took longer than expected, and thus delayed the beginning of Phase II until mid July 2005.

Although the holdups impacted the credibility of the project in this country, from the standpoint of opportunity the delay was not significant since it was mostly due to approval factors and to the change in the administration rather than to the overlap between phases.

It is not possible to talk about scale economy or budget ratios because the second phase of the project is smaller than the first. Although the project co-existed with other IPEC projects in the Dominican Republic, each has its own management setup.

In Nicaragua, the schedules of both Action Plans have been fully respected. During the interviews held with the coordinators of the Action Plans, the progress of the schedule was reviewed, and it was determined that both schedules are up to date.

This problem of the delay of the second stage and the issue of overlap had no significant effects in Nicaragua. Evidence of this is the fact that it was possible to verify that both Action Plans are proceeding according to the implementation calendar.

Regarding the potential synergies, it was verified that in this case cooperation and joint efforts are taking place among the teams that have been carrying out the tasks of the action programs. However, it is not possible to talk about budget ratios and scale because of the smaller size of the Action Plans.

In Costa Rica, if delays occurred, they were mostly due to the changes in the implementing agency. The bridge program mode was used at the beginning with ACSOL, the former agency, but the internal changes in the agency changed its conditions, which were then no longer considered suitable.

The second bridge program signed with ACSOL covered the period from 10/22/2004 to 01/22/2005, but the outcomes produced were not in compliance with the terms of the agreement. The new agency, CEFEMINA, carried out the job tasks between April and August 15th, 2005.

CEFEMINA implemented what was expected for January 2005; furthermore, this agency adequately complied with the commitments of the first bridge program by August 15th, this being work which comprised the preparatory phase of the action program in force. This agreement was signed on August 17th of this year.

This new action program will last six months—until January 17th, 2006. The delays do not threaten the implementation of the plan since the expected results can still be achieved within the terms that had been set forth before the close of the regional project. Under these conditions, no adverse consequences have been perceived, and the administration has managed the situation well.

In fact, no negative impacts due to the overlap between the two phases have been detected for this country, as the problem, as already mentioned, had been caused by the change of the implementing agency.

From the perspective of the Central Administration of the Project in IPEC/Costa Rica, the extension of the activities of Phase I saturated the basic operational structure. This has not had consequences for the specific case of the new action program, which was approved without objections in record time.

Scale economies have not appeared because of the small size of the project. The change of implementing agency has not made it possible to take advantage of the experience acquired in the first phase.

Regarding the monitoring tools, the revision of all cases determined that they were as useful and effective as any other monitoring tool; however, this does not mean that they are necessarily efficient.

It is the opinion of this consultant that the monitoring formats of the action programs are very rigid. Their intention to integrate everything into a single form with pre-elaborated responses forces the person in charge of interpreting the results to perform the tedious task of discriminating between what should and should not be analyzed.

This does not permit an overall idea of the development to be obtained. In the end, the report is still seven pages long and difficult to interpret. In this consultant's opinion, the report should be written as a narrative, even when the supervisor aids in the field work by using a form. It is suggested that identification numbers and a checklist format be used for the activities and sub-activities of the summary schedule.

This is easier to understand from the summary schedules of the bridge programs. Since there is no summary schedule of the sub-program, it is not necessary to have an accurate schedule and distribution of the goals in partial terms; in other words, it is not necessary to have short- and long-term goals.

On the other hand, the activities should be separated as follows a) not started; b) in progress, to be able to appreciate the progress level to date; the corresponding indicators should be included; and c) completed, including the indicators. Each section should distinguish whether they have been completed as expected or if there are any variations, including any justifications.

Moreover, in the consultant's opinion, the technical progress reports prepared by the implementing agencies of the projects do comply with the effectiveness conditions, and they have a structure similar to that suggested in the previous paragraph for the monitoring reports.

2.2. Efficiency of the administrative systems to support implementation and coordination ***(2.4)***

The situation has improved a great deal as the second phase has advanced. The partial revision of a group of situations that took place in the first phase evidences the great

difficulty in coordinating the project when three entities participate in it: IPEC/Costa Rica, the Region's ILO, and ILO/Geneva.

The project approval process has a complicated vertical interaction mechanism that comprises eleven steps, including: a) the coordinators at the level of the implementing agencies in San José that interacted with the CTA, the program official and the project coordinators (one per country); b) at the level of IPEC/Geneva, the backstopping officer and the procurement official; and c) in some cases, which is not completely clear, another backstopping officer from Lima, Peru, is involved as well.

The eleven steps of the project approval process are described in the table below, which also includes three additional steps related to the reports.

This procedure was simplified in the last Action Plans that had to be processed, but according to the interviews that were held during the evaluation mission, the steps prior to the approval both complicated and delayed the start of the Action Plans. The aforementioned procedures were taken from the IPEC and ILO manuals¹⁰.

No.	Activity	Description / participants
1.	SPIF workshop to prepare a program or project	Community leaders, national coordinator, IPEC/SJO Program Officer
2.	Preparation of summary outline (SO)	Implementing Agency and National Coordinator
3.	Revision of summary outline	National Coordinator and Program Officer
4.	CTA's approval of summary outline	CTA and Program Officer
5.	Send SO to IPEC/Geneva for approval	CTA/Program Officer SJO/ Backstopping Of. i) Sometimes ILO/Lima's opinion is requested or ii) it sends observations and recommendations. None is binding, but the CTA has to state the reasons for not considering them.
6.	Final approval minutes	CTA/Program Officer and Project Coordinator
7.	Preparation of Agreement	IPEC/ILO/SJO
8.	Send Agreement Proposal for approval in Geneva	IPEC/ILO/SJO-Procurement
9.	Sign Agreement	Director ILO/SJO-Implementing Agency
10.	Work schedule and Request for Disbursement	Coordinator, CTA, and Project Officer
11.	Submit and approve technical and financial reports	Project Coordinator, Program Officer, and CTA
12.	Technical reports	Agency, Project Coordinator, and Program Officer
13.	Financial reports	Agency, Project Coordinator, IPEC Financial staff, All changes in budget must be approved by Procurement
14.	Donor Report	<i>Phase I:</i> Agency- National Coordinator-Program Officer (revision and translation)- CTA- IPEC/Geneva (Backstopping Officer) <i>Phase II:</i> Agency-National Coordinator-CTA (Synthesis)- IPEC/Geneva (Backstopping Officer)-USDOL (there may be questions and responses)

¹⁰ The consultant is aware that these supervision conditions may be unavoidable for all ILO projects and, in particular, for those implemented through IPEC. In this sense, the recommendation would be to assign more responsibility and decision-making power to the CTA while still using the same consultation entities, precisely because of the level this figure has within the organization.

There are no approval standards per se, but the evaluation can mention a checklist of reference cases linked to USAID and SECO/Switzerland. In both cases, once the cooperation framework agreement is signed between the donor and the implementing agency, the following subcontracting activities with local agencies for developing the project in each country are based on the principle of trust, and the CTA has a more independent role in the negotiation and supervision of the project. This reduces the efforts for administration between the project's management (which is under the direct responsibility of the CTA) and the agencies. This is complemented by internal control and financial management activities. Together, this significantly simplifies the project's approval and implementation procedures.

Notwithstanding, the evaluator acknowledges his limited knowledge about IPEC/ILO manuals of procedures, and that the applicable project approval and implementation procedures are the same for every project managed by these two entities (IPEC/ILO). Therefore, these regulations should be considered part of the production role of these organizations.

Working with IPEC/ILO implicitly means accepting this production role and, as a result, from the evaluators' point of view it is difficult to conceive a quicker method. In any event, because of the advanced stage the project is in, the worst has already been surmounted. It is recommended that in the future this approval process be started earlier, taking into account the critical dates that would make it possible to continue the project.

2.3. Efficacy of the coordination mechanism, information dissemination, and quality of the beneficiary follow-up (2.5, 2.6)

All the country projects evidenced excellent communication between the project's coordination team and the implementing agencies, as well as good dissemination of information between the national and the regional staff and between the project's staff and the staff of the implementing agencies. The communication is not only effective, but also efficient and fluid.

On the other hand, the revision of the monitoring system indicates the existence of two sources:

- a) information proceeding from the formal educational systems, in which the ministries or secretariats of education keep their own official records systems, which provide useful information, but are not necessarily timely and accurate for the project's interests; and
- b) information from ad hoc structures that aim at complementing the official systems in providing resources for the development of follow-up or monitoring systems that are timely and accurate in order to be able to issue an early alert and a quick reaction in case of desertion, that is, students who drop out of school.

The outcomes are highly varied in terms of the success attained so far. They range from one situation in which these outcomes have not yet been designed, to others in which their

efficacy has been proven through the use of simple databases and the work of community leaders on a voluntary basis; this has created a wide network of people who gather and deliver information to the processing center. Moreover, there is a group devoted to responding quickly when a school desertion case is identified.

What needs to be made absolutely clear is that the official system is insufficient not just because it only follows cyclical information recording and utilization procedures and accountability at the beginning and end of each school year, but also because it is not accompanied by a support group for field action. The other aspect that should be kept in mind is that the other supplementary follow-up systems' weakness is that they depend on volunteers to continue operating beyond the project's life.

Nothing guarantees that these non-formal structures will continue operating after the project ends, unless another organization will at least assume their coordination. This might be possible if the interinstitutional coordination commissions could maintain the organization structures that have been put together throughout the project's life.

The main problem is that the establishment of a special child labour monitoring system must not be useful only to the project and the demands related to the eradication of child labor. In order to be easily accepted by the commissions that coordinate actions in favor of children, the system should also integrate other needs related to the support to this population. This requires an additional coordination and relay effort that has not yet started, as it was noticed during the visits.

In Guatemala, the interview held at the various implementation levels revealed that there is adequate communication at the three levels: the regional entities (IPEC-Costa Rica), the national entity (IPEC-Guatemala), and the Action Program coordinating entity.

The opinions about the communication are based on the operation of the action plan and on the activities carried out jointly by the work team and the national and regional coordination entities in favor of the eradication of child labor.

They are also based on the opinions of the interviewees in Guatemala regarding coordination with their supervisors, the CTA, and other administrative staff of IPEC in San José.

Regarding the monitoring systems, it was possible to verify two kinds of monitoring mechanisms mentioned above: the project's specialized monitoring system, and the one utilizing statistics and information from the regional monitoring done by the Ministry of Education through its directorate of the country's provinces.

In general, it may be stated that the quality of the monitoring that is done is good because the information sources are reliable, the design is adequate, and the information is of good quality and is being gathered and distributed in a timely fashion.

In the Dominican Republic, with respect to the communication and exchange of information among the agencies and the project's directorate, the situation is similar to that

of Guatemala. However, the difficulties are greater because of the geographical distance which makes phone calls more expensive.

As for the quality of the monitoring system, it can not yet be evaluated because the system still had not been designed at the time of the visit. However, there is a monitoring database that was used in Phase I. This system is supported by a database that contains the records of the children and their families. In the case of Azua, Visión Internacional will have to assume what it can from what was left behind by Hábitat. With respect to the case of San José de Ocoa, the continuity of the implementing agency will allow it to polish the existing efforts.

Since ADESJO is an agency that has its offices in the community of San José de Ocoa, and which for about 43 years has been developing projects, it is not hard to foresee that this agency will have the necessary conditions to maintain the monitoring systems and to continue the effort to eradicate child labor with other funds once the project ends.

In Nicaragua, the communication of the implementing agency with IPEC's coordination team is excellent, and the information and documents flow without problems. During the period in which the action programs have existed, the coordination has evidenced a good working relationship between the project's coordinator and the implementing agency.

Regarding the monitoring system, it was noticed that this task is carried out within the context of the action plan of UNAG, the implementing agency in charge of the education component.

This modality or approach is based on a combination of the statistics collecting and storage systems of MECD at the various levels—regional and national—and the information gathered by the project itself. The former provide statistics according to each educational center and district about enrollment, attendance, as well as students passing or failing school years, but the delay in providing the information makes the figures compiled useless for the purposes of the needed follow-up.

The system developed by the project integrates a monitoring network comprised of 13 groups of three members apiece (an adolescent and two adults), each in charge of a given community. These commissions operate on a voluntary basis.

In all, there are 39 monitors. One person in each group of monitors attends a meeting of the government's technical committee (comprised of 17 members), in which the situations presented are followed up on. The members of each committee monitor the situation of the eradication of child labor effectively in their communities, and provide support for the teachers involved when there are signs that a student is going to drop out.

Each classroom in the 13 communities has a filing system where records are kept to check children's attendance and to provide follow-up as needed. The visit to the school of Santa

Rosa¹¹ revealed that these files are prepared, but do not show any movement or change other than for registration.

There is a tendency for individual teachers to use their own instruments. Although the aforementioned files are not being used, the dropout cases are reported to the community's monitoring committee, which then follows up on them together with their teachers. This information was gathered by combining an interview held with the members of the municipal technical committee of Acoyapa and with the teacher of the school in Santa Rosa.

In Costa Rica, there is excellent communication and a fluid dissemination of information and documents between the implementing agency and IPEC's coordination team. The advantage in the case of Turrialba, Costa Rica, is that there is better telephone communication, more personal contact, and good use of e-mail. The coordination carried out during the short time the program has been in operation evidences a good relationship between the project's coordinating team and the implementing agency.

The implementation mechanism includes, in addition to the project's staff, a "seed group" composed of young leaders who were identified during the selection process of the beneficiaries. This group has the role both of collaborator and participant.

In addition to having participated in identifying the target population, this group joins in on the training activities and contributes to exercising better control over the beneficiaries. As it is a relatively small population, the records are kept in simple Excel documents. The group's follow-up is perceived as being effectively used as a multiplier effect.

2.b) Interaction between the project and the representatives of the government, trade union, and employer sectors

2.4. Commitment levels from the government, trade unions, and employers (2.7-2.8)

The governments have assumed a high-level commitment that started with the ratification of ILO Conventions 182 and 138, which have complemented the regulations to implement them at the national level. They have undertaken great institutional coordination efforts from the CDN involving not only the institutions for children's protection, but also those that provide basic health and education services, especially the latter. All the governments of the participating countries have managed to include within their strategic planning and immediate Action Plans the issue of eradicating of child labor, which has been given the highest priority.

Furthermore, all these governments have been receptive and have put to good use the aid that, at the local level, is provided by the development of the project for the eradication of child labor in agriculture. They believe that this project supports the tasks they have been

¹¹ Visit on 07/23/2005.

developing well, and they have established fluid coordination mechanisms that evidence their commitment to the issue.

Within these efforts, Guatemala's intention to assume the coordination of the actions for the eradication of child labor is worth mentioning, as coordinating the work was taken charge of at a very high level, through the offices of the vice president of the republic. Unfortunately, this intention has not yet had the expected impact because the agenda for the eradication of child labor has been conflated with that of the Social Council. All governments have linked the issue of the eradication of child labor to children's need to play and to their right to an education. In this sense, they have made additional efforts to improve the access to education.

The ministries of labor of the countries where the project is being implemented have assumed their roles as regulating bodies, and they have contributed to coordinating the efforts that include inspection and awareness-raising actions. In their coordination efforts, they have involved the education and agriculture ministries or secretariats.

The contribution of the trade unions started with the negotiations for the ratification of ILO Conventions. This effort has concentrated on their mobilization in favor of the eradication of child labor by raising awareness among their affiliates, including family members. The greatest commitment and support was identified in the Dominican Republic, both at the regional level in the communities where the project is implemented as well as at the level of the national trade unions.

Trade union activities in Guatemala and Costa Rica have not been present locally, but have been manifested at the national level through the large trade unions that have supported the ratification of ILO Conventions and the inclusion of the issue at a strategic level on the national governments' agendas. In Nicaragua, UNAG'S double role as an association of producers that also includes small agricultural producers does not make including workers' trade unions in the area possible.

The participation and level of commitment of employers has also been a decisive factor for the project's success. Their degree of involvement varies according to the country, but they have been close to the project's implementation. This contrast is mainly due to two reasons: their conviction of the economic benefits derived from the exploitation of child labor, and the costs of being discredited and accused internationally of exploiting child labor. This makes them fear that their products will be subjected to an embargo in the globalized market, as this market demands not only quality, but also social responsibility from producers.

The implementing agencies—FUNCAFE in Guatemala and UNAG in Nicaragua—evidence their high level of commitment not only for coordination and mobilization, but also for the direct implementation of the intervention projects to bring about the eradication of child labor. In the Dominican Republic, the employers are highly committed to the project's implementation, and have expressed their willingness to accept the provisions of the existing regulations and those set forth in the conventions for the eradication of child labor.

At the project level in Costa Rica, the largest coffee producer in the area along with other producers have been participating in the project, and are directly collaborating in the actions derived from the action plan. Moreover, these producers also are honoring the provisions of the existing regulations, and have been promoting awareness about these restrictions.

In Guatemala, several links have been created with the governmental agencies both at the provincial level (under the administrative decentralization plan) and within the nationwide entities.

As mentioned earlier, a National Commission for the Eradication of Child Labor exists at the highest level, but as it tends to be confused with the Government Social Council, there have been difficulties in trying to arrange commission meeting for this purpose of dealing specifically with the child labor issue.

This commission has an executive secretariat which is the National Directorate of Social Prevision, this being part of the Ministry of Labor. The solid relationship has in turn empowered the middle levels. This relationship has been useful in order to solve problems arising from the change in national government administration, which took place a year ago in Guatemala. Even when there have been changes in the upper echelons of government, it has been possible to coordinate strategic plans with the federal employees who favor the eradication of child labor.

This favorable situation has allowed for the integration of a national effort which, according to the interviewees, has contributed significantly to carrying out the child-labor eradication programs supported by IPEC.¹²

The presence of FUNCAFE (formerly FUNRURAL) as implementing agency for the project has guaranteed the active participation of the business sector. Said participation has been made possible by the fact that this organization is highly respected and has a noted capacity for summoning other entities in the business sector. This ability to call enterprises to action has allowed for the incorporation of several national efforts at the business level, such as the *Empresarios por la Educación* [Entrepreneurs for Education] initiative, which has contributed to positioning the issue on the political agenda of the current administration.

Other initiatives, such as the *Amigos de la Escuela* [Friends of the Schools], and the efforts of the Council of Private Foundations, both use motivating slogans such as “An educated girl will be the mother of development” and “Healthy schools are needed.”

¹² Interviews with Sonia Figueroa, General Director of Social Prevision, and Minor Maldonado, Executive Director of FUNCAFE, 07/18/2005

This situation is based on the new vision that these Guatemalan entrepreneurs have assumed; they are now more aware that peace is brought about through development and the reduction of poverty, and that the fight against poverty depends on a single weapon: children's education.

This is a positive reaction to both the problems of violence endured by the country in recent decades, and to the pressure of the international criticism because of children's exploitation in rural areas. The problem of child labor is diametrically in opposition to international quality-seal or certification requirements and to socially and environmentally responsible production, all of which are increasingly necessary in the globalization arena.

With regards to the trade unions, they had very active participation in the approval of Convention 182, but not in the project's development. This has happened mainly because, although there are union members in the coffee plantations, the union's presence is almost nonexistent. The only union members are teachers, whose syndicates firmly support the Project.

An evaluation of the commitment of the government, employers, and trade unions makes it possible to observe that the issue of the eradication of child labor is part of the strategic agenda of the current administration's political actions.

This topic is one of the main axes of strategic planning, and a high-level commission has accordingly been created, a commission which is chaired by the Vice President of the Republic. All the members of the Social Council of the government are members of the commission.

This administration's commitment takes place at the highest level. On the other hand, employers have been involved by supporting education at public schools. They are doing this because they have the conviction that the seeds of peace are planted in the classrooms. Workers and their organizations do not seem to be present in this organization's efforts.

In the San Marcos area, two main types of crop raising and property organization are identified: small landholdings, these being mostly of a subsistence nature or for low-scale commercial vegetable production, and the coffee plantations. In the small landholdings, the work is family-based, while on the plantations, migrant workers participate in the harvest season. In this second case, the entrepreneurs have affirmed that they do not hire children. Instead, the figure of the "*colono*" (foreman) has employer status functions on the large plantations. The owners have these people manage their plantations, and as part of their job, they hire the coffee pickers and other seasonal workers.

This situation has been exploited even to dodge social security coverage issues. Child labor reaches figures of about 199,000 working children in San Marcos. This situation has led the project's coordination team to not take direct actions against child labor per se, but rather to raise the awareness of those involved.

Recently, ExporCafé, which is one of the companies exporting the highest quality Guatemalan coffee, approached the project because they want to mitigate the problem of

their coffee being censured and sanctioned internationally for not being environmentally friendly and, even more so, for exploiting child labor.

In the Dominican Republic, the activity of Phase II may be considered a continuation of Phase I since the actors themselves see it as such. Under the new government administration, more agencies will be joining the project's efforts more enthusiastically than they did before, including the Secretariat of Agriculture and the Secretariat of Education.

The trade unions at the national level, along with their regional affiliates, have stated their willingness and commitment to collaborate on the issue of eradicating child labor. This is also true for the country's employers; though it was not possible to identify a regional or national association or union during the visit, entrepreneurs have manifested that they are committed, at least at the producers' level, to the project's efforts.

- i) The Labor Secretariat will work on raising awareness and on carrying out inspections. They have been doing so both with and without the project, but their efforts are supported by the project.
- ii) The Secretariat of Education is the center of activities; its efforts are focused on improving the conditions of the public educational centers. It aims at extending its awareness-raising activities beyond the regions under the project's influence.
- iii) The Secretariat of Agriculture, with the support of IPEC, is training its staff on the eradication of child labor and its worst forms. Its intention is to take advantage of the monthly meetings held at the regional level, which bring together 800 collaborators from over 160 different municipalities. In addition, among the Secretariat of Agriculture's staff are almost 200 technicians distributed in eight regional offices.¹³ The other task carried out by this Secretariat is to support the projects in San José de Ocoa and Azua by training the families in order to help them to improve their potential income.
- iv) Employers, mostly in Azua, have been made aware of the child labor issue, and are being constantly visited by the inspectors of the Secretariat of Labor. They have stated that they do not hire children, and that they have furthermore forbidden children's presence on the plantations and at their processing plants. This situation is what will continue throughout Phase II.
- v) The unions, such as the Consejo Nacional de Unidad Sindical or CNUS [National Council of Syndicate Unity,], the main national workers' organization, both at the national level and at the affiliates' level in the area, have participated actively in the ratification of the Conventions, have joined the awareness-raising campaigns about child-labor eradication among their workers, and support the project, both in the local area and nationwide. In this sense, the members of Asociación Dominicana de Profesores or ADP [Dominican Teachers'

¹³ Entrevista con los Directores de Administración Rural y de Extensión antes mencionados. (11/07/2005).

Association], through its affiliate in the area of Azua and San José de Ocoa, were made aware of and trained in the first phase of the project, and they are now ready and prepared to contribute to the actions of the second phase.¹⁴ The Federación Campesina, or FECAINMAT [Farm Workers' Federation] has participated in the awareness-raising process, and helps in making small producers aware. FECAINMAT also has an influential summoning capacity, and organizes peasant groups to support the eradication of child labor.

In Nicaragua, the government's willingness to eradicate child labor is expressed in the context of the National Action Plan for Childhood and Adolescence 2002-2011, and in the coordination of the National Council for the Integral Attention and Protection of Children and Adolescents (CONAPINA). This commission includes 21 institutions. The plan includes both public institutions and related non-governmental institutions, and coordinates the regional work. However, the national effort neither uses nor receives information or data from the project.

The presence of the National Union of Farmers and Cattle Raisers (UNAG), as an implementing agency of one of the two Action Plans, reflects their willingness to participate and commitment to the eradication of child labor. This commitment to the issue of started even before Phase I of the project. It dates from the years 1994-95, when a project from Norway entitled Save the Children, and the mandates of UNAG 1996 Congress, took place.

Then the project was introduced, and efforts have been coordinated with other agencies such as International Plan from the Netherlands to complement meal programs for children. International Plan participated actively in the preparation of the Provincial Strategic Plan, and continues to be the local referent on the nourishment assistance issue.¹⁵

In Costa Rica, the government is fully committed to the issue of the eradication of child labor, and it has passed legislation such as the Code of Childhood and Adolescence (Law No. 7739 of 05/06/1998), and has ratified ILO Convention 182 (which deal with the worst forms of child labor) and Convention 138 (dealing with the minimum legal age for employment). Both Conventions were ratified through Law No. 8122 of 09/12/2001, and Law No. 5594 of 10/10/2001, respectively. There is also a complementary regulation with specifications about the eradication of child labor. The activity is coordinated with the Ministry of Labour, and there is great involvement and an outstanding participation on the part of the Ministry who participates in the decisions of the Project.

Currently, the Second Plan for the Eradication of Child Labor (for the period of 2005-2010) is in force. The regulating body on this matter is the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MTSS). The coordinating agency is the National Directive Committee for the Eradication

¹⁴ Interview with Rafael Calderón, Daniel Ramírez, Yselsa Ramírez, and Rosa Lucía Sánchez, leaders in the teacher's association and representatives of the affiliate in Azua, 07/12/2005. It is interesting to observe the teachers' awareness as they were originally against the idea because they believed it was against their union interests. Then they learned it was a good opportunity to improve the conditions in the schools and to increase students' achievement.

¹⁵ Interview with Douglas Alemán, Executive Director of UNAG. Chontales, 07/21/2005.

of Child Labor and the protection of the working Adolescent (CDN), which is the inter-institutional commission that coordinates the efforts supported in part by the project through the Time-bound Program scheme. MTSS is highly committed, and its staff participates actively in the inspection, awareness-raising, and coordination activities nationwide, using MTSS's leadership in the CDN. Their support is so complete that the project's actions may be literally confused with those of MTSS, to such an extent that the action plan's offices in Turrialba are located within the facilities of MTSS.

Moreover, a good number of the posters and public information related to the project adorn the walls of the regional offices and the headquarters of the National Directorate of Social Security of this same ministry.

The officers in charge of this ministry have assumed their delegated roles, and they participate in local and national activities. Although they support the project, they feel that since the project's actions are concentrated in the area of Turrialba¹⁶, its effects have had little impact in other parts of the country. The direct annual contributions of MTSS to support IPEC projects for eradicating child labor in Turrialba have averaged US\$25 thousand over the last four years¹⁷.

The main alliance of the project in the area is with Cafetalera Aquiares, a company that participates in and supports many of the project's activities. The main reason for this support is their awareness regarding the importance of eradicating child labor. This company believes that its activities should be socially responsible, especially in the context of the certifications issued by Rain Forest Alliance and Starbucks.

These business persons are aware that from a productive perspective, the concept of a family of coffee pickers should disappear, and be replaced instead by adult migrant labor.¹⁸ The commitment is open to new requests from the Action Plan coordinator. They have collaborated by providing the facilities for project events, and by organizing meetings to raise their workers' awareness about the need to bring about the eradication of child labor.

2.5. Materialization of the financial commitments of the government and other organizations, and their influence in the project's implementation (2.9-2.10-2.11)

The revision of the six instances of the action programs in the four participating countries where the project is being implemented indicates there is adequate and timely compliance with the financial commitments made on the part of the other actors. This situation, far from delaying the development of the Action Plans in all the cases, has actually produced better performance and turned into specific contributions that evidence the actors' level of commitment.

¹⁶ Interview with Esmirna Sánchez (Director of Social Security) and Marielos Chinchilla (Officer in charge of the eradication of child labor at the MTSS, San José 08/05/2005

¹⁷ Figures provided in detail by Marielos Chinchilla, from the Social Security Directorate of MTSS for the period from 2001 to May 2004. The current situation, Phase II, is practically the same.

¹⁸ Interview with Alonso Barquero (Administrative Director of Cafetalera Aquiares), Turrialba. 07/08/2005

One of the most important factors for the success and continuity of the project through the bridge programs and the Action Plans has been the solvency and degree of commitment of the implementing or implementing agencies. This solvency is not only in financial terms; it is also solvency and credibility in the communities where the project is being implemented. This factor has been fundamental in all countries.

In Guatemala at the time of the consultant's field visit, the scholarships which were the main contribution promised by the government had not yet been assigned, but it had already been decided to make the necessary disbursement in the near future.

The summary outline shows that the local contribution made amounts to the following: a) local office equipment: US\$3,000; b) ANACAFE facilities: US\$1,000; c) partial support for FUNRUAL staff: US\$1,500; d) Ministry of Public Education [MEP] salaries for 60 teachers being trained US\$13,500; e) MEP scholarships: US\$158,311.34/year = US\$456,000: Total local contribution: US\$475,825.

At the time of the visits to the respective institutions, it was possible to verify that the main allotment corresponding to the scholarships for 2005 had already started to be put to use in the communities.¹⁹

In addition, it was possible to verify from the same sources that the payments due to the teachers that attended the training sessions had been made. Although there is no precise accounting control of the entries for the facilities and staff of FUNCAFE, it could be ascertained during the visit made to this organization that they are constantly making contributions in kind. These contributions are related to the use of the facilities for the project's events held in Guatemala City, and for handling bids and procurement of supplies. The FUNCAFE staff is in charge of these procedures.

In this sense it may be stated that they have contributed the local funds for the project as had been provided for in the PRODOC and the summary outline.

The project to a large extent depends on the community organization and the municipalities related to the schools. The school boards comprised of parents, community leaders, and municipalities are the main coordinating entities. The second phase is being implemented in eleven communities contained within four separate municipalities.

Each of the schools has its own board of parents. The municipality, on the other hand, has appointed the deputy mayor to coordinate and support the action plan follow-up activities. The base organization is comprised of the school teachers and the technicians of FUNCAFÉ, and has become a support, monitoring, and recording mechanism with respect to ensuring children's ongoing attendance in school.

It was not possible to verify if this control is truly done "online," however, the records of the database of the action subprogram that keeps a monthly check on the students' status was reviewed.

¹⁹ Confirmed by the Department Director of MEP, Prof. Armando González, 07/20/2005

An initiative of the European Union is INTERVIDA, which operates under COESPA. It has been simultaneously supporting the development of school infrastructure and the delivery of teaching materials and supplies, as well as medical and dental care sessions, teacher training, and the development of school vegetable gardens.

INTERVIDA will remain in the area for at least ten years, and it has been in contact with the coordinator of the subprogram; furthermore, INTERVIDA has been collaborating with the project and has shown a great deal of interest in the methodology being used, especially in what is related to the methodology of the active rural classroom, in order to take this approach to other communities.

In the consultant's opinion, there is a great opportunity to create synergies with INTERVIDA, as this institution seems to be the most appropriate to replace IPEC once Phase II concludes.

Another noted organization, Visión Mundial, supports the actions to hire teachers where there is a deficit; it pays the teachers' salaries, and it grants scholarships and gives school supplies to needy children.

FODE is a fund created by FUNCAFÉ that has contributed resources to support the training of teachers in the active rural classroom methodology.

Montana Explorer has supported the hiring of new teachers. As a result of their efforts and those of other organizations, a total of 36 teachers have been hired to support the dissemination of the active rural classroom methodology.²⁰

In the Dominican Republic, the question of whether the financial commitments (either cash donations or in kind) from the government and other organizations related to the project have been materialized, and if so, how this has influenced the implementation of the Projects and its effects, cannot be answered. Since the second phase had not yet started, it was not possible to evaluate this situation.

The other issue in question is the participation of non-governmental, community, and base organizations in the implementation of the project's activities. In this sense, the support provided by these entities is by means of their organizing the schools and through the school boards formed by parents becoming controllers of the process. However, their work during the second phase may not yet be analyzed because Phase II was barely beginning at the time of the report.

On the other hand, the main synergies have been taking place with ADESJO, since this organization is developing several projects guided by a clear mission, and since it channels resources from several donors that complement the actions of Phase II of the project. The most specific case is the fund for the development of productive ideas that make it possible

²⁰ Interview with Minor Maldonado, Director of FUNCAFÉ and Roberto Jordan, Coordinator of the subprogram, 07/18/2005

to contribute to increasing the beneficiary families' income. An entry of US\$69,055 from the other projects will be used to support the micro-greenhouses program and its dissemination among poor families. Other programs include working on health and human services issues (including potable drinking water, natural medicine, rural health care, housing, and roads).

In Nicaragua, the only financial commitments expected are those funds from the MECD and the implementing agencies. Both have met their financial obligations on time; therefore, there have been no negative consequences on the project's implementation.

Nicaragua is characterized by the base organization schemes inherited from the *Sandinismo* movement, in which community leaders participate as well as professionals and other members. To support the project, they have taken advantage of the existing organizations with some modifications and the inclusion of new members. The provincial committee is comprised of 17 members who in turn represent the institutions that are involved with issue of the eradication of child labor in the area, as well as other non-governmental organizations.

The municipal committees are composed of 22 members each. These committees include representatives of the organizations. Finally, there are the area committees, one for each community (13 in all), which have a total of 56 members (45 women and 11 men apiece). The area committees send representatives to the municipal committees and, in turn, they send representatives to the provincial committees. Key entities are the following:

The **Catholic Church**, through its parishes and community leaders in the selected area: The diocese as an implementing agency of the awareness-raising component carries out on a permanent basis training sessions dealing with the topic of the prevention and eradication of child labor in the agricultural and cattle raising sector.

The Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sports (MECD): MECD provides academic assistance to the study and integration centers that assist illiterate children. MECD does follow-up and contributes food through the World Food Program (PMA) to the rural soup kitchens that are run to benefit children.

The Ministry of Health (Minsa-SILAIS): This ministry works in coordination with the health centers to ensure that children receive preventive and medical care.

The town halls are involved in the project through the Municipal Plan for the Eradication of Child Labor, which has been assumed by the municipal council which participates in the meetings of the Municipal Technical Committee. They continue to coordinate the implementation of the action program through their support for the process of issuing the birth certificates to those children who, for varying reasons, do not have them.

The Ministry of Labor (MITRAB) is involved in the action program to prevent and eradicate child labor by carrying out inspections and contributing to training and awareness-raising activities.

The Ministry of the Family, Childhood and Adolescence (MIFAMILIA) provides psychological attention for children in cases of abuse, and works in coordination with the Ministry of Labor through the inspectors to take corrective measures against those who violate the child labor laws.

The technical, provincial, municipal, and area committees, created in the first phase of the action program, meet periodically and follow up on the actions being taken, as well as plan and evaluate them. In this period, new area committees have been created in the communities that recently joined the project's action program.

Within the project, several resources have been used and the implementing or implementing agencies have created alliances with other organizations that deal with children's affairs or that support the eradication of child labor. The other initiatives are coordinated directly through agreements with UNAG or the provincial steering committee.

In Costa Rica, the only financial commitment that appears in the bridge program and in the recently approved action plan is the local contribution of the implementing agency CEFEMINA. The first amounts to US\$1,200 and the second to US\$11,200. In the first case, the resources were used to rent offices from the MTSS to cover other operational and administrative expenses. In the second case, the action program has just begun.

There is little non-governmental activity in the area. The main allies are the academic centers, that is, local public schools. Among the notable non-governmental organizations, the Centro Agronómico Tropical para la Investigación y la Enseñanza or CATIE [Tropical Agronomy Center for Research and Teaching] and the Instituto Interamericano de Ciencias Agrícolas or IICA [Inter American Agricultural Sciences Institute] should be mentioned.

CATIE participates through the Centro de Competitividad Ecológica or CECOECO [Center for Ecological Competitiveness] program, which cares for program beneficiaries who are interested in developing production initiatives. These initiatives concentrate on areas where the center has been promoting the development of clusters (dairy products, forest productive chains, organic coffee, crafts, nuts, organically raised bananas and cacao, and others).

To date no base organizations have been identified, and trade union activities in the area are practically non-existent.

There is good coordination, especially with the project's activities in the southern part of the country. In that area, a project is being developed together with the National Children's Affairs Office (PANI) and MTSS with the support of the Canadian government. This project is working against the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

The activities started on August 17 and it is expected that funds will be used from public institutions and from non-governmental sources. The mechanism is expected to be the same as that which was used in other projects.

2.6. Extensive and decisive participation of the community and the NGOs in the project (2.12-2.14)

Within the tripartite participation scheme conceived by the project, it was possible to verify in all countries an ample and decisive participation in the project's activities on the part of the parents and children beneficiaries.

The project's organization has included in its action scheme a mechanism by which parents and children join the awareness-raising activities to establish a relationship in which to provide feedback and to enable them to become empowered. These schemes contribute toward preventing that the efforts made thus far not be abandoned, as well as to keep both groups working toward the goal of permanently withdrawing working children, or preventing youngsters from engaging in child labor.

All the projects have developed coordination entities intended to produce reinforcement activities. In Guatemala, in the Dominican Republic, and in Nicaragua these mechanisms are carried out through school boards. The school boards are a well-known and respected organization at the community level. They have now been expanded to include the presence of parents and children who are direct or indirect beneficiaries of the program at board meetings held once each month.

In Guatemala and Nicaragua, these efforts take place in a broader context as part of the overall provincial organization. In the Dominican Republic, in San José de Ocoa, such means of participation are related to the work structure of ADESJO. Parents' and children's coordination and participation in Azua (Dominican Republic) is through a mechanism similar to the school boards with parents and the neighborhood committees. Since the project in Turrialba (Costa Rica) involves adolescents, coordination there is more closely related to an ad hoc organization created by the project which has strong ties to the institutions and to the NGOs that work in the area.

In Guatemala, the Office for the Attention of the Victims and the Dialog Table for the eradication of child labor are the most important coordination entities at the regional level. This round table was created on March 10th of 2005 as a product of the National Forum. It is comprised by twenty-two representatives of regional institutions such as the Prosecutor's Office for the Attention to the Victims, the General Controller of Human Rights, the Offices for Working Youth and Children, the Labor Inspection Department, and the National Women's Office, all of which are ascribed to the MTPS. Additionally, there are representatives from the Pastoral group of the Catholic Church, Cáritas Diocesana, and FUNCAFÉ (which is related to the subprogram), the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Education. They organize support, provide supervision, and coordinate a variety of attention activities.

The subprogram has created a tripartite organization which includes the communities themselves: children, parents, and the municipalities. Children are organized in student bodies; the community leaders and parents participate in the school boards of the eleven public schools in the 11 communities; and the local governments are represented by the deputy mayors.

Together they constitute an empowerment mechanism to keep children and parents interested in the child labor issue, and they also have taken on a supervisory role over children's permanent attendance in school. The operation of this tripartite figure was verified in two communities where it was possible to observe the work dynamics and the level of empowerment of students and parents.

In the Dominican Republic, the Azua project exemplifies the importance of counting on the support of the neighborhood leaders, especially for the organization of the homework and study rooms.

In San José de Ocoa, the coordination is carried out under the various modes of organization developed by the municipality, and is encouraged for a number of reasons and purposes by ADESJO. Here each community has its own committee in charge of coordinating the children, as well as all parents who are interested in the child labor issue.

At the national level, the coordination efforts and the definition of strategies take place within the CDN, this being done with the participation of IPEC.

In Nicaragua, the coordination activity takes place, as mentioned earlier, through Supra. However, the local efforts have not as yet fully extended to the national level, where the project's level influence is almost non-existent.

Children participate because they are the subjects of the program. Parents do so through the parents' boards, as well as in the area and municipal committees. Carrying out the activities of these committees implies attending meetings on a regular basis. The frequency of the work meetings varies: the area committees meet as frequently as needed, whereas the municipal committees and the provincial committees meet once a month.

In Costa Rica, the action plan of Phase II calls for the incorporation of the Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje (INA); Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería (MAG); Consejo Nacional de la Producción (CNP); Instituto Costarricense de Turismo (ICT); Instituto Costarricense de Electricidad (ICE); Instituto de Desarrollo Agrario (IDA); Instituto Nacional de Seguros (INS); Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social (CCSS); Ministerio de Educación Pública (MEP); Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica (ITCR); Universidad Estatal a Distancia (UNED) y Ministerio del Ambiente y Energía (MINAE); El Centro Agronómico Tropical (CATIE); el Instituto Interamericano de Ciencias Agrícolas (IICA); La Cámara de Turismo de Turrialba; las Municipalidades de Turrialba y de Jiménez y la Asociación de Productores Orgánicos (APOT), and Asociación de Desarrollo Forestal (ADF).

It is also expected that a consultant council will be created which will be composed of representatives from the universities that have campuses in the area. This council will provide specific assistance for the development of the business plans of the entrepreneurs who are to be benefited by the action program.

This council and the coordination platform would make sense if specific entities are called to participate in each case in which it is not necessary to have a quorum of more than five or six members in order to come to agreements and make decisions. The description of the project's activities does not include specific actions to be undertaken by this platform. This is interpreted as a network of contacts that could support the project on specific issues, and upon the coordinator's request.

The participation of adolescents and their families has been very active throughout the period of the bridge program. Selection and awareness-raising activities through courses and exchanges were organized with their parents' authorization; these fathers and mothers had also attended informative meetings. The coordination of the events has been carried out by means of the efforts of groups of youngsters who are members of the "seed group," as well as the logistical support of Cafetalera AQUIARES, and the beneficiaries' parents.

2.7. Adequate performance of the implementing agencies and use of the selection criteria (2.13)

In some cases, the NGOs involved in Phase I of the Project continued working during the second phase. For Guatemala, Costa Rica, and the Dominican Republic, one agency was changed in each case. Although no specific selection criteria were used to rate the agencies, it may be stated that the agency replacement was accomplished well. The lessons learned allowed for a quick and accurate decision to be made.

There was a small change in Guatemala when Pastoral, the Catholic Church group, decided to stop participating in the project. Thus, those resources and functions were transferred to FUNCAFE.

In Costa Rica, the prevailing situation made it necessary to replace the implementing agency of the first phase with another one (CEFEMINA). The reasons for the change included the fact that the first agency was not prepared for the new activities, as it had been demonstrating from the beginning that it did not meet the requirements, and also because changes in its staff resulted in its ending up losing not only their accumulated experience and expertise, but also the suitability of the agency for the second phase.

In the Dominican Republic, Habitat, which had worked in Azua, considered that although the experience of Phase I had been good, they were not willing to continue. This decision had been reached for two reasons: Habitat's mission focuses on environmental issues, so it wanted to concentrate on these, and also because the delays in making the disbursements had caused Habitat complications that had affected its other operations and overall credibility.²¹

Regarding the replacement of the agency that left the project in Guatemala, its functions were then assigned to FUNCAFE, which is well known because of its solvency, its

²¹ Interview with Rafael Urbáez and Salvador Calderón, Azua, 07/12/2005

remarkable summoning power on issues related to rural development, credibility, its links and connections at the national level, and its interest in the issue of child-labor eradication.

In the case of the Dominican Republic, Visión Mundial has conditions similar to those of FUNCAFÉ: ample knowledge of child labor and a gamut of assets for developing this kind of project. In Costa Rica, CEFEMINA enjoys nationwide prestige, is knowledgeable about the issue of child labor, especially with respect to a gender approach, is familiar with the area, and has a branch there which allows them to understand the region's conditions.

In Guatemala, the performance of FUNRURAL (now FUNCAFÉ) is known not just because of its excellence, but also because of its high degree of acceptance within the national community, its solid relationships with the business sector and farmers; and, as has been said, its power to call others to action in order to deal with human development issues in rural areas.

In the Dominican Republic, in San José de Ocoa, ADESJO is the partner par excellence. It is an organization that enjoys local, national, and international credibility and prestige, and it has implemented several projects with common strategic axes. ADESJO has a clear mission, and is committed to the eradication of child labor. Moreover, this is an organization that has the needed economic solvency in order to support the project's actions.

In the case of Azua, Visión Mundial has a noted reputation and great deal of experience in dealing with this issue, as well as ample knowledge of the reality of the area.

In Nicaragua, the two previous agencies are still in charge, and their work has been more than satisfactory. The action programs have been developed according on schedule, and both the Diocese and UNAG have high prestige and wide local acceptance.

In Costa Rica, the performance of the new implementing agency, CEFEMINA, was tested with the successful development of the bridge program after the withdrawal of ACSOL. Its performance is considered positive, especially when taking into account that during the four month period of activity implementation, they have managed to reverse the image problems that had been left behind by the preceding agency.

The main reasons for CEFEMINA's selection which are considered valid when analyzing its suitability were the following: a) deep knowledge of the area and the target population; b) a number of CEFEMINA's activities are already carried out right in the area, and it has staff members living there; c) CEFEMINA uses intervention methodologies that make it possible to get the attention of the target population in accordance with the project's interests and aims; d) has sensibility to work with vulnerable groups.

2.8 Adequate transfer of knowledge from the project to the implementing agencies regarding the design, monitoring, evaluation, and paradigm for the eradication of child labor (2.15)

Through its Action Plans and the implementing agencies, the project has been able to effectively transfer the terms that constitute the paradigm for the eradication of child labor. These terms have been transferred to appropriate institutions, as well as to local communities and the project beneficiaries.

As a result of the work done in the first and second phase, the project also has transferred to these institutions the tools that are needed in order for them to be able to design, evaluate, and monitor on the project's activities. This has been very useful for the interaction amongst the implementing agencies and the community, on the one hand, as well as for the agencies, community, and institutions.

The aspect in which the least transfer of knowledge has taken place is the area of cooperation between agencies, Action Plans, and participating countries. In this sense, some relevant aspects were identified in the projects that could be useful if horizontal cooperation mechanisms involving agencies and countries were to be used.

The following situations represent possibilities for horizontal cooperation among the participating countries as part of the overall project:

- Cooperation between Guatemala and Nicaragua to support the development of the methodology of Active Rural Schools in Nicaragua: lessons learned and model. Nicaragua is now attempting to begin utilizing a similar model, whereas Guatemala has been using the same model since 2004.
- Cooperation between Nicaragua and all other participating countries in order to be able to disseminate the mechanisms used by the Pastoral church group to spread the message promoting the eradication of child labor by using the church radio station and the church sermons, as well as meetings of the "Holy Word Delegates."
- Cooperation between the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica so as to be able to develop a system of small greenhouses that would be especially aimed at improving the beneficiary families' income, with particular attention being paid to fostering the participation of female heads of households.
- Cooperation between Guatemala and all other countries in order to transfer the model for the strategic establishment and operation of the official Comité Departamental de Apoyo a la Niñez [Provincial Committee to Aid and Support Children].
- Cooperation between the Dominican Republic and Guatemala so as to be able to transfer the knowledge gained about the organization and methodology of the "homework rooms." Although this methodology is used more often in cities than in rural areas, such as in San Marcos, there are communities other than those involved

in the project that could benefit from this model in order to review subjects, bring children up to level, and keep at-risk children learning in the classrooms during vacation periods --- rather than working.

For the evaluation purposes, *Guatemala* has the project with the largest number of strategic actions and activities for its implementation.

Although the project's coverage in the second stage has been smaller, it is working with eleven communities in four municipalities in San Marcos (where there are 1,911 public schools with a total of 7,611 teachers, and 29 municipalities).²² It was noted during the evaluation mission that the project is strongly linked to the institutions at the provincial and national levels.

The same situation was verified regarding its relationship with the local communities, the target population, and the indirect beneficiaries — children's parents. During the conversations held while visiting the communities, the implementing agencies, and the offices of the project, it was obvious that there is a clear understanding of the key terms and definitions to be considered.

In the Dominican Republic, the terminology and concepts about the withdrawal of children from work and the prevention of child labor have been disseminated, and these terms and concepts are understood by both the actors and beneficiaries. This was confirmed during the multiple visits made to the two regions where the first phase was developed. The second phase will basically cover the same scenario, although with some slight changes.

Regarding the training offered by the project to the implementing agencies, it was determined that the agencies themselves had prior experience with respect to the child labor issue, as well as with the implementation of similar programs. As a result of their prior experience, the adoption of the instruments contributed by the project was something which proved to be relatively simple for these agencies.

In Nicaragua, the model used by UNAG follows a systemic intervention system in the 13 public schools which are included in the action plan. The interaction of the awareness-raising activities for all actors with other aspects related to the supervision of the monitoring agents in these areas was suitable. Moreover, the material support provided, along with the training and raising of awareness of the teachers were also deemed appropriate, given the critical social, economic, and political situations that are currently affecting the country.

²² Interview with Armando González, Provincial Directorate of the Ministry of Public Education (MEP), 07/20/2005

The accumulated effects of the first and second phases made it possible to notice at all levels and among all actors—including the beneficiary children—a thorough understanding of the key terms and definitions of the issue of eradicating child labor.

In Costa Rica, since the implementing agency has its own intervention model for working with the target population and with the project, the main contribution made by the project to the agency has been the paradigm model for the eradication of child labor. Moreover, the national coordination gave technical support to adapt a model of intervention for women to a model of intervention for adolescents (boys and girls) in hazardous work in Agriculture. Together with MTSS, the IPEC support contributed to the formation of the intervention model.

The outcomes from Phase I have contributed important elements for the accuracy of the project's instruments and components. As has been mentioned, the implementing agency has a good deal of experience in assisting needy populations from a gender perspective, as well as familiarity with issues related to this project.

The induction stage that started with the development of the bridge program allowed it to assimilate the paradigm and to use it in order to be able to design the action plan which is being implemented at present.

III. PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

3.1. Possibility of achieving the project's objectives and goals (3.1.)

Chart No.1 on p. 20 of this document shows the expected outcomes in terms of direct beneficiaries. The goal of 4,400 direct beneficiaries is feasible given the scope and level of the Action Plans in the participating four countries.

The other outcomes mentioned earlier allow to draw the following conclusion: that the various goals in terms of the number of families to be benefited by the production options, the number of people made aware of the issue of child labor and who have become informed about it, as well as the follow-up and monitoring of children benefited by Phase I in Guatemala and Nicaragua, may also be achieved during the time that is still left for implementing the project.

In Guatemala, a detailed review with the coordinator and team of the action program for all the activities in the summary outline made it possible to conclude that the development of the activities is going as planned, and that, moreover, there seem to be no obstacles present for carrying them out as planned.

The presence of other cooperation initiatives in collateral activities and complementary projects, as well as the motivation of the governmental institutions, has allowed for synergies to be developed that will make it possible to improve the outcomes with the same budget, and during the time which was established for developing the subprogram.

In the Dominican Republic, the review of the action program in place there showed that there will also not be any difficulties, since the start-up delay has only meant a temporary gap in activities, and not an overall reduction of available time for carrying them out. On the other hand, the delay has resulted in the project's implementation time being better aligned with the school year in this country. This makes it easier to coordinate activities with the schools and teachers.

In Nicaragua, in the case of the Diocese, the implementation of the project's activities has a clear monthly schedule that lets one see that the objectives and goals will be reached within the time scheduled.

In the case of the components carried out by UNAG, a similar situation has been taking place. These components fit especially well with the education component pace, and match the scheduling of the school year. There is no reason to envision delays, as none have occurred so far.

Finally, in Costa Rica, the Turrialba and Jiménez Action Plans just recently began, but a bridge project has already been implemented; this project ended on the 15th of August of 2005.

It is clear that all of the activities will have to be carried out during these six months. The scheduled activities may be completed within the expected time, but what is not as yet clear is the time which will be necessary for the beneficiaries' production initiatives to mature.

Since the implementation of the training activities for the beneficiaries, as well as the implementation of the production ideas, are both complements to the action program, not considering them as an outcome would mean that the project will yield an unfinished product.

The alternative is to, at the very least, certify the training received by the beneficiaries during the implementation period so as to be able to consider this training effort as a finished product. This would indicate that it will be useful to continue this kind of training in the future, as the beneficiaries having received it are then more skilled when they enter the labor market than they were before the program's investment.

3.2. The main outcomes to date guarantee compliance with the goals by the end of the project, and the maturity of a series of noticeable products in each country which would be useful to replicate in others (3.2; 3.2.1.; 3.2.2. and 3.2.3. and 3.3.)

Guatemala and Nicaragua started the second phase of the project several months ago; in contrast, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic only recently initiated their respective action programs. In Costa Rica, it may be stated that the bridge program carried out between April and August of this year was a preparatory phase in order to identify and evaluate the target population and to create the regional support platform. In the Dominican Republic, the project will cover basically the same municipalities, with some slight changes in the communities, but the identification work carried out during the first phase allowed to quickly approach the target communities of the second phase.

During the individual revision of the outcomes reached to date, it was possible to notice that the two Action Plans that are most advanced have carried out the activities according to schedule, and that there are no risk factors that might cause delays during the rest of the implementation period.

As a result of the continuity between the first and second stages, some specific products in each of the participating countries have been developed. Some of these products (associated with one country in particular) could be very useful in terms of being able to improve the operation conditions of other Action Plans in the remaining three countries where the project operates, thus improving the performance of some of the components of these plans.

Using the micro-project mechanism, a complementary horizontal cooperation scheme could be designed for the agencies to enable them to take advantage of these opportunities.

The following are the main outcomes reached to date:

In Guatemala,

- The project has contributed to the creation and strengthening of a support network for the eradication of child labor both in San Marcos, through the decentralized public institutions, and at the national level in coordination with the main governmental ministries (Labor, Education, Law Enforcement & Prosecution, and Agriculture) and other autonomous institutions in charge of vocational training.
- Synergies have been created when working with these organizations, and resources have been channeled for the efforts in favor of the eradication of child labor, this being effected even beyond the project's zone of action. The resources contributed by entities not related to the project are larger than those of the project itself.
- A significant contribution has been made to disseminating the issue of the eradication of child labor, as well as the raising of awareness about the effects child labor has on youngsters' development and on the economy as a whole.
- It has been possible to organize the local communities, and they are now aware of the need for eradication of child labor; this has turned them into allies in the efforts to eliminate the exploitation of children.
- An alternative educational methodology (the Active Rural School) was introduced to make students' training process more flexible. This methodology is being used not only in the school within the project's zone of action, but all over the San Marcos²³ area. This methodology is one of the outstanding products at a regional level, and is one that could be replicated successfully in countries such as Nicaragua, where similar methodologies are being used in rural areas.
- More than 1,600 working or at-risk children have been identified, withdrawn and prevented from working situations, and prevented from engaging in child labor, they and have been enrolled in schools. These children are being attended by the project's components, and it is expected that the group will be supported until the end of the project's implementation.
- There is a detailed record and monitoring system of children's presence in school and the communities.

Two types of monitoring were evaluated:

- The system used by the Ministry of Education, which covers all schools in the San Marcos area; for the control and monitoring of the school age population and their performance during the school year; and
- The system used by the project, which is stored in a database that uses a family code and includes information about the community, the name of the child's parents, with the student's age, sex, academic level, and current status.

The MEP information system contains many more variables, but only provides data about school enrollment, the number of students who graduate school, and grade repetition rate for each school. This information allows for the measuring of the levels of students passing on to the next school year, grade repetition, and desertion rates per school. The information

²³ Resolution No.0151-2004 AMS-UDA. Ministry of Education, Provincial Directorate of Education of San Marcos, November 4, 2004

available also makes it possible to note that during the years the project has been implemented, the enrollment and attendance figures of children in schools have improved while the desertion and grade repetition rates have decreased²⁴.

Both systems are using Excel worksheets, which are adequate for monitoring and for easy handling of the information. What is highly important is the way that the systems are supplied with data. The officer of the Provincial Directorate of San Marcos enters the information each semester, using reports issued by the schools, which are considered the official figures.

In the second case, that is, the project's handling of the information, once the census to identify all the children to be included in the program had been completed, the information was entered in the database. The follow-up could then be done with the help of the teachers, principals, parents' boards, and mayors.

The technicians visit the communities periodically (about once a week) and gather the needed information about the beneficiary children's status. The rescue actions are organized according to the early alert or warning signs originated by the communities. They act on those cases in which the information on file and the reality of a youngster's situation do not match.

The efforts of the second stage have emphasized the strengthening of capacities by creating support and action networks for the eradication of child labor. There are no specific activities in the action program for this topic, but they provide advice, and the labor inspectors are accompanied when they do their awareness-raising tasks, as provided for in objectives 2.4.1 to 2.4.6 of the summary outline.

The program in Guatemala does not work on the assumption of blocking child labor, but rather on the strategy of raising awareness. The problem of working children is widespread in the San Marcos area, and the project does not have the capacity to meet the demands that would be generated if it had to compensate for or support the actions to withdraw children from work in the area. There is no more information available with which to be able to elaborate further on this matter.

A good number of the awareness-raising activities have been carried out in order to support the regional labor inspection team. However, this entity has many limitations, given both the unsafe conditions in which they work and the inadequate enforcement of the laws that back them up.

Employers deny that they have hired working children, but acknowledge that their tenants or foremen may be doing so through the children's parents. Therefore, these awareness-raising activities are geared toward increasing parents' employment potential and productive options.

²⁴ Information provided by the Provincial Director of MEP of San Marcos.

Much of the effort being made is getting channeled by means of the Dialog Table, which, as has been noted, is comprised of a network of 22 institutions. This has been done because the Dialog Table has better opportunities for disseminating the information about child labor. The local television station is donating an hour of air time each week for broadcasting the message, and this is being taken advantage of in order to do a better job of providing information outreach.

Each program depends on a specific reality and particular set of circumstances, these having resulted from the development of the second phase of the project. In the case of Guatemala, three components are being considered for this second phase: a) education, b) awareness-raising, and c) productive options.

- In education, emphasis is being placed on two issues: i) the integration of institutional efforts and cooperating agencies in order to strengthen an offer intended to maintain parents' motivation in keeping their children in school, and ii) the development, promotion, and implementation of a flexible and effective teaching methodology that allows children to easily re-enter school; this is a learning option that better suited to the conditions of these poor communities.
- Regarding awareness-raising, Guatemala is experiencing the most hostile conditions for the field work being done to carry out activities with the trade unions, and for controlling actions with employers to bring about the eradication of child labor. Business people do not acknowledge they hire children, but it is estimated that at least two hundred thousand children work in San Marcos. These conditions have generated massive intervention methodologies, namely, using the media and creating networks of public and private actors that may both multiply the efforts and as well as specific attention to special cases.
- No extraordinary lessons have been observed in the productive options component.

In the Dominican Republic, there are still no outcomes to present since the Action Plan only recently started, in July 2005. The methodology of "homework rooms" was developed in the first phase, and it is expected that this approach will be strengthened in the second phase with the participation of one of the universities. This model as it stands now seems like a good choice to be replicated in other countries, such as in Guatemala.

In Nicaragua,

- The monitoring system used follows from the one employed in the first phase, which uses teachers' data and students' files, as well as area-level monitors and municipality-level supervisors. These all function with the records of the implementing agency. It was observed that this system operates well, but it seems that the personal student files in the hands of the school teachers are not being used, as these teachers prefer to resort to their own control instruments.

- The coordination activities of the municipal and provincial committees are being carried out with the participation of the representatives of the inspection department of MITRAB.
- The most effective tasks are the raising of awareness and the information provided to those affected by the regulations regarding the eradication of child labor. Regarding the labor inspection activities, the representatives of MITRAB themselves acknowledge that the regulations give them very few enforcement tools. This is a limitation in the regulations that effectively limits the possibilities for the project's actions to be fully realized.
- The project supports the inspectors, and the synergies between them and the implementing agencies are stronger. However, in needy environments such as those of Nicaragua, where the municipalities themselves are very poor, the work of the inspectors has been focused in order to convince the participants of the relevance of the issue, that is, to raise awareness, more than to block child labor per se.
- With regards to the outcomes of the workshops and seminars, the information available in the records only allows for verifying that the goals regarding the number of participants and the schedule were in fact achieved.
- An assessment of the progress of the awareness-raising campaigns was not possible taking into account the scope of work outlined in the TOR of this evaluation. This was due to the fact that samples would have been necessary on the target population of the campaign. This issue is mostly being worked on by the church diocese. What was verified during the visits to the communities included in this evaluation was that all the interviewees had received the message; they had heard the radio broadcasts and had seen the advertising and written material. The 78 meetings with the parents and other meetings planned to disseminate the material did take place. The use of the radio spots and the utilization of the network of 190 delegates of the church were also confirmed. This activity had been scheduled from the beginning of the action plan, and has been carried out gradually with the distribution of support materials and the presentation of informative talks.

In Costa Rica, the outcomes are partial since they only refer to the bridge program, which ended on August 15th. They may be summarized as follows:

- ***Identification, recording, and motivation*** of 50 adolescents involved in dangerous jobs, their younger siblings who are at risk, and other members of their families. **Result: 120 adolescents identified, and** once the group was screened, 110 were entered in an updated file.
- ***Records brought up to date:*** **Result:** In a SPSS file with information about each adolescent, his/her family, and socio-demographic characteristics. The file contains the following information about each ***adolescent***: age, schooling, other studies, employment status, type of work done, weekly work hours, and aspirations; the following ***information about his/her parents and family***: schooling, occupation, family

income, other children's status. The records include data about housing, with personal data on the beneficiary, his/her parents and siblings. The record also contains monitoring information entered by the coordinators. The group of 110 adolescents is divided into three subgroups, each one guided by a coordinator who meets with every member on a monthly basis. Once a week the coordinators hold meetings with the general coordinator of the Action Program. There is another monthly meeting with the parents.

- ***A regional support platform to coordinate the efforts*** of the different institutions and organizations involved in the project. **Result:** A wide network of contacts that allows for joining the individual efforts of the institutions and organizations in order to be able to achieve the project's objectives. As a coordinating entity, its creation and strengthening constitute a process that will continue through the life of the action plan. Up to the closing of the bridge program, the network was composed of representatives from MEP, INS, ASEMBIS, CATIE, INA, the Forest Development Association, UCR, UNED, Integral Medical Center (LAXMI), MTSS, local social councils (IMAS); MS; William Allen Hospital, the municipalities of Jiménez and Turrialba, Cafetalera Aquiares, the Association of Retired Teachers of Turrialba, and other groups that are soon to become members. This network is being created. The institutions and organizations have been contributing to the process, and there is a directory that lists them.
- ***Technical and managerial training*** according to the interests and capacities of the adolescents. **Result:** This was prepared and added to the action plan in force. This proposal encompasses three principal areas: a) human counseling and vocational training; b) vocational-business training; c) training in specific interest areas.
- ***Vocational training courses created and started.*** Two seminars. **Result:** the first of the two seminars provided for in the bridge program was given, and the other was expected to be organized to be delivered on August 30th and 31st.
- ***Systematic dissemination of the action program*** in the relevant entities. **Result:** This has not been done yet since the report of the bridge program is still under discussion. It needs to be carried out in the first days of September.
- What has been developed so far constitutes the basis for the monitoring system: A database with data on 110 adolescents, with the information specified in item 3.2 above, including mechanisms and actors for the monitoring system.
- The project does not include the awareness-raising component explicitly, so this is not stated as one of its goals. Nevertheless, the coordination effected with the officer of the Directorate of Social Security of the MTSS and the Regional Office of Labor Inspection (where the project's offices are located) has made it possible to participate in awareness-raising and prevention activities in order to motivate compliance with the existing legislation. Alliances have been created with *Radio Cultural* of Turrialba and the magazine *Turrialba Hoy*; information about the eradication of child labor is still being sent to these media sources, but no further information is available at the moment.

3.3. Investment vs. outcomes: A reasonable cost-benefit ratio (3.4.)

Chart No.3 summarizes the data of the promised investment to be made throughout the life span of the project. The total amount of funding to be invested from the various sources is US\$1,527,027. In general, 29% of this amount corresponds to the funds invested from other sources that are expected to be transferred to the project. The remaining 71% is being contributed by IPEC.

These figures show that most of the entries from partners are found in Guatemala, where the Peace Scholarships program contributes 56% of the total amount of the resources assigned to the project. The other contributions represent between 28% and 12%.

The administrative costs vary greatly from one action program to another. The lowest overhead is found in Guatemala (21%), justified to a great extent by economies of scale of the project. The total amount of the budget assigned to this country represents 3.03 times the amount assigned to the Dominican Republic, which is the country with the second highest budget.

Nicaragua and Costa Rica have the highest administrative costs (69% and 59%, respectively). However, what really stands out is the low administrative costs of the Dominican Republic, because this is a project with a total number of 2,738 direct and indirect beneficiaries, but with a load of only 11% of the total cost.

The direct investment-total cost ratio reflects only the part that directly reaches the beneficiaries, and this is calculated as the difference between the total cost and the administrative costs, or overhead. The problem for the purposes of comparison is that although the accounts in the budget are the same, the expense items that do not reach direct beneficiaries in form of direct support are captured as administrative expenses. In this sense, it may be stated that the information about the administrative expenses should be very carefully interpreted.

Chart No.3**IPEC/PROYECTO ERRADICACIÓN DEL TRABAJO INFANTIL EN LA AGRICULTURA (Segunda Fase)
CALCULO DE LOS BENEFICIOS E INVERSIONES REALIZADAS**

	Monto Total US\$	Aporte local/ Costo total	Costo Adm./ Costo total	Inv. Direct/ CostoTotal	Costo Total/ Benef.Totales	Inversión Dir/ Benef.Direct
Guatemala	892,601	0.56	0.21	0.79	194.04	175.21
San Marcos (Pastoral)	15,000	0	1.00	0	N.A.	N.A.
San Marcos (FUNRURAL)	877,601	0,56	0.20	0.8	269.20	175.52
República Dominicana	294,384	0.28	0.11	0.89	107.52	154.12
Visión Mundial (Azua)	161,589	0.09	0.08	0.92	115.42	114.36
ADESJO (Sn José Ocoa)	132,795	0.52	0.15	0.85	232.16	282.19
Nicaragua	236,517	0.20	0.69	0.31	49.31	67.89
Chontales (Diócesis)	79,160	0.13	0.74	0.26	73.30	19.06
Chontales (UNAG)	157,357	0.24	0.67	0.33	32.53	48.08
Costa Rica	103,525	0.12	0.59	0.41	134.45	103.53
Turrialba (ACSOL)	16,200	0.00	1.00	0	N.A.	N.A.
Turrialba (CEFEMINA)	87,325	0.14	0.51	0.49	113.41	104.36
Total recursos invertidos	1,527,027	0.29	0.29	0.71	130.08	150.79

Source: Own elaboration based on data from project and Action Programmes

Guatemala and the Dominican Republic have the highest ratios of direct investment (79% and 89%, respectively) and almost duplicate that of the next country down on the list.

The average total cost per beneficiary²⁵ is US\$130.08, taking into account a total of 12,805 direct and indirect beneficiaries. At the country level, Guatemala has the highest costs, but it includes the subsidy for the Peace Scholarships, which amounts to US\$114 per beneficiary for the full three school years that the project will continue to last.

The cost per beneficiary in the Dominican Republic is US\$107.52; the project in San José de Ocoa includes an important investment amount designated to benefit the production alternatives component.

In Nicaragua, the cost per beneficiary is the lowest, since the action plan of UNAG indicates that they are supervising and monitoring 3,657 cases in addition to the 1,180 new cases. This means that the average cost is US\$49.31 for both direct and indirect beneficiaries.

Finally, Costa Rica shows the highest average cost per beneficiary (US\$134.45), a figure which is mostly justified by non-economies of scale taking into account the low number of total beneficiaries (almost a fourth of the next country in line, which is the Dominican Republic) and because part of the funds (US\$ 16.200) had been wasted; this was due to the failure of the ACSOL bridge program.

²⁵ Including other sources of funding, such the local contributions.

In conclusion, it may be stated that the variability in the cost-beneficiary ratio, whether direct or indirect, is due to conditions relating to scale, as well as differences in the products included in the Action Plans, which in turn originate different production functions. The differences are also attributable to the price levels in each of the economies considered. This does not allow for an opinion to be issued about whether the differences are reasonable or not, other than what has just been stated. What is clear is that taking into consideration the duration of the program in Guatemala and Nicaragua, the cost per beneficiary is quite low given the benefits received by the target population in two years.

The revision of the project's budget from the point of view of IPEC/ILO provides additional useful information in order to be able to determine the cost of the resource allotment mechanism, given the production function selected for the implementation of the project. This situation is shown in Chart No. 4. The information from the last budget liquidation report of the project reveals the amount of resources committed to date for the project's implementation, as well as how much is funding is still available so as to be able to make modifications that expand the transfer of resources to the target population.

Chart No.4

OIT/IPEC: PROYECTO AGRICULTURA COMERCIAL EN AMÉRICA CENTRAL
PRESUPUESTO POR OBJETIVOS Y RESULTADOS
Cifras en US\$

Rubro por objetivo	2004	2005	2006	Total	%
1. Gastos Administ. y Asist. Técn.	452,100	475,800	251,600	1,179,500	39.31
Objetivo 1: Mov. Actores para combatir el TI	131,300	76,200	17,700	225,200	7.51
Resultado 1.1: Cap. y senib. Institucional	32,600	31,700	6,000	70,300	
Resultado 1.2: Sociedad Sensibilizada	83,700	40,900	10,500	135,100	
Resultado 1.3 Modelos para RyP de TI	15,000	3,600	1,200	19,800	
Objetivo 2: Mecanismos para Cump.Leyes	180,100	111,400	20,700	312,200	10.41
Resultado 2.1. Propuestas de Legislación	30,000	0	0	30,000	
Resultado 2.2. Inspectores de Trabajo Capacitados	17,100	8,000		25,100	
Resultado 2.3. Actores inform y capac manejo riesgos	89,700	59,700	10,000	159,400	
Resultado 2.4. SMTI operando en áreas rurales	19,300	10,700	10,700	40,700	
Resultado 2.5. Uso de sistemas de Certificación TI	24,000	33,000	0	57,000	
Objetivo 3: NNA retirados y prevenidos	459,950	410,000	0	869,950	29.00
Resultado 3.1. Calidad y acceso Educ mejorados	66,500	75,000	0	141,500	
Resultado 3.2. Padres y Madres sensibilizados y org.	93,450	70,000	0	163,450	
Resultado 3.3. Familias que incrementan su ingreso	300,000	265,000	0	565,000	
2. Total costos Directos	771,350	597,600	38,400	1,407,350	46.91
3. Sub-total (1+2)	1,223,450	1,073,400	290,000	2,586,850	86.22
4. Costos adicionales de Apoyo	159,049	139,542	37,700	336,291	11.21
5. Total Costos de Apoyo (3+4)	1,382,499	1,212,942	327,700	2,923,141	97.43
6. Otras provisiones	3,000	60,648	13,385	77,033	2.57
7. GRAN TOTAL DEL PROYECTO	1,385,499	1,273,590	341,085	3,000,174	100.00

Fuente: IPEC/OIT

The total budget assigned to the project is US\$3.0 million, of which 39.31% is assigned to administrative expenses and technical assistance. The total amount of direct costs (direct investment) represents 46.91%, which is used to comply with three basic objectives: to support the raising of awareness and mobilization on the child labor issue (7.51%); to support compliance with the legislation (10.41%), and to provide support so as to ensure working children's rescue, as well as their enrollment and ongoing attendance in school (29%). In addition, 13.78% is aimed at covering "additional support costs" of ILO/Geneva, with a reserve for unexpected expenses.

A preliminary approximation of the use that has been given to this budget is obtained by combining the data of what has been used and committed for the bridge programs and the Action Plans, which amounts to about US\$867,466. This data is calculated as the difference between the amount in column 1 of Chart No.3 above (US\$1,527,027) minus the amount of the contributions in money and kind of the bridge programs and actions plans (US\$644,561). If the total amount in line 2 of Chart No. 4 (Total Direct Cost) is US\$1,407,350), the balance seems to be US\$524,884 (the balance not committed in the direct investment line entry).

It is said that the balance "seems to be this" because other direct costs are not taken into account that correspond to activities carried out of the sphere of influence of the bridge programs and Action Plans. In this sense, it should be considered that the activities detailed in Chart No. No. 5 have an assigned budget of US\$527,300²⁶, an amount which has not been deducted from the aforementioned balance. These actions which are as yet to be implemented are distributed to meet the three main objectives of the project. The unimplemented level amounts to 30.7%, 95%, and 16.3% for objectives 1, 2, and 3, respectively.

Some of the actions not yet started may be implemented in the months to come. Yet many of them have been delayed, and will probably require some adjustment being made to the implementation schedule in order to allow them be extended at the end of the project. The project's schedule evidences a delay of up to several months in some activities. From the conversations with the CTA, it may be concluded that the delays in objective (2) could be covered with two more months adding to the 33 months originally conceived for the project's period.

On the other hand, by August of this year several budget entries that had been sub-implemented, and others related to activities that are no longer necessary to carry out, had been identified. Chart No. 5 shows in the last column that these entries amount to US\$267,741.

These entries include savings from the following: a) the administrative expenses component (US\$117,833], b) activities which are not going to be carried out by the project (US\$89,260), and c) the reserves to cover cost increases (US\$60,248).

²⁶ This data differs from the data calculated on the base of the budget of the Action Programs in about US\$3 thousand. For a more accurate approximation, it is necessary to carry out a more detailed review at the budget-line level, something done during this evaluation as it takes much more effort.

If it is assumed that the total budget will be distributed uniformly during the 33 months of implementation of the project, the average amount of monthly expenses would be US\$90,914. This means that with the expected surplus, it would be possible to extend the project 2.96 months after the date in the PRODOC. If the sub-implementation alluded to is considered (which represents 8.9% of the total), it may be stated that the average monthly expenses for the project would amount to US\$82,810. This would give a margin to extend the project for 3.23 months after the expected closing date.

Obviously, this estimate needs to be studied in detail once the basic administrative costs per country and the administrative costs for the General Directorate for a project extension are determined. These two costs would have to be deducted from the amount mentioned above, a figure which is apparently available.

Chart No.5

OIT/IPEC: PROYECTO AGRICULTURA COMERCIAL EN AMÉRICA CENTRAL
ESTIMACIÓN DE SUBJECUCIONES PRESUPUESTARIAS POR OBJETIVOS Y RESULTADOS
Cifras en US\$

Rubro por objetivo	Total	%	Pendiente de Ejec.	Ahorro y Subjecuc.
1. Gastos Administ. y Asist. Técn.	1,179,500	39.31	N.A.	
Subjecución en Gastos Administrativos (1)				117,833
Objetivo 1: Mov. Actores para combatir el TI	225,200	7.51	89,300	
Resultado 1.1: Cap. y senib. Institucional	70,300		52,000	
Resultado 1.2: Sociedad Sensibilizada	135,100		17,500	
Resultado 1.3 Modelos para RyP de TI	19,800		19,800	
Objetivo 2: Mecanismos para Cump.Leyes	312,200	10.41	296,500	
Resultado 2.1. Propuestas de Legislación	30,000		30,000	
Resultado 2.2. Inspectores de Trabajo Capacitados	25,100		25,100	
Resultado 2.3. Actores inform y capac manejo riesgos	159,400		159,400	
Resultado 2.4. SMTI operando en áreas rurales	40,700		25,000	
Resultado 2.5. Uso de sistemas de Certificación TI	57,000		57,000	
Objetivo 3: NNA retirados y prevenidos	869,950	29.00	141,500	
Resultado 3.1. Calidad y acceso Educ mejorados	141,500		141,500	
Resultado 3.2. Padres y Madres sensibilizados y org.	163,450			
Resultado 3.3. Familias que incrementan su ingreso	565,000			
Otros renglones donde se prevé subjec. presup.(2)				89,260
2. Total costos Directos	1,407,350	46.91		
3. Sub-total (1+2)	2,586,850	86.22		
4. Costos adicionales de Apoyo	336,291	11.21		
5. Total Costos de Apoyo (3+4)	2,923,141	97.43		
6. Otras provisiones (3)	77,033	2.57		60,648
7. GRAN TOTAL DEL PROYECTO	3,000,174	100.00	527,300	267,741

Notas:

- Correponde a: US\$39.860 de la BL 11.00(gastos ATP)+ US\$17.973, BL17(Of. De Prog.)+US\$24.000,BL13(Asist.Administ) + US\$36.000,BL13 (Viajes)= US\$117,833
- (BL32=US\$76,760)+(BL52=US\$12,500)=US\$89,260 (Talleres y Publicaciones respectivamente.
- Otras provisiones, BL57: US\$60,648.

3.4. Unexpected outcomes (3.5)

In Guatemala,

Positive:

- A higher response level than expected in the contributions of the governmental institutions and other cooperation agencies, all of which has improved the quality of the services provided by the program.
- Greater external pressure than anticipated from the countries that purchase agricultural products from Guatemala, which has encouraged business people to become interested in solving the issues of child labor.
- The decision of the provincial directorate to expand the active education coverage throughout the province; this could be viewed as somewhat negative since it generates pressures on the project regarding the demand on it to contribute materials and to train the teachers -- beyond the expectations of the subprogram.

Negative:

- Parents' and children's awareness and subsequent actions lead to the family income becoming insufficient, especially when they have to support several school-aged children actively attending classes. The training requirements of the production options are higher than expected.

In the Dominican Republic,

No unexpected outcomes are envisioned.

In Nicaragua,

- It was believed that the effects of the Action Plans would have national repercussions that would then be used as models for the development of other communities. This has not happened, as this effect has almost been nonexistent.
- It was not expected that the church diocese would use its network of Delegates to multiply the efforts of the awareness campaigns. This has significantly increased the strength of the message, as it is linked to the church.

In Costa Rica,

Unexpected positive outcomes:

- One hundred percent of the direct beneficiaries have ended up with an operational productive business.
- The administration of the platform is being taken up by other actors, and may continue operating beyond the life of the project.

Unexpected negative outcomes:

Given the small area of influence of the action plan, multiplier effects are not expected, nor have they been identified.

IV. SUSTAINABILITY

4.1. Specific measures already initiated (4.1)

As mentioned in the previous pages, the second phase of the project has had the most presence in Guatemala and Nicaragua, as it started in those countries in July 2004. In contrast, activities in the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica just began in July and August of 2005.

This situation makes it necessary to pinpoint the specific measures which favor sustainability, because they are the result of the activities of an Action Plan that is in the middle of its implementation. In the latter two cases, the efforts are focused on the starting activities of the plan. In the first two (Guatemala and Nicaragua), the efforts are focused on assuring the complete achievement of the goals and the continuity of the effort after the project ends.

A general revision of the implementation schedule of the project and the Action Plans evidences that in most cases, the activities will end well into 2006, with commitments yet to be met throughout that year, as in the case of Guatemala where the scholarships will be delivered during the entire school year. This situation manifests that the Action Plans were designed more in accordance with the administrative requirements rather than taking into account the benefits provided at the convenience of the beneficiaries.

This situation deserves attention in order to reconsider an expansion through bridge programs in order to at least guarantee the continuity of the basic activities of the action programs up to the end of the 2006 school year. Once the basic support of the project ends, the effort made during the whole year could be reversed, thus causing -- in the middle of the school year -- a massive desertion.

The specific measures identified so far do not guarantee this continuity.

In Guatemala,

Specific measures toward sustainability:

- Involve other cooperation agencies and governmental institutions: specifically, coordinate with other projects such as INTERVIDA, Cáritas Diocesana, Montana Explorer, FODE, and Visión Mundial, and with the Dialog Table for the eradication of child labor.

- Analyze the possibilities for INTERVIDA to continue the project, since this organization has the needed resources for working on this particular issue, and for assisting the area for at least ten years, after the conclusion of IPEC's project.

In the Dominican Republic,

- No sustainability measures have been taken yet, as the program just started. However, there is a proposal from the universities to take charge of the homework and study rooms.

In Nicaragua,

- The main measures are aimed at having MECD assume the education component. A good part of this component is aimed at strengthening the base conditions which are needed in order to be able to provide services to the schools, that is, the scholarships, food, and follow-up. Although no specific actions have been taken, they are expected by the project's coordination and the implementing agency.
- Regarding the awareness-raising campaigns, it is not clear who would be in charge, but it is assumed that the church will continue this task for at least a while.

In Costa Rica,

- No specific measures have been taken or identified. It is believed that the implementing agency will make some arrangements during the implementation of Phase II so as to be able to monitor the adolescents who have started a business and to also keep the platform under the concept of "enterprise incubation."
- The second phase has not been closely related to the first because of the change of agency. There has been no continuation of the actions, and it may be stated that there was no transfer of experience in the specific field of sustainability strategies.

4.2. Good institutional commitment to sustainability, but conditioned by the financial capacity of the governments (4.2; 4.3)

Each of the participating countries' governments is willing to support the continuity of the actions for the eradication of child labor; they are all carrying out nationwide efforts to support the actions in each of the areas of influence of the project. These support efforts for the project bring about lessons learned for the institutions, some of which might be replicated in other areas.

Nevertheless, this commitment to continue the nationwide efforts does not mean that the project's actions will be continued in the same areas where it has already been implemented. Nor is there any guarantee that there will be enough resources in the national budgets to maintain the program's efforts at the level of the selected communities.

It is clear that the intervention scheme of the IPEC/ILO project has provided essential inputs for the target population in the selected areas, and that the awareness raised thus far has generated more demand for attention in those areas. Moreover, it is understood that demands imply more investment, that the task of keeping children in a condition of being removed from child labor and retained in the schools is a task that does not end until these children are considered “graduates” of the basic education system in each of the participating countries. In addition, to a great extent, the awareness-raising activities have made it possible for the parents of these children to expect them to attend school at least until the ninth grade.

In this sense, this evaluation has determined that in the near future, these children and their parents will be the necessary basis and condition for giving continuity to this process, but this will not be enough to make these children’s education sustainable. Each country has made its own effort, but sustainability depends on very particular factors in each region.

In Guatemala,

- The Ministry of Education (MEP) has incorporated at the provincial level the Active Rural School methodology and flexible grade passing and promotion system, which implies training the teachers in their application.
- The MEP has scheduled the incorporation of the scholarships within its long-term budget. This line entry or budget item is now part of an additional support program to schooling.
- The Dialog Table has installed an office for working children in order to be able to coordinate the efforts related to the eradication of child labor at the provincial level, as well as to support the actions to protect working children.

In the Dominican Republic,

- At the time of the visit, no particular commitments were identified.
- The CDN and related public institutions are highly motivated to carry out work for the eradication of child labor. The national efforts extend beyond the project. The issue of the eradication of child labor is among the ten strategic axes of the five-year plan of the current administration.

In Nicaragua,

- There is no evidence of any particular commitment.
- The project does not seem to be contributing to an institutional strengthening beyond the frontiers of the area of Chontales. Instead the idea is for this strengthening to reach the nation as a projection or extension of the efforts that are being made at the national level, while taking advantage of the infrastructure already developed in the area.

In Costa Rica,

- The only institutional commitment is that which was made at the beginning of the project by the MTSS through its Social Security Directorate. There have been no other efforts as yet because the program is just beginning.
- It may not be said that the project has contributed to the strengthening of public institutions. On the contrary, the project has used the efforts and infrastructure of these institutions. In its second phase, its contribution has been focused on the area of Turrialba, with little impact made nationwide.

4.3. *The sustainability of the monitoring system depends on the continuity of the actions*
(4.4)

The fate of the monitoring system is tied to the possibility of finding a substitute to undertake the project activities in the area, and is also tied to the intervention capacities of the agencies. To the extent that there is a possibility for this substitution, the efforts which are made in order to monitor the activities of the project, to maintain the withdrawn or prevented target population in the same condition, and to measure the project's impact will make it necessary to maintain the monitoring activities.

The simple design of these systems, coupled with the possibility of enhancing them with marginal efforts as part of the routine of the field activities, will make it possible to maintain them with relative ease, provided that there is some degree of intervention of the target population.

In Guatemala,

- A commitment to continue the nationwide efforts is still not clear because there is no budget to incorporate and support the work of the deputy mayors. The monitoring actions have been taking place through coordinating efforts with the participation of the project's technicians, parents, community leaders, school principals, and teachers.
- It is expected that the deputy mayors will coordinate and take over the project technicians' activities. However, it has been stated that these activities not only place demands on the deputy mayors' available time, but also require more resources for them to move around and comply with the needed tasks.
- The periodic control option based on the enrollment records that are updated at the end of each semester and at the conclusion of the school year is the statistical data kept by the MEP, but this is insufficient as it lacks the early alert or warning system, as well as the detailed record characteristics of a monitoring system which are needed in order to be able to carry out follow-up on the children involved in the program.

- There is the possibility of integrating the effort of the Dialog Table by relating the various entities so as to create an alternative that incorporates resources for this monitoring, but this aspect has not yet been structured.
- However, the most plausible option is that which is related to putting the continuity of the project in the hands of INTERVIDA, the organization that has the resources and a temporary action plan on the horizon in the area that can last more than ten years after the end of this project.

In the Dominican Republic,

- A fundamental problem in the Dominican Republic is the quality of the statistical data obtained. Not even the information about the population census is reliable. The Secretariat of Education has its own records for each school, and these records make it possible to get information about student enrollment, retention, promotion, and desertion at each level. The data are calculated per school semester. However, the consultant had no access to these records to verify the quality of the information.
- The project's monitoring system had not identified a replacement. The teachers could contribute to the system if they acted individually, but since they belong to a labor union, the objectivity of the information might be questioned.
- Visión Mundial and ADESJO have the needed means and capacity to get additional resources for an additional phase of this kind of intervention. In the case of ADESJO, the situation is clearer because after the current IPEC/ILO project, this association has other intervention projects that will be working in the same area and benefiting the same population. In this sense, maintaining the monitoring system seems relatively easy and inexpensive.

In Nicaragua,

- Not much is likely to be done with the monitoring system after the end of the project or the duration of the provincial, municipal, or area committees. This is because the schools have their own means of checking on attendance, grade repetition, and dropping out, and there is a great possibility that they will substitute their systems for the others, despite the fact that the project's monitoring mechanisms are more accurate, and allow for the specific control of desertion and working children.
- The extension of these monitoring systems will depend on the possibility of keeping the committees in operation, to be guided by the MECD leadership and given the support of the church diocese. To a great extent, this depends on whether UNAG will continue with the project's activities with funds from sources other than the IPEC/ILO Project.

In Costa Rica,

- The likelihood for the monitoring system mechanisms to survive are very low considering that they are being designed exclusively for the project and for a very small segment of the population, if this sector is compared with the total number of inhabitants in the project's area. The probability would be higher if CEFEMINA could expand the project with funds from other cooperating agencies, because once the monitoring is in the hands of an active agency in the area, the system would be easy to maintain.
- The efforts being made by the MTSS do not have a monitoring system which is different than that of the project. The official statistics that are compiled and kept on student enrollment, ongoing attendance, absences, and grade passing in public schools, on the one hand, along with the partial statistics which are based on the official findings of the Department of Labor Inspection, on the other, offer few possibilities for replacing this system. An option would be for the Directorate of Social Security of the MTSS to appoint staff members who would be placed in charge of handling the monitoring system from San José, and for this staff to visit the area regularly.

V. CONCLUSIONS

1. Design and Relevance:

1. *The project design* for Phase II has been well conceived. The background and rationale use well the diagnosis based on the lessons learned, the local situation and conditions of child labor in the regions, and the response of the institutions.
2. The intervention approach and strategy are compatible with this diagnosis, the initial conditions, and the outcomes of Phase I. It was noticed that the model is logical and the strategy adequate as so is the integration of instruments with the sense of opportunity of the strategy.
3. Its conception *incorporated most of the recommendations* derived from the evaluation of Phase I to adjust the fewer resources to the implementation of the components with the most effectiveness on the attention of the target population;
4. The designs at the project level such as the Action Plans are flexible and adapted to the needs of the new actors and fund resources while attending to the needs of the target population.
5. *The logical framework elements and strategic planning were included* since the beginning in the design of the Action Plans. Thus, the use of these tools for the development of the Action Plans and the incorporation of strategic thinking in the program development were encouraged.

6. ***Regarding the gender approach***, since it was not included as a cross-sectional axis in the PRODOC, it is believed that it did not play an explicit role in any of the designs. It is also acknowledged that it is not easy to make explicit from an outcomes point of view an issued that can be considered during the processes, but whose manifestations are more qualitative than quantitative.
7. The gender approach as a cross-sectional axis was noticeable in the implementation during the visits to the communities where the Action Programs are being implemented. It was also noticeable in the data gathering instruments that fed the monitoring system of the target population.
8. ***Regarding the suitability of the assumptions and hypotheses***, it may be pointed out that in general, the experience of Phase I of the project allowed for the incorporation of adequate assumptions in the Actions Plans.
9. Overall these assumptions are related to the political will of the governments and the expressions in terms of priorities given to the issue by each government and provincial institution.
10. ***Regarding the suitability of the selection of the communities, geographic areas, and the feasibility of the beneficiary goals***, the evaluation concluded that in all countries it was correct to continue working with the communities that participated in Phase I of the Project or neighboring communities. This is due to the fact that the outcomes of an intervention process such as those derived from Phase I transcend and to the fact that with fewer resources, it would not be justified to incur into the high costs of entering a new community, gaining the trust and motivation of the families to participate.
11. ***With regards to the feasibility of the goals***, it may be affirmed that there was sufficient information to adapt the goals to the new budget of the action programs. The different component allow sorting the beneficiaries into two levels: a) direct beneficiaries and b) indirect beneficiaries.
12. ***Regarding the relationship between the Project and the national strategies for the eradication of child labor, the reduction of poverty, the protection of children, and education***, it was verified almost without exception that the project is being implementd in coordination with other entities related to the protection of children in areas where many families live under the line of poverty and where the problem of child labor is severe.
13. All cases evidence that the issue of the eradication of child labor has been given high priority at the governmental level. After the ratification of Conventions 182 and 138, the governments have been promoting complementary legislation and creating the necessary infrastructure based on the national commissions that coordinate efforts to protect children and eradicate child labor.

14. It was possible to identify that the project's and programs' design had taken into account the needs of the target population, but that some of these needs were not covered by the project's design. However, somehow this has been solved through the supplementary activities and funds added through the integration of more actors to the project's development.
15. Precisely, these were eliminated or redefined as a result of the incorporation of the recommendations of the evaluation of Phase I: the assistance component related with health, the provision of goods, materials, uniforms.
16. There are clearly two components that despite being considered as basic needs of the population have not been adequately attended to: a) the health services which should be not included given their high cost and the possibility of their being covered by the ministries or secretariats of health and b) the production options that are not receiving the level of consideration required in the national plans.

2. Project performance

2.a) Vertical coordination among the agencies and the general directorate of the project

17. Beginning of the second phase before the first one had finished affected the coordination activities among the implementing agencies and the general directorate of the project to a great extent. The basic coordinating team was significantly reduced as the activities of the first phase ended, but their closing overlapped the preparation of the second stage affecting the revision and approval of the Action Plans.
18. According to the evaluation, the monitoring tools for the outcomes would be useful and effective, as any other monitoring tool. However, this does not mean that they are efficient.
19. It is the consultant's opinion that the monitoring forms of the Action Programs are very rigid. Their intention of integrating everything in a single form with pre-prepared answers turns the interpretation of results into a tedious task of screening information to distinguish between what should and should not be analyzed.
20. The technical progress reports prepared by the implementing agencies are effective on the evaluator's opinion and are structured following the monitoring forms.
21. Regarding the efficiency of the administrative systems to support the implementation and coordination of the project, it is believed that the situation has improved as the second phase advances, in the past, the partial review of some situations that took place in Phase I evidences great coordination difficulties due to the large number of actors and entities involved (IPEC/Costa Rica; the region's ILO, and ILO/Geneva).

22. The approval process of the projects has a complex and costly mechanism of vertical interaction of eleven steps, including: a) in San José the coordinators at the agency level interact with the CTA, the Program Officer, and the Project Coordinators (one per country); b) At the IPEC/Geneva level, Backstopping Officer and Procurement offices get involved; and c) in some cases, a technical support team from Lima, Peru, also participates, though it is not clear why.
23. This process has been simplified for the last Action Plans, but according to the interviews, the steps before the approval were complicated and delayed the start of the Action Plans.
24. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that working with IPEC/ILO implicitly entails this production function; as a result; it is difficult to imagine from the evaluator's perspective a simpler and faster process, especially now that the worst part is over, and that today the coordination with IPEC Geneva requires less revisions.
25. Regarding the efficacy of the coordination mechanism, the dissemination of information and the quality of the beneficiaries' monitoring, it may be stated that in all countries there is excellent communication between the project coordination and the agencies. There is also good circulation of information among the staff at the national and regional levels regional and between the project staff and the staff of the implementing agencies. The same is true for the beneficiaries' follow-up.

2.b) Horizontal interaction between the project and the representatives of the government, trade unions, and employers

26. The governments have assumed a high-level commitment that started with the ratification of ILO Conventions 182 and 138, which have complemented the regulations to implement them at the national level. They have undertaken great institutional coordination efforts from the CDN involving not only the institutions for children's protection, but also those that provide basic health and education services, especially the latter. All the governments of the participating countries have managed to include within their strategic planning and immediate Action Plans the issue of eradicating of child labor, which has been given the highest priority
27. The contribution of the trade unions started with the negotiations for the ratification of ILO Conventions. This effort has concentrated on their mobilization in favor of the eradication of child labor by raising awareness among their affiliates, including family members.
28. The participation and level of commitment of employers has also been a decisive factor for the project's success. Their degree of involvement varies according to the country, but they have been close to the project's implementation. This contrast is mainly due to two reasons: their conviction of the economic benefits derived from the exploitation of child labor, and the costs of being discredited and accused

internationally of exploiting child labor as well as understanding the opportunity cost of child labor in terms of the sacrifice of children's formation.

29. Regarding the materialization of the financial commitments of the government and other organizations and their influence on the project implementation, The revision of the six instances of the action programs in the four participating countries where the project is being implemented indicates there is adequate and timely compliance with the financial commitments made on the part of the other actors. This situation, far from delaying the development of the Action Plans in all the cases, has actually produced better performance and turned into specific contributions that evidence the actors' level of commitment.
30. One of the most important factors for the success and continuity of the project through the bridge programs and the Action Plans has been the solvency and degree of commitment of the implementing agencies.
31. The project's organization has included in its action scheme a mechanism by which parents and children join the awareness-raising activities to establish a relationship in which to provide feedback and to enable them to become empowered. These schemes contribute toward preventing that the efforts made thus far not be abandoned, as well as to keep both groups working toward the goal of permanently withdrawing working children, or preventing youngsters from engaging in dangerous child labor.
32. In Guatemala and Nicaragua, these efforts take place in a broader context as part of the overall provincial organization. In the Dominican Republic, in San José de Ocoa, such means of participation are related to the work structure of ADESJO. Parents' and children's coordination and participation in Azua (Dominican Republic) is through a mechanism similar to the school boards with parents and the neighborhood committees. Since the project in Turrialba (Costa Rica) involves adolescents, coordination there is more closely related to an ad hoc organization created by the project which has strong ties to the institutions and to the NGOs that work in the area
33. In some cases, the NGOs involved in Phase I of the Project continued working during the second phase. For Guatemala, Costa Rica, and the Dominican Republic, one agency was changed in each case. Although no specific selection criteria were used to rate the agencies, it may be stated that the agency replacement was accomplished well. The lessons learned allowed for a quick and accurate decision to be made
34. Through its Action Plans and the implementing agencies, the project has been able to effectively transfer the terms that constitute the paradigm for the eradication of child labor. These terms have been transferred to appropriate institutions, as well as to local communities and the project beneficiaries.

35. As a result of the work done in both stages, it was possible to have institutions adopt some of the design, evaluation, and monitoring tools used in the project. These tools are very useful for the interaction between the project implementers and the community and among the agencies, the community, and the institutions.
36. Maybe the aspect where the least transfer of knowledge has occurred is the cooperation among agencies and among Action Plans. Several outstanding aspects have been identified that should be shared at a horizontal level.

3. Achievements of the project

37. The expected outcomes in terms of direct beneficiaries—4,400—is feasible progress level and achievement of the action plans in the four countries. To date, all the projects have identified the totality of expected beneficiaries in the action programs.
38. Similarly, the other expected outcomes regarding the indirect beneficiaries—number of families benefited with production options, people made aware and informed, and the follow-up or monitoring of the children of phase I in Guatemala and Nicaragua will also be met in what remains of the project.
39. The main outcomes to date guarantee compliance with the goals at the end of the project and a series of products in each country that may be useful to replicate in the others.
40. Nevertheless, what is valid for the action programs does not apply to the central management of the project. That is, *some of the activities in the PRODOC were not included in the Action Plans or have been delayed considerably*. These activities include mainly those related to objective (2) which deals with the support to the improvement of the legislation about child labor in the countries. This is mostly due to the effect of the overlap between the stages which affected the utilization of human resources. The recovery of time now requires extending the project for at least two months after the original closing date²⁷
41. In the individual revision of the achievements made so far it was noticed that the two that are most advanced have been held according to plan and there are no risks that may cause delays during the rest of the project's implementation.
42. With regards to the investment-outcomes ratio, it is concluded that the variability in the cost-beneficiary ratio is due to scale conditions, differences in the products of each action plan which bring about different production options, and the price levels in each of the economies considered. This situation does not allow stating if these differences are reasonable.

²⁷ This deadline refers only to the activities related to objective 2 that have been delayed. The convenience of extending the end date to five or six months is justified because of other additional reasons that have already been mentioned before.

43. Nevertheless, what is clear is that the longest terms occurs in Guatemala and Nicaragua, where the amounts per beneficiaries are very low if all the benefits the target population has received in two years.

4. Sustainability of the project

44. A general revision of the implementation schedule of the project and the Action Plans evidences that in most cases, the activities will end well into 2006, with commitments yet to be met throughout that year, as in the case of Guatemala where the scholarships will be delivered during the entire school year. This situation manifests that the Action Plans were designed more in accordance with the administrative requirements rather than taking into account the benefits provided at the convenience of the beneficiaries.
45. Each of the governments is willing to support the continuity of the actions to eradicate child labor. However, this commitment to continue the national efforts does not mean they will continue doing so in the areas where the project has been implemented. There is no guarantee either that the resources allocated for this purpose in the national budgets will be used to sustain the effort in the selected communities.
46. In addition, the evaluation acknowledges that children's and parents' motivation is necessary to continue this process, but it is not enough to turn children's formation into a sustainable activity.
47. The fate of the monitoring system is tied to the possibility of finding a substitute to undertake the project activities in the area, and is also tied to the intervention capacities of the agencies. As long as there is a possibility for this substitution, then the efforts which are made in order to follow-up on the activities of the project, to maintain the withdrawn or prevented target population in the same condition, and to measure the project's impact will all ensure the maintenance of the monitoring activities.
48. The simple design of these systems, coupled with the possibility of enhancing them with marginal efforts as part of the routine of the field activities carried out, will make it possible to maintain them with relative ease, provided that there is some degree of intervention of the target population.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Design and Relevance:

- Gender approach: it is advisable to take advantage of the experience derived from the study about child labor in agriculture to recommend using this approach in what is left of the project implementation time and in future interventions, not just as cross-thematic axis, but also more explicitly as part of the project goals.

- Include in the progress reports of the action plans those factors that might contribute to integrating this approach in order to reduce the invisibility of the effort made in this sense. In identifying the target population and during the design of the action plans, information was gathered to work in the gender dimension, but this information has not transcended the design or the pertinent periodic reports.
- In those cases in which the same agency has been in charge, it is advisable to devote additional resources to systematize the experience and lessons learned for future projects. For this purpose, the General Directorate should provide funds and develop an overall methodology to guide this effort for the project as a whole, including both phase.
- Regarding the targets, it is necessary to explicitly indicate in reports about the targets met and population attended what monitoring activities derive from the first phase. This is especially important for the action plans of Guatemala and Nicaragua, where the follow-up and monitoring of these cases implies resources for more than five thousand children.
- Although because of the delay in scheduling the activities related to Objective (2) it might be considered to cut the budget and to end the project on the day set for that purpose, it is not recommended to take these actions, especially when dealing with the support to the enactment of legislation for the eradication of child labor. These activities are necessary to reinforce Objective (1) about mobilization and awareness, contribute to the strengthening of the institutions, and secure the sustainability efforts of the project actions.
- It is recommended to support the regional initiatives that promote the creation of “dialog tables” or interinstitutional coordinating commissions in order for them to assume the coordination efforts to eradicate child labor after the end of the Project. It is important to contribute to making the works of these institutions more effective and, if possible, they should be encouraged to assume the sustainability of the child-labor monitoring systems.
- Strengthen as much as possible the coordination with other programs to create synergies that allow caring for the target population. This may be done using the unused resources from some activities (see section 2.3 of the report). In particular, this may include the design and implementation of “productive options” and vocational training for working adolescents. They could also be used to facilitate the integration of the health component into the education component at the level of governmental institutions.

2. Performance of the project

2.a) Vertical coordination between agencies and the project general directorate

- Simplify the monitoring forms of the action plans of the project. It would be more efficient to use a form for the progress reports prepared by the agencies. For a better

control of the activities, the forms should be numbered according to the order in which they appear in the summary outline.

- Given the stage the project's implementation is in, it is advisable to request ILO/IPEC/Geneva to review the mechanism to approve Action Plans and bridge programs to allow introducing a reform or expansion of these instruments in an easier manner. This also means clarifying the CTA level of decision-making power and responsibility for the project, once the PRODOC is approved.
- It is also advisable for the agencies and the General Directorate to contribute to overcoming the hurdles in the process to modify or extend a project and to review its budget. Efforts should be made to start the approval process earlier taking into account the critical dates in order to guarantee the continuity of the project activities.

2.b) Horizontal integration between the project and the representatives from the government, trade unions, and employers

- The CTA, the program officers, and Project coordinators should devote more time and effort to strengthening their relationship with the institutional representatives and to keep them informed about the project's progress, including matters not strictly under their competence. This should be used to monitor the actions of appropriation and support for the project's sustainability.
- Inter-agency cooperation may contribute to increasing significantly the impact of some of the activities of the action programs. Outstanding aspects of the projects have been identified in all countries that could be replicated. For this purpose, the central management should promote horizontal cooperation. Specific examples of this type of cooperation are described below:
 - Cooperation between Guatemala and Nicaragua to support the development of the methodology of Active Rural Schools in Nicaragua: lessons learned and model. Nicaragua is now attempting to begin utilizing a similar model, whereas Guatemala has been using this model since 2004.
 - Cooperation between Nicaragua and all other participating countries in order to be able to disseminate the mechanisms used by the Pastoral church group to spread the message promoting the eradication of child labor by using the church radio station and the church sermons, as well as meetings of the "Holy Word Delegates."
 - Cooperation between the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica so as to be able to develop a system of small greenhouses that would be especially aimed at improving the beneficiary families' income, with particular attention being paid to fostering the participation of female heads of households.
 - Cooperation between Guatemala and all other countries in order to transfer the model for the strategic establishment and operation of the official Comité

Departamental de Apoyo a la Niñez [Provincial Committee to Aid and Support Children].

- Cooperation between the Dominican Republic and Guatemala so as to be able to transfer the knowledge gained about the organization and methodology of the “homework rooms.” Although this methodology is used more often in cities than in rural areas, such as in San Marcos, there are communities other than those involved in the project that could benefit from this model in order to review subjects, bring children up to level, and keep at-risk children learning in the classrooms during vacation periods --- rather than working.

3. Achievements of the project

Although there is no doubt about the achievement of the quantitative goals related to the attention of withdrawn or prevented children (direct beneficiaries, their families, etc.), the delay justifies an extension of the project that could be used to:

- a) Make up for lost time to implement the activities that are behind and that are mostly related to Objective (2) which deals with the improvement of the legislation for the eradication of child labor.
- b) Match the end of the project with the end of the school year in Guatemala and the Dominican Republic, at least. It would be useful for the program in the Dominican Republic to be extended until the first quarter of 2006.
- c) Undertake systematization and horizontal cooperation activities that would allow expanding the impact of some of the components on the target population.
- d) An expansion would imply a revision of the budget and the reallocation of some resources that will be sub-implemented and that amount to almost 9% of the budget.
- e) For future intervention projects, it is recommended to match the closing date of the direct intervention activities with the dates of the main activities of the target population. In this particular case, the intervention in favor of children at risk of working in hazardous jobs in Agriculture should end at the same time as the school year, which is the main activity of this population.

4. Sustainability

- Request the national Project coordinators to include in their agendas activities to guarantee that a substituting agency will take over the intervention, thus assuring the sustainability of the project’s impact on the target population and the local institutions.
- Encourage the national coordination and agencies to undertake actions to strengthen the ties with the institutions to support the actions to eradicate child labor and to identify the actors that could continue the task and monitoring actions.

- An effort should be made for the monitoring system not to be useful only to the Project, but to other actions in favor of children. Thus, the possibilities of having the coordinating and support commission pro childhood assume this task increase. This requires an additional coordinating effort that has not yet started.

ANNEX

Conversion table of the original questions in the terms of reference to the grouped topics

Groups and presentation order		Original questions	
1.	Design and Relevance	1.	Design and Relevance
1.1.	<i>Relevance of the Project Design (1.1. to 1.6)</i>	1.1.	Was the design of Phase II adequate, realistic, and flexible?
		1.2.	How were the recommendations of the final evaluation of Phase I used in the design?
		1.3	Is it possible to verify a good use of the Logical Framework Approach in the design?
		1.4	How was the gender approach used in the design of the document of Phase II?
		1.5	Were the assumptions/hypotheses of the design adequate?
		1.6	How useful was the Strategic Program Impact Framework (SPIF) to design a realistic and adequate strategy?
1.2.	<i>Suitability of the selection of the specific communities and geographic areas, and the feasibility of the beneficiary goals (1.7- 1.8)</i>	1.7	Are the quantitative and qualitative goals set for the indicators realistic?
		1.8	Was the decision to continue working in the geographic areas included in Phase I suitable?
1.3.	<i>The project's relation with the national strategies for child-labor eradication, poverty reduction, child protection and education (1.9)</i>	1.9	How are the project's efforts integrated with the national strategies for child-labor eradication, poverty reduction, child protection and education?
1.4.	<i>Project's design and the needs of the target population: (1.10;1.11)</i>	1.10	How have the needs of the beneficiaries considered in the design of the Action Programs?
		1.11	Are there key needs in the target population that have not been covered by the project's design? If so, how could it be possible to meet these needs in the remaining time for the implementation of the project or what resources are available to do so?
2.	Project Performance	2	Project implementation
2.a)	Interaction among the implementing agencies and the project administration	2.a.	Interaction among the implementing agencies and the project administration
2.1.	Effective scheduling, stage overlap, and efficacy of the monitoring tools and outcomes (2.1; 2.2.; and 2.3)	2.1.	Have the schedules been complied with? If there are deviations, what seem to be the causes and consequences and how has this been handled by the project administration?
		2.2.	Are the monitoring tools and outcomes (short-term and long-term) of the project useful?

		2.3.	Analyze the impact of the overlap of Phases I and II on the overall performance of the project, taking into consideration the load of the team responsible, the necessary coordination of the work plans and monitoring tasks, etc. Review the synergies generated and the benefits in terms of scale economies and resource management.
2.2.	Efficiency of the administrative systems to support implementation and coordination (2.4)	2.4	Evaluate the efficiency of the administrative systems that support the implementation of the activities, especially the approval mechanisms of the Action Programs, resource disbursement, administrative coordination, and overall communication between the project offices, IPEC's sub-regional coordination in Costa Rica, IPEC/Geneva, and the donor.
2.3.	Efficacy of the coordination mechanism, information dissemination, and quality of the beneficiary follow-up (2.5, 2.6)	2.5	Analyze the efficacy of the coordination mechanism, information dissemination between the regional and national staff and between the project's staff and the staff of the implementing agencies of the Action Programs.
		2.6	Analyze the mode and quality of children's (direct beneficiaries) follow-up promoted by the project.
2.b)	Interaction between the project and the representatives of the government, trade unions, and employers	2.b	Work of the government agencies, trade unions, and employers' organizations and other related organizations
2.4.	Commitment levels from the government, trade unions, and employers (2.7-2.8)	2.7	Evaluate the governmental commitment and that of the workers' and employers' organizations with the project, including a detailed analysis of the government participation activities and the social interlocutors at the regional, national, and local levels.
		2.8	Is there any type of commitment from producers or employers in the sector with the project?
2.5.	Materialization of the financial commitments of the government and other organizations and their influence on in the Project implementation (2.9-2.10-2.11)	2.9	Have the financial commitments (in cash or in kind) of the government and other organizations related to the project realized? How has this influenced its implementation and effects?
		2.10	Analyze the participation of non-governmental organizations, communities, and base organizations in the implementation of the various project activities.

		2.11	Review and evaluate the coordination and synergies with other initiatives (IPEC's or those of other international and national organization, governmental and non-governmental) for childhood protection and related to child labor in the region. Analyze especially if the project has been able to mobilize additional resources to fight against child labor paying attention to the procedures set for their identification and cooperation with other initiatives.
2.6	Wide and decisive participation of the community and NGOs in the project (2.12-2.14)	2.12	Analyze the activities, participation, and role of local management structures (national or local committees), including a revision of the frequency of their meetings, their impact on the project outcomes, and the protagonist role of the main actors involved.
		2.14	Analyze the level of participation of the children, their parents, and the community leaders in the implementation of the Action Programs.
2.7	Adequate performance of the implementing agencies and use of the selection criteria (2.13)	2.13	Analyze the performance of the implementing agencies of the Action Programs and the selection criteria (when the agencies did not participate in Phase I).
2.8.	Adequate transfer of knowledge from the project to the implementing agencies regarding the design, monitoring, evaluation, and paradigm for the eradication of child labor (2.15)	2.15	Evaluate the training in the design, monitoring and evaluation as well as important matters related to the eradication of child labor in agriculture offered by the project to the implementing agencies of the Action Programs. Especially verify if there is a common understanding of the key terms and definitions used by the Project to define the withdrawal and prevention of child labor.
3.	Project Achievements	3.	Project Achievements
3.1.	Possibility of achieving the project's objectives and goals (3.1.)	3.1.	Will it be possible to achieve the immediate objectives of the project with the resources and in the times set? What are the alternative actions to maximize the impact of the project activities in the time left for its implementation?
3.2.	The main outcomes to date guarantee compliance with the goals by the end of the project and the maturity of a series of noticeable products in each country which would be useful to replicate in others (3.2; 3.2.1.; 3.2.2. and 3.2.3. and 3.3.)	3.2.	What have the main outcomes been in the main areas of action at the regional and national levels? More specifically:
		3.2.1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate the monitoring systems of child labor in place, including their design and progress.

		3.2.2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate the progress to strengthen the capacities and promotion of effective systems to facilitate compliance with the existing regulations and legislation, including an analysis of the outcomes of the various training seminars and workshops.
		3.2.3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate the progress in the raising of awareness based on the actions promoted by the project, taking into account the implementation of the activities and campaigns.
		3.3.	Review the implementation and preliminary achievements of the Action Programs active in the four countries, according to their own objectives and within the framework of the regional objectives of the program. Identify lesson from the implementation of the Action Programs, especially those dealing with the provision of services to the beneficiaries, the generation of income for the families, the awareness of the community, and the monitoring of child labor and analyze the replication possibilities. Does the project (through the Action Programs) provide adequate services to the beneficiaries?
3.3.	Investment vs. outcomes: A reasonable cost-benefit ratio (3.4.)	3.4.	Do the outcome justify the investment? If possible, analyze the expected cost per beneficiary in the Action Programs?
3.4	Unexpected outcomes (3.5.)	3.5.	Identify the unexpected outcomes (positive and negative) and multiplying effects of the project by reviewing those already mentioned in the final evaluation and adding others deemed relevant.
	4. Sustainability	4.	Sustainability
4.1.	Specific measures already initiated (4.1)	4.1.	What specific measures have already been initiated during Phase II for the local appropriation of the project and the sustainability of its benefits? How are the sustainability strategies set in Phase I going?
4.2.	Good institutional commitment to sustainability but conditioned by the financial capacity of the governments (4.2; 4.3)	4.2.	What institutional commitments (financial and otherwise) exist or are in process of approval to guarantee the continuity of the benefits generated? Analyze the project outcomes regarding the mobilization of resources to continue the national efforts against child labor, including those from the private sector.
		4.3.	Analyze the extent of the efforts and institutional strengthening strategies of public and non-governmental organizations that may contribute to the sustainability of the action against dangerous child labor in agriculture.

4.3	The sustainability of the monitoring system dependent on the continuity of the actions (4.4)	4.4.	What are the sustainability perspectives of the child-labor monitoring systems in operation?
-----	--	------	--