

FUNDED BY THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

# Independent Midterm Evaluation of the *Entérate* (LEARN) Project: Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor Through Education in Nicaragua

American Institutes for Research  
Cooperative Agreement Number: IL-17759-08-75-K



2010

**ICF** MACRO  
an ICF International Company

This page intentionally left blank.

FUNDED BY THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

**Independent Midterm Evaluation  
of the *Entérate* (LEARN) Project:  
Combating the Worst Forms of  
Child Labor Through Education  
in Nicaragua**

American Institutes for Research  
Cooperative Agreement Number: IL-17759-08-75-K

2010

This page intentionally left blank.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

---

This report describes in detail the midterm evaluation, conducted during April 2010, the Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor through Education in Nicaragua *Entérate* (LEARN) Project. The report was prepared by ICF Macro, according to agreements specified in its contract with the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT). The evaluation of the *Entérate* Project in Nicaragua was conducted and documented by Julia Hasbún Martínez, an independent evaluator in collaboration with USDOL/OCFT staff; the *Entérate* project team; and stakeholders in Nicaragua. ICF Macro would like to express sincere thanks to all parties involved in this evaluation: the independent evaluator, the American Institutes of Research and its partners, and USDOL.



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

## RECOGNITION

The evaluator wishes to express her gratitude to the following persons:

- Mary Anne Anderson and Jamie Timmons, of ICF Macro, for their pertinent collaboration and permanent support during the evaluation.
- Kathryn Chinnock and Maureen Jaffe of the U.S. Department of Labor for their support in the evaluation process.
- The personnel in general, of the *Entérate* Project—María Ivette Fonseca, Yvonne Martin, José Ramón Laguna, Sergio Watson, Karen Crespo, Aldo Rocha and last, but not least, Patricia Chávez and Jorge (GPS) Roa for their excellent coordination and unconditional support to carry out this evaluation.
- Mr. Markus Broer, of the American Institutes for Research, for facilitating the work in this evaluation.
- Staff of *Club Infantil*, INPRHU-SOMOTO, and *La Cuculmecca* for their openness and dedication in guiding, explaining, and answering all questions concerning this evaluation.

- All government officials interviewed for the valuable information provided.
- All persons interviewed in the communities we visited including beneficiaries, parents, teachers, school principals, personnel of coffee plantations, and other private individuals who pertinently shared with the evaluator their insight and opinions and made it possible to achieve the objectives of this midterm evaluation.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>LIST OF ACRONYMS</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>I OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>III GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED PROJECT</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>IV RELEVANCE</b>	<b>9</b>
4.1 Findings	9
4.2 Good Practices	16
<b>V EFFECTIVENESS</b>	<b>21</b>
5.1 Findings	21
5.2 Lessons Learned and Good Practices	27
<b>VI EFFICIENCY</b>	<b>29</b>
6.1 Findings	29
6.2 Good Practices	30
<b>VII IMPACT</b>	<b>33</b>
7.1 Findings	33
7.2 Good Practices	35
<b>VIII SUSTAINABILITY</b>	<b>37</b>
8.1 Findings	37
8.2 Good Practices	38
<b>IX CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>39</b>
9.1 Key Recommendations for the Project	39
9.2 Other Recommendations	40

## ANNEXES

Annex A: Guide 1 and 2—Project Personnel and Partners

Annex B: Guide 3a—ILO-IPEC Personnel

Annex C: Guide 3b—Local Ministry Staff

Annex D: Guide 4—Local Personnel

Annex E: Guide 5—Community Leaders

Annex F: Guide 6—Beneficiaries’ Parents

Annex G: Guide 7—Beneficiary Children of the Project

Annex H: Guide 8—Adolescent Beneficiaries and Former Beneficiaries of the Project

Annex I: Terms of Reference

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

---

CEAR	<i>Centros de Educación Alternativa Rural</i> (Centers for Alternative Rural Education)
CNEPTI	<i>Comisión Nacional para la Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil y la Protección de Adolescentes Trabajadores</i> (National Commission for the Eradication of Child Labor)
ENTIA	<i>Encuesta Nacional de Trabajo Infantil</i> (National Survey on Child Labor, 2005)
ILO-IPEC	International Labour Organization's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
INATEC	<i>Instituto Nacional Tecnológico</i> (National Technological Institute)
INPRHU-SOMOTO	<i>Instituto de Promoción Humana Infantil de Somoto</i> (Institute of Human Promotion of Somoto)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIFAN	<i>Ministerio de la Familia, Adolescentes y Niñez</i> (Ministry of the Family, Adolescents and Childhood)
MINED	<i>Ministerio de Educación</i> (Ministry of Education)
MITRAB	<i>Ministerio del Trabajo</i> (Ministry of Labor)
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
NNA	<i>Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes</i> (Children and Adolescents)
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USDOL	U.S. Department of Labor

This page intentionally left blank.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

---

## BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) has on multiple occasions supported the fight for the eradication of child labor in Nicaragua. Through a competitive bid process sponsored by USDOL, the American Institutes for Research, and the Association for Education and Communication of *La Cuculmeca* and the *Instituto de Promoción Humana Infantil de Somoto* (Institute of Human Promotion of Somoto [INPRHU-SOMOTO]) in 2008 obtained a cooperation agreement for a term of three years and two months, for implementation of an Education Initiative Project aimed at withdrawing and preventing children and adolescents from exploitive child labor. Thus, the *Entérate* Project, discussed in this midterm evaluation was developed. The life of the project set forth in the agreement is from September 2008 to November 2011. The agreement includes a midterm evaluation in 2010.

The project objectives would be achieved through educational strategies. To this effect, the project consists of different programs that seek to prioritize the education of children and youth. Each member, *Club Infantil*, INPRHU-SOMOTO, and *La Cuculmeca* have developed different educational strategies according to the needs and profiles of the communities where they intervene. While the activities of the members may be different, they all share the same objectives of the project including:

- Remove or prevent *Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes* (children and adolescents [NNAs]) from getting involved in exploitive child labor through the provision of direct education and training activities.
- Strengthen child labor policies, national institutions, and educational systems to reduce enrollment in child labor and increase school attendance among NNAs involved in child labor.
- Increase awareness about the importance of education for NNAs and encourage key actors to improve and expand educational infrastructures.
- Support research work and the supply of data on child labor.
- Ensure long-term sustainability of the efforts.
- Encourage relations between public and private sectors.
- Assist and Promote social responsibility and codes of conduct in the eradication of child labor.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The qualitative techniques used were 33 focus group sessions (each with more than six participants) comprising parents, beneficiaries, and project personnel. Twenty-four group interviews were conducted (each with more than one and less than six participants) with teachers from the project, community leaders, beneficiaries, and parents. Also, 25 individual interviews were conducted with key actors. A total of 17 schools were visited in Madriz and Jinotega during a two-week period. The evaluator interviewed approximately 350 persons.

## **RESULTS**

All observations during this evaluation indicate that the objectives and goals set by the project will be achieved without much difficulty. The withdrawal and prevention of 10,045 beneficiaries is a feasible task under the current conditions. However, it is recommended that the numeric goals of *La Cuculmeca*, namely its intervention in 90 schools, be revised, as there are currently 75 schools being served by the project. What needs to be determined is whether the current conditions make the numeric goal of the project achievable without compromising the quality of the project services.

Communities, especially among the parents of beneficiaries, perceived the awareness-raising efforts of the project as very valuable toward changing attitudes and harmful behaviors in the development of their children. It is recommended that the monthly meetings usually held with the parents continue. The more contacts and spaces for reflection available to parents, the fewer obstacles there are for eradication of exploitive child labor.

The geographical intervention areas of the project have been described by all key actors interviewed as ideal for the fight against exploitive child labor. Furthermore, they are validated by the different studies that identify them as a priority in the subject area. However, children in these areas must walk great distances to attend educational centers. Therefore, it is recommended that areas with current public transportation systems set up contracted transport modes for beneficiaries living far away or for those who must incur risk walking along solitary areas. Beneficiaries' families would be given a small allowance to offset the cost of transportation. In areas such as *El Cuje*, where there is no public transportation, the project should try to obtain or pay the services of a vehicle operator that would provide a safe transportation system in these areas.

The selection of beneficiaries is properly carried out, as observed in the databases and during field trips. While beneficiaries in the project meet the requirements for participation, there are other NNAs who have not been involved with the project and who meet the prerequisites as outlined in the project design. Therefore, it is recommended that the project undertake an exercise for future interventions, with this or with another project once the current project is completed after three years, which may shed some light on the number of places that would be required to offer greater coverage.

The different educational strategies implemented by *Club Infantil*, INPRHU-SOMOTO, and *La Cuculmeca* seem to be effective and appropriate for the cultural and socio-economic context of

the communities. The differences between partners are positive, in that the project will not implement only one strategy and try to accommodate it in all contexts. Differences between partners give the project a valuable heterogeneity. Notwithstanding, it is recommended that the project have clear roles regarding the common strategic elements needed to achieve goals that are identical for everyone (lowest common denominator). It is also suggested that the partners carry a sort of exchange program of experiences with their field personnel, where, for instance, an educator from *La Cuculmeca* may stay in INPRHU-SOMOTO territory for some days and vice versa. This helps enrich the vision of the partners.

The project's monitoring and evaluation system is very good, as well as its data analysis tasks. It is suggested that the project decide whether each partner will assume an analysis system (not the databases) of their own or if the project must contribute to the training required for the partners to analyze data in SPSS. The project could also use the syntax component of the SPSS, which allows data analysis when needed without the person being skilled as a specialist in the area or in the program.

Sustainability of the project is feasible, but must be worked toward in a more focused manner. It is recommended that an action or work plan with deadlines be developed, and add numeric goals (especially regarding the number of sponsors for schools in the Performance Monitoring Plan) with which the project can easily comply, so that at any time the progress of sustainability plans may be known.

This page intentionally left blank.

# I OBJECTIVES

---

The primary objective of the midterm evaluation was to review and analyze actions implemented by the project, as established by the cooperative agreement entered into with the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL). The evaluation had to identify aspects concerning the relevance, effectiveness, efficacy, sustainability and possible apparent impact indicators. Furthermore, it had to analyze whether the project would be able to reach its final goals and provide the recommendations required for further achievements.

The midterm evaluation places the project at an advantage to identify areas that need improvement or transformation and the requisite follow-up as needed, without having to wait for the final evaluation. Thus, the project is further enriched.

As with all evaluations, the midterm evaluation is based on the project objectives, as follows:

- Withdraw or prevent *Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes* (Children and Adolescents [NNA]) from getting involved in exploitive child labor through the provision of direct education and training activities.
- Strengthen child labor policies, national institutions, and educational systems to reduce enrollment in child labor and increase school attendance among NNAs involved in child labor.
- Increase awareness about the importance of education among NNAs and encourage key actors to improve and expand educational infrastructure.
- Support research work and the supply of data on child labor.
- Ensure long-term sustainability of the efforts.
- Encourage relations between the public and private sectors.
- Assist and Promote social responsibility and codes of conduct in the eradication of child labor.

This page intentionally left blank.

## II METHODOLOGY

---

The first stage in this methodology consisted of the identification and preparation of key questions to be answered in the evaluation. This task was performed by ICF Macro, an institution hired by USDOL to manage and recruit personnel to execute evaluations of child labor elimination projects.

Once the services of the evaluator were contracted, based on a specific and clear description of tasks to be performed, the evaluator designed a grid of questions based on the terms of reference and identified the best participants for each question. The work guides annexed to this document were thus created.

The project management prepared a schedule of visits and interviews for the different actors and venues under the supervision of ICF Macro. The *Entérate* Project submitted to the evaluator a list of possible geographical areas to visit, from which the evaluator made a selection. Thereafter, the management of the *Entérate* Project, with further knowledge of the territory, expanded the coverage of visits and submitted a proposal to ICF Macro and the evaluator that was accepted and fulfilled.

Once the necessary documents were gathered, the evaluator examined them and prepared a summary of the most relevant aspects. Among the documents requested were statistics pertinent to the project and reports, as well as material produced by it. This stage was previous to the physical visit of the evaluator and lasted up to the moment of writing this report.

Based on the timeline prepared and accurately coordinated by the *Entérate* Project, all the visits were performed and all the qualitative techniques concerning fieldwork were applied within a two-week working period.

The qualitative techniques used were as follows:

- Focus group sessions with groups of six persons or more. There were 33 sessions distributed as follows: 10 with parents of beneficiaries, 5 with project personnel, 1 with community authorities, 1 with partner beneficiaries who are being trained in communication, and 16 with beneficiaries of the project.
- Group interviews in cases where more than one and less than six persons were interviewed. Twenty-four interviews were performed as follows: 6 with parents of beneficiaries, 16 with school staff, 1 with a communications team made up of beneficiaries, and 1 with community authorities.
- Individual interviews with 4 members of the central staff of the project, 4 with government officials, 10 with coordinators or educators of the partners of the project, 6 with community promoters involved in the project, and one with diplomatic personnel, for a total of 25 individual interviews.

- Seventeen schools were visited in a similar number of communities, in the departments of Madriz and Jinotega.
- It is calculated that approximately 350 persons furnished information for this evaluation.

Interviews were recorded using a digital recorder, with prior authorization of the interviewed persons. All recorded interviews were with the evaluator's promise to maintain the confidentiality of the information and the identity of the interviewees. Accordingly, this report does not include the names of the persons interviewed. What is more important for this evaluation is the content of the information furnished.

Once all the required information was obtained, it was qualitatively analyzed using a triangulation technique to answer the evaluative questions.

### III GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED PROJECT

---

On multiple occasions, USDOL has supported the fight for the eradication of child labor in Nicaragua. Through a competitive bidding process sponsored by USDOL, the American Institutes for Research, the Association for Education and Communication of *La Cuculmeca*, and the *Instituto de Promoción Humana Infantil de Somoto* (Institute of Human Promotion of Somoto [INPRHU-SOMOTO]) obtained in 2008 a cooperative agreement for a term of three years and two months, implementation of an Education Initiative Project aimed at withdrawing and preventing children and adolescents from exploitive child labor. Thus, the *Entérate* Project, discussed in this midterm evaluation, was created. The life of the project set forth in the agreement is from October 2008 to November 2011. The agreement included a midterm evaluation in 2010.

After the project's inception, another partner, *Club Infantil*, joined the project, as the other partners considered that its contribution to the project could be very valuable. The *Entérate* Project covers the areas of Jinotega and Madriz and conducts small interventions in Managua.

While each partner has its own methodologies and specific strategies, common objectives and goals seek to reduce the prevalence of exploitive child labor among NNAs. The three partners use educational strategies to that end.

Since 1990, *La Cuculmeca* promotes the sustainable use of the environment and the involvement and participation of the communities to reach their own development. It contributes three types of educational programs for the withdrawal of NNAs from exploitive work to the *Entérate* Project including:

- **Basic Rural Education Program of *La Cuculmeca*:** This program functions with working NNAs who are outside the school system in the rural districts of Jinotega. In this way, these out-of-school working NNAs are recovered and prepared to be inserted in schools. They receive tutoring in formal education, where they are often taught to read and write, brought to their respective educational level and are offered support. Moreover, they participate in activities of interest (sports, handicrafts, etc.); they are also given information about their rights that will ensure their access to and retention in school. Current work involves schools in 41 communities.
- **The Technical Modules of *La Cuculmeca*:** They are aimed at working with adolescents in rural areas, with minimum fourth grade primary school education. Here they are offered education related to the economic activity prevailing in the community, which in most cases is agriculture. There are modules that teach sustainable management of farms, ecological agriculture, basic grain crops, and rural community tourism. Each module consists of 16 sessions. With the knowledge they acquire and the practical work they perform once a week in neighboring farms, adolescents gradually consolidate their performance and acquire new skills that will help them in their working life. This program operates in 75 rural communities in Jinotega.

- **Escuelas en las Plantaciones de Café/Schools in Coffee Plantations:** The third program implemented by *La Cuculmea* involves the decisive support of the plantation owners who provide the physical infrastructure for schools on the plantations, in some cases pay the salaries of the teachers (who are approved by the *Ministerio de Educación* (Ministry of Education [MINED])), and provide educational material and other benefits. The beneficiaries of this type of school are the NNAs of fixed workers of the plantations and neighboring areas, as well as the NNAs who travel with their parents during harvest periods. The plantation schools prevent them from working during the harvesting season. *La Cuculmea* currently has 25 schools of this type on plantations and 8 more in farming associations.

*La Cuculmea* is also engaged in a process to raise awareness, in training and offering information to parents, teachers, and community leaders focusing on children's rights.

INPRHU-SOMOTO, the oldest nongovernmental organization (NGO) in Nicaragua, implements projects that benefit working NNAs since 1993 in the Department of *Madriz*. It contributes three types of programs to the *Entérate* Project: *Centros de Educación Alternativa Rural* (The Centers for Alternative Rural Education [CEAR]), the Coverage and Quality Basic Education Program, and the Advocacy Program.

**The Centers for Alternative Rural Education** for adolescents (12 to 18 years old and with sixth grade primary school) consist of a basic secondary education cycle with basic ecological agriculture technical education. Beneficiaries of this program are working adolescents who attend classes at these centers for 10 months (the entire school year) for three years. Beneficiaries receive a basic technical degree recognized by MINED and *Instituto Nacional Tecnológico* (the National Technological Institute [INATEC]).

**The Coverage and Quality Basic Education Program** of the INPRHU-SOMOTO intervenes on behalf of NNAs who have been removed from exploitive child labor or who are at risk of entering it. The program offers students the opportunity to strengthen their education and it prevents them from failing and quitting school. Both teachers and students who complete their secondary education are involved in this program offering assistance to beneficiaries. INPRHU-SOMOTO provides training for teachers in addition to teaching and recreational materials.

**The Advocacy Program** of INPRHU-SOMOTO works together with the **Coverage and Quality Basic Education Program**, which focuses on schooling and the development of self-esteem among NNAs who are at risk of quitting or who have quit school. They are offered information about their rights and are encouraged to continue their school education. The program also addresses prevention of sexual exploitation and trafficking with at-risk NNAs, it also helps building citizenship among beneficiaries.

*Club Infantil* has been implementing actions for the benefit of working NNAs since 1995. It offers programs for the protection of the rights of NNAs and support for their education and vocational training.

**The Rights Based Education Program** of *Club Infantil* benefits working or at-risk NNAs in the urban area of the districts of Jinotega and San Sebastián de Yali. It offers strengthening of school education to its beneficiaries, to encourage and achieve better school performance among students. These activities are offered at the same school, with personnel from the *Club Infantil* or in their own operation centers. This program includes artistic expression courses and workshops offered at the *Club Infantil* centers, such as dancing and painting. Furthermore, it offers other educational actions such as the **Formal Transition Program** and even personal defense classes for young girls, which although not funded by the project, may contribute valuable results.

**The Vocational Training Program** operates with adolescents who work in urban markets where *Club Infantil* intervenes. Its objective is to train 90 adolescents in the fields of beauty and drawing to enable them to gain access to the labor market upon completion of their formal education.

This page intentionally left blank.

## IV RELEVANCE

---

### 4.1 FINDINGS

#### 4.1.1 Analysis of Project Assumptions and Strategies

The project used as a baseline the results obtained by *Encuesta Nacional de Trabajo Infantil* (the National Survey on Child Labor [ENTIA]) in 2005. In that year, the survey identified that there were 238,827 NNAs from 5 to 17 years of age in Nicaragua actively working, which yields a percentage of 13.2%. Out of those NNAs who work, 36% were under 14 years of age, which is illegal according to Section 84 of the Constitution.

In turn, the 2005 Homes Survey for Measurement of Living Standards reported an 18.4% illiteracy rate in Nicaragua among the 10-year-old and older population and an illiteracy rate of 29% in the rural area. Mandatory education in Nicaragua covers completion of primary education. Therefore, according to the law, parents are not obligated to send their children to school after they have completed primary school education.

Based on these findings, the *Entérate* Project has worked with these realistic assumptions since the work began. The objectives and goals of the project continue to be relevant at midterm. It was observed that the project is withdrawing and preventing NNAs from exploitive child labor despite obstacles found, as identified below.

The fundamental strategy used by the project is education. NNAs who have quit or who have never attended school are recovered and at the same time, beneficiaries are assisted to guarantee they do not abandon their studies as a result of learning problems, or because they enroll in jobs that induce them to quit school.

In many of the cases observed, the *Entérate* Project works with NNAs who are over-age for the school grades they are attending. The project also prepares beneficiaries so that they may access school through tutoring and it helps adolescents acquire the skills that will prepare them for the world of labor.

Interviewed beneficiaries reported that prior to the project they did not attend school or they had simply abandoned it to work in full-time jobs. In Jinotega, a 15-year-old adolescent reported:

*I worked with my father in the harvest from 7 am to 6 pm. That was the same shift my father had. I did not attend school and I did not like reading and writing very much. I joined the Project Entérate and now I go to school; and my father allows it because he was persuaded to let me study. On weekends I help my father, but I don't work every day any more. And at school I am doing fine.*

A 12-year old beneficiary said in turn:

*I used to work in the market place helping my mother. I did not go to school. I spent the whole day selling in the market. Now I'm going to school and I'm doing fine. Now, the most important thing for me is to study; and my mother agrees.*

Teaching personnel of MINED said in their interviews that with the intervention of the *Entérate* Project, school enrollments had increased significantly. They mentioned that the project locates NNAs who are not attending school and accompanies them in returning to school, consequently preventing them from quitting school and going back to full-time work.

#### **4.1.2 Adaptation of the Project Design to Achieve the Five Education Initiative Goals**

The design of the project seems to be adequate to achieve the five Education Initiative goals. They include—

1. Removing NNAs from exploitive child labor.
2. Preventing minors who are at risk from being involved in exploitive child labor. Through the project, the capacities of the partners and other institutions such as the public education infrastructure, have been strengthened and will continue on that path.
3. Raising the awareness of communities and the public in general through mass communication regarding the risk of child labor and the importance of children's education.
4. Creation and implementation of a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system with the proper parameters required by USDOL, whereby databases of the intervened beneficiaries are effectively developed and thoroughly analyzed in reports that detail all the relevant characteristics of the population with which it is working.
5. Monitoring beneficiaries with a system that includes community promoters who live and form part of the communities, to ensure regular follow-up. This ensures the gathering of reliable data regarding child labor in the intervention areas of the project.

Efforts have been engaged to achieve sustainability of the purposes and actions of the project. Nevertheless, these actions until now have not been methodical and effectively programmed, as will be explained later.

#### **4.1.3 Main Strategies of the Project**

The formal strategy of the *Entérate* Project is education, both at the formal education level and through alternative means, and to raise awareness among the population of the risks of child labor.

Different strategies, which were developed by each partner and through different qualities and actions, point in the same direction—toward the eradication of exploitive child labor. *La Cuculmecca* has the following three programs currently under implementation:

- **Rural Basic Education Program:** As already explained in the project description, this program operates with working NNAs who are not in the school system in rural *Jinotega*. Approximately 41 schools are working with this effective strategy. The program rescues

NNAs who are not attending school, prepares them for inclusion in the public school system without much complication, especially by teaching them to read and write and leveling them to their respective grade.

- **The Technical Modules:** They provide rural adolescents with the knowledge required for the economic activities prevailing in their community, so that their education adapts to the community context. During one of the visits, it was perceived that the community cooperates with this strategy and is closely involved. For instance, in Mancotal, it was observed that beneficiaries carried out their module's practical work in six small farms, privately owned by members of the community. The land owners loaned project beneficiaries the use of their land and livestock to practice the knowledge and skills acquired from the module teacher. The owners of these small farms not only loaned their land and goods, but they also taught the beneficiaries what they knew. Beneficiaries would rotate one month in each farm, practicing their acquired knowledge.
- Although **schools in the coffee plantations** provide a means for education, they are among the places with the greatest risk for exploitive child labor. Yet, it was observed that the kinds of schools visited at the coffee plantations showed evidence of high-quality education.

INPRHU-SOMOTO operates the Rural Alternative Education Program for adolescents, where it simultaneously offers them knowledge and practice in ecological agriculture (once a week) and formal secondary education classes (on a separate day of the week). CEARs visited have massive numbers of beneficiaries participating, and while many of them must walk hours to attend school, the demand increases every day. Consequently, INPRHU-SOMOTO is negotiating to secure larger premises in some areas. Despite all hardships, attendance is a good indicator of the interest of beneficiaries and their parents in the educational offerings.

INPRHU-SOMOTO also offers the Coverage and Quality Program to strengthen school learning, which seeks to prevent NNAs already withdrawn from their work or at risk, from quitting school. It is the same MINED teachers who offer this kind of support. In other words, the program is currently in the school and it has teachers already trained for such tasks.

The Advocacy Program of INPRHU-SOMOTO includes prevention against sexual exploitation and trafficking of NNAs at risk. It is the only program of the project that directly pursues that objective. Through spaces for reflection and stakeholders beneficiaries are encouraged to internalize and defend their rights.

*Club Infantil*, in turn, also offers different kinds of educational strategies. One of them is the Educational Rights and Support Program in the same schools where other programs exist or in their centers. To that end they have personnel hired on a full-time basis at the schools, who work every day with the beneficiaries of the project that need support or close follow-up because they are at risk of entering exploitive child labor. Project beneficiaries perceive the personnel of *Club Infantil* in a familiar way and as an integral part of their school. They offer them not only academic strengthening, but also a series of workshops that develop beneficiaries' artistic expressions. Dancing (included in the formal school curriculum in Nicaragua), drawing and

serigraphy are skills offered by the club, with well-trained teachers, who can assist with these tasks. During the visits, it was observed that many of the beneficiaries attending these centers benefit from these artistic skills by building their self-esteem and they demonstrate great satisfaction with the products they create. For example, a 10-year-old boy who was receiving academic strengthening in one of the centers stated: “Here they help me with all my school work. But what I like the most is to paint. We paint a lot. I come here every day to paint.” Daily attendance is not mandatory; however, massive numbers of beneficiaries participate at the centers.

Another educational strategy of *Club Infantil* is the Vocational Training Program with adolescents who used to work in urban markets where the Club intervenes. These adolescents are offered beauty-related courses (beneficiaries include both sexes, as beauty includes men’s hairdressing) and serigraphy. It was observed in one of the beauty centers that many people go to them to have their hair cut, dyed or styled, as the service is free of charge. Satisfaction with the service received from program beneficiaries is quite good. *Club Infantil* also works in the information and promotion of advocacy of rights.

#### **4.1.4 Identification of Main Obstacles or Barriers the Project Has Identified as Important in the Fight Against Child Labor in the Country**

Poverty in Nicaragua is severe. Persons interviewed pointed out that NNAs work because their families are in great need of all its members to contribute to the household. It was observed that many project beneficiaries continued maintain some level of work responsibility—for example, selling food products one or two hours a day. A mother shared her case, stating the following:

*I would like that my daughter did not have work at all. But what I earn is not enough to support the family. So my daughter sells nacatamales among the neighbors. In one hour she sells everything because we sell them to our neighbors. I prepare the nacatamales in the evenings or when I can and then I leave to go to work. If she did not sell them we would not have the extra money and would not be able to support ourselves.*

Some parents also reported that other parents in neighboring communities did not yet allow their children to go to school because their labor was needed to help purchase food for the family.

Another factor identified by the persons interviewed is that many dwellings are mononuclear. They are headed by a single person, which is frequently a single mother whose partner or the children’s father has abandoned them and refuses to have anything to do with them.

It was determined that the parents of beneficiaries of the project indicated, in most cases, that their children worked. That is, there is a cultural element that accepts child labor; they are not necessarily aware that they are exploiting their children and preventing their development. A father stated the following:

*I used to be an exploiting parent and I also worked when I was a child. I was doing what my father did to me. But I had not really thought that I was abusing my three children by*

*putting them to work with me. Since there was no school here, it did not worry me that my children did not study. Today I am aware that they must study so that they can do better than I did.*

Before the project, parents of the beneficiaries indicated that they were not aware that there were laws that forbid children who are less than 14 years of age to work. But this barrier is being faced successfully by the project. All parents interviewed had sufficient information about the risks of child labor. All the partners, some more than others, comply with the need to raise awareness among the parents regarding exploitive child labor. According to the parents, partners get together with the parents at least once a month and discuss different issues with them, always concerning child labor.

While beneficiaries of the project, both direct (children) and indirect (parents) are clearly aware that education is of utmost priority in the development of children, in persons interviewed in the visited communities indicated they knew there were families whose children were unable to study because they were forced to work by their parents. For example, the monitors and teachers of the partners reported that sometimes, when they visited those families, they were afraid they would be kicked out, as parents were stubbornly reluctant to let their children study.

Another barrier project staff encountered is the tradition of families assigning responsibilities such as house chores to children at an early age. On average, beneficiaries who were interviewed stated that they started to cook at home when they were seven years old. Some of the beneficiaries interviewed showed minor scars from burns they sustained while cooking at home. Male beneficiaries of some communities, meanwhile, reported that at that same age they had to burn the garbage using matches. These two activities are considered dangerous and inappropriate for children of that age. Furthermore, it was also observed that the eldest daughter or son had to take care of the younger children while the mother or parents worked. There was a case of a 15-year-old girl, a project interviewee, who could not finish her education because she was waiting for her 2-year-old brother to grow up and attend school. Then she could continue studying. This adolescent was taking care of her three brothers and her mother when she came back tired from work in the evenings. Other household responsibilities reported by beneficiaries and parents were carrying water and bringing firewood, in addition to home chores.

It was observed that there was a trend of assigning house chores more frequently to girls than boys. This affects gender equality and increases the possibility that women are ascribed to homemaking. This barrier is also attributed to a cultural element quite connected with male chauvinism and the devaluation of the female gender.

The long distances that beneficiaries sometimes walk to attend schools or centers constitute an obstacle. Some beneficiaries reported they had to walk three hours each way to go to school and often along solitary paths. Some female beneficiaries expressed their fear to walk along these solitary stretches. And in some communities, such as El Cuje, there is no public transportation. Having to walk long distances every day can be a factor that discourages beneficiaries from seeking education.

Key informants in this evaluation reported that in farming areas, particularly in coffee harvest areas, there are NNAs that sell *pepena* (remains from the coffee harvest) on their own and obtained some economic profit from doing this. The father of a beneficiary who was interviewed indicated that his son was involved in this activity and said to him: “I make more money than you.” The information received is that it is women who sell the *pepena* with the children. This practice is beyond the control of the parents of the project and the farmers, and it is a very harmful practice for the project.

#### **4.1.5 Cultural, Political and Economic Context of the Project and Its Relation with Other Initiatives**

The three partners of the project implement their activities differently, which in many ways helps and simplifies adapting the project design to fit in the different contexts in which it works. *La Cuculmeca*, for example, which works in rural farming areas, has strategies that include and involve the farms and schools in the coffee plantations. The other partners do not have this component. *Club Infantil* offers strategies to work in the local urban markets. INPRHU-SOMOTO has included taking care of school orchards in its strategy, which is an initiative of MINED.

There are other initiatives in Nicaragua, among all sectors, to fight against child labor. In the public sector, *Comisión Nacional para la Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil y la Protección de Adolescentes Trabajadores* (the National Commission for the Eradication of Child Labor [CNEPTI]) of the *Ministerio del Trabajo* (Ministry of Labor [MITRAB]) was created in 1997 as a venue where all social, economic, and political sectors are represented. The government serves as the general coordinator of efforts to fight child labor in the country. The MITRAB, meanwhile, has continued engaging efforts to measure child labor through surveys and it has also endorsed the International Labour Organization’s Conventions 182 and 138 among other agreements. The MINED has set out goals to offer wider coverage to working NNAs who are not attending school and to improve the quality of education for students.

ILO-IPEC, among the key endorsers of the conventions, also implements programs for the withdrawal of NNAs from exploitive work in 23 large farms and with the participation of worker’s unions.

The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and other organizations, such as the Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development and the Netherlands Development Cooperation, are working towards eradicating exploitive child labor as well.

The *Entérate* Project fits perfectly in these initiatives, since it has been working jointly with MINED, both pursuing the same objectives to offer wide educational coverage. Furthermore, the project uses in its programmed interventions, strategies closely related to the content of the official school curriculum. In the communities, especially at a municipal level, the connection between MINED and the *Entérate* Project is very close and valuable.

At a local school in which the project intervened, the principal was interviewed for this evaluation and shared the following testimony regarding how the project complements and supports public education in the country:

*They locate the kids who are not in school and go and visit them and talk to their parents. They persuade them to come or to return (if they have abandoned school). Our school enrollments are increasing. But not only do they bring the kids, the [Entérate] Project also helps insert them in the public program, by offering them support with their learning problems and, in many cases, teaching them how to read and write. It is a great help for us, since as it may be observed, we have the problem that in each classroom there may be up to three different grades, making it a multiple grade class, which is quite normal in our schools. The teachers cannot teach these kids adequately, so the project trains teachers or other personnel to recover these youngsters. They also follow up on attendance. If they fail to attend, monitors visit NNAs at their homes to inquire why they are not attending. They are in close touch with the parents, since we cannot, due to our work, go from house to house; however, they persuade them to approach the school and attend the meetings. So the project also brings parents and schools closer together.*

The project has also provided support to the CNEPTI in its actions and is part of the committee. The three partners are in contact with other donors in projects and in specific actions that benefit the *Entérate* Project. Nevertheless, there appeared to be little coordination by the project (not among the partners) to join efforts with other initiatives in the area, such as ILO and UNICEF, to work collectively to achieve common goals of eradicating child labor and ensuring children are fully educated.

Through *La Cuculmeca*, the project works with different cooperatives; however, it may be observed that there are also other associations, such as for example CISA, an association that purchases coffee directly from producers and promotes corporate social responsibility by working together with an NGO called American Nicaraguan Foundation. They serve approximately 6,300 school students and 18 schools at coffee plantations that they sponsor. These institutions have been approached, but there is no plan established so far for these organizations to collaborate.

At a particular level, in association with the *Padre Fabretto* Foundation and Beeman Productions, the *Entérate* Project has offered an audiovisual production and civic journalism course to some beneficiaries who were connected to garbage collection in La Chureca in Managua. Among the 24 beneficiaries of this initiative, some adolescents were removed from dangerous work such as garbage collection. However, most of them have been prevented from exploitive labor. These beneficiaries were selected from the Padre Fabretto Foundation, which works effectively in the prevention and withdrawal of NNAs in the dumpsite of La Chureca.

As a result of this training offered by the project in production of audiovisual media and civic journalism, the documentaries produced by the beneficiaries were broadcast on national television in May 2010. Those documentaries are part of the Metropolis Program, which is a worldwide program where youth communicate through self-produced documentaries on a certain topics—such as drugs and prostitution—as well as

lighter subjects. Until now, this group has not produced material about the project, although it is a positive step for the project's image.

#### **4.1.6 Analysis of the Selection Criteria of Geographical Areas Where the Project Operates**

The criteria used by the project to identify targeted working areas are based on the results of the 2005 ENTIA, which determines the geographical areas that pose greater risk for exploitive child labor among NNAs. Besides being one of the largest departments of Nicaragua, *Jinotega*, was also identified by the agricultural sector as a child labor area *par excellence*, given that it is one of the strongest coffee-growing regions in the country. Furthermore, Jinotega shows the highest school year repetition and desertion rates among 15-year-old adolescents. The other geographical area targeted by the project is Madriz, one of the poorest areas of Nicaragua. The selection criteria are valid and appropriate, and it was observed during the field trips that these areas were located in zones or strips of extreme poverty of the country, which increases the risk of the proliferation of exploitive child labor. In Madriz, as well, because of its closeness to the border with Honduras and the Pan American Highway, there is documentation of an increasing number of sexual exploitation and trafficking cases among NNAs, especially in San Lucas, a community intervened by INPRHU-SOMOTO.

When asking key actors interviewed about the suitability of the geographical areas intervened for the project, they all agreed that Jinotega and Madriz were two priority areas with respect to fighting exploitive child labor.

## **4.2 GOOD PRACTICES**

**The project partners** (*Club Infantil, La Cuculmecca*, and INPRHU-SOMOTO) are widely known in the communities where they intervene. Other projects with different donors have favored this rapport between NGOs and the communities, which they treat as “partners” and not beneficiaries. The scope of action of the project is wide and very demanding, especially if we consider the great distances that partners must cover to visit and monitor the often scattered communities. The accessible road structures to these communities in many cases are very hard; nevertheless, the partners of the project have not backed away or been discouraged from doing the programmed work where it is needed. The selection of geographical areas is respected based on need and not on accommodating criteria.

**The involvement of the community**, especially in the strategy of *La Cuculmecca* of the technical modules visited is very encouraging for the project. The community feels responsible for the educational activities carried out. Owners get involved with the programs offered in the modules, often acting as teachers for the beneficiaries of the project, in addition to offering their farms and livestock so that NNAs can practice. The capacity observed in *La Cuculmecca* to involve communities in the project is very valuable.

**The 25 schools in the coffee plantations of *La Cuculmecca*** are a model to be replicated throughout the country, which has a direct impact on the farming migration patterns of families. These schools help prevent minors in the plantations, neighbors and those arriving during the

harvesting season, from being forced to work. Schools are prepared during the harvest season to implement an educational bridge. During vacation, the temptation to put minors to work is greater, as they have no classes. These educational bridges allow the schools to offer vacation programs to prevent the presence of NNAs in the coffee furrows. The physical infrastructure of schools of this type that project staff visited point toward improved education venues for children. Furthermore, the involvement and interest of the management of the farms visited were obvious. The beneficiaries of the project in these schools visited showed greater ease compared with other schools visited.

A good practice observed is that **some farm owners hosting schools at the coffee plantations** do not to hire workers who appear to work alongside their children. The banning of minors in the harvest land prevents these parents from working there.

INPRHU-SOMOTO has achieved that in the community of San Lucas in *Madriz*, where the authorities meet every three months to discuss the different situations and possible solutions regarding child labor. Those authorities, who belong to several ministries and police forces, perceive INPRHU-SOMOTO as “a friendly hand” that enables permanent communication between key government actions and those of the private sector.

It is an excellent practice that the three partners of the project rely on mass media for their interventions. INPRHU-SOMOTO has the cooperation of *Radio Ecológica* in Somoto, which broadcasts simple messages about the risks of exploitive child labor. These messages (about six altogether) are created by groups of young people. *Club Infantil* has a radio station—*Radio Estéreo Libre*—and a television program, as explained earlier, as well as a group of communicators who create all the messages and audiovisual material. *La Cuculmeca* has paid to broadcast messages on local radio stations, which were created by *Club Infantil*'s group of communicators.

In its Coverage and Quality Program, INPRHU-SOMOTO has trained school teachers (which represent a sustainability element) so that they may offer an education tailored to the needs of the program's beneficiaries.

The classrooms of the schools intervened by INPRHU-SOMOTO are recognized because of their attractive decoration consisting of posters and other mobile paper decorations, with messages for students to analyze and discuss. Attractive classrooms are very important, considering that students attending these schools come from very poor homes, which may or may not be physically attractive venues. This strategy, however, helps beneficiaries perceive education as something attractive and beautiful.

An example of such decorations appears on page 18.



The School Orchard component implemented by INPRHU-SOMOTO through its Coverage and Quality Program of school interventions is a good practice. The School Orchard component is a strategy of MINED that INPRHU-SOMOTO embraces and acts upon. These school orchards, in most cases, are tended by the parents of the beneficiaries, which gets them further involved with the project. This component also aims at introducing vegetables in the beneficiaries' daily diet, which are normally not included. The enthusiasm for school orchards has caused parents and leaders to ask for assistance in creating family orchards for self-consumption.

A very good practice of *Club Infantil* is to offer legal services for single mothers to demand alimony rights from their children's father. To this effect, they have the assistance of an attorney-at-law, who guides and accompanies them in the process. This is important, as in most cases single mothers do not have the help of the father to care for their children whom they must support on their own—a condition that exacerbates their poverty. Demanding that the father takes responsibility, even if it is only economic, is a step that may prevent the mother from putting her children to work to supplement the family's income.

*Club Infantil* has a group of communicators (adolescents) who through news reports and messages make an impact through mass media. They have a one-hour television show on Saturdays and a radio show on Sundays. *Club Infantil* has a radio station of its own, called *Radio Estéreo Libre*, which frequently broadcasts exploitive child labor prevention messages and where young communicators may develop. This group of communicators prepared a documentary about exploitive child labor, called *San José de las Latas*, which has already won local awards

and, if included in other kinds of festivals, could have a great chance of winning more awards. This group of communicators has created very interesting and moving radio-theater plays. An example is the story of Tomás, a boy who lives with his mother. She sends him to work every day, and consequently, he doesn't go to school. Tomás works in a store at the market, where he dumps the garbage and runs other errands. Tomás is often hungry at home, under nourished, and really unfit for the work he performs for his age and given that he suffers from malnutrition. One day he finds some *tortillas* in the trash that he dumps every day and he eats them. The radio play shows a conversation between the couple who are Tomás's employers, where the man asks his wife for the tortillas; she says she dumped them into the garbage, because she thought they were bad. The husband then explains to her that the *tortillas* had poison for a dog that he wanted to kill. Tomás, who had eaten the *tortillas*, falls into a coma from which he does not recover.

At first, you might think that the story is very dramatic; but when analyzed, the danger narrated in the story is very possible, as children working in the street have no adult supervision and will fulfill their basic needs as they can. The story, thus, is quietly raising awareness about the situation of children living or subsisting on the streets.

This page intentionally left blank.

## V EFFECTIVENESS

---

### 5.1 FINDINGS

#### 5.1.1 Scope of Project Objectives in the Midterm

Based on the observations during the visits and the analysis of the documents on the project, it is highly probable that almost all objectives proposed within the logical framework of the project will be achieved. The numeric goals established for the first year were reached and in some cases, surpassed, as shown by the technical progress reports of the project. The number of NNAs withdrawn and prevented from exploitive child labor is being satisfactorily reached.

The project had a goal of 20% for school passing rates, and achieved 88.5% for the 2009 school year. Sixty-four per cent of the beneficiaries outside formal schooling were already enrolled in school by 2009. The current retention rate of beneficiaries in schools is 89.8%, when the goal was to reach 70%. These rates evidence or forecast the very successful achievement of goals if the trend continues toward the completion of the project.

The numeric goals for *La Cuculmeca* represent almost 50% of beneficiaries to be reached altogether. Among the specific goals to achieve is the intervention of the program in 90 schools. Currently, intervention has taken place at 75 schools according to data presented for this evaluation. It is not denied that this goal is reachable, but it is more important to analyze the conditions under which the inclusion of the remaining 15 should be achieved. One of these conditions is that the teaching personnel be contributed by MINED, which may take some time in the event personnel is not yet available. It must also be considered that in the case of schools in plantations, even if the farm owners were able to pay the salaries of some teachers, they would need to be inserted in the MINED system in order to comply with the additional benefits to which teachers in Nicaragua are entitled, which also require some time. Another obstacle is that *La Cuculmeca* would have to increase its field personnel if it intends to keep expanding its geographical range of action. Not less important is that in pursuing numeric goals, we might neglect the quality of the attention given to beneficiaries because of the dispersion of actions.

Most of the activities established are being fulfilled. But attention must be given to the sustainability grid of the project. This grid has no performance patterns, that is, it does not offer numeric goals, which are included in the Performance Monitoring Plan. Therefore it is not possible to rapidly analyze the dimensions of the scope of objectives such as sponsoring of schools and self-sustainable actions; however, this concern will be analyzed later in this report.

The support of the project for the Government of Nicaraguan is evident and valuable at the local level (where programs are developed); it was also observed that relations with MINED are very good at a central level. With regard to the relations with MITRAB, these are not very close yet, even though both entities pursue the same objectives. It would seem that MITRAB is not interested in working with the *Entérate* Project, which is quite unfortunate. The partners of the project have good relations with public authorities in their districts and are well respected and recognized by all key actors.

### **5.1.2 Effectiveness of the Project's Strategies and Actions**

The *Entérate* Project is withdrawing NNAs from coffee plantations and from other agricultural and livestock activities. It is also withdrawing NNAs from other work such as paid household work, urban market places, and garbage dumpsites. It also offers prevention to other NNAs who are at risk of enrolling in this kind of work. It has a direct effect on withdrawing NNAs from exploitive work and ensuring they do not enroll in this kind of work again and remain within the school system.

The sensitization work that the project has undertaken with parents, teachers, community leaders, and authorities is outstanding. Workshops, talks, and meetings to analyze child labor situations seem to be producing the expected results and raising awareness regarding the risks of child labor. Furthermore, the fact that the project includes an important component through the use of mass media strengthens sensitization and disseminates it to the public, which cannot be directly captured by the project.

Attendance of beneficiaries was described by the teaching personnel interviewed by project staff as very good. This indicator is very encouraging toward the final results of keeping beneficiaries away from exploitive work. As long as they are involved in their education as a primary activity, the possibilities that they might go to work fade away and are less frequent.

Intensification of school activities offered by the three partners through their different programs and their individual methods really favors school reinsertion for children who lagged behind in their education because they were involved in economic activities not appropriate for their age. Students older than their grade in school and efforts to combat illiteracy are being addressed by both MINED and by the *Entérate* Project. Other resources, such as the math component of Project *Excelencia* (which closed in 2009), were recognized as very effective. In particular, the *Entérate* Project continues promoting this educational methodology through training offered to teachers. Teachers interviewed and trained in this technique considered it very valuable. A school teacher commented, "It makes mathematics seem magical."

Interventions at technical vocational centers offered by the three partners, although with different names, are quite attractive to adolescents who have been working for a long time, without any academic education. One would think that it is this population that would present greater difficulties to attend formal school. The way the project offers technical vocational education—not prioritizing or considering only formal education—makes it easier for beneficiaries to be motivated and to show more interest. The demand for this kind of intervention from the communities is gradually increasing. It was observed that in most places visited, the key actors expressed the need for more spaces for beneficiaries. This calls for the project to seek new alternatives to meet community needs; for example, in El Cuje, there is need for larger premises to accommodate beneficiaries.

All indicators previously analyzed evidence that the program interventions of the project may be effective to prevent or withdraw NNAs from exploitive work. The services offered by the project are considered by all key actors interviewed as effective toward the achievement of goals and objectives. It is clear that education is the strategy and eradication of exploitive child labor is the goal.

### **5.1.3 Identification of the Project's Target Audience**

The project has clear parameters to identify who and what kind of beneficiaries must be withdrawn or prevented from child labor. It was observed that the M&E system of the project verifies through indicators and visits that the selected beneficiaries comply with the requirements. These indicators are in the project's database and on the cards initially completed by the beneficiaries.

It is the community leaders and promoters who identify the possible beneficiaries of the project. The teachers of MINED also contribute to this task. In some places, with instructions from MINED, teachers conducted a sort of survey to identify homes with children not attending school. This kind of practice enabled more effective identification of beneficiaries. "In my community, I knew which homes were not sending their children to school," said one school teacher; "So I pointed them out to the coordinator that came here. She then went house by house, trying to persuade parents to send their children to school. And she really managed to have many of them attend and are now beneficiaries of the project."

Regarding inclusion of the types of beneficiaries in the data system, they are classified as removed after a three-month period. This is done so that beneficiaries who may abandon the project soon after they start are not included in the database. Furthermore, if after, for example, five months, a beneficiary classified as withdrawn abandons the project, the beneficiary is removed from this category and is included under the dropout indicator. This makes the data gathered by the project more reliable and enables continuous monitoring. Usually, prevented beneficiaries are designated as such from the start, when the enrollment card is filled out; but if they abandon the program, the same process described above is followed.

During the visits, it was observed that there may be more than one beneficiary per family or home, which confirms the importance of conveying and internalizing the understanding that the only restrictions to being selected as beneficiaries are if they are not at risk of exploitive work or if they do not work in this condition.

Although the above is considered, there were still cases where in the same family there were beneficiaries, but the eldest children were used as substitute parents and did not attend school.

### **5.1.4 Type of Monitoring Used and Its Effectiveness**

There is a good M&E system developed under the responsibility of the official in this area, which meets all the requirements or parameters demanded by USDOL. To that end, a data entry program was created that includes all the pertinent indicators and even includes alarm indicators of potential dropout of beneficiaries from the project.

The person in charge of M&E of the project has trained the partners in using the database and has a manual where it specifies all the instructions. Each partner has its own person in charge of monitoring and evaluation, who handle and feed the databases that are sent to the central level of the project. In turn, field monitors or technicians provide information on a weekly basis to feed the system. These monitors visit homes when beneficiaries fail to attend pertinent project activities.

Analysis of the data takes place in the central offices of the project, using the statistical software program SPSS. If the partners prefer to conduct their own analysis, they request that information be sent to the central office or they perform the analysis using a program such as Excel. Partners do not manage the SPSS analysis program, which is a very powerful software.

Partners request the presence of the monitoring and evaluation official of the project whenever they need it. Furthermore, the project visits the field to the extent possible (there is only one person for these visits) to verify and report on the progress of the project and develop written reports based on those observations. There are plans in the project to hire more personnel for this purpose. However, there are no monitoring visits planned at a central level. Some partners requested periodic visits.

As for monitoring the partners' visits, it was observed that in two of the weekly visits (INPRHU-SOMOTO and *Club Infantil*) are conducted at the schools or centers of the persons in charge of monitoring. At *La Cuculmeca*, visits may take place every two weeks because of the large number of schools that this partner works with.

Frequently the central level of the project receives monitoring reports rather late. This is caused by delays in the delivery of some field monitors' reports. It should be mentioned that the great distances these monitors must cover do not make it easy for reports to arrive on time. This situation is not really troubling. What is more important is that the data conveyed are reliable. It is normal that in one quarter, for instance, data may change. For example, during the last quarter, 24 children were removed from child labor and 35 were prevented from entering it in school X. However, of the 24 children removed, 2 abandoned the program because of their family's labor migration and 1 prevented beneficiary dropped out. This means that the previous figures will also change. Therefore, during the last quarter, we have 22 removed and 34 prevented at school X. Numbers may change because of shifting situations, which occurred in the communities. Even if a number of beneficiaries were previously reported, one must always bear in mind that there may be unforeseen changes.

It was observed that the partners manage their statistics according to their activities, fulfillment of objectives, and achievement of their particular goals. This is highly beneficial for the project, as the responsibility of each partner is clear.

In order to monitor and follow up beneficiaries during the school vacation period, which coincides precisely with the harvest season in the country, an educational bridge has been created, that is, some schools continue to operate and include more recreational activities than they would during the formal period. As expressed by the beneficiaries and their parents, those who live on or in close proximity to a coffee plantation may visit and work one or two days a week in the harvest during the vacation period; but if there is an educational bridge in the community, the presence of beneficiaries in the harvest is more scarce. This measure is important to be able to monitor NNAs who go with their parents to the plantations during the harvest season.

### **5.1.5 Identification of Financial Strengths**

The administrative-financial system of the project is quite solid. Each partner knows the requirements and procedures it must undergo for payment and expense purposes. The person in charge of the financial area at the project's central level controls such procedures and cross-checks them against the monitoring reports to ensure that funds are being disbursed for specific activities, previously set out in the plans of action of the partners and the project.

The project partners stated they were satisfied with the system; the less experienced partner in the financial management of this type of project had no problems in this respect. The person in charge of this area at a central level is also satisfied with the procedure in place.

An aspect that the partners recognized was that there is flexibility in the management of financial resources. For instance, if a budgeted activity could not be carried out or was considered unnecessary, the system allows those funds to be used for other relevant activities, provided the reasons are thoroughly documented and are set forth in the USDOL's Management Procedures and Guidelines.

### **5.1.6 Identification of Management Areas (Financial and Technical) That Require Improvement for Successful Achievement of Objectives and Goals**

The project delivers educational materials, such as notebooks, pencils, backpacks, and shirts directly to the beneficiaries. At *La Cuculmeca* it was observed that there was a late delivery of these materials, which were to be delivered in February, but were finally delivered in April, days before the evaluation visit. The delay stemmed from a problem at the printing shops. The reason for the delivery of these materials is to somewhat lighten the burden of expenses that parents must incur to send their children to school. Therefore, this delay represents another effort parents must make to purchase materials.

In some vocational centers for adolescents, beneficiaries complained about some teachers with poor teaching skills. While it is true that it is not always possible to have suitable teachers, a problem of this nature could discourage beneficiaries who must walk long distances to arrive and receive education in these centers.

When examining an advocacy video that was not created by or for the project, but was used by one of the partners, it was observed that the video, although with good intentions, was not addressed to a primary school population. The video was based on Socrates' philosophy and how a teacher should use it. It also advocated that a teacher should get involved in the marital problems of a student's parents. This kind of video can confuse the population.

In a visit to a technical module at Mancotal, it was observed that the community house was used as a classroom. While this indicates that the community was contributing to the project, the community house was in extremely bad condition. When it rained, the beneficiaries would get wet as a result of the leaking roof; the walls were also not safe. The physical structure was rather dangerous to shelter people.

The transportation problem—which required travelling long distances between the homes, schools, and centers—have already been addressed in this report as a barrier. But it was observed last year, that one of the partners provided its beneficiaries with a small amount of money (30 *córdobas*, about US\$1.40) in order to pay for public transportation that operates in the Mancotal region to go to the school or center and return home. This measure ended in 2010 without explanation. Consequently, beneficiaries are asking that this benefit be restored, as they have to walk long distances along solitary paths, which sometimes discourage them. Some of the persons interviewed reported that some school friends had abandoned the technical module. Furthermore, they ask to be given lunch, as they spend most of the day in the module (lunch was provided in 2009, but has now been discontinued—another discouraging factor). Interviewed parents confirmed these complaints and mentioned the importance of the project providing transportation and food assistance, as most parents could not afford these necessities.

During school visits by observers, project staff found classrooms were hardly attractive for the students. They had gloomy rooms and bare walls.

In a technical module visited, beneficiaries were not being offered any supporting printed material (the methodology of the modules must include this kind of material) or it had not been supplied as yet. The teacher dictated materials for the students to copy.

Among the partners, the most frequent cause for dropping out from the project is the migration of the families who leave to work in Costa Rica, El Salvador, or Honduras. This situation is beyond the project's control and, once those beneficiaries leave, there appears to be no way to recover them.

The CEAR community of Machitia asked for a donation of shoes, at least once a year. Given the distances these beneficiaries must walk to attend the centers and with no access to public transportation of any kind, this petition is quite logical.

Other petitions made by the communities follow:

- More school supplies are needed for all the communities.
- Intervene in the community of Cayantú.
- Propose solutions so that their children do not have to walk along solitary paths to attend school (this was asked in the communities of INPRHU-SOMOTO and *La Cuculmeca*).
- For the schools of *Club Infantil*, training for the teachers of the dance and drawing schools (as specified in the school curriculum, but the teachers have received no training).
- The community of Uniles requests the donation of seeds to form family orchards and vehicle tires to prepare the field. Access to drinking water at the school is also requested. The community members also need fountains to hold the water they gather from rain.

- The community of Quebrada Grande requests a closer secondary school. The closest one is two hours away. The community members ask that milk be included with the school lunch.
- Young communicators of *Club Infantil* request cameras, recorders, and computers. They also want to have internet access (there is internet only at the radio station).
- Sports materials (such as balls, gloves, and other supplies) are requested for all the communities.
- The mayor's office of Yalí requests interventions at the communities of El Vijajeral, La Rica, and Las Colinas. They believe that there is too much violence, too many gangs, and rampant drug addiction in those areas.
- Construction materials to reinforce the community house of Mancotal, where the technical modules are currently being offered.

## **5.2 LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES**

The data entered into databases in the M&E system are reviewed on different occasions at both the central level and by partners. The project understood that the data on the beneficiaries' cards could change over time: a withdrawn beneficiary, for example, could drop out of the project. The indicators of the databases were reduced (there were too many indicators and they were simplified). This made it easier to manage reports.

The use of tags, billboards, books, and shirts with the name, “*Entérate* Project,” has made it possible for a good number of the project's beneficiaries to be acquainted with the project's name (all direct beneficiaries interviewed in this evaluation were familiar with the name of the project; some were also familiar with the funding agency— USDOL—but this cannot be said about the project in general). Although this is not a primary objective, it must be taken into account that it is very positive for the image of the project. Beneficiaries know and feel that they are part of a group that benefits them and they speak about it that way.

At the schools on the coffee plantations visited, it was observed that farm owners and the administration forbid the presence of children under 14 years of age in the harvest. Thus, it ensured that children older than 14 continued studying, which prevented them from working full time in the harvest.

One of the farm owners forbade the hiring of workers migrating with their families in order to prevent the involvement of minors in the harvest.



**Signpost project including basketball hoop. Very good idea from *La Cuculmeca*!**

## VI EFFICIENCY

---

### 6.1 FINDINGS

#### 6.1.1 Cost-efficiency of the Project

The project has all the indicators of being cost-efficient. It is withdrawing about 5,000 minors from exploitive work and reinserting them in school or offering them some other educational alternative. It will also prevent an additional 5,000 beneficiaries from entering exploitive work by the project's completion. Obviously, long-term sustainability of this cost-efficiency will be related to the sustainability of actions once the project has ended.

#### 6.1.2 Sufficiency of Human and Financial Resources in the Project

Some partners, such as *La Cuculmeca*, need a greater amount of human resources for the programmed activities, consistently with the goals established, to be fulfilled by the end of the project. It was observed, for example, that an educator at *La Cuculmeca* may be in charge of coordinating and overseeing up to 18 schools, which is inappropriate, since visits are shorter, faster, and the requisite attention needed at each school is diminished. Although the schools assigned to the nine educators of *La Cuculmeca* are relatively close, the distances are great and roads are difficult to access. Therefore, one day is not adequate time to visit more than two schools.

*Club Infantil* is the partner with the smallest budget. While it is also the partner with the lowest numeric goals, the efforts toward achievement of the goals are similar to those of the others. This partner perceives it does not have sufficient financial resources.

The monitoring and evaluation official at the project's central level needs more personnel to comply with the pertinent monitoring tasks. The project's interventions are in Madriz and Jinotega, but they are all very scattered; hence, one single person from the central level is insufficient to verify monitoring.

The planning and design of the project should take into account that a program intervention often generates other needs that were not included in the budget. For example, the increase in school enrollment has made school textbooks scarce, as well as material in general; this is also the case for beneficiaries who walk long distances to attend the project's educational centers (children who for the most part, did not attend educational institutions until now, thanks to the project). This has caused parents to ask for shoes for their children (because of the fast wear and tear or unsuitable shoes).

The personnel at the project's central level is highly qualified. There are nine members: six of them represent the technical area and three are supporting personnel. The central level has a specialist in education, two in project financing, one in communications, and one in M&E and information technology. The supporting personnel are highly involved with the project and manage to comply with their responsibilities efficiently.

In March 2010, a new director joined the project. She has wide experience in the field of child labor and great project management expertise, which will no doubt benefit the project.

The partners, in turn, have a greater number of human resources for the project, which is required to cover all the needs. It is necessary to recognize the work of those persons who coordinate in the field and the educators of all three partners. Day after day they set out along almost impassable routes to access intervened communities. They mostly maintain very good relations with key community actors and local authorities. The good relationships of the partners have been a decisive factor in the continuity of the project.

One concern frequently expressed by partners and key actors is that when certain kinds of beneficiaries are targeted, other children are excluded, causing discriminatory situations. This was especially analyzed by the teaching staff of the intervened schools. They reported how some children cried when they were not chosen.

Discrimination obviously occurs among children when beneficiaries are chosen. However, it is similar to affirmative action, as it is also forcing countries to have quotas and public Congress seats for women. Positive discrimination occurs in situations where balance of a certain aspect is maintained in certain populations but where other aspects are neglected. In this case, NNAs who were working in exploitive conditions did not have the conditions conducive to study effectively, unlike NNAs who did not work in such situations. Prevention cases also require greater attention than the other cases do. For this reason, the project targets beneficiaries who are already involved or at risk of becoming involved in exploitive child labor.

It must also be mentioned that in the intervened schools, all NNAs attending the school indirectly benefit from the project, as a result of teacher training, the availability of teaching materials, and increased community awareness, which all impact NNAs. The fact that beneficiaries are offered backpacks and notebooks must not be a point of perception of exclusion among the children.

### **6.1.3 Efficiency of the Monitoring System of the Project**

It was observed through the midterm of the project that the system implemented, both at the central and local levels of each partner, is very good. Beneficiaries are regularly monitored. The system is prepared to withstand changes in the status of beneficiaries. Also, it is prepared to alert the monitoring system when beneficiaries have more than one alert indicator of dropout from the project. The database provides a thorough analysis, which is translated into full reports.

Despite certain natural delays in the gathering of data from the monitoring system, the technical progress reports of the project are delivered on time.

## **6.2 GOOD PRACTICES**

Community promoters designated by their own communities are acting as permanent monitors of the communities. They are volunteers respected by their community who alert or intervene so that the activities of the project may be carried out satisfactorily. Since they live in the community, they are able to know when project beneficiaries do not attend school or if they have

any interference. These personnel have received training by the project; during field visits interviewed promoters showed high levels of interest and participation in the community.

INPRHU-SOMOTO already has this kind of personnel in monitoring activities, and *La Cuculmeca* is preparing to train such persons and place them as permanent monitors. This practice not only saves salaries, but also enables the community to contribute through highly sensitized persons.

This page intentionally left blank.

## VII IMPACT

---

### 7.1 FINDINGS

#### 7.1.1 Current Observable Impacts of the *Entérate* Project According to Type of Beneficiary

Interviews and visits made during this evaluation showed some apparent impacts. These impacts are listed in the table below and have been divided by type of beneficiary.

##### **NNAs**

- Withdrawal from exploitive child labor.
- Increase in school enrollments.
- Prevention of school desertion due to learning problems or work.
- Increased retention rate in schools.
- Increase in the promotion of beneficiaries to the next highest grade.
- Literacy for some beneficiaries or improved reading/writing skills.
- Leveling of grades as a solution to over-age students.
- Prevention of enrollment in work because of learning problems and fear they cannot study.
- Increased awareness of their educational rights and the fact they cannot be forced to work.
- Increased self-esteem and confidence in their ability to learn.
- Learning artistic expressions.
- Learning vocational skills among adolescents.
- Improvement in the quality of communication between beneficiaries and their families.
- Improved ability to socialize with others; i.e., building more friendships.
- Positive behavior changes in discipline and obedience to the family.
- Creation of defense mechanisms to prevent their parents from forcing them to do many daily chores. (Example: "When I ask my daughter to help at home, she says to me 'but I have to study.'" Mother of a 13-year-old).
- Those who continue working are engaged in non-exploitive work, with shifts and conditions that protect minors (e.g., reduced working hours to one or two hours per day).

### **Beneficiaries' Parents**

- Showed considerable increase in awareness that education should be a priority for their children.
- Gave them a feeling of pride toward their children because the children are achieving educational opportunities that may or may not have been available to them.
- Showed less concern about the possibility of their children abandoning school.
- Became more involved with school activities.
- Paid more attention to their children.
- Socialized with other parents in the meetings held by the project.

### **Community**

- Internalized understanding of the leading role of education in children's lives.
- Increased involvement in the problems of children and adolescents.
- Encouraged active engagement with the project. They identify themselves with it and make it theirs.
- Greater education and development of vocational skills among residents.
- Greater self-confidence about their capacity to do and manage things for themselves.

### **Impacts on the Partners**

- Created greater strengths to work as a team, with shared goals and objectives.
- Increased capacity to work with government institutions in a harmonious and respectful environment.
- Encouraged some partners to acquire skills to manage more complex projects.
- Perfected or improved financial systems.
- Improved and acquired skills in the monitoring system.

### **Impacts at a Governmental Level**

- Withdrew and prevented NNAs from exploitive child labor.
- Increased school enrollment.
- Helped locate, rescue, and persuade children outside the school system to become educated.
- Reduced over-age students.
- Reduced desertion and grade repetition.
- Helped improve reading and writing skills.
- Trained teaching personnel.
- Provided teaching materials.
- Created effective and meaningful relationships with local authorities in accomplishing their work.

### **7.1.2 Emerging Aspects and Opportunities That the Project Must Take into Account to Increase Its Impact and Relevance**

One emerging aspect at present for the project is the change of the head of MINED. In order to continue working as closely as it has with MINED, the project must take the steps necessary to present its work before the new minister. It is also necessary to approach the Program *Amor* directly to coordinate actions that benefit both entities. While in the past relations with government institutions at a central level were difficult, today it is necessary to use the good relations it has cultivated with the new director of the *Entérate* Project and write a new chapter.

The selling of *pepena* by NNAs to coffee buyers must be controlled by the plantations, the community, and to some extent the project. It is not possible to let NNAs get involved in this kind of economic activity, since in the long term, it will impair their development.

The increase in school enrollments results in increased needs. It is necessary to analyze carefully concerns regarding the need for human resources and teaching materials. Many of these unforeseen problems are not budgeted; therefore, the project must seek solutions to face them.

The project partners have other donor agencies that supply the necessary resources in a timely fashion that benefit the project work. Save the Children, Caritas Switzerland, UNICEF, *Tierra de Hombres* of Germany, *Día Mundial de Oración*, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Dutch Cooperation, and Danish Cooperation are some of these agencies, along with the partners that contribute and provide in many cases the required elements for the development of the project. For example, seeds for the school orchards are provided by Plan Nicaragua.

Materials from ILO, which are available to all everyone, constitute useful resources. The project need only mention that the materials were created by that organization and reproduce them as needed. The same could be done with other agencies that may allow use of their materials.

## **7.2 GOOD PRACTICES**

The knowledge acquired by the project beneficiaries' parents about exploitive child labor, as observed in the interviews, is impressive. The awareness offered to the parents about prioritizing education above all other aspects also seems to have rendered good results, as observed from the positive attitudes shown by the parents interviewed.

Another possible impact observed in places visited is the interest and motivation of the teaching personnel from MINED, who have stood up to the challenge of rescuing NNAs who are outside the school system. They are the absolute leading actors in the project and have adopted it as their own.

This page intentionally left blank.

## VIII SUSTAINABILITY

---

### 8.1 FINDINGS

#### 8.1.1 Project Exit and Sustainability Plan

The *Entérate* Project has a sustainability grid that details an exit plan once the life of the project has been completed, which includes sponsorship of schools by the private sector under agreement with MINED, preparation of a National Strategy for the Gradual Eradication of Child Labor in the Coffee Production Sector by 2015, and the involvement of merchants in urban product markets in the fight against child labor.

This simple but important plan may be effective and feasible if a specific work plan is laid out with a timeline of actions and numeric goals for the private sector's sponsorship of schools. Up to this moment, the project has undertaken this kind of action, however, not in a methodic and guided manner. *La Cuculmeca* is working in schools on coffee plantations, sponsored by farm owners and associations. Steps have been taken toward future interaction plans with CISA. However, to date, this has not been worked out as a sustainability plan, but rather as scattered opportunities. The *Entérate* Project must take the lead of the plan at a central level and see it through.

#### 8.1.2 Initiatives to Include Resources Outside the Project

The inclusion of resources outside the project has been an initiative of the particular partners rather than of the project itself. Nevertheless, some actions have been undertaken as part of the project at a central level. An example of this is the inclusion of training in audiovisual production and civic journalism with Beeman Productions and the *Padre Fabretto* Foundation.

The partners, in turn, as previously mentioned and detailed, have included their other donors, who contributed necessary and useful resources to the *Entérate* Project in a timely manner.

#### 8.1.3 Challenges and Opportunities in the Coordination with the Government Sector

To date, this coordination with MINED at a local level has been quite successful. It must continue in the same way or an even better way. Both projects' objectives are very similar; therefore, it is essential they continue to work together for the sake of the country.

The information obtained for the evaluation indicates that the CNEPTI has been replaced to a great extent by the Project *Amor*; hence, the Commission has not operated over the past year. Currently, the *Entérate* Project has no direct coordination with MITRAB. Therefore, if possible and if it is the right time, steps must be taken to present the objectives and achievements of the project, thus emphasizing the common objectives between that structure and the project.

There has already been collaboration with *Ministerio de la Familia, Adolescentes y Niñez* (Ministry of the Family, Adolescents and Childhood [MIFAN]) with respect to Project *Amor*, in

obtaining birth certificates for the beneficiaries of the project. The active and decisive participation of MIFAN personnel has been observed in some regions, in team work between the authorities with the support of project partners. It would be highly positive if the Entérate Project could coordinate work directly with Project Amor at a central level for purposes other than obtaining birth certificates, from which the country may benefit. The partners have also kept good relations with INATEC.

#### **8.1.4 Challenges and opportunities in the coordination with ILO-IPEC**

As mentioned earlier, ILO-IPEC has many common goals with the *Entérate* Project. The project implemented by ILO-IPEC on coffee plantations, with the support of the unions, is similar to what *La Cuculmeca* is conducting for the project; therefore, agreements may be reached to optimize resources and strengthen the fight against child labor. They share the same donor; hence, coordination could be closer, for instance, by sharing educational materials.

#### **8.1.5 Challenges and Opportunities in the Coordination with Other International and/or Multilateral Agencies and NGOs**

The project has amassed considerable collaborative opportunities with other entities, such as CISA, in all matters concerning schools on coffee plantations, such as certification of producers and expansion plans. Another foundation that the project could potentially coordinate with is *Fundación Pellas*, to promote a public campaign that warns young children about the dangers of jobs that entail working with fire or hot objects, which could result in burns.

### **8.2 GOOD PRACTICES**

The project works directly with the teaching personnel of MINED to train teachers. These trainings represent the sustainability of project goals, even after the project ends, because the skills acquired by the teachers will continue to benefit the educational system; they can also be replicated and refined by future teachers.

The same applies for trainings offered by the project to participating community promoters who can assume roles in the new initiatives.

## **IX CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

---

### **9.1 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PROJECT**

#### **9.1.1 Key Conclusions and Recommendations for the Project**

1. The first conclusion determines that everything observed during this evaluation indicates that the project objectives will be achieved without great difficulties. The withdrawal and prevention of 10,045 beneficiaries is a feasible task in the current conditions. However, it is recommended that the project revise the numeric goal of *La Cuculmecca* to intervene in 90 schools, given that the number is currently 75. A determination should be made if the original goal is achievable without inadvertently creating a distraction or compromising the quality of services offered by the project. Furthermore, this implies an increase in field personnel, as the existing personnel are challenged to adequately cover 75 communities. The recommended exercise is a simple revision in order to determine the feasibility of the goal.
2. The project's awareness-raising efforts offered the communities, particularly the beneficiaries' parents, valuable opportunities to change harmful attitudes and behaviors regarding their children's development. It is recommended that the usual monthly meetings with the parents continue. The more contact and reflection spaces available to parents, the greater the chances to lay a foundation that will help toward the eradication of exploitive child labor.
3. All key actors interviewed described the project's geographical intervention areas as very suitable for the fight against exploitive child labor. Furthermore, different studies validated these as priority areas where child labor exists. The geographical areas are relevant; however, there is the barrier of the great distances the beneficiaries must walk to access educational centers. Thus, it is recommended that vehicle operators are hired in regions where a public transportation system is already in place, to transport beneficiaries who walk through long, dangerous, and solitary paths to attend school, or provide them with funds to supplement their transportation costs. In areas like *El Cuje*, where there is no public transportation, efforts should be made to obtain or pay for a vehicle service that will serve as a means of safe transportation. Finally, beneficiaries should not walk more than a half hour to get to school.
4. The selection of beneficiaries is properly performed according to databases and visits. While beneficiaries considered in the project meet the criteria for selection and intervention, there are still other NNAs that could not be involved in the project, even though they met the requirements. Thus, it is recommended that the projects undertake an exercise for future interventions, in this or some other project that could indicate how many more communities would need coverage. For now, the project should concentrate on its already established plans.

5. The different educational strategies implemented by the three partners seem to be effective and appropriate for the communities' cultural and socio-economic context. The different approaches and areas of work presented by the partners ensure a valuable heterogeneity to the extent that multiple strategies are essential to the success of the project, rather than the adaption of one strategy for all contexts. However, it is recommended that project staff be clear about the common strategic elements that should result in attainment of identical goals for all partners (lowest common denominator). It is also suggested that partners implement a sort of exchange program of experiences with their field personnel, where an educator from *La Cuculmecca* may stay in INPHRU territory and vice versa. This helps to enrich the vision of the partners.
6. The project's M&E system is very good; it operates data analysis tasks. It is suggested to decide whether partners will assume an analysis system (not the databases) of their own, or if the project must provide partners with the required training to analyze in SPSS. Alternatively, the project could use the syntax component of the SPCC, which allows the analysis of data from time to time without specialized training for the user.
7. Sustainability of the project is feasible, but must be more fully developed through an action or work plan with deadlines and numeric goals (especially regarding the number of sponsors for schools). This work plan should be one with which the project can easily comply and show the progress of the sustainability plans at any time.

## **9.2 OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **9.2.1 Pertinent to Relevance**

- Gender equality must be integral to the project regarding concrete situations, such as domestic chores at home. Essentially, ascribing domestic work primarily to females is quite widespread.
- The group of 24 young beneficiaries trained in audiovisual production and civic journalism must produce audiovisual materials related to the project that has benefitted them.
- The project should increase communications through meetings with administrative personnel at the plantations so that teachers can communicate their needs. As observed during the visits, the administrative personnel are willing to cooperate more.
- The professionally produced documentary film on the NNAs *Club Infantil* of San José de las Latas may be broadcast by a national TV network. Through the media, the public can become aware of the capacities of the project's beneficiaries.
- The methodology that INPRHU-SOMOTO uses to put important messages in the school classrooms is a good practice that other partners can reproduce.

- To the extent possible, INPRHU-SOMOTO can assist in the distribution of seeds, plots, and vehicle tires to create family orchards that contribute to the permanent inclusion of vegetables in a nutritional diet at home.

### **9.2.2 Pertinent to Effectiveness**

- The monitoring area of the project at the central level should prepare a systematic visitation plan for the partners that includes more than required visits.
- Encourage the creation of more educational bridges in coffee plantation schools. This helps to prevent the presence of children in the harvest, during vacations.
- Care should be exercised regarding delays in the delivery of usable material for the beneficiaries, such as notebooks and backpacks. These materials are offered so that parents do not have to incur such expenses. If delivery is delayed, parents will have to bear the cost. Also, the project should also analyze whether the number of notebooks delivered is appropriate given that the children seem to need many more.
- The teaching personnel who depend on the project, such as teachers of the vocational program, should be carefully selected and monitored to ensure they are employing good didactic knowledge and practice. It is dangerous that after working so hard to implement this project system, it gets overturned because of inadequate or poor teaching skills.
- As for the problem of English language learning, which was one of the complaints received in this evaluation, INPRHU-SOMOTO, for example, may take advantage of the exchange agreement they have maintained with a Canadian foundation, which exchanges children who travel and stay in both countries for three months. These Canadian children could have the responsibility, during their stay in Nicaragua, of teaching English classes on Saturdays (the specific day that this subject is usually offered in CEARs). Also, at the central level, the project has a specialist in bilingual education who could prepare simple modules with recorded cassettes for pronunciation.
- The project could prepare a plan to review the educational materials that are used. This would prevent the use of inappropriate materials and would optimize the use of good materials.
- Special care should be taken with the physical infrastructure used for classrooms in educational strategies, even if they are provisional. While only one borrowed community facility used for vocational training was very inadequate, it should not be forgotten that insecure or dangerous physical structures are an unnecessary risk.
- It is also pertinent to have written support materials in educational vocational activities, so that it is not necessary to purchase books or spend time taking dictation from the teacher.

- The project and the partners must analyze the requests made by the different actors interviewed in order to determine which are feasible to fulfill.

### **9.2.3 Pertinent to Efficacy**

- It is recommended to include additional monitoring personnel to work on the project to cover the need for visits to the communities.
- *La Cuculmecca* should determine whether it has an adequate number of educators to cover and coordinate 75 schools.
- Use of a selection criteria to determine project beneficiaries meant that some children were not included, which generated undesirable reaction in the communities. The project must not invest attention or resources in trying to match benefits for other non-participating NNAs who also attend intervened schools. It would be better to explain to the children the limitations on the number and criteria of participants in the project.
- It is recommended that the project encourage, to the extent possible, the volunteer community promoters; they are important political figures and very valuable to the project.

### **9.2.4 Pertinent to Sustainability**

- It is suggested that the project's central level takes the lead in devising an action plan, as recommended earlier for sustainability efforts.
- The project must bring its activities closer to those performed by the ILO-IPEC. They are alike in many aspects.
- It is recommended to prepare specific plans with CISA as soon as possible.
- Approach *Fundación Pellas* about collaborating, to the extent possible, on a national campaign to prevent 7-year-old children from cooking or burning garbage because of the risk these activities pose to their safety.

---

# ANNEXES

---

This page intentionally left blank.

## **ANNEX A: GUIDE 1 AND 2—PROJECT PERSONNEL AND PARTNERS**

---

1. What are your responsibilities in the project?
2. In addition to these responsibilities, do you have any other, even if it does not correspond to you?
3. Do you believe that the assumptions and realities on which the project was based at the beginning are still the same? Or has anything changed? Identify what is still the same and what changed.
4. What are the main strategies of the project, designed to prevent child labor and trafficking? Why are these strategies appropriate?
5. What would you say are the obstacles and threats that the project faces in its fight against child labor?
6. What has the project done to face these challenges? Have these actions been effective? Why?
7. Do you believe that the project design is appropriate for the cultural, economic and political context in which it operates? Why?
8. How would you say the project fits with other government initiatives and those of other organizations with similar objectives?
9. Describe what criteria were used to select the scope of action of the project, the geographical areas and the beneficiaries.
10. Could you identify what other types of initiatives and/or methodologies should be included in the project?
11. Do you think that the design of the project favors or not the achievement of five proposed goals? Which goals would you say the project favors the most? Which goals would you say the project favors the most? Why?
12. Halfway through the life of the project, do you believe the final objectives and goals may be fulfilled? Which objectives or goals are more difficult to achieve? How far are you from reaching the goals? Which are the factors that hinder the achievement of these objectives or goals?
13. According to your perception, do you believe that the educational interventions of the project, such as the creation of the EPC for boys and girls and the EPE for adolescents and the distribution of resources and educational material has been effective to prevent child labor and trafficking? Why do you think that EPCs have been effective? Or not? Why do you think that EPEs have been effective? Or not?

14. The creation of the EPEs has been the newest experience in the project. What do you think is achieved with the creation and the implementation of these new spaces?
15. Comparing the EPCs and the EPEs, would you say the effectiveness of their strategies is the same or different? Why?
16. What do EPCs contribute that EPEs don't? What do EPEs contribute that EPCs don't?
17. Which of the two kinds of space is easier to implement? Why?
18. With regard to the needs of the population to be intervened, do you think that the project replies to all or most of these needs or only to some? Sort by EPC and EPE.
19. How would you say that EPCs contribute to increasing educational opportunities, the feeling of belonging to the community, the development of communities and to alerting about child labor risks?
20. How would you say that EPEs contribute to increasing educational opportunities, the feeling of belonging to the community, the development of communities and to alerting about child labor risks?
21. Do you believe that the project has been able to identify accurately boys, girls and adolescents at risk or already enrolled in child labor in the areas of agriculture, domestic chores, drug trafficking and sales, illegal activities in tourist resorts in the country and sexual work?
22. Are boys, girls and adolescents who do not have a birth certificate able to access the project in EPCs and EPEs? In what proportion does this take place? What are the restrictions?
23. Would you say that the project has identified accurately the worst forms of exploitation in child labor in most of the cases or just in some? Which yes and which no and why?
24. Could you share a lesson learned in general or by sector, about the kinds of effectiveness of the project?
25. Is the project's monitoring system easy to implement? Why?
26. Do you think the project's monitoring system is efficient and responds to the informative needs required? Why?
27. Is the labor status of beneficiaries monitored during vacations and when they leave school?

28. Which would you say are the managerial strengths of this Project (both the technical and the financial aspects) and why? Give examples. According to your perception, what technical and financial aspects must be improved to guarantee a better achievement of goals and objectives of the project? Why?
29. Do you believe this Project is cost-efficient based on the range of activities and the direct and long-term impact it pursues? Why?
30. Do you believe that the financial and human resources of the project are sufficient or appropriate to achieve the desired results?
31. What other alternatives are there to strengthen or improve these resources?
32. Have you been able to perceive to date some kind of impact of the project in its beneficiaries, in the community, in the educational system or in the final achievements of the project? Which?
33. What has been (if any) the influence and impact of the project in the organizations that work in eradicating child labor and trafficking? Give examples.
34. What would you say is the impact the project has had on the government sector, especially concerning educational aspects and prevention of child labor? Give examples.
35. How do you think the education component of the project has been received in the communities and the Government? Is it perceived, for example, as something they could implement or replicate themselves in the future?
36. Have you been able to perceive if there are any new trends to which the project should respond in order to improve its assertiveness and relevance? Which are they?
37. Have you been able to perceive if there are any kinds of new opportunities which the project should count on to increase its impact? Which are they?
38. Halfway through the life of the project, would you be able to indicate a good practice that could be replicated in other areas or which could contribute innovative solutions for the current status of the problem? Which?
39. Does the project have an Exit and Sustainability Plan for when it comes to an end? Do you think the plan will be feasible and efficient?
40. How successful has the project been in accessing financing funds other than those of the project itself? Which have those experiences been?
41. Do you believe there are good perspectives for self-sustainable funds? Why?

42. Which have been the main challenges and achievements in starting and keeping financial support partnerships with other projects or funds of the United States Department of Labor?
43. Please describe briefly how you perceive the involvement of local authorities and of the Central Government with the project. What benefits can you perceive in this involvement to eradicate child labor and trafficking? What aspects should be strengthened or improved?
44. What would you say have been the main challenges and opportunities in starting and maintaining coordination with the government sector, as for instance with the Labor and Education Secretariats and other agencies in this Project?
45. What would you say have been the main challenges and opportunities in starting and maintaining coordination with the ILO-IPEC in this Project?
46. What would you say have been the main challenges and opportunities in starting and maintaining coordination with other international and/or multilateral agencies in this Project?
47. What would you say have been the main challenges and opportunities in starting and maintaining coordination with NGOs and Community-based Organizations (CBOs) in this Project?
48. What steps would need to be taken to achieve and promote the project's sustainability?
49. What aspects would you point out as strengths in the project partnership?
50. What aspects would you say should be improved in the partnership and coordination of the project?

## **ANNEX B: GUIDE 3A—ILO-IPEC PERSONNEL**

---

Explain objectives. Ask for authorization to record the interview

1. Do you believe that the assumptions and realities on which the project was based at the beginning are still the same? Or has anything changed? Identify what is still the same and what changed.
2. What are the main strategies of the project, designed to prevent child labor and trafficking? Why are these strategies appropriate?
3. What would you say are the obstacles and threats that the project faces in its fight against child labor?
4. What has the project done to face these challenges? Have these actions been effective? Why?
5. Do you believe that the project design is appropriate for the cultural, economic and political context in which it operates? Why?
6. How would you say the project fits with other government initiatives and those of other organizations with similar objectives?
7. Describe what criteria were used to select the scope of action of the project, the geographical areas and the beneficiaries.
8. Could you identify what other types of initiatives and/or methodologies should be included in the project?
9. According to your perception, do you believe that the educational interventions of the project, such as the creation of the EPC for boys and girls and the EPE for adolescents and the distribution of resources and educational material has been effective to prevent child labor and trafficking? Why do you think that EPCs have been effective? Or not? Why do you think that EPEs have been effective? Or not?
10. The creation of the EPEs has been the newest experience in the project. What do you think is achieved with the creation and the implementation of these new spaces?
11. Would you say that the project has identified accurately the worst forms of exploitation in child labor in most of the cases or just in some? Which yes and which no and why?
12. Have you had access to the monitoring system of the project? What did you think about it?
13. Do you think the project's monitoring system is efficient and responds to the informative needs required? Why?

14. Do you believe this Project is cost-efficient based on the range of activities and the direct and long-term impact it pursues? Why?
15. Have you been able to perceive to date some kind of impact of the project in its beneficiaries, in the community, in the educational system or in the final achievements of the project? Which?
16. What has been (if any) the influence and impact of the project in the organizations that work in eradicating child labor and trafficking? Give examples.
17. What would you say is the impact the project has had on the government sector, especially concerning educational aspects and prevention of child labor? Give examples.
18. Have you been able to perceive if there are any new trends to which the project should respond in order to improve its assertiveness and relevance? Which?
19. Have you been able to perceive if there are any kinds of new opportunities which the project should count on to increase its impact? Which?
20. Halfway through the life of the project, would you be able to indicate a good practice that could be replicated in other areas or which could contribute innovative solutions for the current status of the problem? Which?
21. Please describe briefly how you perceive the involvement of local authorities and of the Central Government with the project. What benefits can you perceive in this involvement to eradicate child labor and trafficking? What aspects should be strengthened or improved?
22. What would you say have been the main challenges and opportunities of the project in starting and maintaining coordination with the ILO-IPEC?

## **ANNEX C: GUIDE 3B—LOCAL MINISTRY STAFF**

---

1. Do you believe that the assumptions and realities on which the project was based at the beginning are still the same? Or has anything changed? Identify what is still the same and what changed.
2. What are the main strategies of the project, designed to prevent child labor and trafficking? Why are these strategies appropriate?
3. What would you say are the obstacles and threats that the project faces in its fight against child labor?
4. What has the project done to face these challenges? Have these actions been effective? Why?
5. Do you believe that the project design is appropriate for the cultural, economic and political context in which it operates? Why?
6. How would you say the project fits with other government initiatives and those of other organizations with similar objectives?
7. Describe what criteria were used to select the scope of action of the project, the geographical areas and the beneficiaries.
8. Could you identify what other types of initiatives and/or methodologies should be included in the project?
9. According to your perception, do you believe that the educational interventions of the project, such as the creation of spaces for boys and girls and spaces for adolescents and the distribution of resources and educational material have been effective to prevent child labor and trafficking? Why do you think the spaces have been effective? Or not?
10. Which are the easiest types of space to implement? Why?
11. What do you think of this? Why?
12. Would you say that the project has identified accurately the worst forms of exploitation in child labor in most of the cases or just in some? Which yes and which no and why?
13. Have you had access to the monitoring system of the project? What did you think about it?
14. Do you think the project's monitoring system is efficient and responds to the informative needs required? Why?
15. Do you believe this Project is cost-efficient based on the range of activities and the direct and long-term impact it pursues? Why?

16. Have you been able to perceive to date some kind of impact of the project in its beneficiaries, in the community, in the educational system or in the final achievements of the project? Which?
17. What would you say is the impact the project has had on the government sector, especially concerning educational aspects and prevention of child labor? Give examples.
18. Have you been able to perceive if there are any new trends to which the project should respond in order to improve its assertiveness and relevance? Which?
19. Have you been able to perceive if there are any kinds of new opportunities which the project should count on to increase its impact? Which?
20. Halfway through the life of the project, would you be able to indicate a good practice that could be replicated in other areas or which could contribute innovative solutions for the current status of the problem? Which?
21. Please describe briefly how you perceive the involvement of local authorities and of the Central Government with the project. What benefits can you perceive in this involvement to eradicate child labor and trafficking? What aspects should be strengthened or improved?
22. What would you say have been the main challenges and opportunities of the project in starting and maintaining coordination with you? MINED?

## **ANNEX D: GUIDE 4—LOCAL PERSONNEL**

---

1. What is your role within the existing coordination between the community and this Project?
2. Which do you think were the factors that favored its participation?
3. Do you believe that the assumptions and realities on which the project was based at the beginning are still the same? Or has anything changed? Identify what is still the same and what changed.
4. What are the main strategies of the project, designed to prevent child labor and trafficking? Why are these strategies appropriate?
5. What would you say are the obstacles and threats that the project faces in its fight against child labor?
6. Do you believe that the project design is appropriate for the cultural, economic and political context in which it operates? Why?
7. How would you say the project fits with other government initiatives and those of other organizations with similar objectives?
8. Describe what criteria were used to select the scope of action of the project, the geographical areas and the beneficiaries.
9. Could you identify what other types of initiatives and/or methodologies should be included in the project?
10. According to your perception, do you believe that the educational interventions of the project, such as the creation of spaces for boys and girls and spaces for adolescents and the distribution of resources and educational material have been effective to prevent child labor and trafficking? Why do you think the spaces have been effective? Or not?
11. The creation of the spaces has been the newest experience in the project. What do you think is achieved with the creation and the implementation of these new spaces?
12. With regard to the needs of the population to be intervened, do you think that the project responds to all or most of these needs or only to some?
13. How would you say that the spaces contribute to increasing educational opportunities, the feeling of belonging to the community, the development of communities and to alerting about child labor risks?
14. How would you say that the spaces contribute to increasing educational opportunities, the feeling of belonging to the community, the development of communities and to alerting about child labor risks?

15. Do you believe that the project has been able to identify accurately boys, girls and adolescents at risk or already enrolled in child labor in the areas of agriculture, domestic chores, drug trafficking and sales, illegal activities in tourist resorts in the country and sexual work?
16. What do you think of this? Why?
17. Would you say that the project has identified accurately the worst forms of exploitation in child labor in most of the cases or just in some? Which yes and which no and why?
18. Could you share a lesson learned in general or by sector, about the kinds of effectiveness of the project?
19. Do you believe that the financial and human resources of the project are sufficient or appropriate to achieve the desired results?
20. What other alternatives are there to strengthen or improve these resources?
21. Have you been able to perceive to date some kind of impact of the project in its beneficiaries, in the community, in the educational system or in the final achievements of the project? Which?
22. (If not spontaneous) Have the school grades of Project beneficiaries changed? Are they the same? Or have they gotten worse? Ask them to show cases in the grade records.
23. Comparing Project beneficiaries with children and adolescents outsider the project, who have better school performance? Why?
24. What is your opinion about the courses offered by the Vocational Center for adolescents? Elaborate.
25. What are these vocational courses missing? Why?
26. What would you say is the impact the project has had on the government sector, especially concerning educational aspects and prevention of child labor? Give examples.
27. How do you think the education component of the project has been received in the communities and the Government? Is it perceived, for example, as something they could implement or replicate themselves in the future?
28. Have you been able to perceive if there are any new trends to which the project should respond in order to improve its assertiveness and relevance? Which?
29. Have you been able to perceive if there are any kinds of new opportunities which the project should count on to increase its impact? Which?

30. Halfway through the life of the project, would you be able to indicate a good practice that could be replicated in other areas or which could contribute innovative solutions for the current status of the problem? Which?
31. Please describe briefly how you perceive the involvement of local authorities and of the Central Government with the project. What benefits can you perceive in this involvement to eradicate child labor and trafficking? What aspects should be strengthened or improved?

This page intentionally left blank.

## **ANNEX E: GUIDE 5—COMMUNITY LEADERS**

---

Explain objectives. Ask for authorization to record the interview

1. Are you acquainted with Project “Entérate”, operating in your community?
2. Have you had any active participation in this Project? Which?
3. Do you believe that the project design is appropriate for the cultural, economic and political context in which it operates? Why?
4. How would you say the project fits with other government initiatives and those of other organizations with similar objectives?
5. Do you know how they select the place and the children and adolescents to participate in this Project? How?
6. Do you know if a boy, girl or adolescent without a birth certificate can enter as Project beneficiary? What do you think of that?
7. In your opinion, are these beneficiary selection criteria correct or not? Why?
8. Could you identify what other types of initiatives and/or methodologies should be included in the project?
9. According to your perception, do you believe that the educational interventions of the project, such as the creation of spaces for boys and girls and spaces for adolescents and the distribution of resources and educational material have been effective to prevent child labor and trafficking? Why do you think the spaces have been effective? Or not?
10. With regard to the needs of the population to be intervened, do you think that the project responds to all or most of these needs or only to some?
11. How would you say that the spaces contribute to increasing educational opportunities, the feeling of belonging to the community, the development of communities and to alerting about child labor risks?
12. Do you believe that the project has been able to identify accurately boys, girls and adolescents at risk or already enrolled in child labor in the areas of agriculture, domestic chores, drug trafficking and sales, illegal activities in tourist resorts in the country and sexual work?
13. Would you say that the project has identified accurately the worst forms of exploitation in child labor in most of the cases or just in some? Which yes and which no and why?
14. Could you share a lesson learned in your community about the effectiveness of the project?

15. Do you believe that the financial and human resources of the project are sufficient or appropriate to achieve the desired results?
16. What other alternatives are there to strengthen or improve these resources?
17. Have you been able to perceive to date some kind of impact of the project in its beneficiaries, in the community, in the educational system or in the final achievements of the project? Which?
18. What has been (if any) the influence and impact of the project in the organizations that work in eradicating child labor and trafficking? Give examples.
19. What would you say is the impact the project has had on the government sector, especially concerning educational aspects and prevention of child labor? Give examples.
20. Have you been able to perceive if there are any new trends to which the project should respond in order to improve its assertiveness and relevance? Which?
21. Have you been able to perceive if there are any kinds of new opportunities which the project should count on to increase its impact? Which?
22. Could you mention a good practice that could be replicated in other areas or that could contribute innovative Solutions to the current status of the problem? Which?
23. Please describe briefly how you perceive the involvement of local authorities and of the Central Government with the project. What benefits can you perceive in this involvement to eradicate child labor and trafficking? What aspects should be strengthened or improved?
24. Does the community agree with the project or not? Why?
25. Have you attended any activity of the project? Which?
26. What did you think about it?
27. What is your opinion about what the project pursues, rescuing working children and adolescents or preventing child labor? Is there anything with which you do not agree? What is that?
28. Do you believe that local authorities are aware of the risks of child labor? Why?
29. Do you believe that beneficiaries' parents are satisfied with the project? Or not? Why?
30. Do you really think that there was a real change in the thinking of the parents involved with the project for them to change their minds about putting or allowing their children to work?
31. And what do the parents of the community in general think about it?

32. Do you believe the project really helps to remove children and adolescents from works to which they should not be subjected? Give examples.
33. Do you think that the project helps children and adolescents who have abandoned school to go back to it? Give examples.
34. Do you know the courses offered by the Vocational Center through the project? What is your opinion about them?

This page intentionally left blank.

## **ANNEX F: GUIDE 6—BENEFICIARIES' PARENTS**

---

1. Are you acquainted with Project *Entérate*, operating in your community?
2. Have you had any active participation in this project? Which?
3. Do you have a son or daughter who is beneficiary of the project?
4. Before enrolling in the project, did your son or daughter worked, whether in agriculture, domestic service or other activities? If yes, in what did he/she work? How many hours per day?
5. Does your son/daughter currently work? If yes, how many hours?
6. Please tell me how it was that your son/daughter joined the project.
7. Do you believe this Project is adequate for the cultural, economic and political context of this community? Why?
8. Do you know how they select the place and the children and adolescents to participate in this Project How?
9. Do you know if a boy, girl or adolescent without a birth certificate can enter as Project beneficiary? What do you think of that?
10. In your opinion, are these beneficiary selection criteria correct or not? Why?
11. Could you identify what other types of initiatives and/or methodologies should be included in the project?
12. According to your perception, do you believe that the educational interventions of the project, such as the creation of spaces for NNAs and the distribution of resources and educational material have been effective to prevent child labor and trafficking? Why do you think the spaces have been effective? Or not?
13. With regard to the needs of the population that participate in the project, do you think that the project responds to all or most of these needs or only to some? To which?
14. What benefits or good things do you see in the project? How has it benefitted your son/daughter? Give examples.
15. What negative aspects you see in the project? Give examples.
16. Do you believe that the children and adolescents that enter this Project improve their learning in school? Give examples. Ask for grades.
17. Do you think that the project helps children and adolescents who had abandoned school to go back to it? Give examples.

18. Do you think that the children and adolescents should work? In what conditions? Are these conditions possible? Are they real?
19. How would you say that the spaces contribute to increasing educational opportunities, the feeling of belonging to the community, the development of communities and to alerting about child labor risks?
20. Could you share a lesson learned in your community about the effectiveness of the project?
21. Do you believe that the financial and human resources of the project are sufficient or appropriate to achieve the desired results?
22. What other alternatives are there to strengthen or improve these resources?
23. Have you been able to perceive to date some kind of impact of the project in its beneficiaries, in the community, in the educational system or in the final achievements of the project? Which?
24. Have you attended any activity of the project? Which? What did you think about it?
25. Does the community agree with the project or not? Why?
26. And what about you? Are you pleased or not? Why?

## ANNEX G: GUIDE 7—BENEFICIARY CHILDREN OF THE PROJECT

---

Explain objectives. Ask for authorization to record the interview

1. Are you acquainted with the *Entérate* Project operating in your community?
2. Do you participate in these spaces?
3. Tell me how you participate. Elaborate.
4. Do you go to school? At what time?
5. What time do you come here?
6. Do you come every day?
7. When you are unable to attend, what are the reasons? Ask if it is due to a responsibility.
8. Do you like being here? Why?
9. What do you like to do most?
10. What do you like to do the least?
11. What things would you like this space to have that it doesn't?
12. How are your grades at school?
13. Before coming here, how were your grades? Good, poor or fair?
14. Have you worked for money? That is, did you or your parents get paid for work such as sowing or gathering harvests, cleaning houses, running errands or accompanying persons? (if he/she worked) Tell me what you used to do and how much you were paid. How many hours?
15. (If he/she worked) Did you like to do that work? Why?
16. And now? Do you work? What do you do? How many hours?
17. (For those who have not worked yet) At what age do you think you will work?
18. (For all) At what age do you think one should start working? Why?
19. What do your parents say about at what age one should start working?
20. What work would you like to do? Why?

21. Does your teacher at school agree with your coming here? What does he/she say to you?
22. And do your parents like for you to come here? What do they say to you?
23. Is there anyone who doesn't like you to come here? Who? What does he/she say to you?

## ANNEX H: GUIDE 8—ADOLESCENT BENEFICIARIES AND FORMER BENEFICIARIES OF THE PROJECT

---

Explain objectives. Ask for authorization to record the interview

1. Are you acquainted with the *Entérate* Project operating in your community?
2. Do you participate in these spaces?
3. Tell me how you participate. Elaborate (resources and material he/she receives, etc.)
4. Do you go to school? At what time?
5. Have you ever quit school? What was the reason?
6. How come you went back to school (if he/she went back)?
7. At what time you begin here?
8. Do you come every day?
9. When you are unable to attend, what are the reasons? Ask if it is due to a responsibility.
10. Do you like being here? Why?
11. What do you like to do most?
12. What do you like to do the least?
13. Do you take courses at the Vocational Center?
14. What courses have you taken or are taking?
15. Do you like those courses? Why?
16. What are the teachers like? Would you say you learn what they teach you or not?
17. What is the best part of the courses at the Vocational center? Why?
18. What do you like the least in the courses at the Vocational center? Why?
19. Do you think that when you leave you will be able to work with something they taught you here?
20. What things would you like this space to have that it doesn't?
21. How are your grades at school?

22. Before coming here, how were your grades? Good, poor or fair?
23. Have you worked for money? That is, did you or your parents get paid for work such as sowing or gathering harvests, cleaning houses, running errands or accompanying persons? (If he/she worked) tell me what you used to do and how much you were paid. How many hours?
24. (If he/she worked) Did you like to do that work? Why?
25. And now? Do you work? In what? How many hours?
26. (For those who have not worked yet) At what age do you think you will work?
27. (For all) At what age do you think one should start working? Why?
28. What do your parents say about at what age one should start working?
29. In what would you like to work? Why?
30. Does your teacher at school agree with your coming here? What does he/she say to you?
31. And do your parents like you to come here? What do they say to you?
32. Is there anyone who doesn't like you to come here? Who? What does he/she say to you?

For former beneficiaries

33. Ask the foregoing questions using the past tense. Add the following:
34. What was the best thing this Project gave you? Why?
35. What was missing in this Project? Why?
36. According to your experience and that of your classmates, would you say this Project really helps to prevent children and adolescents from being forced to work? Why? Give examples.
37. According to your experience and that of your classmates, would you say this Project really helps NNAs to continue studying and not to abandon school? Why? Give examples.

## ANNEX I TERMS OF REFERENCE

---

### Terms of Reference for the Independent Midterm Evaluation of Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor Through Education in Nicaragua: *Entérate* Project

<b>Cooperative Agreement Number:</b>	IL-17759-08-75-K
<b>Financing Agency:</b>	U.S. Department of Labor
<b>Grantee Organization:</b>	American Institutes for Research
<b>Dates of Project Implementation:</b>	October 1, 2008–November 30, 2011
<b>Type of Evaluation:</b>	Independent Midterm Evaluation
<b>Evaluation Field Work Dates:</b>	April 5–April 19, 2010
<b>Preparation Date of TOR:</b>	February 2, 2010
<b>Total Project Funds from USDOL Based on Cooperative Agreement:</b>	US\$5,000,000 Matching Funds: US\$716,959
<b>Vendor for Evaluation Contract:</b>	ICF Macro Headquarters 11785 Beltsville Drive Calverton, MD 20705 Tel: (301) 572-0200 Fax: (301) 572-0999

## I BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

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

Since 1995, the U.S. Congress has appropriated over \$780 million to USDOL for efforts to combat exploitive child labor internationally. This funding has been used to support technical cooperation projects to combat exploitive child labor in more than 80 countries around the world. Technical cooperation projects funded by USDOL range from targeted action programs in specific sectors of work to more comprehensive programs that support national efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor as defined by ILO Convention 182. USDOL-funded child labor elimination projects generally seek to achieve five major goals:

1. Withdrawing or preventing children from involvement in exploitive child labor through the provision of direct educational services.
2. Strengthening policies on child labor and education, the capacity of national institutions to combat child labor, and formal and transitional education systems that encourage children engaged in or at risk of engaging in exploitive labor to attend school.

3. Raising awareness of the importance of education for all children and mobilizing a wide array of actors to improve and expand education infrastructures.
4. Supporting research and the collection of reliable data on child labor.
5. Ensure the long-term sustainability of these efforts.

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

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

In the appropriations to USDOL for international child labor technical cooperation, the U.S. Congress directed the majority of the funds to support the two following programs:<sup>1</sup>

## **1 International Labour Organization International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC)**

Since 1995, the U.S. Congress has earmarked some \$450 million to support the International Labour Organization International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC), making the U.S. Government the leading donor to the program. USDOL-funded ILO-IPEC projects to combat child labor generally fall into one of several categories: comprehensive, national Timebound Programs (TBP) to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in a set time frame; less comprehensive Country Programs; sector-specific projects; data collection and research projects; and international awareness raising projects. In general, most projects include “direct action” components that are interventions to remove or prevent children from involvement in exploitive and hazardous work. One of the major strategies used by IPEC projects is to increase children’s access to and participation in formal and non-formal education. Most IPEC projects also have a capacity-building component to assist in building a sustainable base for long-term elimination of exploitive child labor.

## **2 Child Labor Education Initiative**

Since 2001, the U.S. Congress has provided some \$269 million to USDOL to support the Child Labor Education Initiative (EI), which focuses on the elimination of the worst forms of child labor through the provision of education opportunities. These projects are being implemented by a wide range of international and non-governmental organizations as well as for-profit firms. USDOL typically awards EI cooperative agreements through a competitive bid process.

---

<sup>1</sup> In 2007, the U.S. Congress did not direct USDOL’s appropriations for child labor elimination projects to either of these two programs. That year, USDOL allocated \$60 million for child labor elimination projects through a competitive process.

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

## Other Initiatives

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

## Project Context

In Nicaragua, children work in the agricultural sector, especially in the production of crops such as coffee, bananas, sugarcane, and tobacco. Children also work crushing stone, extracting pumice, mining for gold, and collecting mollusks and shellfish. Children in Nicaragua are also vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation, and Nicaragua is a source and transit country for children trafficked for sexual exploitation. Some children are trafficked within Nicaragua for sex tourism and to work as domestic servants. Children, especially girls, from poor rural areas, are among the most vulnerable to trafficking and being forced into prostitution.<sup>2</sup>

USDOL has provided US\$6.96 million to combat exploitive child labor in Nicaragua, as well as an additional US\$22,295,285 on regional efforts in Central America that included Nicaragua. Previous projects funded by USDOL in Nicaragua include three ILO-IPEC projects, which totaled US\$1.96 million, and addressed child labor in agriculture and in garbage dumps. With regard to the regional projects funded by USDOL, Nicaragua participated in a 7-year US\$8.8 million project implemented by ILO-IPEC which concluded in April 2009, and sought to combat commercial sexual exploitation through a variety of activities, including capacity building and legal reform. The project targeted 713 children for withdrawal and 657 children for prevention from commercial sexual exploitation in Central America. Nicaragua also participated in the 4-year regional *Primero Aprendo* project, which ended in March 2009 and was implemented by CARE. This project worked to strengthen the government and civil society's capacity to combat child labor through education and withdrew or prevented 4,105 children from exploitive child labor.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> USDOL, "The U.S. Department of Labor's 2008 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor," 2009, p. 267: <http://www.dol.gov/ilab/programs/ocft/PDF/2008OCFTreport.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> USDOL, p. 269.

#### USDOL-Funded Projects in Nicaragua<sup>4</sup>

Years	Grantee	Project	Amount
1998–2000	ILO-IPEC	Combating Child Labor in Central America and the Dominican Republic	\$150,000
2000–2004	ILO-IPEC	Combating Child Labor in the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labor in the Farming and Stockbreeding Sectors in Nicaragua	\$680,000
2000–2005	ILO-IPEC	Elimination of Child Labor at La Chureca Garbage Dump Yard in Managua	\$1,130,000
2008–2011	American Institutes for Research	Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor Through Education in Nicaragua, <i>Entérate</i> Project	\$5,000,000
1998–2000	ILO-IPEC	Combating Child Labor in Central America and the Dominican Republic	\$330,000
1999–2004	ILO-IPEC	Statistical Program for Advocacy on the Elimination of Child Labor and the Protection of Working Children in Central America	\$2,210,000
1999–2004	ILO-IPEC	Combating Child Labor in the Coffee Sector	\$6,110,000
2003–2006	ILO-IPEC	Combating Child Labor in the Commercial Agricultural Sector Prevention and Progressive Elimination of Child Labor in Agriculture in Central America, Panama and the Dominican Republic (Phase I and II)	\$4,120,000
2002–2006	ILO-IPEC	Stop the Exploitation: Contribution to the Prevention and Elimination of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Central America, Panama , and the Dominican Republic	\$3,795,285
2004–2009	CARE	Combating Child Labor Through Education in Central America and the Dominican Republic, <i>Primero Aprendo</i>	\$5,730,000
<b>TOTAL Nicaragua and Regional</b>			<b>\$29,255,285</b>
<b>Nicaragua Only Total</b>			<b>\$6,960,000</b>
<b>*Regional Total</b>			<b>\$22,295,285</b>

The Government of Nicaragua has ratified ILO Conventions 182 and 138, and is an ILO-IPEC participant country. The law sets the minimum age for employment at 14 years. Children of age 14 through 16 years must have parental permission and be under the supervision of the Labor Ministry in order to work. There are also restrictions on the number of hours per day and per week that children 14 to 18 years of age can work. The Ministry of Labor has published a list of hazardous work activities from which minors are prohibited, and the law provides for fines in cases of violations of child labor laws. Though prostitution is legal for individuals 14 years and older, the new penal code, published in May 2008, increased penalties related to the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Trafficking of children under 18 years is penalized by 10 to 12 years in prison.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> USDOL, “Project Status—The Americas,” <http://www.dol.gov/ilab/projects/americas/project-americas.htm>.

<sup>5</sup> USDOL, p. 269.

The Ministry of Labor is responsible for the enforcement of laws related to child labor. The Ministry of Government is also responsible for combating trafficking, operates an anti-trafficking unit, and leads the National Coalition against Trafficking in Persons. In addition, the Government's Policy on Special Protection for Children and Adolescents includes special protections for victims of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking in persons, and the Government of Nicaragua participates in regional activities to combat sexual exploitation and trafficking of children and adolescents. The Government has provided oversight to the 5-year National Plan against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (2003–2008) and a 10-year National Action Plan for Children and Adolescents, and the Ministry of Labor supports a 10-year plan (2007–2016) to end child labor that requires that all government programs and projects include child labor prevention and eradication initiatives. First Lady Rosario Murillo, in coordination with the Ministries of Family, Health, Education and Government, launched a child labor initiative called Program Amor (Love) that targets 25,000 street children and their families primarily in Managua. The program aims to eliminate child labor and provide education for children and vocational training for parents.<sup>6</sup>

### **Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labor Through Education in Nicaragua: *Entérate* Project**

On October 1, 2008, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) received a 4-year Cooperative Agreement worth \$5 million from USDOL to implement an EI project in Nicaragua, aimed at withdrawing and preventing children from exploitive child labor by expanding access to and improving the quality of basic education and supporting the five goals of the USDOL project as outlined above. AIR, in association with the *Asociación de Educación y Comunicación La Cuculmeca (La Cuculmeca)*, and *Instituto de Promoción Humana de Somoto (INPRHU-SOMOTO)*, was awarded the project through a competitive bid process. As stipulated in the Cooperative Agreement, the project targets 5,045 children for withdrawal and 5,000 children for prevention from exploitive child labor in the Departments of Madriz, Jinotega, and Managua. The project mostly targets children working on plantations, and some children working in garbage dumps, and will provide them with education and training opportunities. The Project Goal is to contribute to the elimination of exploitive child labor in Nicaragua. The Project's Immediate Objectives are to—

- Withdraw or prevent children from involvement in exploitive child labor through the provision of direct education and training services.
- Strengthen capacity of national institutions to combat child labor.
- Raise awareness of the importance of education for all children and mobilize a wide array of actors to improve and expand education infrastructures.
- Support research and the collection of reliable data on child labor.
- Ensure long-term sustainability of these efforts.

---

<sup>6</sup> USDOL, p. 269.

The project main activities are to—

- Develop public sector outreach and partnership with NGOs to provide a variety of educational services to beneficiary children.
- Strengthen CNEPTI (the National Commission coordinating the elimination of child labor in Nicaragua) and build its capacity to leverage resources and raise child labor awareness.
- Implement a sustainable child labor monitoring/inspection system, particularly the capacity for inspection at the municipal level.
- Develop an innovative corporate social responsibility strategy with the private sector and coffee growers.
- Execute an awareness-raising strategy that includes a program offering communication and leadership training, in addition to conducting public service announcements.
- Work with local law enforcement to strengthen its capacity to enforce existing child labor laws.
- Conduct research to better inform prevention and mitigation strategies by the government and other interested stakeholders.

## **II PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF EVALUATION**

OCFT-funded projects are subject to midterm and final evaluations. The *Entérate* Project in Nicaragua went into implementation in October 2008 and is due for midterm evaluation in 2010.

### **Scope of Evaluation**

The scope of the evaluation includes a review and assessment of all activities carried out under the USDOL Cooperative Agreement with AIR. All activities that have been implemented from project launch through time of evaluation fieldwork should be considered. The evaluation should assess the achievements of the project toward reaching its targets and objectives as outlined in the cooperative agreement and project document.

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

## **Midterm Evaluation Purpose**

The purpose of the midterm evaluation is to—

1. Assess the relevance of the project in the cultural, economic, and political context in the country, as well as the extent to which it is suited to the priorities and policies of the host country government.
2. Determine whether the project is on track toward meeting its objectives and identify the challenges encountered in doing so.
3. Provide recommendations toward how the project can successfully overcome challenges to meet its objectives and targets by the time of project end.
4. Assess the effectiveness of the project's strategies and the project's achievements, strengths and weaknesses in project implementation and identify areas in need of improvement.
5. Assess whether project activities can be deemed sustainable at the local and national level and among implementing organizations, and identify steps that can be taken to enhance the sustainability of project components and objectives.

The evaluation should also identify emerging lessons learned, potential good practices, and models of intervention that will serve to inform future child labor projects and policies in Nicaragua and elsewhere, as appropriate. It will also serve as an important accountability function for USDOL and AIR and provide direction in making any revisions to work plans, strategies, objectives, partnership arrangements, and resource allocations that may be needed in order for the project to increase its effectiveness and meet its objectives. Recommendations should focus on ways in which the project can move forward in order to reach its objectives and make any necessary preparations or adjustments in order to promote the sustainability of project activities. The evaluation should also assess government involvement and commitment in its recommendations for sustainability.

## **Intended Users**

This midterm evaluation should provide USDOL, AIR, and other project stakeholders an assessment of the project's experience in implementation and its impact on project beneficiaries. USDOL/OCFT and AIR management will use the evaluation results as a learning tool regarding the relevance of the approach and strategy being used by the project. The evaluation results should also be used by AIR, the Government of Nicaragua and other current or potential partners to enhance effectiveness in the implementation. Therefore, the evaluation should provide credible and reliable information in order to suggest how the project could enhance its impact during the remaining time of implementation, ensuring the sustainability of the benefits that have been or will be generated.

The final report will be published on the USDOL website, so the report should be written as a standalone document, providing the necessary background information for readers who are unfamiliar with the details of the project.

## **Evaluation Questions**

Specific questions that the evaluation should seek to answer are found below, according to five categories of issues. Evaluators may add, remove, or shift evaluation questions, but the final list will be subject to approval by USDOL and ICF Macro.

### **Relevance**

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

1. Have the project assumptions been accurate and realistic? How, if applicable, have critical assumptions been changed?
2. Does the project design seem to be adequately supporting the five EI goals? If not, which ones are not being supported and why not?
3. What are the project's main strategies/activities designed toward meeting objectives in withdrawing/preventing children from WFCL? Please assess the relevance of these strategies.
4. What are the main obstacles or barriers that the project has identified as important to addressing child labor in this country? (i.e., poverty, lack of educational infrastructure, lack of demand for education, etc.) Has the project been successful in addressing these obstacles?
5. Is the project design appropriate for the cultural, economic, and political context in which it works?
6. How has the project design fit within existing initiatives, both by the government and other organizations, to combat child labor?
7. Please assess the relevance of the project's criteria for selecting program regions and sectors and subsequently project beneficiaries.
8. Assess the project's strategy of public-private sector cooperation.
9. Assess the project's ability to cooperate with the Government of Nicaragua, both at the national and local levels.
10. What other major design and/or implementation issues should be brought to the attention of the grantee and USDOL?

## **Effectiveness**

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

1. At midterm, is the project on track in terms of meeting its targets/objectives? If not, what seem to be the factors contributing to delays and how far behind are they in terms of target numbers and objectives?
2. Assess the effectiveness of the “direct action” interventions, including the education interventions provided to children (e.g., non-formal education, vocational training, and the provision of formal school supplies and scholarship program). Did the provision of these services result in children being withdrawn/prevented from exploitive child labor/trafficking and ensure that they were involved in relevant educational programs?
3. Assess the effectiveness of the services in meeting the needs of the target population identified in the project document including children *prevented* and *withdrawn* from labor/trafficking.
4. Assess the effectiveness of the specific models (e.g., *Entérate a Través de Mi Voz*, SCREAM methodology, *EXCELENCIA*, and *Primero Aprendo* models) on increasing educational opportunities, creating community ownership, increasing the capacity of communities, and increasing awareness/understanding of the dangers of child labor.
5. Has the project accurately identified and targeted children engaged in, or at risk of working in, the target sectors identified in the project strategy of plantation agriculture and urban centers? In a larger sense, did they accurately identify the worst forms of child labor in the country?
6. Are there any sector-specific lessons learned regarding the types and effectiveness of the services provided?
7. What monitoring systems does the project use for tracking the work status of children? Is it feasible and effective? Why or why not? How does the project monitor work status after school and during holidays?
8. What are the management strengths, including technical and financial (controls), of this project?
9. What management areas, including technical and financial, need to be improved in order to promote success in meeting project objectives?
10. Is the project addressing and perhaps trying to fill in the gaps of the national school system’s half-day length of the school day? Is the project’s approach effective?

11. How is the project addressing issues related to migration in agriculture, particularly children who migrate with their families? Is the project able to assist those children, and if so, how?
12. Recommend ways in which plantation owners can encourage children's education while still being economically competitive.

### **Efficiency**

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

1. Is the project cost-efficient in terms of the scale of the interventions, and the expected direct and long-term impact?
2. Were the project strategies efficient in terms of the financial and human resources used, as compared to its outputs? What alternatives are there?
3. Were the monitoring and reporting system designed efficiently to meet the needs and requirements of the project?

### **Impact**

The evaluation should assess the positive and negative changes produced by the project—intended and unintended, direct and indirect, as well as any changes in the social and economic environment in the country—as reported by respondents. Specifically, it should address:

1. What appears to be the project's impact to date, if any, on individual beneficiaries (children, parents, teachers, etc.)?
2. What appears to be the project's impact to date, if any, on partners or other organizations working on child labor in the country (NGOs, community groups, schools, national child labor committee, etc.)?
3. What appears to be the project's impact to date, if any, on government and policy structures in terms of system-wide change on education and child labor issues?
4. If applicable, assess the impact, to the extent possible, of project activities/strategies on education quality (both formal and non-formal interventions). How has the education quality improvement component been received by the government and the communities?
5. Assess the working conditions of the children still working on plantations and in urban centers, after the project intervention.
6. Are there any emerging trends or issues that the project should and/or could respond to in order to increase the impact and relevance of the project? Are there any emerging opportunities to take the work further/have greater impact?

7. At midterm, are there good practices by the project or the implementing partners that might be replicated in other areas, or considered to be innovative solutions to the current situation?

### **Sustainability**

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

1. Have an exit strategy and sustainability plan been integrated into the project design? Will it likely be effective?
2. How successful has the project been in leveraging non-project resources? Are there prospects for sustainable funding?
3. What have been the major challenges and successes in initiating and maintaining partnerships in support of the project, including with other USDOL-funded projects?
4. Assess the level of involvement of the local/national government in the project and how this involvement has built government capacity and commitment to work on child labor elimination.
5. Has there been coordination with government programs that address child labor or other children's services, such as the *Programa Amor*?
6. What have been the major challenges and opportunities, if any, of initiating and maintaining coordination with the host country government, particularly the Ministries of Labor, Education, Agriculture and Forestry, and Family, Adolescence and Childhood, as well as other government agencies active in addressing related children's issues?
7. What have been the major challenges and opportunities, if any, of implementing coordination with the ILO-IPEC?
8. What have been some of the challenges and opportunities in working with international and/or multilateral organizations?
9. What have been some of the challenges and opportunities in working with other national NGOs and/or community-based organizations present in the country?
10. What additional steps need to be taken in order to promote the sustainability of project components?

### **III EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND TIMEFRAME**

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

#### **A Approach**

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

1. Methods of data collection and stakeholder perspectives will be triangulated for as many as possible of the evaluation questions.
2. Efforts will be made to include parents' and children's voices and beneficiary participation generally, using child-sensitive approaches to interviewing children following the ILO-IPEC guidelines on research with children on the worst forms of child labor (<http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=3026>) and UNICEF Principles for Ethical Reporting on Children ([http://www.unicef.org/media/media\\_tools\\_guidelines.html](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_tools_guidelines.html)).
3. Gender and cultural sensitivity will be integrated in the evaluation approach.
4. Consultations will incorporate a degree of flexibility to maintain a sense of ownership of the stakeholders and beneficiaries, allowing additional questions to be posed that are not included in the TOR, whilst ensuring that key information requirements are met.
5. As far as possible, a consistent approach will be followed in each project site, with adjustments to be made for the different actors involved and activities conducted and the progress of implementation in each locality.

#### **B Midterm Evaluation Team**

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

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

## **C Data Collection Methodology**

### **1. Document Review**

- Pre-field visit preparation includes extensive review of relevant documents
- During fieldwork, documentation will be verified and additional documents may be collected
- Documents may include—
  - Project document and revisions,
  - Cooperative Agreement,
  - Technical Progress and Status Reports,
  - Project Logical Frameworks and Monitoring Plans,
  - Work plans,
  - Correspondence related to Technical Progress Reports,
  - Management Procedures and Guidelines,
  - Research or other reports undertaken (baseline studies, etc.), and
  - Project files (including school records) as appropriate.

### **2. Question Matrix**

Before beginning fieldwork, the evaluator will create a question matrix, which outlines the source of data from where the evaluator plans to collect information for each TOR question. This will help the evaluator make decisions as to how they are going to allocate their time in the field. It will also help the evaluator to ensure that they are exploring all possible avenues for data triangulation and to clearly note where their evaluation findings are coming from.

### **3. Interviews with Stakeholders**

Informational interviews will be held with as many project stakeholders as possible. Depending on the circumstances, these meetings will be one-on-one or group interviews. Technically, stakeholders are all those who have an interest in a project, for example, as implementers, direct and indirect beneficiaries, community leaders, donors, and government officials. Thus, it is anticipated that meetings will be held with—

- ILAB/OCFT Staff
- Headquarters, Country Director, Project Managers, and Field Staff of Grantee and Partner Organizations
- Government Ministry Officials and Local Government Officials
- Community leaders, members, and volunteers, including “community promoters”
- School teachers, assistants, school directors, education personnel
- Project beneficiaries (children withdrawn and prevented and their parents)
- International NGOs and multilateral agencies working in the area
- Other child protection and/or education organizations, committees and experts in the area
- Labor Reporting Officer at U.S. Embassy and USAID representative.

#### **4. Field Visits**

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

## **D Ethical Considerations and Confidentiality**

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

## **E Stakeholder Meeting**

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

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

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

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

## **F            Limitations**

Fieldwork for the evaluation will last two weeks, on average, and the evaluator will not have enough time to visit all project sites. As a result, the evaluator will not be able to take all sites into consideration when formulating their findings. All efforts will be made to ensure that the evaluator is visiting a representative sample of sites, including some that have performed well and some that have experienced challenges.

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

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

## G Timetable and Work Plan

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

Activity	Responsible Party	Proposed Date(s)
Phone interview with USDOL and Grantee Staff/Headquarters	ICF Macro, USDOL, Grantee, Evaluator	February 18
Desk Review	Evaluator	February–March
Question Matrix and Instruments due to ICF Macro/USDOL	Evaluator	March 5
Finalize TOR and submit to Grantee and USDOL	USDOL/ICF Macro/Evaluator	March 5
International Travel		April 4
Introductory Meetings with Project Staff and National Stakeholders	Evaluator	April 5
Field Site Visits	Evaluator	April 6–16
National Stakeholder Meeting		April 19
International Travel		April 20
Post-evaluation debrief call with USDOL		April 27
Draft report to ICF Macro for QC review	Evaluator	May 3
Draft report to USDOL & Grantee for 48 hour review	ICF Macro	May 5
Draft report released to stakeholders	ICF Macro	May 12
Comments due to ICF Macro	USDOL/Grantee & Stakeholders	May 26
Report revised and sent to ICF Macro	Evaluator	June 2
Revised report sent to USDOL	ICF Macro	June 3
Final approval of report	USDOL	June 17
Finalization & distribution of report	ICF Macro	July 8

## IV EXPECTED OUTPUTS/DELIVERABLES

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

- I. Table of Contents
- II. List of Acronyms
- III. Executive Summary (providing an overview of the evaluation, summary of main findings/lessons learned/good practices, and three key recommendations)
- IV. Evaluation Objectives and Methodology

- V. Project Description
- VI. Relevance
  - A. Findings—answering the TOR questions
  - B. Lessons Learned/Good Practices
- VII. Effectiveness
  - A. Findings—answering the TOR questions
  - B. Lessons Learned/Good Practices
- VIII. Efficiency
  - A. Findings—answering the TOR questions
  - B. Lessons Learned/Good Practices
- IX. Impact
  - A. Findings—answering the TOR questions
  - B. Lessons Learned/Good Practices
- X. Sustainability
  - A. Findings—answering the TOR questions
  - B. Lessons Learned/Good Practices
- XI. Recommendations and Conclusions
  - A. Key Recommendations—critical for successfully meeting project objectives
  - B. Other Recommendations—as needed
    - 1. Relevance
    - 2. Effectiveness
    - 3. Efficiency
    - 4. Impact
    - 5. Sustainability
- XII. Annexes—including list of documents reviewed; interviews/meetings/site visits; stakeholder workshop agenda and participants; TOR; etc.

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

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

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

After returning from fieldwork, the first draft evaluation report is due to ICF Macro on May 3, 2010, as indicated in the above timetable. A final draft is due one week after receipt of comments from ILAB/OCFT and stakeholders and is anticipated to be due on June 2, 2010, as indicated in the above timetable. All reports including drafts will be written in Spanish. A working draft and a final draft for publication will be translated into English by a professional translation firm to be determined.

## **V EVALUATION MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT**

ICF Macro has contracted with Julia Hasbún to conduct this evaluation. Ms. Hasbún conducted the midterm evaluation of an EI project in the Dominican Republic in 2009. She has a post-graduate degree in Social Research from the *Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo* and an undergraduate degree from the *Universidad Nacional Pedro Henríquez Ureña*, Santo Domingo, in Psychometry. Ms. Hasbún has over 18 years experience conducting regional and national evaluations in Latin America and the Caribbean. From 2003 to 2004, she conducted a regional public health evaluation which included field work in Nicaragua. The contractor/evaluator will work with OCFT, ICF Macro, and relevant AIR staff to evaluate this project.

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

ICF Macro or its subcontractors should contact Markus Broer, Corporate Monitor, AIR, 1000 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW, Washington, DC 20007, Phone: 202.403.5278, Email: mbroer@air.org, to initiate contact with field staff. The primary point of contact for the project in Nicaragua is María Ivette Fonseca López, Project Director, Colonia Independencia #298, Managua, Nicaragua, phone: +505 260-4556/7, email mfonseca@enterate.org.ni.