



**BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL LABOR AFFAIRS**  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

# **FINAL EVALUATION**

## **REDUCING INCIDENCE OF CHILD LABOR AND HARMFUL CONDITIONS OF WORK IN ECONOMIC STRENGTHENING (RICHES)**

Final Report Submitted May 5, 2022

**Grantee:** Grameen Foundation

**Project Duration:** December 2017 – February 2022

**Fiscal Year and Funding Level:** FY 2018-FY2021: \$1,872,000

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**Evaluation Fieldwork Dates:** January 31, 2022 – February 17, 2022



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This report describes in the final evaluation of the RICHES project. Fieldwork for this evaluation was conducted in January and February 2022. DevTech Systems, Inc. conducted this independent evaluation in collaboration with the project team and stakeholders and prepared the evaluation report according to the terms specified in its contract with the United States Department of Labor. The evaluation team would like to express sincere thanks to all the parties involved for their support and valuable contributions.



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Funding for this evaluation was provided by the United States Department of Labor under contract number 47QRAA20D006X. This material does 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.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABA-ROLI	American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative
ACW	Acceptable Conditions of Work
CL	Child Labor
CMEP	Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment (Philippines)
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry (Philippines)
HCW	Harmful Child Work
ILAB	Bureau of International Labor Affairs
KII	Key Informant Interview
MFI	Microfinance Institution
OCFT	Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking
PSA	Pre-Situational Analysis
RICHES	Reducing Incidence of Child labor and Harmful conditions of work in Economic Strengthening
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
SPM	Social Performance Management
SPTF	Social Performance Task Force
TEC	Technical Experts Committee
UACW	Unacceptable Conditions of Work
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
WEE	Women's Economic Empowerment

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Globally, approximately 160 million children—more than double the entire child population of the United States—are engaged in child labor. Nearly half of these children engage in hazardous work that endangers their safety, health, and moral development. Nearly three-quarters of all child labor (CL) and 83 percent of CL among children ages five to eleven takes place within their own family businesses. From December 2017 to February 2022, the Reducing Incidence of Child labor and Harmful conditions of work in Economic Strengthening initiatives (RICHES) project worked to combat child labor within family enterprises. RICHES was funded by the Department of Labor’s Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking (OCFT) and was implemented by Grameen Foundation in partnership with the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative (ABA-ROLI). The project was designed to support women-led enterprises to improve livelihoods responsibly without engaging in unacceptable conditions of work (UACW) or child labor. The RICHES project was tasked to develop a toolkit for policy makers and service providers who work with women entrepreneurs to promote the goal of women’s economic empowerment (WEE) without UACW or CL. The toolkit was piloted in two countries--El Salvador and the Philippines—and with select other stakeholders globally.

The final performance evaluation of RICHES is intended to provide OCFT, Grameen Foundation, ABA-ROLI, project stakeholders, and other stakeholders working to combat child labor, with an assessment of the RICHES project’s performance and an understanding of the factors driving the project’s results. The evaluation utilizes a mixed-methods approach, reflecting participatory principles and drawing on qualitative and quantitative data. All findings, and the evidence-based conclusions and recommendations that follow, reflect the triangulation of information across multiple data sources. Quantitative project performance data, drawn from the Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (CMEP), was complemented by qualitative data solicited from key informant interviews (KII) and stakeholder workshops.

### KEY EVALUATION RESULTS

*Relevance:* The pre-situational analysis conducted by the RICHES team facilitated a deep understanding of Harmful Child Work (HCW), unacceptable conditions of work, and the intersection of child labor and WEE initiatives in the pilot countries of El Salvador and the Philippines and globally. The RICHES team made the pivotal decision to substitute the use of CL with HCW, to more clearly describe and target harmful and unsafe work for children, as opposed to safe or legal CL. As a result, the project was able to ensure that the toolkit is appropriate for a variety of contexts and accessible to WEE initiatives.

*Coherence:* In addition to conducting the pre-situational analysis (PSA) to understand the intersection of HCW and WEE initiatives, RICHES developed partnerships with multiple diverse stakeholders operating in this sector. These partnerships included existing organizations focusing on child labor, child protection, and WEE, networks of MFIs, and financial institutions, as well as government agencies supporting child labor

efforts and small and medium enterprises, Active engagement with this broad range of stakeholders allowed the project to align with a variety of stakeholders' initiatives.

*Effectiveness:* The RICHES project achieved the outcomes outlined in the CMEP, receiving high achievement ratings on all four outcomes. The project team implemented the recommendations of the Technical Expert Committee (TEC) and created a 'minimum package' of tools, allowing organizations to use the tools that meet their current needs and capacity.

*Efficiency:* After adjusting to the COVID-19 pandemic, the RICHES project successfully delivered all planned efforts in a generally efficient and timely manner. A costed extension of nine months facilitated the completion of planned work following delays incurred at the start of the pandemic. A total of \$372,000 in additional funds supported full implementation of TEC recommendations, promoted adjustments in response to COVID-19, and maximized achievement of Outcome 4. These additional time and monetary resources are viewed by the project and all interviewed stakeholders as necessary investments that directly facilitated the high level of project achievement.

*Sustainability:* Stakeholders are optimistic about the long-term impact and usage of the toolkit, thanks to its free availability online, easy incorporation into organizational practices, and the likely continued relevance of HCW in the long-term. These aspects were all strategically designed by the RICHES project to promote long-term sustainability. Stakeholders stated that a proof of concept, demonstrating the successful strategies used by the RICHES team and supported by evidence would be useful to attract potential new users of the toolkit. However, interviewed organizations emphasized the importance of the support they received from the RICHES team to successfully implement the toolkit during the pilot. The availability of a dedicated support team will end when the RICHES project closes. Interviewees noted that this may limit the successes of new organizations implementing the toolkit.

*Impact:* The high likelihood of generating positive impact is widely articulated among the pilot organizations. Stakeholders shared reports that women entrepreneurs were already changing perspectives—a likely precursor to behavior change—as a result of the pilot. That said, impact is defined as “higher-level effects” generated by the project. This necessarily goes beyond the initial project activities and individuals involved in the pilot, requiring the support of higher-level stakeholders, which may be difficult to achieve post-project. No interviewed stakeholders identified any unintended or negative impacts resulting from RICHES.



**Table 1. Performance Summary**

Outcome	Performance Summary	Rating
<b>Outcome 1. Increased understanding of child labor and acceptable conditions of work in the context of WEE initiatives.</b>	RICHS produced a rigorous PSA that assessed the intersection of CL, HCW, and WEE initiatives. The PSA was highly significant to developing the toolkit through the framework of HCW and targeted specifically to WEE. The PSA was formulated into three shorter, focused briefs (global, the Philippines, and El Salvador). Key PSA findings were presented in short videos, providing a medium that is quick and engaging to deploy. The PSA was universally described by interviewed stakeholders as a “foundational” document which is readily available and is anticipated to remain relevant in the medium- to long-term.	<b>Achievement:</b> High <b>Sustainability:</b> High
<b>Outcome 2. Increased availability of tools to integrate child labor awareness and acceptable conditions of work into WEE initiatives.</b>	13 modular guides and trainings and 46 unique tools were created at a high level of coherence with the PSA insights. Project implementers and experts express high satisfaction with the project’s responsiveness to country-level and stakeholder needs. The digitization of some tools and integration of data collection with open-source technology were responses to implementation constraints posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. By making the toolkit publicly available online and free of cost, RICHS eliminated a large barrier to organizations that could not have afforded a toolkit placed behind a paywall. The translation of the toolkit further increases its availability to new stakeholders.	<b>Achievement:</b> High <b>Sustainability:</b> High
<b>Outcome 3. Increased applicability, adaptability, and adoptability of tools to integrate child labor awareness and acceptable conditions of work into WEE initiatives.</b>	Stakeholders praised the applicability of the toolkit primarily for the HCW framing, the assessment tools, and the context-responsive interventions in pilot sites. In terms of adaptability, the phased “minimum package” approach and the flexibility to select tools based on each organization’s needs and capacity are key enabling factors. The tool’s adoptability is inherent to its open source/access feature as there are no fees nor access permissions required for organizations to integrate the materials into their capacity development and advocacy initiatives. While stakeholders are confident that the toolkit will continue to be relevant in the future, some limiting factors identified by stakeholders include resourcing challenges, such as lack of physical space and dedicated staff necessary to implement the toolkit, and the need for a larger sample size of pilots to gain further insight into whether the toolkit needs to be further refined, translated, or otherwise adapted to increase applicability in other contexts.	<b>Achievement:</b> High <b>Sustainability:</b> Above-Moderate

Outcome	Performance Summary	Rating
<p><b>Outcome 4. Increased awareness and adoption of tools to integrate child labor awareness and acceptable conditions of work into WEE initiatives by a broad range of stakeholders.</b></p>	<p>The project successfully disseminated the PSA and the toolkit and implemented its communication and outreach with strategic partners. Communication channels and partnerships to promote awareness and adoption of the tools post-project were also developed. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has diverted some stakeholders' bandwidth and resources to new pandemic-related priorities, which was beyond the project's power to control. While noting the ease with which the toolkit could be incorporated into their existing efforts, certain interviewed stakeholders shared they could not prioritize the toolkit as intended due to the urgency of new pandemic-related work.</p> <p>Interviewed stakeholders from pilot organizations noted several factors that limit the sustainability of the tools, such as the importance of providing financial resources for WEE initiatives and government agencies to continue working on HCW, as this requires dedicated resources internally and active cooperation externally.</p> <p>RICHES successfully engaged with higher-level actors and government groups (such as the Philippines Department of Labor and Employment and the Philippines Department of Trade and Industry) to promote broader utilization of the toolkit. Engaging additional higher-level actors requires an advocacy strategy spearheaded by a single organization, which is a role Grameen had filled until the closing of the RICHES project.</p>	<p><b>Achievement:</b> High <b>Sustainability:</b> Moderate</p>

## PROMISING PRACTICES

**Promising Practice 1. Coherent articulation of learning inputs, assessments, and concrete mitigating action and responses to harmful child work by stakeholder type to increase awareness and inspire concrete action toward achieving the project-level objective (integration of CL issues into WEE).** The PSA and the toolkit deliver context analysis, assessment indicators, and appropriate responses, weaving the ‘why,’ ‘how,’ and ‘so what’ on addressing risks of harmful child work within women’s economic initiatives. The insights and recommended action(s) are organized by stakeholder types (management, staff, and women entrepreneurs) to reflect their respective scale of actionable change and capacities.

**Promising Practice 2. Diversification of the types and modes of delivery of the toolkit to enhance project efficiency and effectiveness.** In addition to supporting project efficiency and effectiveness in the face of the pandemic, the diversified toolkit modalities (e.g. paper/printable, digitized, app-based) reflects deep understanding of the priorities, needs, and challenges faced by organizations and women entrepreneurs, and enhances toolkit usefulness and application.

**Promising Practice 3. Partnering with existing networks of organizations supporting WEE for leveraging reach and resources toward achieving the toolkit’s adaption and adoption by the broadest possible stakeholders.** The project strategically partnered with networks supporting women SMEs in the Philippines (for advocacy) and Nigeria (for the TEC and advocacy). Such organizations have a strategic influence on their members which was helpful to reach more potential toolkit users.

**Promising Practice 4. Government partnerships for high-impact policy-level adoption.** RICHES reached an understanding with the Philippines Department of Trade and Industry to use the education tools and show the project videos in its 1,363 business centers nationwide. RICHES also has a continuing discussion with the Philippines Department of Labor and Employment to identify strategic ways to integrate the tools with its policy and programs. Action by higher-level actors is critical for sustainable higher-level impact.

## LESSONS LEARNED

**Lesson 1: Increasing the understanding of child labor and acceptable conditions of work (ACW) in the context of WEE initiatives is most effective and relevant to stakeholders when framed through the lens of “harmful child work.”** Replacing the term “child labor” with “harmful child work” distinguished the difference from legal child work, enabling coherence in concepts, definitions, and measures at global and country levels and promotes applicability across different stakeholder groups and contexts. The concept of harmful child work is less controversial and avoids negative portrayals of women entrepreneurs and households at risk of conducting harmful practices because of poverty, lack of knowledge, and other marginalizing circumstances, and so increases the likely uptake of the concepts.

**Lesson 2: The flexibility of the toolkit to align with WEE (financing) organizations’ capacities and needs encourages their buy-in and use of the tools.** The toolkit’s flexibility was exercised by identifying a ‘minimum package’ for implementation, phasing the tools according to intended types of users (management, staff, and

women participants), and emboldening organizations to choose which tools, supplementary materials (videos, briefers), and engagement modalities are most relevant to use for their respective contexts.

**Lesson 3: Aspiring for the toolkit’s adaptability at a global scale inevitably necessitates the toolkit be responsive to all contexts to meet stakeholders’ expectations.** As the specific tools and supplementary materials are implemented in new geographic areas, stakeholders expect a continuing need for context-specific nuances (for language, peace and security issues, and literacy, for example).

**Lesson 4: The project’s successes were enabled by the interconnected, dynamic efforts of experts and implementers providing direct support, networks advocating for the toolkit’s relevance, and organizations delivering the last-mile implementation.** The networked mechanism nourished by the project to design, develop, and implement the tools, with all the resources that each stakeholder brings, is seen as an important driver of the pilot organizations’ successes in implementing the toolkit. As such, these dynamic support mechanisms are an important consideration for project sustainability as new organizations implement the toolkit.

## CONCLUSION AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The RICHES project succeeded in increasing the understanding of child labor and acceptable conditions of work in the context of WEE initiatives by addressing these issues through the lens of “harmful child work.” Through the use of Human-Centered Design methodology, the RICHES project produced a coherent and comprehensive PSA of global, country, community, and household contexts and by articulating appropriate action through the toolkit, RICHES was able to communicate – with overwhelmingly positive stakeholder response – novel and adaptable ways of understanding and acting on the risks of HCW practices in women’s enterprises.

The RICHES project’s ability to engage a broad and diversified set of stakeholders was tempered by the COVID-19 pandemic’s effects on the priorities and capacities of government agencies and organizations. Nonetheless, the project successfully adapted to the pandemic environment, pivoting to virtual interventions and alternative tool modalities, with two-fold effect. These adaptations promoted overall project efficiency by continuing workplan implementation through the pandemic and amplified the effectiveness of the project to meet stakeholders where they are.

Stakeholders are confident the project has set promising directions towards achieving the project goal. The strategies include partnering with global and country-level actors for policy and advocacy activities and ensuring that the toolkit has both universal and adaptable components for the flexible implementation of interested stakeholders. While certain actions with government and global partners had been initiated, ongoing engagement and leadership is likely required to expand the RICHES toolkit globally as intended. However, stakeholders’ responses suggest that the success of the project ultimately depends on the capacity of these partner groups to prioritize the toolkit, regardless of its inherent flexibility for implementation.

**Recommendation 1. (For DOL/ILAB and Grameen) Maximize opportunities for adoption of the toolkit in geographical areas and WEE networks that do not require new translations or context-specific nuances for the toolkit.** This recommendation responds to the high expectations of context-specificity of tools raised from communicating the toolkit as adaptable at a global scale. In other words, if the project

wants to scale-out, then it would face the same expectations from local stakeholders for translations, context-specific nuances for whatever key issues are experienced by women entrepreneurs (e.g., in the Philippines, the issues of access and reach were magnified, while in El Salvador, the issues of gender inequity and security were more pronounced). Should there be efforts to further broaden the reach and increase the adoption of the toolkit, such a project may consider phasing the outreach to first cover areas and contexts wherein the current nuances in the toolkit would already be considered sufficient, e.g., no further translations are required, no context-specific examples to be added. Such strategy does not negate the promise of a globally adaptable toolkit but leverages the significant technical and implementation work already spent on customizing the tools where they have been piloted.

Concrete action points include expanding the network partners in the Philippines and El Salvador (e.g., women and children's rights advocacy groups, broader private sector, media, and educational institutions), since the tools and guides have already been tested as relevant in the country contexts.

**Recommendation 2. (For DOL/ILAB and Grameen) Support the global network of experts, associations, and organizations to pursue future advocacy and provide direct technical support to new organizations interested in using the toolkit.** This recommendation responds to the stakeholder feedback that on its own, the toolkit's adoption by new organizations may not be sufficient to replicate the pilot organizations' successes because the latter benefited from the project's technical and implementation support.

**Recommendation 3. (For Grameen) Document the successful adaptive and adoptive strategies of the pilot organizations to help guide the work of new organizations implementing the toolkit.** Compiling successful adaptive strategies of implementers, particularly those adaptations made in response to important contextual challenges, will help future organizations think through their own needs and make similar adaptations. Additionally, this compendium of adaptive and adoptive successes can be used in advocacy communications to demonstrate the value of the toolkit to potential new stakeholders.

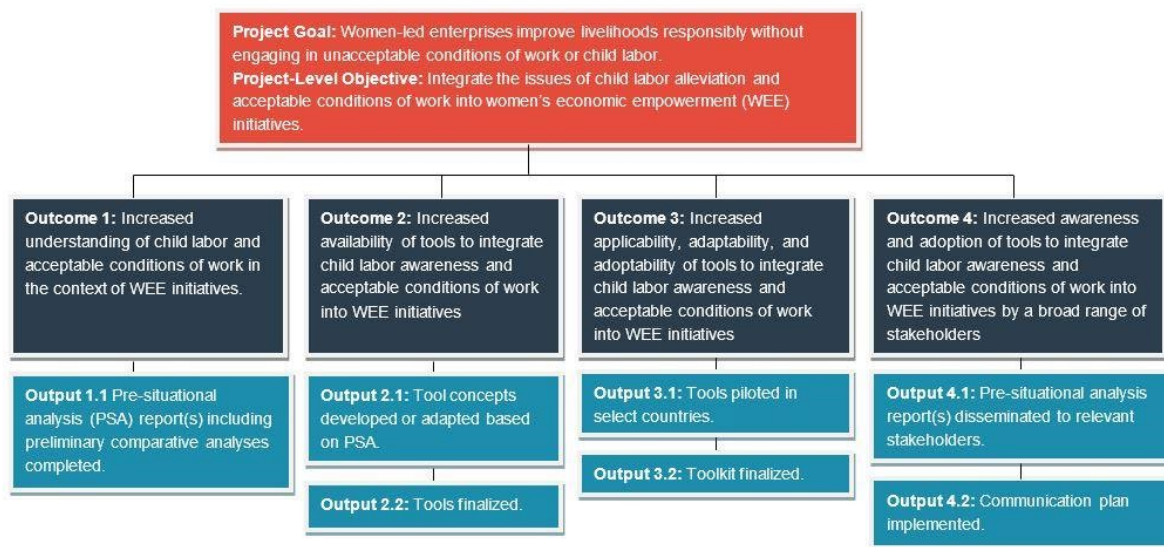
**Recommendation 4. (For DOL/ILAB and Grameen) Follow-up on the advocacy relationships built with key high-level actors and expand to new high-level relationships to increase reach and potential impact.** This recommendation responds to the findings that high-level actors and organizations are needed to expand the communication and implementation of the RICHES toolkit and standards on the global stage.



## 1. PROJECT CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION

Globally, approximately 160 million children—more than double the entire child population of the United States—are engaged in child labor. Nearly half of these children engage in hazardous work that endangers their safety, health, and moral development.<sup>1</sup> Nearly three-quarters of all child labor (CL) and 83 percent of CL among children ages five to eleven takes place within their own family businesses.<sup>2</sup> From December 2017 to February 2022, the Reducing Incidence of Child labor and Harmful conditions of work in Economic Strengthening initiatives (RICHES) project worked to combat child labor within family enterprises. RICHES was funded by the Department of Labor’s Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking (OCFT) and was implemented by Grameen Foundation in partnership with the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative (ABA-ROLI). The project was designed to support women-led enterprises to improve livelihoods responsibly without engaging in unacceptable conditions of work or child labor. To address this goal, the RICHES project was tasked to develop a toolkit for policy makers and service providers who work with women entrepreneurs. The RICHES project was comprised of four distinct outcomes, each with supporting outputs, as reflected in Figure 1.

Figure 1: RICHES Results Framework



RICHES began with a Pre-Situational Analysis (PSA) whereby Grameen and ABA-ROLI sought to determine the current state of child labor and unacceptable conditions of work in relation to women’s economic empowerment. RICHES produced three PSA briefs that provided a synopsis of the PSA report on global context, as well as briefs/reports specific to El Salvador and the Philippines, which were chosen as sites to conduct initial pilots of the toolkit. The RICHES team then created tools meant to respond to the findings of the PSA. The project collected stakeholder feedback on the tools through an iterative process and the tools were piloted, in

<sup>1</sup> International Labor Organization and the United Nations Children’s Fund. Child Labor: Global Estimates 2020, Trends, and the Road Forward. 2021.

<sup>2</sup> International Labor Organization and the United Nations Children’s Fund. Child Labor: Global Estimates 2020, Trends, and the Road Forward. 2021.

person and virtually, in El Salvador, the Philippines, and with select other stakeholders globally.

The RICHES toolkit is structured in three phrases. Each phase targets a specific group of users. Phase 1 is directed at the organizational management level. Phases 2 and 3, addressing frontline staff and direct participants respectively, build on the foundation set by Phase 1.

Table 2: RICHES Toolkit Phases

	Phase 1: Setting the Foundation	Phase 2: Build the Structure	Phase 3: Engage Participants
<b>Phase Purpose</b>	This is the foundation for the toolkit. These tools build management-level awareness and understanding of organizational and program risks of harmful work for children and adults	This set of tools is meant to build frontline staff-level awareness and prioritize new or improved products and services	These tools build participant-level awareness and support their needs.
<b>Associated Tools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making the Case Presentation</li> <li>• Risk Assessments</li> <li>• Social Performance Management (SPM) Guide</li> <li>• Understanding Harmful Work Training</li> <li>• Linkages Guide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Performance Management (SPM) Guide</li> <li>• Understanding Harmful Work Training</li> <li>• Market Research Guide</li> <li>• Financial Services Guide</li> <li>• Design Workshop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linkages Guide</li> <li>• Business Diagnostics Guide</li> <li>• Intra-Household Dialogue Guide</li> <li>• Risky Business Curriculum</li> <li>• Monitoring and Evaluation Guide</li> </ul>
<b>Audience</b>	Management	Frontline Staff	Participants

## 2. EVALUATION PURPOSE

The purpose of this final performance evaluation is to provide OCFT, the Grameen Foundation, ABA-ROLI, project stakeholders, and others working to combat child labor, within the context of WEE with an assessment of the RICHES project’s performance and an understanding of the factors driving the project’s results. Specifically, the evaluation’s purpose is to assess the following:

- Whether the project has achieved its objectives and outcomes, identifying the challenges encountered and analyzing the driving factors for these challenges;
- The intended and unintended effects of the project;
- Lessons learned and emerging practices from the project (e.g., strategies and models of intervention) and experiences in implementation that can be applied in current or future projects in the focus country(ies) and/or in projects designed under similar conditions or targeted sectors, communities, or populations; and
- Which outcomes or outputs can be deemed sustainable.



## 2.1. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

In collaboration with DOL/ILAB, the evaluation team identified ten priority evaluation questions nested under the OECD DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact.<sup>3</sup> Table 3 presents these ten evaluation questions.

Table 3. Evaluations Questions per OECD DAC Criteria

OECD DAC Criteria	Question Number	Evaluation Question
<b>Relevance</b>	EQ 1	To what extent was the RICHES project's tool design responsive to beneficiary, country, and partner needs and priorities? a. Did RICHES continue to respond to stakeholder needs and priorities during pilot implementation and/or as contextual realities evolved?
<b>Relevance</b>	EQ 2	What effects has the COVID-19 pandemic had on project implementation, and how successful was the project in adapting as contextual realities evolved?
<b>Coherence</b>	EQ 3	To what extent did RICHES harmonize its research and activities with other ILAB-funded research, activities, tools, and priorities? a. To what extent did RICHES harmonize with related stakeholder activities globally?
<b>Coherence</b>	EQ 4	To what extent did RICHES harmonize its research (Pre-Situational Analysis) and activities with the development and applicability of the toolkit?
<b>Effectiveness</b>	EQ 5	To what extent was the RICHES project goal, as well as project outcomes, achieved (as per the CMEP/PMP indicators)? a. What factors facilitated or inhibited success?
<b>Effectiveness</b>	EQ 6	To what extent were the Technical Experts Committee recommendations implemented, and what were the results of implementing those recommendations?
<b>Effectiveness</b>	EQ 7	How do stakeholders rate the usefulness and applicability of the different tools generated by the project?
<b>Efficiency</b>	EQ 8	To what degree has the project been able to deliver the planned outputs in an efficient and timely manner?
<b>Sustainability</b>	EQ 9	What is the likelihood that the benefits of the projects' activities will continue, absent ILAB or external resources? a. Which project outputs/outcomes show the greatest likelihood of being sustained? b. What are the factors that limit or facilitate sustainability?
<b>Impact</b>	EQ 10	To what extent is RICHES likely to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended higher-level effects concerning the reduction of child labor and unacceptable conditions of work in women's businesses? a. How likely are the tools and guides developed by RICHES likely to be utilized/implemented as standards of practice among stakeholders that support women's economic empowerment?

<sup>3</sup> The use of OECD DAC criteria aligns with the DOL's standard evaluation policies.

## 3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

### 3.1. EVALUATION APPROACH

The evaluation utilizes a mixed-methods approach, reflecting participatory principles and drawing on qualitative and quantitative data.<sup>4</sup> All findings, and the evidence-based conclusions and recommendations that follow, reflect the triangulation of information across multiple data sources. Quantitative project performance data, drawn from the Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (CMEP), was complemented by qualitative data collected through key informant interviews (KII) and stakeholder workshops.

The evaluation team (ET) was divided into two units, with one lead evaluator focusing on the RICHES pilot in El Salvador and the other on the Philippines. Global stakeholders beyond these two countries were also consulted to capture the full scope of efforts and activities under the RICHES project. This evaluation report thus reflects the general themes and findings from across these geographic sites and stakeholder groups.

While the content of this evaluation report reflects the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the evaluation team, the entire evaluation process was participatory. Multiple stakeholder groups provided feedback on the evaluation design, findings, and reports. The participatory nature of the evaluation is meant to contribute to the sense of ownership among stakeholders and project participants and promote the application of the evaluation findings in future work.

### 3.2. DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY

The team conducted a desk review of relevant documents, including the RICHES grant award and scope of work, the CMEP, quarterly technical progress reports, technical expert committee (TEC) reports, the PSAs, and the toolkit. The ET also conducted 24 key informant interviews with stakeholders including RICHES project team members from Grameen and ABA-ROLI, TEC members, implementing partners, government officials, and representatives from DOL (see Table 4).<sup>5</sup>

The ET triangulated project monitoring data with relevant quantitative and qualitative data collected through KII to objectively rate the level of achievement and sustainability of each of the project's major outcomes on a four-point scale (low, moderate, above-moderate, and high) and to respond to each of the ten evaluation questions.

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<sup>4</sup> This section provides a summary of the methodology used for this evaluation. A more detailed description of the evaluation approach can be found in Annex D. Terms of Reference.

<sup>5</sup> Many interviewees fell into multiple stakeholder groups, due to the nature of their position and involvement in RICHES. For example, a stakeholder from an international organization was also a tool reviewer. KIIs with such individuals explored all their relevant roles and contributions in relation to RICHES. The table reflects the number of interviewees per group and, given that a single person often fell into multiple groups, the sum of interviewees across groups as reflected in the table is greater than the total of 24 people interviewed.

Table 4: Interviewees by Stakeholder Group

Stakeholder Group	Number of Interviewees
RICHEs Implementing Partners	8
DOL Program Management	1
Technical Expert Committee Members	9
Tool Reviewers	9
Pilot Organizations	9
Government	1
International Organizations	3

### 3.3. LIMITATIONS

Like any evaluation, this final performance evaluation is subject to several limitations. The evaluation relied heavily on information collected through KII. Such data incurs the potential for recall bias and response bias. Recall bias occurs when individuals do not remember details of prior events. Memory lapses or inconsistencies can be caused by a variety of factors, including what other pressing priorities occurred during that time in the project as well as during the interview. This natural source of error can negatively affect the accuracy of their recollections. The ET mitigated recall bias by including specific probe questions to actively explore the fullest details of the project possible. Response bias occurs when a person, consciously or unconsciously, provides an incomplete or inaccurate response. They may wish to present their organization in a positive light or echo the sentiments of higher-ranked individuals. Response bias is combatted by conducting one-on-one interviews, rather than group interviews, as well as through the aforementioned probe questions.

These limitations are not unusual for performance evaluations and the ET is confident in the validity of the information presented herein and its ability to provide rich insight into the project’s implementation, challenges, successes, and future sustainability.

## 4. EVALUATION RESULTS

### 4.1. RELEVANCE

#### 4.1.1. EVALUATION QUESTION 1

***To what extent was the RICHEs project’s tool design responsive to beneficiary, country, and partner needs and priorities? Did RICHEs continue to respond to stakeholder needs and priorities during pilot implementation and/or as contextual realities evolved?***

The RICHEs project used a human centered design methodology to facilitate the creation of the toolkit. This included seven activities, each of which was completed throughout the cycle of the project and served a specific purpose during the different phases of the project. For example, the Market Research activity resulted in the generation of the PSA, while the Pilot and Testing activity incorporated feedback from technical experts and the piloting organizations.

Content-wise, the toolkit is highly recognized for its nuanced presentation of “child labor” (CL) and “harmful child work” (HCW). When the project was initially designed, the term child labor was used, but the RICHEs team received feedback from

stakeholders that this term, which is meant to refer to illegal or harmful CL, may be confused with legal or safe CL. In order to address this, the RICHES team replaced CL with HCW, which is considered to be less controversial. This approach makes the delivery of the toolkit's key messages non-confrontational and easier to contextualize in the lived experiences of the organizations and their clients—that is, it enhances the relevance of the toolkit to various contexts. The toolkit is also well-received for articulating both risk assessment indicators and mitigating actions for organizations and women's enterprises.

The toolkit's responsiveness and flexibility to align with evolving organizational capacity and needs during the pilot period was described in overwhelmingly positive terms. In both countries, stakeholders appreciated the toolkit's 'phases' with corresponding guidance on the inputs relevant for management, field staff, and women clients. In the Philippines, Microfinance institutions (MFIs) cited the ease of integrating the tools with their current capacity development programs. Individual modules could "enrich" the existing curricula instead of requiring a separate, stand-alone training program. In El Salvador, some stakeholders noted that the toolkit integrates the CL-reduction instruments from previous programs of other international and country-level organizations. This all facilitates the introduction of the new tools into their existing materials.

Stakeholders noted the more concise the materials are, the more relevant they are perceived to be. In the Philippines, the short videos and module briefers are deemed practical because visits to clients, especially those in impoverished, geographically isolated island localities, must cover several agenda items in a limited time (e.g., business checks and payments, regular training, information dissemination and updates, et.al.). An El Salvador MFI describes the tool design as "implementation-appropriate" since the short videos and briefers are easy to understand and are attention-grabbing without compromising the key messages for the clients. The conciseness of the tools was thus a key factor in their responsiveness to contextual challenges where the tools are used.

For the policy actors and networks engaged in the Philippines, the toolkit is seen to augment the assessments, advocacy materials, and training currently provided to women entrepreneurs. The national MFI association views the toolkit's risk indicators and corresponding anti-HCW mitigation as enriching the Philippine Social Performance Management (SPM) assessment. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) also committed to showing the videos and making the tools available in its 1,363 Negosyo Centers nationwide.<sup>6</sup> At a global scale, the project engaged the Social Performance Task Force (SPTF), which manages the universal standards of SPM, to reflect the toolkit's concepts and indicators in promoting "Do No Harm" principles in the financial services sector. SPTF's response is expected to be officially announced in 2022.

However, there are concerns that the responsiveness of the toolkit design applies only to the needs and priorities of stakeholders directly reached during the pilot and indirectly represented through the Technical Experts Committee (TEC) inputs. For

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<sup>6</sup> Negosyo Centers are hubs put up by the Department of Trade and Industry - Bureau of Small and Medium Enterprise Development in coordination with city and municipal local governments across the Philippines to cater to the business formalization and capacity-building needs of entrepreneurs and would-be entrepreneurs in the micro, small, and medium enterprise sector.

TEC members and project implementers, these concerns have lingered throughout the project and highlight that the project would have been eager to develop more modules for more identified stakeholders' needs and priorities with time. Such concerns may be understood as reflecting the high, self-imposed expectations to continuously nuance, test, and contextualize content and methodology for a global audience beyond what the project timeline and resources could cover.

To illustrate, some stakeholders in the Philippines and El Salvador alike noted that the toolkit could have been tested for its relevance and alignment to the policy and communications campaigns of other women and children's rights advocacy groups. Meanwhile, the El Salvador interviews identify some lingering, context-specific stakeholder needs. For example, the Spanish language observes explicit gender-differentiating nomenclature. Some stakeholders who reviewed the toolkit highlighted that the modules should be more cognizant of such language nuance.<sup>7</sup> The toolkit also could have better engaged the needs of women with low literacy levels. Additionally, there are accounts of women unable to participate in the pilot training because "their men did not allow them." While the last scenario may be at the surface level a communication and coordination issue, it poses questions of whether the assumptions of the modules (e.g., understanding HCW or the intrahousehold dialogue) could stand when engaging households with such power dynamics.

#### 4.1.2. EVALUATION QUESTION 2

### ***What effects has the COVID-19 pandemic had on project implementation, and how successful was the project in adapting as contextual realities evolved?***

At a strategic level (directly contributing to higher-level outcomes), the pandemic slowed down the response of stakeholders that would have contributed to maximizing the momentum within the project timeframe. In the Philippines, it was at the extreme tail-end of the project (concurrent with the implementation of this final evaluation) that the understanding of DTI's commitments was reached. The directions pipelined with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), such as a memorandum of understanding and presentation to the national policy-making anti-CL interagency council, are yet to be conducted. The necessary prioritization of COVID-19 response and recovery left little room for new agenda within government agencies, even with continued coordination between the government focal office and the RICHES team. Meanwhile, no similar policy development intervention was documented in the El Salvador pilot. This was likely due in part to competing COVID-19 priorities within the El Salvador government as well as (or amplified by) other coordinating and capacity challenges.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> RICHES clarified that the initial drafts used Google translate in the interest of speed of piloting the tools in El Salvador. In February 2022, a professional translation was completed that addressed the language nuances.

<sup>8</sup> These other challenges were reported to include: the change of the El Salvador government a year into the project and difficulty connecting with the new administration; the National Committee for Elimination of Child Labor in El Salvador was not formed until later in the project; lack of support (due to insufficient bandwidth, capacity, or interest) from other on-the-ground entities who could have supported higher-level policy engagement, such as the Fair Labor Association, the Rainforest Alliance, USAID, and the ILO regional office despite repeated efforts by the RICHES team.

At an *activity* implementation level, the project swiftly shifted to virtual modalities for the content (digitalization of tools) and deployment (online meetings and training, with corresponding trainers' training for effective online delivery). Across stakeholder types in both pilot sites and well as new global pilot sites, going virtual is most cited as the successful adaptive approach deployed by RICHES.

The normalization of virtual activities enabled a small number of the partner organizations to conduct public and face-to-face implementation within the allowable parameters of public health and safety in the pilot sites. Not all women-clients were capable or ready to transition online, which the partner organizations acknowledged. In the Philippines, the pandemic exacerbated issues of access and reach for women in poor and geographically isolated areas, specifically regarding availability and cost of gadgets, internet access (infrastructure), and internet rates (cost of data). While one MFI originally desired to pilot the Intrahousehold Dialogue guide, it was agreed that it could not be delivered effectively in a virtual setting. There are also accounts of clients simply preferring the 'personal touch' that face-to-face interactions provide. In El Salvador, one partner organization shared how the continued face-to-face activities in strategically selected locations presented "safe spaces" for collective discussions between women about their challenges from the pandemic and prevalent gang violence.<sup>9</sup> In all these scenarios, the stakeholders recognized the project's support to sufficiently adapt, if not through adjustments in activity designs, then through technical or operational assistance to meet the needs of partner organizations.

Module deployment by partner organizations had to give way to more urgent COVID-related priorities for both MFI-frontliners and their clients, especially in the first half of 2020 when the pandemic lockdowns were first enforced. In the Philippines, MFIs prioritized resources to respond to client needs (e.g., creating new financing facilities, monitoring enterprise status, extending social support) while client businesses faced new or heightened vulnerabilities. In El Salvador, there are accounts of partner organizations prioritizing food distribution to their served communities at the onset of the pandemic.

Despite these strategic and practical challenges, anecdotes from the Philippines suggest that the core message from the toolkit withstood the deployment challenges brought on by the pandemic. An MFI training department head shared stories that portrayed changed behavior from the women who participated in the pilot. The pandemic required women to devote extra time and energy to their children's education as classes became home-based, concurrent with the difficulties of keeping their businesses thriving and navigating pandemic health concerns. The anecdotes highlighted that instead of being "more stressed" about the situation, the women "learned to be more patient," to become more deliberate in the time they spend on their children despite their business and income issues. The training head expressed that the RICHES project, which adapted to the COVID context, "*made the children more visible*" during the pandemic.

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<sup>9</sup> The mentioned gang violence was associated with the Mara Salvatrucha or 'Maras'. In such localities, the project organized face-to-face meetings closer to the households and even in the houses of the participants themselves for safety.

## 4.2. COHERENCE

### 4.2.1. EVALUATION QUESTION 3

***To what extent did RICHES harmonize its research and activities with other ILAB-funded research, activities, tools, and priorities? To what extent did RICHES harmonize with related stakeholder activities globally?***

Stakeholders from the pilot sites largely re-emphasize the strategic value of the toolkit's deployment flexibility (i.e., the 'minimum package' formulation, and choosing which tools apply) to effectively harmonize the project with the stakeholders' activities.

The approach of partnering with existing organizations and networks of MFIs and government agencies supporting small and medium enterprises (in the Philippines) and financial institutions and anti-CL-oriented groups (in El Salvador) was also cited as strategic for stakeholder outreach and coordination. The project integrated its presentations and toolkit deployment within stakeholders' events (e.g., national assemblies and field activities) and leveraged the capacities of the partners to deploy the tools and materials. For instance, the agreement with the Philippine DTI to show the videos in its business centers nationwide is a creative partnership that harmonizes stakeholder activities with RICHES because all small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) seeking new and renewed licenses, permits, and training would inevitably have to go to the offices and be exposed to the videos.

The structure of the global team and experts and the mechanisms for communication and activity coordination were also repeatedly identified as enabling harmonization with stakeholders. Some organizations who provided feedback on the toolkit cited the 'organized way' that their inputs were solicited and documented. In addition, Philippine partner organizations repeatedly cited the 'warmth' and willingness of the RICHES global team to provide hand-holding support throughout the pilot implementation.

The responses suggest that the success of harmonization depends on the capacity of the partner groups to prioritize the toolkit, regardless of its inherent flexibility for implementation. For example, the Philippine stakeholders articulated that the toolkit is part of a broader advocacy on preventing CL in the women's economic empowerment (WEE) sector, which is still reeling from the pandemic's effects on the economy. The pilot showed that introducing the toolkit as a 'new agenda' would have to contend, unintentionally, with the 'already stretched' attention and resources of policy actors and implementing organizations. The scenario does not imply that the toolkit could not or would not eventually be adopted, only that the partners' capacities to harmonize from their end are beyond the project's control. This learning point becomes an essential consideration when discussing project sustainability.

### 4.2.2. EVALUATION QUESTION 4

***To what extent did RICHES harmonize its research (Pre-Situational Analysis) and activities with the development and applicability of the toolkit?***

The PSA established the interconnections of global, country, and community contexts, particularly the many ways that CL is conceptualized, defined, measured, and addressed. The PSA's insights informed the toolkit's pivot from focusing on CL to HCW, which – as discussed under Evaluation Question 1 – is highly lauded by the

interviewed toolkit reviewers and partner organizations. The PSA's understanding of the stakeholder groupings allowed for the 'phased' approach (management, staff, and women participants), and the 'minimum package' and flexibility in using specific tools or materials as the organizations deem appropriate. The PSA analysis, enriched by the TEC inputs, also allowed the articulation of specific mitigating or responsive action if HCW is identified. There is a wide and deep acknowledgement among stakeholders that the PSA was 'foundational' in the development and applicability of the toolkit.

For the project implementers and experts, the coherence between the PSA and the toolkit is demonstrated by, and inherent to, the project's stated objective to integrate the issues of child labor alleviation and acceptable conditions of work into WEE initiatives. Or, as an interviewed technical expert explained, the intent to "begin conversations" on CL in WEE among the countries and stakeholders. the project engaged. In this sense, the project may be understood not simply as a technical intervention in the form of the toolkit, but a coherent packaging of the 'what and why' of social problems (from the PSA) with the 'how and 'so what' of the response (from the toolkit assessment and recommended courses of action).

Among the Philippines stakeholders, the thematic feedback is that the CL-WEE connection emerging from the PSA is novel, or at least, it was 'culturally known' but not coherently articulated prior to the project. The stakeholders describe it as "raising awareness," although unpacking the responses suggests it is more about internalizing the implications of the CL-WEE connection than raising awareness about its existence. The internalization is evidenced by a range of 'calls-to-action' adopted by the stakeholders, such as the actual and pipelined policy changes with government agencies, an MFI adopting the toolkit's framework and HCW risk assessment in its organizational governance, MFIs revisiting their training curricula to integrate the tools, and narratives of field officers' sensitivities being reoriented to actively check for HCW risks, to name a few examples. These are strong indications that both the PSA and the toolkit were coherent with each other and were understood by the stakeholders the project targeted for the pilot.

The pivot from CL to HCW is widely referenced in the El Salvador interviews, especially since the partner organizations have been implementing anti-CL interventions supported by other international organizations prior to the RICHES project. The project activities leading to the identification of security risks and gender issues were also cited as helpful in aligning the PSA insights with the toolkit development and promoting toolkit applicability. However, the intent for the toolkit's global applicability raises the expectation that ongoing granular nuancing will be required, such as the El Salvador feedback on the need for more precise Spanish gender translations.

RICHES encountered several challenges connecting with additional stakeholders, such as ILO's office in El Salvador and Ciudad Mujer, which were difficult to access due to staff turnover or diverging priorities. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some organizations in El Salvador focused on organizational sustainability and protecting staff and their beneficiaries, especially for those who work with children and other vulnerable populations. Due to the pressure on the WEE actors' resources and limited capacity to engage, the RICHES project was unable to work with these actors for input and to pilot the tools. During the height of the pandemic, interviewed stakeholders noted that some organizations perceived RICHES as another project competing for the same resources that the Salvadoran organizations lacked. However, it is noted



that to mitigate these challenges, the RICHES team identified and worked with organizations that had prior child labor programming to ensure there was no duplication of efforts when implementing the toolkit.

### 4.3. IMPLEMENTATION EFFECTIVENESS

#### 4.3.1. EVALUATION QUESTION 5

**To what extent was the RICHES project goal, as well as project outcomes, achieved (as per the CMEP/PMP indicators)? What factors facilitated or inhibited success?**

**Outcome 1: Increased understanding of child labor and acceptable conditions of work in the context of WEE initiatives.**

Output 1.1: PSA reports including preliminary comparative analyses completed

#### **Achievement level: High**

The PSA was produced and was highly significant in framing the tools for the HCW within WEE approach and toolkit content. Stakeholder feedback is *consistently positive* on the achievement of this outcome.

The breadth and depth of insights from the PSA stem from the technical rigor employed in its development. The 287-page main report<sup>10</sup> demonstrates both thematic clarity and granular attention in establishing the interconnections between CL and WEE at global, country, subnational, and household levels. Technical experts shared how the PSA wove together “many years” of their professional or their organization’s experience, and how conversing with women entrepreneurs among the urban and rural poor in the Philippines and El Salvador provided a ‘lived experience’ perspective on CL tendencies in SMEs. Two notable themes are observed from the experts’ and researchers’ responses on the PSA insights: an empathetic, non-vilifying characterization of women entrepreneurs and their families at risk of ‘crossing the line’ of CL because of poverty, lack of awareness, and other marginalizing conditions, and “Do No Harm,” which emerged as a driving rationale for the toolkit’s content and phased approach.

The positive stakeholder uptake of the PSA insights may be attributed to several approaches utilized by the project. First, the PSA was also produced in shorter versions (global, Philippines, and El Salvador)<sup>11</sup> with corresponding translations to streamline the key points for specific audiences. Second, the narratives informed the content of the short videos about HCW risks within WEE, essentially repackaging the PSA findings into a medium that is quick and engaging to deploy. Connecting with earlier discussion on the high relevance of the concise materials, a Philippine MFI shared that the videos are well-grounded in women’s experiences such that its pre- and post-tests showed high learning uptake even if the videos are deployed on their own (without implementing the full modules). Third, even if the PSA’s primary function was to inform the toolkit development, its dissemination remained a prominent feature of communication with stakeholders until the project ended.

<sup>10</sup> <https://grameenfoundation.org/partners/resources/riches-pre-situational-analysis-psa-final-report>

<sup>11</sup> <https://grameenfoundation.org/riches-research-and-pre-situational-analysis>

### **Outcome 2: Increased availability of tools to integrate child labor awareness and acceptable conditions of work into WEE initiatives**

Output 2.1: Tool concepts developed or adapted based on PSA.

Output 2.2: Tools finalized.

#### **Achievement Level: High**

Tools were developed at a high level of coherence with the PSA insights, as was discussed above. There are 13 modular trainings and guides produced under which there are 46 unique tools.<sup>12</sup> Project implementers and experts express high satisfaction with such turn-out as a demonstration of the project's responsiveness to country-level and stakeholder needs. The digitization of some tools (e.g., the Understanding Harmful Work Training and the Risky Business Curriculum and the Entrepreneur Business Diagnostic) and integration of data collection with open-source technology (such as KoboToolbox, documented in the Philippines pilot) were responses to the implementation constraints posed by the pandemic.

The increase in tool availability is enabled by the diversity of distribution channels that the project secured. First, all tools are available for download and customization via the Grameen website. Second, digitized versions are available via mobile apps that implementing organizations and women entrepreneurs could install on their gadgets. Third, project videos are available and may be downloaded via YouTube. Fourth, the tools are circulated through the partner network organizations (Philippines, Nigeria) and government agencies (Philippines). Fifth, materials for non-digitized distribution (such as those used in the Philippines for the poor and geographically isolated clients) were also developed.

Partner organizations also noted that the availability of tools is not merely a matter of access to the documents. They appreciate that the tools are open access, an enabling arrangement that entails no costs (i.e., for copyright fees) or additional formal permissions required of the currently implementing and future interested organizations.

### **Outcome 3: Increased applicability, adaptability, and adoptability of tools to integrate child labor awareness and acceptable conditions of work into WEE initiatives**

Output 3.1 Tools piloted in select countries.

Output 3.2 Toolkit finalized.

#### **Achievement level: High**

<sup>12</sup> [https://grameenfoundation.org/stories/blog/new-online-toolkit-expands-do-no-harm-best-practices-to-include-child-labor?utm\\_source=website&utm\\_medium=gfblog&utm\\_campaign=fy22-events](https://grameenfoundation.org/stories/blog/new-online-toolkit-expands-do-no-harm-best-practices-to-include-child-labor?utm_source=website&utm_medium=gfblog&utm_campaign=fy22-events)

*Applicability:* Across stakeholder types (TEC, policy actors, organizations), there is high positive feedback on the applicability of the toolkit primarily for the HCW framing, the assessment tools, and the context-responsive interventions in the pilot sites (as discussed under Evaluation Questions 1 and 3).

*Adaptability:* The ‘minimum package,’ the phased approach, and the flexibility to select tools to implement based on each organization’s needs and capacity are key enabling factors for the toolkit’s adaptability. The adaptive measures deployed during the pandemic, e.g., digitization, development of concise materials and non-digitized printable briefers, enriched the readiness of the tools for a range of local implementation contexts and needs.

*Adoptability:* The toolkit’s adoptability is inherent to its open access feature. The project does not require fees or permissions for organizations to use the tools and integrate into existing (and future) capacity development and advocacy initiatives.

The intent for the toolkit to be applicable, adaptable, and adoptable at a global scale sets a high expectation to be responsive to context-specific issues, such as the gender translation, and gender and security issues documented in El Salvador.

**Outcome 4: Increased awareness and adoption of tools to integrate child labor awareness and acceptable conditions of work into WEE initiatives by a broad range of stakeholders**

Output 4.1 Pre-situational analysis report(s) disseminated to relevant stakeholders.

Output 4.2 Communication plan implemented.

**Achievement level: High**

The project successfully disseminated the PSA and implemented its communication and outreach with strategic partners. Communication channels (websites, social media) and partnerships (SPTF for the SPM, Philippine government, network organizations) were developed to promote awareness and adoption of the tools post-project.

While the evaluation finds the achievement of this outcome at a high level, it is worth noting that the interpretation of the ‘broadness’ in the outcome statement differs across stakeholders. For country-level implementing organizations and amplifying partners interviewed, the pandemic posed significant challenges in broadening the reach with more WEE organizations and women entrepreneurs. As referenced under Evaluation Question 2, the stakeholders’ capacities and resources were stretched to attend to more pressing economic, health, and well-being concerns, thus limiting the extent of awareness and adoption of the tools. The country-level interviewees also noted that, if not for the pandemic, there could have been more opportunities to reach a more diverse set of stakeholders such as the private/business sector including the ‘larger’ financing institutions (compared to local MFIs), policy advocacy groups on gender and women and children’s rights, the media, labor groups, and educational institutions. Meanwhile, for the donor and the implementing partner, the pandemic posed challenges in reaching more beneficiaries but also created unique opportunities for the project to develop additional tools (e.g., the PSA briefs) and

innovate on communication strategies. The implementers also underscored that the pilot was intentional about targeting organizations catering to the women entrepreneurs historically excluded from the formal financial sector, hence expanding the set of stakeholder groups engaged was not a priority.

**Project Goal: Women-led enterprises improve livelihoods responsibly without engaging in unacceptable conditions of work or child labor.**

**Project-Level Objective:** Integrate the issues of child labor alleviation and acceptable conditions of work into women's economic empowerment (WEE) initiatives.

**Achievement level for project-level objective: High**

**Achievement level project goal: Above Moderate**

The evaluation separates the two components of the results framework because of different indicators being referenced by project stakeholders.

For the project-level objective which is 'integration', the earlier discussions on relevance and effectiveness (outcomes 1 to 4 with all high achievement ratings) provide various insights into how the project successfully achieved the weaving of CL into WEE initiatives through the toolkit's tiered approach with organizations (MFIs' management), staff, and women entrepreneurs.

For the project goal (above moderate achievement), country-level stakeholders' feedback changes with the key terms they focus on from the statement:

1. **Women-led enterprises:** The implementing partner notes that the target was to engage one to four actors in each pilot country, which the project achieved,<sup>13</sup> but also recognized that the number of women entrepreneur beneficiaries reached was affected by the pandemic. Meanwhile, country-level stakeholders expressed that the project could not claim success at the level of women-led enterprises because (1) the project's reach was curbed by the pandemic, and (2) the implementing organizations have only tracked improvements on 'increased awareness' so far. Implementing organizations and experts also emphasized that the WEE sector is much broader than the MFIs, citing women's rights advocates, labor groups, and the larger private financing institutions as groups that need to be engaged. The implementing partner recognized that the number of women entrepreneur beneficiaries reached was affected by the pandemic.
2. **Improve livelihoods responsibly:** Country-level stakeholders noted that it is rather too soon (from the project end to the time of the evaluation) to make a definitive assessment if there are project outcomes on all the three elements: improvement, specifically on the women's livelihoods, and most significantly, responsibly addressing CL in WEE. The stakeholders, however, provided positive responses about the promise and potential toward achieving the

<sup>13</sup> While the original scope of the project envisioned eight partners in two countries (El Salvador and the Philippines), RICHES was able to expand its engagement to 41 partners across 12 countries.

project goal. The effectiveness of the tools to raise awareness and inspire strategic action at policy and organizational levels is strongly observed (as discussed in previous sections). There is also anecdotal evidence from the Philippines suggesting changes in behavior among field officers and women participants after learning about HCW assessments and mitigation from the tools.

The evaluation team notes that there is evidence of achievement towards the project goal, but due to the high-level and long-term nature of goals, it is not designed to be completely achieved during the period of performance of the RICHES project.

#### 4.3.2. EVALUATION QUESTION 6

##### ***To what extent were the Technical Expert Committee’s recommendations implemented, and what were the results of implementing those recommendations?***

The Technical Expert Committee (TEC) reviewed the tools, the toolkit and produced a report in June 2021 outlining their recommendations. The TEC provided 14 high-level suggestions to strengthen the tools, which covered a range of topics including the need to promote a minimum package of tools, emphasizing “do no harm” and client protection principles, and ensuring that the messaging does not suggest or result in WEE actors seeing themselves in a punitive role. The report also detailed specific suggestions targeting each of the tools reviewed.

Stakeholders from Grameen consistently stated the TEC’s recommendations were helpful for the design of the tools, and all recommendations were considered and adopted. At least three interviewed stakeholders referred to formal efforts to collaborate with the TEC and integrate their recommendations through, for example, follow up meetings and a flow diagram. Interviewed stakeholders positively remarked on these structured forms of collaboration and responsiveness to the TEC, which ensured mutual understanding of how TEC feedback was being incorporated and served as a platform for tracking progress. This was particularly important, it was noted during KII, due to the scope of consultations, the backdrop of the pandemic, and the amount of “back and forth” required during the review process.

It is important to note the role of TEC members in supporting the development of the toolkit *for global application*, or at least outside the core pilot countries of El Salvador and the Philippines. Interviewed TEC members in Nigeria noted using their own membership networks to review the tools—essentially pre-testing the tools for deployment. Interviewed TEC members note that because of the extensive consultations they conducted, the tools should be sufficiently applicable in Nigeria as well, although it was not a direct pilot site. This speaks to the quality of the strategic partnerships and the value of the global representation of TEC members that the project employed.

In response to the TEC recommendations, the RICHES team developed a minimum package of tools designed for a diverse range of WEE actors to implement within a reasonable timeframe with minimal cost requirements which includes tools such as the “Making the Case” presentation. The RICHES team also implemented the suggestion to define and standardize principal concepts throughout the various

phases and tools included in the toolkit. For example, the project adopted the use of “Women’s Economic Empowerment Actors”, which is now accurately reflected in several tools including the Risk Assessments (Phase 1), Understanding Harmful Work Training and Facilitators’ Guide (Phase 2), and the Business Diagnostics Guide (Phase 3). Additionally, the team reviewed the tools and amended them as necessary to ensure that they reflected “the objective of the project and that the tools were not considered punitive” towards WEE actors. Indeed, the TEC recommendation most cited during KII’s was the suggestion to reconcile CL with different country-level policies and frameworks in anticipation of resistance from possible partners should the CL concept be inconsistent with existing legal definitions and antagonistic toward women entrepreneurs. As a result, the concept of HCW was adopted in the toolkit, replacing the usage of CL.

#### 4.3.3. EVALUATION QUESTION 7

##### ***How do stakeholders rate the usefulness and applicability of the different tools generated by the project?***

The stakeholders interviewed described the tools as useful and applicable, with few exceptions.

Interviewees recognized the flexibility of the tools as critical to their usefulness and applicability. The ability to select one or more tools, according to the relevant phase and requirements of the group, was essential. Interviewed stakeholders from MFIs identified the “Making the Case” tool as particularly useful to educate on: i) fundamental concepts, ii) the damage and unwanted consequences caused by CL, and iii) clear examples captured by frontline staff, trainers, and women. The nuanced approach differentiating between child work and child labor was similarly cited as amplifying the usefulness of the tools in MFIs and WEEs, as was the identification of unwanted practices in Intra-household Dialogues in workshops with women from El Salvador and Philippines. Certain interviewees suggested the toolkit is more compatible with certain industries than others. Some users noted the tools are less easily applied to their audiences in the agricultural sector, identifying the Phase 1 Risk Assessments tool and the Phase 3 Business Diagnostics Guide. However, this may be a reflection of the users’ more limited organizational experience in agriculture compared to other sectors. Other interviewed MFIs, including those elsewhere in Latin America, shared that the toolkit fit seamlessly into their existing operations, aligned with their organizational mission, and supported their many years of experience working in this area.

The nuanced language, including metaphors, and the group activities presented in the toolkit are also hailed as enhancing usefulness and applicability while promoting a holistic understanding of the issues. The Intra-Household Dialogue Guide was particularly appreciated to promote awareness about CL and acceptable conditions of work. The activities, metaphors, and group dynamic, among other interactive techniques, reinforced the messaging of the tool. This view was shared by many interviewed MFI stakeholders.

When assessing applicability by higher-level policy actors, there is evidence of the toolkit’s usefulness and value. Particularly in the Philippines, there are pipelined

commitments from government agencies (such as DTI and DOLE) and the national MFI association, as discussed above in Evaluation Question 1. The Social Performance Task Force (SPTF) announced the new version of standards in February 2022, it includes concepts and indicators in promoting “Do No Harm” principles as well as the expansion of the definition of certain indicators to include the household. Such a decision would significantly amplify the use of the tools and standards, requiring their adoption by WEE actors who would then need to demonstrate compliance. There is a clear indication that the toolkit is useful and applicable to higher-level actors and that these actors have an appetite for the tools.

## **4.4. EFFICIENCY**

### **4.4.1. EVALUATION QUESTION 8**

#### ***To what degree has the project been able to deliver the planned outputs in an efficient and timely manner?***

The expected results, products, and principal activities of the RICHES project are reflected in the Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (CMEP) and include the PSA, the design, piloting, and finalization of the toolkit, and the communication of the final products and results. After adjusting to the COVID-19 pandemic, the RICHES project delivered all planned efforts in a generally efficient and timely manner.

The phasing of the project activities was inherently efficient. The PSA was an indispensable resource for the design of tools, providing a clear, evidenced, contextually nuanced conceptual framework for the relevant CL and acceptable conditions of work concepts. While a significant undertaking, stakeholders agreed that the PSA was a necessary investment and a foundation for the project’s subsequent achievements with the toolkit.

It is worth highlighting again the project’s success in finding alternative ways to accomplish the pilot, despite the global pandemic, most notably through the design of virtual material (discussed under Evaluation Question 2). Stakeholders in El Salvador reported using WhatsApp as a simple, efficient, virtual way of communicating and organizing pilot activities. Piloting organizations also had the flexibility to utilize virtual or in-person sessions as appropriate, which helped maximize the value of the pilot during the time allowed. For example, while many activities were deployed virtually, in El Salvador, in-person sessions were held by an NGO that coordinates across a network of producers in the sugar industry. These alternative and flexible strategies were critical to the project’s efficient use of resources to maximize achievements in the timespan available, despite the challenges of the pandemic

The project was initially planned to run from December 1, 2017 through May 31, 2021 with a budget of \$1.5 million. The project was granted: 1) a cost extension that added \$238,000 and nine months to the project, extending the end date to February 28, 2022, and 2) an additional \$134,000 for the COVID Pivot, which supported the creation of digital tools. Several factors are seen as contributing to the need for a cost extension. The majority of interviewees across all stakeholder groups cited the delays experienced during the immediate onset of the pandemic. However, these interviewees all followed up by mentioning the project’s efforts to overcome these

challenges and the successful completion of planned activities and outputs. As discussed above, RICHES successfully adapted to these novel challenges and the project is described as "efficient", "sufficiently efficient", and "on time," to cite various KII.

Interviewees representing both the implementing partner and USDOL discussed the approval process and its considerable role in the timely implementation of the project. USDOL noted that the project uses a collaborative approach in the development of the CMEP, which can be time consuming. Given the monitoring standards of USDOL, the revision of the PSA and other products entailed reviewing draft versions, providing comments, and ensuring comments were addressed in multiple rounds in order to resolve issues or errors prior to finalization and approval. Depending on the volume of comments, this iterative process can be drawn out. Both parties highlight that this process helped to shape the design of the tools, including enhancing the format, phases, and synchronicity of the tools. However, the implementing partner cited there was a lack of clarity regarding the parties involved and the length of the process and as such, the approval timeline was not accurately reflected in the initial project work plan.

The cost extension was necessary to: 1) implement the recommendations of the TEC and ensure achievement of Outcome 4 to increase awareness and adoption of tools across stakeholder groups; and 1) provide adequate time to align and maximize events which experienced delays caused by the pandemic. Central to the additional cost was the need to test the "minimum package" of tools—an essential product to ensure achievement of Outcome 4 and one that was repeatedly identified by interviewed stakeholders as immensely valuable for tool utility and application. The addition of time and money to the project, rather than being an automatic indication of low efficiency, are instead perceived by stakeholders as necessary and well-received additions that contributed to the project's achievements.

## 4.5. SUSTAINABILITY

### 4.5.1. EVALUATION QUESTION 9

***What is the likelihood that the benefits of the projects' activities will continue, absent ILAB or external resources? Which project outputs/outcomes show the greatest likelihood of being sustained? What are the factors that limit or facilitate sustainability?***

**Outcome 1: Increased understanding of child labor and acceptable conditions of work in the context of WEE initiatives.**

#### **Sustainability level: High**

RICHES produced a comprehensive, granular PSA reflecting interconnections of global, country, and community contexts, particularly the many ways that CL is conceptualized, defined, measured, and addressed and how it intersects with working conditions for women and WEE actors. The PSA was universally described as a "foundational" document, is readily available, and is a robust resource that is anticipated to remain relevant in the medium- to long-term.



**Outcome 2: Increased availability of tools to integrate child labor awareness and acceptable conditions of work into WEE initiatives****Sustainability level: High**

RICHES made the full toolkit publicly available online and free of cost. In doing so, RICHES eliminated a large barrier to organizations that could not have afforded a toolkit placed behind a paywall. The online and no-cost access promotes the continued availability of the tools for various global stakeholders. Indeed, interviewed stakeholders cited free access to the toolkit in multiple languages as a positive indication of sustainability. The translation of the toolkit further increases its availability to new stakeholders with the same language needs.

**Outcome 3: Increased applicability, adaptability, and adoptability of tools to integrate child labor awareness and acceptable conditions of work into WEE initiatives****Sustainability level: Above-Moderate**

Stakeholders expressed high levels of confidence about the toolkit being able to “stand the test of time” since the issues of CL/HCW in WEE initiatives, the risks, and the prevention strategies will continue to be relevant for the foreseeable future. Interviewed stakeholders made specific mentions of the following tools when discussing future relevance and sustainability: Business Diagnostics, Linkages Guide, Intrahousehold Dialogue Guide, and the videos. Interviewees additionally noted that the phased approach of the toolkit empowers users to determine the best package to fit their needs, which is encouraging for new WEE initiatives who may discover the toolkit in the years to come. The flexibility of the toolkit’s design contributes to its continued relevance and, thus, its continued applicability.

Despite the majority optimistic outlook regarding the toolkit’s future usage, interviewed stakeholders identified several factors that could limit sustainability of this outcome. First, resourcing challenges may limit the increased adoption of tools by organizations involved in the pilot. Stakeholders noted that without additional resources and dedicated staff, it is likely that only the select tools, briefers, and videos chosen during the pilot would be sustained. For example, the Intra House Dialogue Guide required physical space and supplies that some organizations didn’t have available. On the other hand, the Business Diagnostic Guide tool would be easier to implement with MFIs that have been established for many years.

This reinforces an earlier point about the importance of the interconnected dynamic support network alongside the adaptable toolkit to sustain and build on the project achievements. Second, stakeholders would like to see additional pilots conducted with a larger sample size. This would provide insights into whether the toolkit would need to be further refined, translated into more languages, or otherwise adapted to increase its applicability in contexts different from the pilot countries.

**Outcome 4: Increased awareness and adoption of tools to integrate child labor awareness and acceptable conditions of work into WEE initiatives by a broad range of stakeholders****Sustainability level: Moderate**

RICHES promoted the continued awareness and adoption of tools by broader stakeholders through its advocacy with Philippine government agencies, Nigeria-based organization, and the SPTF, among hundreds of others reached via global webinars. Through these existing avenues, the RICHES tools should continue to be utilized and expanded to new stakeholders. Interviewees expressed hope that governments will expand beyond the role of setting standards and pursue national policies, programs, and projects to foster an environment more substantively supportive of the RICHES toolkit, standards, and indicators.

However, interviewees identified several factors that could limit sustained expansion to new stakeholders. Although higher-level policy actors have an appetite for the tools, government agencies may not have the capacity and bandwidth for policy adaption and tool integration in the near future due to the continuing demands of the pandemic and other global shocks. The MFI association is concerned that maximizing the usefulness and applicability of the toolkit to their member organizations, and establishing its relevance, necessitates an advocacy campaign. Such a campaign requires a clear entity with dedicated resources and capacity to spearhead the effort; it was implied by interviewed stakeholders that the Grameen Foundation would be ideally placed to take on this role.

Stakeholders also noted the importance of financial resources for WEE initiatives as well as for government agencies, as undertaking this work requires dedicated resources internally and active cooperation externally. While training tools are designed to enhance skills for existing staff, many WEE initiatives cited that they would also require dedicated staff to work on CL or monitor the effects of their activities (which relates to the lack of understanding of CL at the management level and insufficient resources typically directed towards this role). Additionally, some MFI stakeholders believe the establishment of a call center for CL issues is necessary, which would require external resources. Engaging additional higher-level actors also requires an advocacy strategy spearheaded by a single organization (previously Grameen when RICHES was being implemented).

These findings do not take away from the reported interest and applicability of the tools to a broad range of stakeholders, but rather highlight the potential challenge in expanding awareness and adoption.

**Project-Level Objective: Integrate the issues of child labor alleviation and acceptable conditions of work into WEE initiatives.****Sustainability level: Above-moderate**

Organizations implementing pilot trainings stated that the participating women entrepreneurs demonstrated increased awareness of CL/ACW and had developed plans to mitigate these issues in their work. It appears, then, that the concepts targeted by RICHES are being integrated into the WEE initiatives involved in the pilot. Some

expanded and continued integration of these issues into WEE initiatives is evident, as displayed by the partnership with the SPTF and the publication of the updated standards in February 2022. Given the factors facilitating sustainability discussed above for all four outcomes some tools could be quickly implemented while others need more time to be fully adopted. However, stakeholder feedback also indicates gaps, such as staff turnover resulting in a lack of knowledge management and the need for external support, that may negatively affect the continued expansion of RICHES achievements as planned, namely those discussed under Outcomes 3 and 4. Interviewed stakeholders suggested the following strategies to improve sustainability:

- *Managing staff transitions:* Internal strategies and protocols in trained organizations to ensure that topical and implementation knowledge will not be lost when trained staff leave.
- *Periodic refreshers and orientations/Training of Trainers:* To complement staff transitions, refresher and new orientations on the toolkit could be made available for any interested organization. (Some identified Grameen as a potential provider of these trainings.)
- *Proof of concept:* An interviewed stakeholder emphasized that one of the most effective strategies to sustain interest (and recruit new users) is for RICHES/Grameen to produce a proof of concept<sup>14</sup> reflecting results from different organizations that have used the toolkit. It could also reflect learnings from processes deployed at the levels of management, staff, and women entrepreneurs.

## 4.6. IMPACT

### 4.6.1. EVALUATION QUESTION 10

***To what extent is RICHES likely to generate significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended higher-level effects concerning the reduction of child labor and unacceptable conditions of work in women’s businesses? How likely are the tools and guides developed by RICHES to be utilized/implemented as standards of practice among stakeholders that support women’s economic empowerment?***

A high likelihood of generating positive impact is widely articulated among the pilot organizations.

At a fundamental level, RICHES directed the awareness and actions of MFIs toward the issues of CL and ACW within WEE. As one interviewee shared, “we did not have the child labor issue on the radar” prior to the project but now “it is incorporated” in their work. Further, MFIs across the pilot countries noted their incorporation of the RICHES tools and standards in the official workflow. As one interviewee in El Salvador shared, these resources “are already standardized” within their organization. This base level of awareness raising among the pilot organizations, and their reported incorporation

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<sup>14</sup> A proof concept entails full monitoring and evaluation of the implementing organization that demonstrates successful strategies and provides supporting evidence using techniques such as process tracing in order to attribute outcomes to the use of the toolkit and tools. This would demonstrate the project has successfully move toward its goal of women's enterprises improving livelihoods responsibly.

of the RICHES tools and standards in their ongoing work, promotes the likely continued positive impact of the project through the groups involved in the pilot.

Certain interviewed MFIs shared reports that women entrepreneurs were already changing perspectives—a likely precursor to behavior change—as a result of the pilot. Some interviewed stakeholders in Latin America noted that, during discussions held using the Phase 3 tool *Intra-Household Dialogue Guide*, mothers demonstrated particular awareness and sensitivity to the vulnerability of their daughters to CL/HCW. These mothers/women entrepreneurs also linked the vulnerability of girls to CL/HCW with their vulnerability to gang violence and criminal groups, which are important contextual factors contributing to CL/HCW in those countries.

That said, impact is defined as “higher-level effects” generated by the project. This necessarily goes beyond the initial project activities and individuals involved in the pilot. With this in mind, some interviewed stakeholders expressed some apprehension about other organizations replicating the successes of the pilot. The toolkit may be adaptable and flexible, but the confidence and capacity of pilot organizations to use it did not emerge from the toolkit itself. Central to the pilot’s success was, in their view, the capacity development and supportive interventions delivered by the network of engaged pilot stakeholders, including the dedicated RICHES team and community of experts.

Additionally, higher-level effects require the involvement of higher-level stakeholders. In some cases, this includes government actors and global organizations. Government policy adopting risk assessment indicators and the inclusion of the assessments in the SPM of MFIs, were identified by interviewees as high-effort interventions necessary for high impact. As discussed above, the project pursued multiple pathways to amplify the toolkit among higher-level, higher-impact actors, as demonstrated by the establishment of the MOU with DTI and the publication of SPTF’s updated standards. The inclusion by the SPTF of standards, indicators and “Do No Harm” principles developed by RICHES is anticipated to generate positive, higher-level effects at scale. However, similar initiatives were not achieved in El Salvador, due to challenges related to the political environment and the closing of the ILO office in country. As a result, high-level engagement and buy-in remains a gap in the El Salvador which limits the overall high-level impact of the project.

Some stakeholders emphasized that targeting higher-level impact necessitates a strong advocacy campaign that promotes and legitimizes the use of the toolkit. Interviewed stakeholders from the Philippines shared that it is not unusual for toolkits and other technical assistance outputs to quickly become irrelevant and uninteresting to stakeholders if there is no entity heightening and broadening their communication and promotion post-project. These Philippines stakeholders reported looking to Grameen as a global advocacy influencer to lead the initiative.

No interviewed stakeholders identified any unintended or negative impacts resulting from the RICHES project or the toolkit.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The RICHES project succeeded in increasing the understanding of child labor and acceptable conditions of work in the context of WEE initiatives the use of Human Centered Design and its focus on “harmful child work.” By reframing child labor as a goal of reducing harmful child work, the project was able to raise awareness across

diverse contexts and groups without negatively portraying or harming women entrepreneurs. This terminology also broadened the scope of stakeholders engaged in the project, as HCW is a concept most stakeholders engaged in CL issues are familiar with, and its usage facilitated discussions which may have been met with resistance if using the term “child labor”. Through using HCW, the toolkit ensures that both children and women are protected from harmful business practices.

Through a coherent and comprehensive PSA of global, country, community, and household contexts and by articulating appropriate action through the toolkit, the project was able to communicate – with overwhelmingly positive stakeholder response – novel and adaptable ways of understanding and acting on the risks of CL/HCW and unacceptable conditions of work practices in women’s enterprises/initiatives.

The RICHES project’s ability to engage a broad and diversified set of stakeholders was tempered by the COVID-19 pandemic’s effects on the priorities and capacities of government agencies and organizations. Nonetheless, the project successfully adapted to the pandemic environment, pivoting to virtual interventions and alternative tool modalities, with two-fold effect. These adaptations promoted overall project efficiency by continuing workplan implementation through the pandemic and amplified the effectiveness of the project to meet stakeholders where they are.

Stakeholders are confident the project has set promising directions towards achieving the project goal. The strategies include partnering with global and country-level actors for policy and advocacy activities and ensuring that the toolkit has both universal and adaptable components for the flexible implementation of interested stakeholders. While certain actions with government and global partners have been initiated, ongoing engagement and leadership is likely required to expand the RICHES toolkit globally as intended.

## 6. LESSONS LEARNED AND PROMISING PRACTICES

### 6.1. LESSONS LEARNED

**Lesson 1: Increasing the understanding of child labor in the context of WEE initiatives is most effective and relevant to stakeholders when framed through the lens of “harmful child work.”**

Replacing the term “child labor” with “harmful child work” distinguished the difference from legal child work, enabling coherence in concepts, definitions, and measures at global and country levels and promotes applicability across different stakeholder groups and contexts. The concept of harmful child work is less controversial and avoids negative portrayals of women entrepreneurs and households at risk of conducting harmful practices because of poverty, lack of knowledge, and other marginalizing circumstances, and so increases the likely uptake of the concepts.

**Lesson 2: The flexibility of the toolkit to align with WEE (financing) organizations’ capacities and needs encourages their buy-in and use of the tools.**

The toolkit’s flexibility was exercised by identifying a ‘minimum package’ for implementation, phasing the tools according to intended types of users (management, staff, and women participants), and emboldening organizations to choose which tools, supplementary materials (videos, briefers), and engagement modalities (such as the safe spaces in El Salvador) are most relevant to use for their

respective contexts. The implementation flexibility also maintained the project's momentum despite the significant challenges raised by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Lesson 3: Aspiring for the toolkit's adaptability at a global scale inevitably creates the expectation that the toolkit continually be adapted to be responsive to all contexts to meet stakeholders' expectations.**

The goal to develop a globally adaptable toolkit influenced a remarkable PSA that accounts for various legal, programmatic, and experiential nuances to CL/HCW and ACW in the WEE sector at global, country, community, and household levels. The PSA served as the foundation for the CL/HCW framing and "Do No Harm" approach, which is the defining feature of the toolkit. However, as the specific tools and supplementary materials are implemented, stakeholders expect a continuing need for context-specific nuances (e.g., explanation of HCW risks among women entrepreneurs in communities with peace and security issues and modalities for low-literacy women to learn from the tools). This reality promotes a review of the toolkit's readiness *to be communicated as a globally adaptable tool* and the strategic post-project actions that must be deployed to realize the high-level goal (see Recommendations section).

**Lesson 4: The project's successes were enabled by the interconnected, dynamic efforts of experts and implementers providing direct support, networks advocating for the toolkit's relevance, and organizations delivering the last-mile implementation.**

The networked mechanism nourished by the project to design, develop and implement the tools, with all the resources that each stakeholder brings, is seen as an important driver of the pilot organizations' successes in implementing the toolkit. As such, these dynamic support mechanisms are an important consideration for project sustainability as new organizations implement the toolkit.

## 6.2. PROMISING PRACTICES

**Promising Practice 1. Coherent articulation of learning inputs, assessments, and concrete mitigating action and responses to harmful child work by stakeholder type to increase awareness and inspire concrete action toward achieving the project-level objective (integration of CL issues into WEE).**

This promising practice has two components that were effectively employed in the project to increase awareness and inspire concrete action. First, the PSA and the toolkit coherently and comprehensively cover context analysis, assessment indicators, and appropriate responses, weaving the 'why,' 'how,' and 'so what' on addressing risks of harmful child work. Second, the insights and recommended action(s) are organized according to stakeholder types (management, staff, and women entrepreneurs) to reflect their respective scale of actionable change and capacities.

**Promising Practice 2. Diversification of the types and modes of delivery of the toolkit to enhance project efficiency and effectiveness.**

The practice entails a deep understanding of the priorities, needs, and challenges faced by organizations and women entrepreneurs, and the technical and direct support from the project team and experts. The toolkit is made available online via the Grameen website in customizable open-access formats, with sets of supplementary translations, short videos on YouTube, digitized (mobile app-based) tool versions,

printable briefers, and integrations with open-access data gathering software.<sup>15</sup> The diversification of the toolkit modalities (e.g., paper/printable, digitized, app-based) was also central to the project's efficiency and overcoming of challenges from the pandemic.

**Promising Practice 3. Partnering with existing networks of organizations supporting WEE for leveraging reach and resources toward achieving the toolkit's adaption and adoption by the broadest possible stakeholders.**

The project strategically partnered with networks of organizations supporting women SMEs in the Philippines (for advocacy) and Nigeria (for the TEC and advocacy), as well as large global networks such as the SPTF and SPTF Investor's Work Group. Such organizations have a strategic influence on their members which was helpful to reach more potential toolkit users. The MFI association in the Philippines has committed to promoting the HCW risk assessment in their members' SPM, while the Nigerian association is looking into leveraging its policy development engagements with the government to also forward the use of the tools.

**Promising Practice 4. Government partnerships for high-impact policy-level adoption.**

In the Philippines, the project made headway with key government agencies to develop various ways of adopting the toolkit, despite the significant effects of the pandemic on the government agencies' capacity for timely responses. At the project's end, the project reached an understanding with the Philippines Department of Trade and Industry to show the project videos in its 1,363 business centers nationwide, which ensures that all SMEs registering or renewing their licenses or seeking training will be exposed to the videos as advocacy materials. The project has also pipelined virtual technical reviews with the Philippines Department of Labor and Employment to identify strategic ways to integrate the tools with policy and programs of the national agency, though there was no formal agreement in place.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Recommendation 1. (For DOL/ILAB and implementing partner) Maximize opportunities for adoption of the toolkit in geographical areas and WEE networks that do not require new translations or context-specific nuances for the toolkit.**

This recommendation responds to the high expectations of context-specificity of tools raised from communicating the toolkit as adaptable at a global scale. In other words, if the project wants to scale-out, then it would face the same expectations from local stakeholders for translations, context-specific nuances for whatever key issues are experienced by women entrepreneurs (e.g., in the Philippines, the issues of access and reach were magnified, while in El Salvador, the issues of gender inequity and security were more pronounced). Should there be efforts to further broaden the reach and increase the adoption of the toolkit, such a project may consider phasing the outreach to first cover areas and contexts wherein the current nuances in the toolkit would already be considered sufficient, e.g., no further translations are required, no context-specific examples to be added. Such strategy does not negate the promise of a globally adaptable

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<sup>15</sup> The toolkit will also be made available in the DOL/ILAB website.

toolkit but leverages the significant technical and implementation work already spent on customizing the tools where they have been piloted.

Concrete action points include expanding the network partners in the Philippines and El Salvador (e.g., women and children’s rights advocacy groups, broader private sector, media, and educational institutions), since the tools and guides have already been tested as relevant in the country contexts.

**Recommendation 2. (For DOL/ILAB and Grameen) Support the global network of experts, associations, and organizations to pursue future advocacy and provide direct technical support to new organizations interested in using the toolkit.**

This recommendation responds to the stakeholder feedback that on its own, the toolkit’s adoption by new organizations may not be sufficient to replicate the pilot organizations’ successes because the latter benefited from the project’s technical and implementation support. *Concrete action points* include supporting Grameen Foundation for a global campaign (that urges the use of the toolkit), which becomes the continuing vehicle to convene and enable the global stakeholder network.

**Recommendation 3. (For Grameen) Document the successful adaptive and adoptive strategies of the pilot organizations to help guide the work of new organizations implementing the toolkit.**

Like Recommendation 2, this recommendation responds to the feedback that the toolkit on its own may not empower new organizations to successfully implement it. It further builds on the findings regarding the importance of contextual customization of the tools. Compiling successful adaptive strategies of implementers, particularly those adaptations made in response to important contextual challenges, will help future organizations think through their own needs and make similar adaptations. Organizations applying the tools in areas of insecurity or violence would likely benefit from the learned experiences of, for example, El Salvador, which identified the criticality of generating trust among women and locating safe, secure spaces for in-person meetings where women entrepreneurs could more freely engage. Additionally, this compendium of adaptive and adoptive successes can be used in advocacy communications to demonstrate the value of the toolkit to potential new stakeholders. *Concrete action points* include compiling stories of successful adaptive strategies around important contextual differences, particularly in easy to access modalities such as videos.

**Recommendation 4. (For DOL/ILAB and Grameen) Follow-up on the advocacy relationships built with key high-level actors and expand to new high-level relationships to increase reach and potential impact.**

This recommendation responds to the findings that high-level actors and organizations are needed to expand the communication and implementation of the RICHES toolkit and standards on the global stage. *Concrete action points* include following up on the status of the SPTF’s incorporation of the RICHES content in their



upcoming guidance<sup>16</sup> and working with governments of future implementation countries to officially adopt, for example, the risk assessment indicators.

Table 5. Recommendations and Supporting Evidence

Recommendation	Evidence	Page Numbers
<p><i>Recommendation 1</i></p> <p>Maximize opportunities for adoption of the toolkit in geographical areas and WEE networks that do not require new translations or context-specific nuances for the toolkit</p>	<p>Findings from the Philippines that the conciseness of supplementary materials and diverse modalities helped to reach women in poor and geographically isolated areas, and to an extent those without their own gadgets and internet access. In El Salvador, some stakeholders noted the need for further nuance in language (gender terms) and peace and security issues. Furthermore, the goal for global applicability of the toolkit raises stakeholder expectations for specific tailor-fitting for their context.</p>	<p>Evaluation Question 1 (page 16-18)</p>
<p><i>Recommendation 2</i></p> <p>Support the global network of experts, associations, and organizations to pursue future advocacy and provide handholding direct technical support to new organizations interested in using the toolkit</p>	<p>TEC members and partner organizations highlighted that the successes achieved by the pilot were enabled by a dedicated global mechanism of supportive from RICHES project staff and TEC members offering technical and implementation hand-holding support.</p>	<p>Evaluation Question 5 (Page 22-26), specifically discussion of Project Goal</p> <p>Evaluation Question 10 (page 32-33)</p>
<p><i>Recommendation 3</i></p> <p>Document the successful adaptive and adoptive strategies of the pilot organizations to help guide the work of new organizations implementing the toolkit</p>	<p>Same as Recommendations 1 and 2.</p>	<p>Same as Recommendations 1 and 2.</p>
<p><i>Recommendation 4</i></p> <p>Follow-up on the advocacy relationships built with key high-level actors and expand to new high-level relationships to increase reach and potential impact</p>	<p>The involvement, commitment, and actions of key government agencies, such as DTI in the Philippines, and global actors like SPTF, provide unparalleled opportunities to advance the reach of the RICHES tools and standards at pace and scale.</p>	<p>Evaluation Question 7 (page 27-28)</p> <p>Evaluation Question 9 (page 29-32)</p> <p>Evaluation Question 10 (page 32-33)</p>

<sup>16</sup> The evaluation team notes that this action was completed during drafting of this report and the SPTF published the updated standards in February 2022.

## **ANNEX A. LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED**

Achieving Safe and Healthy Business Growth for Women: Protecting Women and Children with Women's Economic Empowerment Initiatives Presentation (2022), Grameen Foundation

Grant Modification/Notice of Obligation (November 2017), Department of Labor

Pre-Situational Analysis Research Briefs, Grameen Foundation, accessed at <https://grameenfoundation.org/riches-research-and-pre-situational-analysis>

Reducing Incidences of Child Labor and Harmful Conditions of Work in Economic Strengthening Barriers Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (June 2021), Grameen Foundation

RICHS Toolkit Video Resources, Grameen Foundation, accessed at [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLtOB88klbMt\\_ST4ubpwCknuql3t5KgLjl](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLtOB88klbMt_ST4ubpwCknuql3t5KgLjl)

RICHS Toolkit, Grameen Foundation, accessed at <https://grameenfoundation.org/riches/riches-toolkit>

Technical Expert Committee Review Final Report (June 2021), Grameen Foundation

Technical Progress Report for Reducing Incidences of Child Labor and Harmful Conditions of Work in Economic Strengthening Barriers (December 2017-March 2018), Grameen Foundation

Technical Progress Report for Reducing Incidences of Child Labor and Harmful Conditions of Work in Economic Strengthening Barriers (April 2018-September 2018), Grameen Foundation

Technical Progress Report for Reducing Incidences of Child Labor and Harmful Conditions of Work in Economic Strengthening Barriers (October 2018-March 2019), Grameen Foundation

Technical Progress Report for Reducing Incidences of Child Labor and Harmful Conditions of Work in Economic Strengthening Barriers (April 2019-September 2019), Grameen Foundation

Technical Progress Report for Reducing Incidences of Child Labor and Harmful Conditions of Work in Economic Strengthening Barriers (October 2019-March 2020), Grameen Foundation

Technical Progress Report for Reducing Incidences of Child Labor and Harmful Conditions of Work in Economic Strengthening Barriers (April 2020-September 2020), Grameen Foundation

Technical Progress Report for Reducing Incidences of Child Labor and Harmful Conditions of Work in Economic Strengthening Barriers (April 2021-September 2021), Grameen Foundation

## ANNEX B. EVALUATION ITINERARY

Table 6: Evaluation Fieldwork Itinerary

<b>Field Work Itinerary: February 2022</b>						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	31 Interviews with ABA-ROLI Consultants	1 Interviews with ABA-ROLI Consultants	2 Interviews with Grameen and Piloting Implementers	3 Interviews with Grameen and Piloting Implementers	4 Interviews with Grameen and Piloting Implementers	5
6	7 Interviews with Grameen and Piloting Implementers	8 Interviews with Grameen and Piloting Implementers	9 Interviews with Grameen and Piloting Implementers	10 Interviews with Technical Expert Committee	11 Interviews with Technical Expert Committee	12
13	14 Interviews with Technical Expert Committee	15 Interviews with Technical Expert Committee	16 Interviews with Technical Expert Committee	17 Interview with DOL RICHES Program Management Staff (Rescheduled for March 1)	18	19
20	21 Analysis of preliminary findings for Stakeholder Debriefs	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 Stakeholder Debrief (Philippines)	1 Stakeholder Debrief (El Salvador) Interview with DOL RICHES Program Management Staff	2	3	4	

## **ANNEX C. STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP AGENDA**

Both lead evaluators hosted a virtual evaluation debrief for their respective geographical focus (El Salvador and the Philippines) on February 28, 2022 and March 1, 2022. The debrief was composed of a slide deck featuring the pilot country-specific findings and provided stakeholders with the opportunity to respond to the initial findings and provide recommendations. Both lead evaluators used the same agenda, as outlined below.

### **STAKEHOLDER DEBRIEF AGENDA:**

- Evaluation Background
- Evaluation Scope of Work
- Fieldwork Approach
- Findings
- Questions/Discussion

**ANNEX D. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

# **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Final | January 27, 2022

## **FINAL EVALUATION RICHES**

**SUBMITTED TO**

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*Funding for this evaluation was provided by the United States Department of Labor under contract number 47QRAA20D006X. This material does 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.*

## 1. 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). ILAB's mission is to promote a fair global playing field for workers in the United States and around the world by enforcing trade commitments, strengthening labor standards, and combating international child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking.

OCFT works to combat child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking around the world through international research, policy engagement, technical cooperation, and awareness-raising. Since OCFT's technical cooperation program began in 1995, the U.S. Congress has appropriated funds annually to USDOL for efforts to combat exploitive child labor internationally. This funding has been used to support technical cooperation projects in more than 90 countries around the world. Technical cooperation projects funded by USDOL support sustained efforts that address child labor and forced labor's underlying causes, including poverty and lack of access to education.

This evaluation approach will be in accordance with DOL's Evaluation Policy<sup>17</sup>. OCFT is committed to using the most rigorous methods applicable for this qualitative performance evaluation and to learning from the evaluation results. The evaluation will be conducted by an independent third party and in an ethical manner and safeguard the dignity, rights, safety and privacy of participants. The quality standards underlying this evaluation are: Relevance, Coherence (to the extent possible), Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact (to the extent possible), and Sustainability.<sup>18</sup> In conducting this evaluation, the evaluator will strive to uphold the American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles for Evaluators.<sup>19</sup> OCFT will make the evaluation report available and accessible on its website.

Globally, approximately 160 million children—more than double the entire child population of the United States—are engaged in child labor. Nearly half of these children engage in hazardous work that endangers their safety, health, and moral development.<sup>20</sup> Nearly three-quarters of all child labor (CL) and 83 percent of CL among children ages five to eleven takes place within their own families.<sup>21</sup> Since December 2017, the Reducing Incidence of Child Labor and Harmful Conditions of Work in Economic Strengthening Initiatives (RICHES) project has worked to combat child labor within family enterprises. RICHES, funded by the USDOL/ILAB and implemented by the Grameen Foundation with the American Bar Association Rule of

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<sup>17</sup>For more information on DOL's Evaluation Policy, please visit <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/evaluationpolicy.htm>

<sup>18</sup> From Better Criteria for Better Evaluation: Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use by the [Organization for Economic Development's Development Assistance Committee \(OECD-DAC\)](#) Network on Development Evaluation. DOL determined these criteria are in accordance with the OMB Guidance M-20-12. For more information, please visit: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> For more information on the American Evaluation Association's Guiding Principles, please visit: <https://www.eval.org/p/cm/ld/fid=51>

<sup>20</sup> International Labor Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund. Child Labor: Global Estimates 2020, Trends, and the Road Forward. 2021.

<sup>21</sup> International Labor Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund. Child Labor: Global Estimates 2020, Trends, and the Road Forward. 2021.

Law Initiative (ABA-ROLI), has developed a toolkit aimed at preventing CL by working within women’s economic empowerment (WEE) initiatives. The interventions and tools developed by the project are intended for global application. Their use in El Salvador and the Philippines, among several other countries, offer valuable opportunities to assess the implementation process and performance achievements of RICHES, as child labor and unacceptable conditions of work (UACW) are an entrenched issue in both countries. Barriers to education, poverty, and susceptibility to income shocks are significant drivers of CL in both countries. El Salvador has the added complexity of gang-related violence, which promotes children accompanying (and supporting) their parents at worksites to escape insecurity at home. El Salvador also lacks a comprehensive national framework to combat CL and UACW, while the Philippines has a strong framework that is insufficiently enforced.<sup>22</sup>

## 2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF EVALUATION

The purpose of the final performance evaluation covered under this contract includes, but may not be limited to, the following:

- Assessing if the project has achieved its objectives and outcomes, identifying the challenges encountered and analyzing the driving factors for these challenges;
- Assessing the intended and unintended effects of the project;
- Assessing lessons learned and emerging practices from the project (e.g., strategies and models of intervention) and experiences in implementation that can be applied in current or future projects in the focus country(ies) and/or in projects designed under similar conditions or targeted sectors, communities, or populations; and
- Assessing which outcomes or outputs can be deemed sustainable.

### INTENDED USERS

The evaluation will provide OCFT, the grantee, other project stakeholders, and stakeholders working to combat child labor more broadly, an assessment of the project’s performance and an understanding of the factors driving the project results. The evaluation results, conclusions and recommendations will serve to inform any project adjustments that may need to be made, and to inform stakeholders in the design and implementation of subsequent phases or future child labor elimination projects as appropriate. The evaluation 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.

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<sup>22</sup> Grameen Foundation and ABA-ROLI. *RICHES Pre-Situational Analysis Report*. May 2020.

### 3. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

#### Relevance

1. To what extent was the RICHES project's tool design responsive to beneficiary, country, and partner needs and priorities?
  - a. Did RICHES continue to respond to stakeholder needs and priorities during pilot implementation and/or as contextual realities evolved?
2. What effects has the COVID-19 pandemic had on project implementation, and how successful was the project in adapting as contextual realities evolved?

#### Coherence

3. To what extent did RICHES harmonize its research and activities with other ILAB-funded research, activities, tools, and priorities?
  - b. To what extent did RICHES harmonize with related stakeholder activities globally?
4. To what extent did RICHES harmonize its research (Pre-Situational Analysis) and activities with the development and applicability of the toolkit?

#### Effectiveness

5. To what extent was the RICHES project goal, as well as project outcomes, achieved (as per the CMEP/PMP indicators)?
  - a. What factors facilitated or inhibited success?
6. To what extent were the Technical Experts Committee recommendations implemented, and what were the results of implementing those recommendations?
7. How do stakeholders rate the usefulness and applicability of the different tools generated by the project?

#### Efficiency

8. To what degree has the project been able to deliver the planned outputs in an efficient and timely manner?

#### Sustainability

9. What is the likelihood that the benefits of the projects' activities will continue, absent ILAB or external resources?



- a. Which project outputs/outcomes show the greatest likelihood of being sustained?
- b. What are the factors that limit or facilitate sustainability?

## **Impact**

10. To what extent is RICHES likely to generate significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended higher-level effects concerning the reduction of child labor and unacceptable conditions of work in women's businesses?
  - a. How likely are the tools and guides developed by RICHES likely to be utilized/implemented as standards of practice among stakeholders that support women's economic empowerment?

Below are specific focus areas that need to be addressed during the evaluation process. These should be discussed with the evaluator and incorporated into questions as needed.

### **ALL EVALUATIONS:**

- Should identify which interventions are most effective at producing the desired outcomes
- Should identify which outcomes and, where applicable, which outputs have the greatest likelihood of being sustained after donor funding ends
- Should objectively rate the level of achievement of each of the project's major outcomes on a four-point scale (low, moderate, above-moderate, and high).
- As relevant during final evaluations, should assess whether the results from the RDQA were used by the project to formulate and implement measures to strengthen their data management and reporting system and improve data quality.

### **FINAL EVALUATIONS:**

- Should include questions following up on midterm evaluation recommendations.
- Should include activity to review CMEP data with grantee.

## **4. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND TIMEFRAME**

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

### **A. APPROACH**

The evaluation approach will be qualitative and participatory in nature and use project documents including CMEP data to provide quantitative information. Qualitative information will be obtained through field visits, interviews and focus groups as appropriate. Opinions coming from stakeholders and project participants will improve and clarify the use of quantitative analysis. The participatory nature of the evaluation will contribute to the sense of ownership among stakeholders and project participants.

To the extent that it is available, quantitative data will be drawn from the CMEP and project reports and incorporated in the analysis. In particular, project monitoring data shall be triangulated with relevant quantitative or qualitative data collected during fieldwork, in order to objectively rate the level of achievement of each of the project's major outcomes on a four-point scale (low, moderate, above-moderate, and high).

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. Gender and cultural sensitivity will be integrated in the evaluation approach.
3. 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.
4. As far as possible, a consistent approach will be followed in each project site, with adjustments made for the different actors involved, activities conducted, and the progress of implementation in each locality.

## **B. EVALUATION TEAM**

The evaluation team will consist of:

1. The lead evaluator(s)
2. As appropriate an interpreter fluent in necessary languages

One member of the project staff may support the evaluation team to make introductions. This person is not involved in the evaluation process, or interviews.

The lead evaluator(s) will be responsible for developing the methodology in consultation with DevTech Systems, Inc., USDOL, and the project staff; assigning the tasks of the national consultant (as applicable); assigning the tasks of the interpreter for the field work (as applicable); directly conducting interviews and facilitating other data collection processes; analysis of the evaluation material gathered; presenting feedback on the initial results of the evaluation to the national stakeholder meeting and preparing the evaluation report.

The responsibility of the interpreter in each provincial locality is to ensure that the evaluation team is understood by the stakeholders as far as possible, and that the information gathered is relayed accurately to the evaluator. The interpreter should be impartial and independent from the grantee in order to mitigate potential bias.

## 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
- The evaluator shall also review the Routine Data Quality Assessment (RDQA) form completed by the grantee. The evaluator shall assess whether results from the RDQA were used by the project to formulate and implement measures to strengthen their data management and reporting system and improve data quality. The evaluator's analysis should be included in the evaluation report.
- The evaluator shall also review key CMEP outcome and OCFT Standard Output indicators with the grantee. This will include reviewing the indicator definitions in the CMEP's Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) and the reported values in the Technical Progress Report (TPR) Annex A to ensure the reporting is accurate and complete.
- Documents may include:
  - CMEP documents and data reported in Annex A of the TPR,
  - Routine Data Quality Assessment (RDQA) form as appropriate
  - Baseline and endline survey reports or pre-situational analyses,
  - Project document and revisions,
  - Project budget and revisions,
  - Cooperative Agreement and project modifications,
  - Technical Progress and Status Reports,
  - Project Results Frameworks and Monitoring Plans,
  - Work plans,
  - Correspondence related to Technical Progress Reports,
  - Management Procedures and Guidelines,
  - Research or other reports undertaken (KAP studies, etc.), and,
  - Project files 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 results are coming from. The Contractor will share the question matrix with USDOL.

### 3. INTERVIEWS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Informational interviews will be held with as many project stakeholders as possible. The evaluation team will solicit the opinions of, but not limited to: program

implementers, program staff, government representatives, and NGO and INGO officials regarding the project's accomplishments, program design, sustainability, and the working relationship between project staff and their partners, where appropriate.

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, such as implementers, partners, direct and indirect participants, community leaders, donors, and government officials. Thus, it is anticipated that meetings will be held with:

- OCFT staff responsible for this evaluation and project prior to the commencement of the field work
- Implementers at all levels
- Headquarters, Project Managers, and Field Staff of Grantee and Partner Organizations
- Government Ministry Officials and Local Government Officials who have been involved in or are knowledgeable about the project
- Community leaders, members, and volunteers
- Project participants (including NGOs and INGOs engaged in the project)

#### 4. FIELD VISITS

All data collection will be conducted remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions currently in place. 5. Outcome Achievement and Sustainability Ratings

The evaluator should objectively rate the level of achievement and potential for sustainability of each of the project's outcomes on a four-point scale (low, moderate, above-moderate, and high).

##### ACHIEVEMENT

“**Achievement**” measures the extent to which a development intervention or project attains its objectives/outcomes, as described in its performance monitoring plan (PMP).

For assessing the achievement of program or project outcomes, the evaluation team should consider the extent to which the objectives/outcomes were achieved and identify the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives/outcomes. **For final evaluations**, the evaluation team should consider to what extent the project is likely to meet or exceed its targets by project end.

Project achievement ratings should be determined through triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data. The evaluation team should collect qualitative data from key informant interviews and focus group discussions through a structured data collection process, such as a survey or rapid scorecard. Interviews and focus groups can also provide context for the results reflected in the Data Reporting Form submitted with the Technical Progress Report (TPR). The evaluation team should also analyze quantitative data collected by the project on key performance indicators defined in the Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) and reported on in the TPR Data Reporting Form. The evaluation team should consider the reliability and validity of the performance indicators and the completeness and accuracy of the data collected. The assessment of quantitative data should consider the extent to which the project achieved its targets and whether these targets were sufficiently ambitious and

achievable within the period evaluated. The evaluation team should assess each of the project's objective(s) and outcome(s) according to the following scale:

- **High:** met or exceeded most targets for the period evaluated, with mostly positive feedback from key stakeholders and participants.
- **Above-moderate:** met or exceeded most targets for the period evaluated, **but** with mostly neutral or negative feedback from key stakeholders and participants.
- **Moderate:** missed most targets for the period evaluated, **but** with mostly positive feedback from key stakeholders and participants.
- **Low:** missed most targets for the period evaluated, with mostly neutral or negative feedback from key stakeholders and participants.

### SUSTAINABILITY

“**Sustainability**” is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. When evaluating the sustainability of a project, it is useful to consider the likelihood that the benefits or effects of a particular output or outcome will continue after donor funding ends. It also important to consider the extent to which the project takes into account the actors, factors, and institutions that are likely to have the strongest influence over, capacity, and willingness to sustain the desired outcomes and impacts. Indicators of sustainability could include agreements/linkages with local partners, stakeholder engagement in project sustainability planning, and successful handover of project activities or key outputs to local partners before project end, among others.

The project's Sustainability Plan (including the associated indicators) and TPRs (including the attachments) are key (but not the only) sources for determining its rating. The evaluation team should assess each of the project's objective(s) and outcome(s) according to the following scale:

- **High:** strong likelihood that the benefits of project activities will continue after donor funding is withdrawn and the necessary resources<sup>23</sup> are in place to ensure sustainability;
- **Above-moderate:** above average likelihood that the benefits of project activities will continue after donor funding is withdrawn and the necessary resources are identified but not yet committed;
- **Moderate:** some likelihood that the benefits of project activities will continue after donor funding is withdrawn and some of the necessary resources are identified;
- **Low:** weak likelihood that that the benefits of project activities will continue after donor funding is withdrawn and the necessary resources are not identified.

In determining the rating above, the evaluation team should also consider the extent to which sustainability risks were adequately identified and mitigated through the project's risk management and stakeholder engagement activities. **For final**

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<sup>23</sup> Resources can include financial resources (i.e. non-donor replacement resources), as well as organization capacity, institutional linkages, motivation and ownership, and political will, among others.

**evaluations**, the evaluation team should assess the risk environment and its expected effects on the project outcomes after the project exits and the capacity/motivation/resources/linkages of the local actors/stakeholders to sustain the outcomes produced by the project.

#### **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 project participants, 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 interviewees feel comfortable, and to allow the evaluator to observe the interaction between the implementing partner staff and the interviewees.

#### **E. STAKEHOLDER MEETING**

Following the remote fieldwork, a stakeholder meeting will be organized by the project and led by the evaluator to bring together a wide range of stakeholders, including the implementing partners and other interested parties to discuss preliminary evaluation results. 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. ILAB staff may participate in the stakeholder meeting virtually.

The meeting will be used to present the major preliminary results and emerging issues, solicit recommendations, discuss project sustainability 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 may be prepared to guide the discussion and possibly a brief written feedback form. Due to the wide geographic spread of stakeholders and diversity of time zones, alternatives to a traditional remote workshop may be explored, such as sharing a brief pre-recorded presentation or brief write-up of preliminary results, paired with a short feedback form for stakeholders to complete.

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

- Presentation by the evaluator of the preliminary main results
- Feedback and questions from stakeholders on the results
- Opportunity for implementing partners not met to present their views on progress and challenges in their locality
- If appropriate, Possible Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) exercise on the project's performance
- 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.

A debrief call will be held with the evaluator and USDOL after the stakeholder workshop to provide USDOL with preliminary results and solicit feedback as needed.

## F. LIMITATIONS

Fieldwork for the evaluation will last two weeks, on average. Given the date of award of this contract, the remote fieldwork will overlap with final month of the project being evaluated. During this time, some contractors and stakeholders will be offboarding or have already been offboarded from the project. All efforts will be made to collect data from as many stakeholder groups as possible. Additionally, some identified stakeholders engaged with the project through their official capacity within government ministries (such as the Philippines Department of Labor and Employment, or DOLE). The evaluation team is obligated to follow formal protocols before interviewing official stakeholders. This requires formal introduction from the US Embassy and navigating the busy official calendars of these officials. The evaluation team will work with DOL and the implementing partner to expedite this process and make every attempt to interview official stakeholders during the anticipated remote fieldwork window.

This is not a formal impact assessment. Results for the evaluation will be based on information collected from background documents and in interviews with stakeholders, project staff, and project participants. The accuracy of the evaluation results 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.

Similarly, the evaluation criteria of impact and sustainability will be addressed to the extent possible. The project under evaluation is an output-oriented project, challenging the relevance and answerability of questions pertaining to long-term impact and sustainability. The evaluation team will respond to evaluation questions related to those two criteria to the extent possible, likely focusing on anticipated impact and anticipated sustainability.

## G. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**The Contractor is responsible for accomplishing the following items:**

- Providing all evaluation management and logistical support for evaluation deliverables within the timelines specified in the contract and TOR;
- Providing all logistical support for travel associated with the evaluation;
- Providing quality control over all deliverables submitted to ILAB;
- Ensuring the Evaluation Team conducts the evaluation according to the TOR;

**The Evaluation Team will conduct the evaluation according to the TOR. The Evaluation Team is responsible for accomplishing the following items:**

- Receiving and responding to or incorporating input from the grantees and ILAB on the initial TOR draft;
- Finalizing and submitting the TOR and sharing concurrently with the grantees and ILAB;
- Reviewing project background documents;
- Reviewing the evaluation questions and refining them as necessary;
- Developing and implementing an evaluation methodology, including document review, KIIs and FGDs, and secondary data analysis, to answer the evaluation

questions;

- Conducting planning meetings or calls, including developing a field itinerary, as necessary, with ILAB and grantees;
- Deciding the composition of field visit KII and FGD participants to ensure the objectivity of the evaluation;
- Developing an evaluation question matrix for ILAB;
- Presenting preliminary results verbally to project field staff and other stakeholders as determined in consultation with ILAB and grantees;
- Preparing an initial draft of the evaluation report for ILAB and grantee review;
- Incorporating comments from ILAB and the grantee/other stakeholders into the final report, as appropriate.
- Developing a comment matrix addressing the disposition of all of the comments provided;
- Preparing and submitting the final report;

**ILAB is responsible for the following items:**

- Launching the contract;
- Reviewing the TOR, providing input to the evaluation team as necessary, and agreeing on final draft;
- Providing project background documents to the evaluation team, in collaboration with the grantees;
- Obtaining country clearance from U.S. Embassy in fieldwork country;
- Briefing grantees on the upcoming field visit and working with them to coordinate and prepare for the visit;
- Reviewing and providing comments on the draft evaluation report;
- Approving the final draft of the evaluation report;
- Participating in the pre- and post-trip debriefing and interviews;
- Including the ILAB evaluation contracting officer's representative on all communication with the evaluation team;

**The grantee is responsible for the following items:**

- Reviewing the TOR, providing input to the evaluation team as necessary, and agreeing on the final draft;
- Providing project background materials to the evaluation team, in collaboration with ILAB;
- Preparing a list of recommended interviewees with feedback on the draft TOR;
- Participating in planning meetings or calls, including developing a field itinerary, as necessary, with ILAB and evaluator;
- Scheduling meetings during the field visit and coordinating all logistical arrangements;
- Helping the evaluation team to identify and arrange for interpreters as needed to facilitate worker interviews;
- Reviewing and providing comments on the draft evaluation reports;
- Organizing, financing, and participating in the stakeholder debriefing meeting;
- Providing in-country ground transportation to meetings and interviews;;
- Including the ILAB program office on all written communication with the evaluation team.

## **H. TIMETABLE**

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



Task	Responsible Party	Date
Evaluation launch call	DOL/OCFT	1/12/2022
Background project documents sent to Contractor	DOL/OCFT	1/22/2022
TOR Template submitted to Contractor	DOL/OCFT	1/10/2022
Contractor and Grantee work to develop draft itinerary and stakeholder list	Contractor and Grantee	1/28/2022
Logistics call - Discuss logistics and field itinerary	Contractor and Grantee (DOL/OCFT as needed)	1/17/2022
Contractor sends minutes from logistics call	Contractor	1/19/2022
Draft TOR sent to DOL/OCFT and Grantee	Contractor	1/19/2022
DOL/OCFT and Grantee provide comments on draft TOR	DOL/OCFT and Grantee	1/24/2022
Finalize field itinerary and stakeholder list for workshop	DOL/OCFT, Contractor, and Grantee	1/28/2022
Final TOR submitted to DOL/OCFT for approval	Contractor	1/27/2022
Question matrix submitted to DOL/OCFT for review	Contractor	1/27/2022
Final approval of TOR by DOL/OCFT	DOL/OCFT	1/28/2022
Submit finalized TOR to Grantee	Contractor	1/28/2022
Interview call with DOL/OCFT	Contractor	Week of 1/31/2022
Interview call with Grantee HQ staff	Contractor	Week of 1/31/2022
Fieldwork	Contractor	1/31/2022 – 2/11/2022
Stakeholder Workshop	Contractor	Week of 2/14/2022
Post-fieldwork debrief call	Contractor	Week of 2/14/2022
Revised report (3-week review draft) submitted to DOL/OCFT and Grantee	Contractor	3/4/2022
DOL/OCFT and Grantee/key stakeholder comments due to contractor after full 2-week review	DOL/OCFT and Grantee	3/18/2022
Revised report in redline submitted to DOL/OCFT and Grantee demonstrating how all comments were addressed either via a comment matrix or other format	Contractor	4/1/2022
DOL/OCFT and Grantee provides concurrence that comments were addressed	DOL/OCFT and Grantee	4/15/2022
Final report submitted to DOL/OCFT and Grantee	Contractor	4/29/2022
Final approval of report by DOL/OCFT	DOL/OCFT	5/2/2022
Draft infographic/brief document submitted to DOL/OCFT	Contractor	4/29/2022
DOL/OCFT comments on draft infographic/brief	DOL/OCFT	5/6/2022
Editing and 508 compliance by contractor	Contractor	Ongoing
Final infographic/brief submitted to DOL/OCFT (508 compliant)	Contractor	5/13/2022
Final approval of infographic/brief by DOL/OCFT (508 compliant)	DOL/OCFT	5/16/2022
Final edited report submitted to COR (508 compliant)	Contractor	5/13/2022
Final edited approved report and infographic/brief shared with grantee (508 compliant)	Contractor	5/16/2022

## 5. EXPECTED OUTPUTS/DELIVERABLES

Within fifteen working days (three weeks) following the evaluator's return from fieldwork, a first draft evaluation report will be submitted to DOL/OCFT. The report should have the following structure and content:

1. Table of Contents
2. List of Acronyms
3. Executive Summary (no more than **five pages** providing an overview of the evaluation, summary of main results/lessons learned/emerging good practices, and key recommendations)
4. Evaluation Objectives
5. Project Description
6. Listing of Evaluation Questions
7. Results
  - a. The results section includes the facts, analysis, and supporting evidence. The results section of the evaluation report should address the evaluation questions. It does not have to be in a question-response format but should be responsive to each evaluation question.
8. Conclusions and Recommendations
  - a. Conclusions – interpretation of the facts, including criteria for judgments
  - b. Lessons Learned and Emerging Good Practices<sup>24</sup>
  - c. Key Recommendations - critical for successfully meeting project objectives and/or judgments on what changes need to be made for sustainability or future programming
9. Annexes –
  - a. List of documents reviewed;
  - b. Interviews (including list of stakeholder groups; without PII in web version)/meetings/site visits;
  - c. Stakeholder workshop agenda and participants;
  - d. TOR, Evaluation Methodology and Limitations;
  - e. Summary of Recommendations (citing page numbers for evidence in the body of the report, listing out the supporting evidence for each recommendation, and identifying party that the recommendation is directed toward.)

The key recommendations must be **action-oriented and implementable**. The recommendations should be clearly linked to results and directed to a specific party to be implemented. It is preferable for the report to contain no more than 10 recommendations, but other suggestions may be incorporated in the report in other ways.

The total length of the report should be approximately 30 pages for the main report, excluding the executive summary and annexes.

The first draft of the report will be circulated to OCFT and the grantee individually for their review. The evaluator will incorporate comments from OCFT and the

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<sup>24</sup> An emerging *good practice* is a process, practice, or system highlighted in the evaluation reports as having improved the performance and efficiency of the program in specific areas. They are activities or systems that are recommended to others for use in similar situations. A *lesson learned* documents the experience gained during a program. They may identify a process, practice, or systems to avoid in specific situations

grantee/other key stakeholders into the final reports as appropriate, and the evaluator will provide a response, in the form of a comment matrix, as to why any comments might not have been incorporated.

While the substantive content of the results, 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.