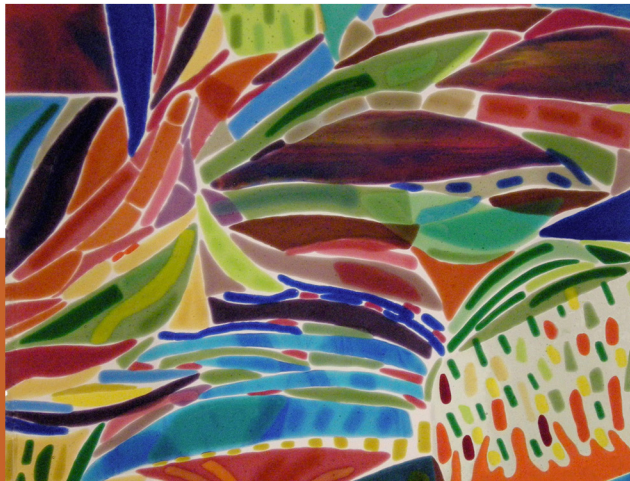


FUNDED BY THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Independent Midterm Evaluation of the *Educar* Project: Combating Child Labor in Brazil

Partners of the Americas

Cooperative Agreement Number: E-9-K-3-0064



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

C&A	Children and Adolescents
CPD	<i>Centro de Prevenção as Dependências</i> (Center for Dependency Prevention)
CSE	Commercial Sexual Exploitation
ECA	<i>Estatuto Crianças e Adolescentes</i> (Child and Adolescent Statute)
IA	Illicit Agriculture
ILO	International Labour Organization
MIS	Management Information Systems
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
PEADS	<i>Proposta Educacional de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento Sustentável</i> (Educational Proposal to Support Sustainable Development)
PETI	<i>Programa de Eliminação de Trabalho Infantil</i> (Program for the Elimination of Child Labor)
TPR	Technical Progress Report
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
WFCL	Worst Forms of Child Labor

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report contains the results of the midterm evaluation of the *Educar* Program. Financed by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) for US\$5 million, *Educar* is a four-year program (2003–2007) aimed at combating the worst forms of child labor (WFCL) in Northeast Brazil. The program evaluation was conducted from May to July 2006. An initial desk review was followed by a two-week visit to Brazil where 6 of the 23 program sites were visited and meetings were held with the implementers and a variety of program stakeholders. A draft report was prepared and a final report was produced based on comments on the draft.

Educar is directed at two WFCL—Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Illicit Agriculture (IA). In the Sertao region of Brazil, the driest and poorest area in the country, CSE is quite prevalent, as poverty provides motivation and strong interstate commerce provides opportunity. IA is also quite prevalent as the region around the Sao Francisco River is one of the two largest marijuana growing areas in Brazil. It is estimated that more than 10,000 children and adolescents (C&A) are involved in production.

Educar is headed up by Partners in the Americas and relies on the active participation of two subcontractors, Serta, a nongovernmental organization (NGO) whose main responsibility is school curriculum and teacher training, and *Centro de Prevenção as Dependências* (CPD; Center for Dependency Prevention), an NGO whose main responsibility is tied to diagnostic interventions related to CSE. The program relies on municipal governments to implement the program and on significant coordination between various agencies and programs. Therefore, a good deal of effort is devoted to establishing and expanding buy-in and networking. Another principal activity is the training of teachers, social educators (the name given to professionals working with CSE and with former child workers in educational interventions), and others. In IA, a household census was undertaken to provide a basis to identify and target C&A working in agriculture. (It was felt to be too dangerous for the program and potential beneficiaries to focus explicitly on IA, so work in agriculture, in general, became the focus.) In CSE, there were no models of how to identify exploited C&A and target them with services, so the program developed an innovative methodology using social educators to go to locations where C&A are working.

Educar's accomplishments are many and varied. It has secured the commitment and involvement of the highest level municipal officials in what has become a locally owned and operated project with *Educar* providing support. Networking and coordination across agencies and programs has been very successful, so that a multisectoral approach is brought to bear on WFCL. While operating at a local level, *Educar* is also a contributor to state and national efforts and policy. Training activities have been extremely successful, reaching more than 500 schools and almost 3,000 teachers. The curriculum reform process has developed an innovative approach, integrated with local realities, on the basis of research in the rural environment, and aiming at active learning with strong community-school relations. Most classrooms and locations where Programs for the Elimination of Child Labor (PETIs) take place—the complementary extended school day program for former child workers—were successfully using the new curriculum. *Educar* has begun to transform traditional classroom pedagogy, increase student self-esteem, and improve relations between teachers and students, as well as between the school and the

community. It has also improved the integration of the schools and PETIs. The educational census was successful, gathering data on more than 67,000 households and 280,000 individuals, and is now being used to identify, target, and track children working in agriculture and other WFCL. In CSE, the development of a whole methodology around the role and approach of social educators has been successful in reaching target C&A.

Though quite successful overall, *Educar* faces diverse and significant challenges. There is variation among municipalities and applications in how well *Educar* is performing. In some municipalities, where the focus is CSE, work on the program is just getting started. There are also instances of tension between *Educar* and what should be complementary programs. Some reference schools have experienced difficulty in overcoming staff resistance to incorporating C&A victims of CSE. Although depending on local resources is a program strength, it is also a limitation, as tight municipal budgets limit program activities. Upcoming state and national elections will likely result in a transition period that will make program operations somewhat more difficult and uncertain. Common attitudes that child labor is normal, useful, or necessary, will hinder the ability of the program to withdraw C&A from agricultural work. The severe economic conditions of the Sertão also limits the success of educational and withdrawal efforts. Though training has been successful, more effort is needed in training in particular areas—PETIs, grades 5 to 8, and urban schools. There is also a substantial demand for increased training.

Educar faces a major challenge in meeting its end-of-program goals. This is partly related to confusion over definitions of withdrawal and prevention. Also, the process for withdrawing girls from CSE is a slow one and it is constrained by limited available resources and the fact that this work does not typically qualify for PETI enrollment. The process for withdrawing C&A from agriculture is just beginning and is likely to face serious administrative and attitudinal obstacles. Because of these problems, program targets may be difficult to meet.

There are a number of actions *Educar* can undertake to meet these challenges. As part of the next Technical Progress Report (TPR) and/or a program revision, *Educar* should produce a systematic and comprehensive review of all withdrawal and prevention plans, mechanisms, and targets. To facilitate work in CSE, some municipalities should be convinced to hire more social educators and to give them more support. Immediate attention needs to be focused on municipalities that have not yet hired social educators. Reference schools with serious problems require immediate attention or the selection of an alternative school. *Educar* should also lobby nationally and statewide for a change to PETI criteria to include CSE workers. A traditional mass media campaign may complement current efforts to get children to give up agricultural work. To the extent resources permit, training activities should be increased. More training effort should be focused on the three areas of PETIs, grades 5 to 8, and urban schools.

I INTRODUCTION

Of the many problems facing the world, child labor is one of the worst. It is the result of a complex set of forces, from the local to the global, which often lead to lasting harm to our most vulnerable population—children. This harm ranges from damaged health to an interrupted education or one never started. Though there is some debate about the degree to which child labor can be beneficial to the child under certain circumstances, there is wide agreement that WFCL, as described in International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 182, needs to be eliminated.

Since the early 1990s, USDOL has been investing in education initiatives aimed at combating child labor worldwide. Approximately US\$500 million has been allocated to projects in more than 70 countries. The *Educar* Program in Brazil is one of these education initiatives. The program was approved in August 2003, but implementation did not get underway until January 2004 because of delays in obtaining written approval from various Brazilian ministries. The program will continue until mid-November 2007. This report represents the findings from the midterm evaluation of the *Educar* Program, though its execution took place with approximately 16 months remaining in the program (i.e., beyond the actual midterm of the program).

The remainder of the report is organized into seven sections. The first section describes the evaluation objectives and the second describes the evaluation methodology. The third section describes the *Educar* Program. The fourth section presents the findings of the evaluation, divided into a subsection on the accomplishments of the program and another subsection that examines the challenges the program faces. The fifth section looks at the lessons learned and best practices found in *Educar*. The sixth section offers some conclusions, and the final section contains recommendations. Included in the terms of reference (TOR) for the evaluation were a number of specific questions from USDOL. Responses to these questions are included in Annex A, and the TOR is included as Annex B.

1.1 EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

As set out in the TOR, the purpose of the evaluation is three-fold: (1) to determine if the program achieved its stated objectives and explain why or why not; (2) to assess the impact of the program in terms of sustained improvements achieved; and (3) identify lessons learned and best practices to inform future USDOL projects.

1.2 METHODOLOGY OF EVALUATION

Of the evaluations three phases, the first phase began in the United States with a review of project documents. Included in this review were the original project proposal and associated documents and TPRs to date. The review also included relevant literature on child labor, particularly in Brazil. In addition to the review of project documents, a number of meetings were held with staff from Macro International Inc., an Opinion Research Corporation company (ORC Macro)—the company USDOL contracted to perform the evaluation—with staff from USDOL, and with the *Educar* project director via telephone.

The second phase of the evaluation took place in Brazil. Fieldwork in Pernambuco and Bahia, Brazil, took place from May 7–20, 2004. A detailed itinerary of these meetings and a list of the principal individuals met with are provided in Annexes C and D. The first two days in Brazil were spent meeting with the core project team—Partners of the Americas (Partners), Serta, and CPD.

These meetings in Recife were followed by eight days of visits to 6 of the 23 program municipalities. The evaluator was accompanied by the *Educar* Project Director, Stuart Beechler, for visits to the first three municipalities, and by its Education Coordinator, Teresa Barros, to the last three municipalities.¹ The municipalities, located in the states of Bahia and Pernambuco, were Cabrobo, Lagoa Grande, Paulo Afonso, Petrolina, Salgueiro, and Tacaratu.²

Within each municipality, we visited various communities, urban and rural, including a quilombo³ community and an indigenous Truka community. We also visited schools, PETIs,⁴ and other institutions. In each municipality, meetings were held with principal stakeholder groups—municipal authorities, administrators of relevant programs, school administrators, teachers, social educators, and students. Occasionally, we met a few parents.⁵ Interviews took place individually or, more commonly, in small or large groups. Typically, upon arrival in a municipality, we met with municipal authorities—the mayor and/or the secretaries of education and social development. Following an initial meeting, some of these authorities or their staff would accompany us to schools and PETIs for an initial meeting with its director, visits to classrooms and interviews with the classroom teacher and students, and then a larger meeting with school or PETI staff. Interviews with stakeholder groups followed a semi-structured format. These groups were asked about the nature of the program and its history from their perspective; successes and failures; problems and issues; and directions for the future. More than 100 interviews were conducted, including 18 with *Educar* staff; 13 with municipal authorities; 22 with municipal administrators; 13 with school and PETI directors; 20 with teachers; 9 with social educators; and 7 with staff from other organizations (see Annex D). This does not include the large number of students spoken with in their classrooms.

¹ The issue was raised as to whether the presence of *Educar*'s Director or staff would bias the interviews in any way. It was decided that the added knowledge that their presence would bring and the additional comfort of interviewees with a familiar person outweighed any reluctance that might be felt to speak honestly. It is the evaluator's judgment that this was a good decision. The contextual knowledge that they brought made the interviews more productive and those interviewed talked openly about problems facing the project as evidenced by the many problems raised and discussed in the report.

² Communities and schools to be visited were selected by the *Educar* staff and municipal authorities. While this introduces some biases toward examples of successful implementation, these sites did exhibit significant problems. On the basis of feedback from the stakeholders' meeting and discussions with *Educar* staff, the evaluator believes he was able to get a good representation of the problems facing the project as a whole. Nonetheless, the results apply most directly to the project communities visited.

³ The quilombos are descended from slaves who escaped in the 19th century and formed isolated communities in Northeast Brazil.

⁴ PETIs are the site for the extended day of education offered to former child workers (along with a small grant) by the *Programa de Eliminacao de Trabalho Infantil* (PETI; Program for the Elimination of Child Labor). They generally have a morning shift to complement the education of those who have school in the afternoon and an afternoon shift to complement the education of those who have school in the morning.

⁵ Given the limited duration of field visits, it was decided not to set up formal interviews with parents as they are not as central to the project as are the other stakeholders.

Returning to Recife after the fieldwork, the evaluator spent a day debriefing with the Partners team and preparing for the stakeholders' meeting on Friday, May 19. He also met with Ana Aslan of USDOL and Anabella Bruch of Partners, both of whom had come down from Washington, DC for the Friday meeting. The stakeholders' meeting had 44 participants, gathering a wide range of relevant people from local, national, and international arenas (see Annex E for a list of participants). At the meeting, the evaluator offered an overview of his findings followed by a plenary discussion, breakout groups to discuss challenges faced by the program, and another plenary session to share and discuss the group work. Ideas and insights from the stakeholder meeting are incorporated in this report and in the answers to the questions in Annex A.

During the final phase of the evaluation in the United States, a draft report was produced. Its findings are a result of the extensive interviews undertaken, transcripts from the stakeholders' meeting, documents gathered in Brazil, and documents previously gathered for the desk review, as well as observations in the six program sites visited. Feedback was solicited on the draft report, revisions were made, and this final version of the midterm evaluation was produced.

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II THE *EDUCAR* PROGRAM

The *Educar* Program is a four-year project, financed by USDOL for US\$5 million and aimed at fighting WFCLs. It focuses on two WFCLs—CSE and IA in the Sertao region of Northeast Brazil. The Sertao region is the poorest in Brazil, consisting of the region inland from the coast, generally dry and subject to periodic severe droughts. CSE of children and youth is all too common as severe poverty and considerable interstate commerce offer motivation and opportunity. IA is especially common in what is called the “marijuana polygon” of Pernambuco, which is near the Sao Francisco River. This area offers excellent growing conditions and is one of the top two producers of marijuana in Brazil. During the evaluation period in Brazil, there were almost daily busts of marijuana plantations or trafficking. Some of the production is done on family farms but the vast majority is on large estates or unregulated landholdings in remote and clandestine areas. Children and youth who work on these estates are often hired for several months at a time to live in an area remote from their family, without opportunity for schooling, subject to arrest if caught, and exposed to drugs and a drug culture. It has been estimated that more than 10,000 children and youth in this area are involved in IA.

Partners is the *Educar* lead. It has subcontracts with two institutions it refers to as “anchor partners”—CPD and Serta. CPD is an NGO that initially focused on drug and alcohol abuse but now has extended its work to a range of vulnerable populations.⁶ Serta is an NGO concerned with community development, especially related to education. While both institutions are involved with the overall project, they each have specialized roles they play in the project. In *Educar*, CPD focuses on developing and applying a methodology to deal with CSE related to diagnostics and onsite interventions and referrals through social education teams. Serta is most involved with the training of public school teachers and PETI educators.

Educar has three overall lines of action that are discussed briefly below. These lines of action also serve as a template for organizing the discussion of accomplishments and challenges that follows.

2.1 ARTICULATION, MOBILIZATION, AND INTEGRATION

Educar’s fundamental strategy is to engage municipal governments (and nongovernmental actors when they exist) in implementing program activities, and to network with other programs in the municipality to work together to accomplish program goals. This strategy was designed to enhance sustainability and emphasizes increasing the capacities of municipal governments. The program’s key initial and ongoing activities involve getting institutions to buy into the program, mobilizing these various actors, integrating them into a functional inter-organizational team, and networking and coordinating work. Those involved include the Secretaries of Education, Social

⁶ CPD began working with *Educar* in January 2005, eventually replacing *Projeto Axe*. Serta has been with the project from the beginning, but its role has changed. Both points are discussed in Annex A.

Development, and Health, as well as *Sentinela*,⁷ the Tutelary Council,⁸ unions, other associations, and NGOs.

2.2 TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Given the central strategy of strengthening public policies and services by investing in local capacity building, a major activity of the *Educar* Program is the training of teachers, social educators, municipal administrators, and sometimes school staff, NGO staff, and other actors. Improved schools and PETIs are seen as key to the prevention and successful withdrawal of C&A from WFCL. Formal training is delivered in stages and divided into modules that incrementally introduce curriculum reform, along with some focus and content on child labor. Modules are delivered to the entire municipality in the case of IA-targeted municipalities, lasting two to four days, and are given twice a year, so far delivering two to three modules. These training sessions are followed up by municipal authorities and supported by technical assistance from the Partners and Serta staff. Social educators who work with CSE are given separate, ongoing training and technical support by CPD staff.

Educar is organized to provide continual followup and technical assistance to its training and networking activities. The technical assistance aims at reinforcing and maintaining stakeholder commitments, as well as addressing technical demands that result from training activities—seeking to ensure that the methodologies introduced are transformed into practice. Since January 2006, *Educar* has been organized into regional teams so as to provide more systematic technical support and work toward greater local coordination. The 23 municipalities are divided into three regions and each region has a four-person team composed of two staff from Partners and one each from CPD and Serta. Outreach is planned so that every community is visited at least once a month.

2.3 IDENTIFICATION, TARGETING, AND MONITORING

The identification, targeting, and monitoring of C&A is critical for withdrawal from WFCL. Considerable effort has gone into how this might be done. In agriculture, it was decided that it was too dangerous for the program and potential beneficiaries to be explicitly identified with marijuana growing, and so *Educar* became identified as an education program.⁹ The focus was

⁷ *Sentinela*, whose name was recently changed to Referral Centers, is a Federal program established in 2001 aimed at providing a service center for C&A who are victims of sexual violence, domestic violence, child pornography, and CSE. It offers counseling, legal, and some educational services.

⁸ The Tutelary Council is part of the apparatus set up through the landmark 1990 Brazilian legislation, the *Estatuto das Crianças e Adolescentes* (ECA; Child and Adolescent Statute). At the municipal level, a Child Rights Council and a number of community-based Tutelary Councils are formed by civil society and government representatives to protect the rights of C&A. The local Tutelary Council receives denunciations about threats or violations of a child's rights and seeks legal, juridical, and psychological solutions.

⁹ There are dangers involved in this project. Both forms of child labor involve criminal activity and no matter how careful the approach to IA and CSE—and great care is taken—working in these areas is not without risk. Moreover, in the project area, there is a high incidence of carjacking, and project staff experienced more than one narrow escape. Recife is also a high crime city. It was estimated that 15 years ago Bogota had three times as much crime as Recife, now the figures are reversed. Last year, the *Educar* Program offices were robbed at gunpoint during the day.

broadened to identifying child labor in agriculture in general, as well as some other WFCL.¹⁰ As indicated above, much of the agricultural work in this area of Brazil is in marijuana production, and, if not, it often involves dangerous work because pesticides are often used in the production of vegetables and fruit in the region. To identify C&A working in agriculture, a door-to-door, household educational census was undertaken cooperatively with local authorities in the 14 municipalities where agricultural activities were targeted. The census results are the basis for working with schools and municipal authorities to target and monitor C&A who are working in agriculture and other WFCL.

In CSE, there were no good extant examples of how to identify and target C&A engaged in such activities. Most existing programs are oriented toward the repression of a crime and fall short of addressing the socio-educational needs of victims and their withdrawal from this WFCL, so *Educar* had to create a methodology to use for this program. Building on the work of their former partner, *Projeto Axe*,¹¹ with street children and street educators, and with their current partner CPD in CSE, an approach evolved that relied on social educators.¹² In this “Investigation and Intervention Methodology,” the social educator first becomes acquainted with the settings where CSE takes place (e.g., bars, brothels, or gas stations). After gaining entry to these locations, the social educator works on winning the trust of the C&A working there. That trust enables progressive intervention, helping the C&A with their health needs, educational alternatives, and eventually stopping their work. This type of intervention is much different than that of *Sentinela* and the Tutelary Councils, both of which are legal-judicial interventions that attempt to immediately stop C&A from working and put them into complementary programs. These programs have had limited success and large numbers of C&A continue in CSE, successfully evading the efforts of *Sentinela* and the Council. *Educar* offers an alternative whereby the social educator works with the C&A to get them to withdraw from CSE and continues to monitor that withdrawal.

As part of the CSE methodology, in each of the 12 communities where *Educar* is operating, one or more “reference schools” are identified to serve as the place where C&A in CSE who want to return to school are referred and monitored. These schools are selected to be in a central location, usually offer grades 5 to 8, and bring together students from a variety of surrounding communities. Training is given to school staff with the aim of making the school a more effective learning and social development environment for these C&A.

¹⁰ Though, as befitting a rural project, the focus is on agricultural labor, data collection also yielded data on urban WFCLs such as in weaving and flour mills that cause respiratory problems and in brick-making and market work that can involve heavy lifting. C&A in these areas are also targets of interventions.

¹¹ See the discussion of *Projeto Axe* in Annex A.

¹² The term street educator has been transformed to social educator, indicating the broader reach of this educator into a variety of social settings and confronting a variety of social problems.

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III FINDINGS

3.1 PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In this section, *Educar*'s successes are examined. It is organized according to *Educar*'s three lines of action.

3.1.1 Articulation, Mobilization, and Integration

High-Level Local Engagement

Most impressive was the high level of engagement with the *Educar* Program at the local level. In each of the program communities visited during the evaluation, there was evidence of involvement by the highest level local officials—in particular the mayor, and the Secretaries of Education, Social Development, and sometimes Health. In all cases, local officials demonstrated clear knowledge of, commitment to, and enthusiasm for the program. This commitment was not merely abstract, but in all cases local institutions were involved in the program and local resources were committed to the program.¹³ Teachers were attending training and Secretariat staff were involved in a variety of roles such as pedagogical coordinators, social educators, and networking.

Local Ownership

The majority of development projects that come from outside a country or even outside a region is rarely incorporated into the locality and often disappears when funding ends. Local ownership is a necessity to sustainability. *Educar* is one of the relatively few projects that, in the evaluator's experience, has been able to establish local ownership from the outset. *Educar* provides necessary support, but the project is the municipality's.

Connections Among Relevant Programs

A major challenge in this area of work has long been the lack of a coordinated response to social problems. From the local to national level, it is difficult getting different government agencies to work together, let alone in coordination with others. Yet, the problems facing WFCL are multisectoral and successful treatment requires the integration of multiple actors.

As reported in interviews with numerous municipal actors, one of *Educar*'s accomplishments has been the improved level of integration among different sectors of the government, councils, other programs, and NGOs. Staff from agencies and projects are more aware of each others' activities and meet with each other more often. Many respondents said that cooperation and coordination are now much more commonplace in *Educar* communities because of the program.

¹³ To date, it is estimated that project municipalities have contributed approximately US\$400,000 to project activities.

State and National Level

Though the program operates at a local level, it has successfully involved state and national level groups. *Educar* is part of and contributes to a variety of state and national level commissions and organizations such as the Sertao Working Group, the United Nations Children's Fund's (UNICEF's) initiative on children's work in the semiarid region, and the state and national PETI Forums. The Ministry of Education used *Educar*'s census as a national exemplar for municipal education planning.

3.1.2 Training and Technical Assistance

The training has reached more than 500 schools in the 23 municipalities, training almost 3,000 teachers, social educators, and others, with each receiving two to three modules of instruction and another two to three modules forecast. But the impact is not simply quantitative. This training, especially the *Proposta Educacional de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento Sustentável* (PEADS; Educational Proposal to Support Sustainable Development) methodology, has had a greater impact than any of this type and duration. PEADS has a curriculum approach integrated with the local reality, based on research in the rural environment, and aimed at active learning with strong community-school relationships.

Most Schools and PETIs are Using the Methodologies

Almost every classroom and the majority of PETIs visited were using the PEADS approach. This was especially true for grades 1 to 4 in primary school. Teacher lessons were related to the most recent research that students had carried out. The classroom walls were covered with the results of student research projects concerning population, agriculture, and the environment. Even first graders participated (e.g., by drawing maps of their neighborhood).

Transformed Work with Students

The students observed and interviewed seemed interested and engaged, and student-teacher relations change as a result of the research-based PEADS curriculum. Given the nature of the curriculum, a reliance on student research means teachers are no longer the source of all knowledge, and active learning and discovery learning begin to replace an authoritarian pedagogy. According to teachers, this new pedagogy has increased student self-esteem, as does the fact that the curriculum privileges and values rural life.

Transformed Relations with the Community

Having students perform research in the community changes the student's relationship with their parents and the community's with the school. Parents become linked to the school and their children's learning within the school. Parents also become a valuable and valued source of knowledge. The PEADS approach even has a specific stage—devolution—when the community gathers to discuss the results of the research. Teachers and principals uniformly say that as a result of the PEADS curriculum, the relationships between schools and communities are much improved. One principal that when she previously called for a meeting with parents, few came, but that now such meetings are very well-attended.

Improved Integration of the Schools and PETIs

In many communities, schools and PETIs do not have a very good relationship. PETI teachers are often seen as monitors and are not valued, and PETI students are seen as problem C&A. In *Educar* communities, this relationship is changing. School teachers and PETI social educators (the term the program uses instead of monitors) said that relations between the two have improved, chiefly through two mechanisms: (1) contact through participating in training together, and (2) in many cases, they began to coordinate their work because, for the first time, they were using the same curriculum approach—PEADS-inspired research.

Training Reaches Other Stakeholders

Training is not restricted to teachers and social educators. Municipal authorities often attend and are featured in training activities, and sometimes training includes staff from other programs or NGOs. In the reference schools, training includes all school staff, including guards and food service personnel. Such inclusion increases buy-in and operational effectiveness.

3.1.3 Identification, Targeting, and Monitoring

Completed the Educational Census

Undertaking and completing the educational census was an enormous task. Data on education and work (28 variables) were gathered on more than 67,000 households and 280,000 individuals. Moreover, according to *Educar* staff and municipal actors, the census served as a community mobilization activity. The process of having census takers going door-to-door discussing and asking questions about education and work served to inform and sensitize communities to both topics. The Ministry of Education recognized this and recommended the *Educar* Educational Census in a recent national publication.

Using the Census to Identify and Target C&A in Agriculture and other WFCL

The census database is currently being used to identify, track, and monitor C&A who are working in agriculture (and other WFCLs for which there is data). Schools and municipal authorities, working with *Educar* staff, are in the process of developing strategies aimed at the prevention and withdrawal from WFCL of the more than 20,000 C&A in the region identified in the census.

Developed a Methodology for Identification and Intervention with C&A in CSE

A major accomplishment of the program has been the development of a methodology to identify and intervene with C&A in CSE. CSE is a particularly harmful WFCL, it is a hidden problem, very difficult to treat, and there are few examples of successful treatment. *Educar*'s development of the role and approach of the social educator, as described previously (see pages 5–6), with attention to how they enter the CSE environment, avoid the risks associated, develop a relationship with the C&A, and work toward withdrawal and monitoring, is a story of a successful social innovation, undertaken with courage and commitment, that deserves in-depth discussion and dissemination.

3.2 PROGRAM CHALLENGES

In this section, the challenges facing *Educar* are examined according to *Educar*'s three lines of action.

3.2.1 Articulation, Mobilization, and Integration

Though articulation, mobilization, and integration have been quite successful in general, there is considerable local variation. Some municipalities are not performing as well as others and some activities have been less successful than others.

Program in Initial Phases in Some Municipalities

In some communities, where the focus is CSE, implementation of program services is just beginning. For example, in Petrolina, social educators have not yet been contracted, and in Lagoa Grande, they have only been at work for a few months. The reasons underlying this problem are unclear; in both cases municipal authorities cite contracting difficulties and budget problems. Even after social educators are assigned or contracted, in some municipalities the degree of support given to them is inadequate (e.g., they are given multiple and conflicting responsibilities).

Relations Between Educar, Sentinela, and the Tutelary Council

Though in all communities there is some coordination between *Educar*, *Sentinela*, and the Tutelary Councils, the relationship is better in some than others. There exists an unavoidable tension because the groups' different approaches to the common problem of CSE. *Sentinela* and the Tutelary Council have a legal-judicial approach and generally operate by someone being "denounced" as violating the law (e.g., by being a child prostitute). Therefore, they have a repressive function, one which C&A often hide from and one which is quite dissimilar to *Educar*'s child-centered educational approach. This difference does not necessarily hinder cooperation between the programs, but the degree to which close relations develop seems to depend on the particular orientation of *Sentinela* and Council staff.

Success of the Reference Schools

Successful development of the reference schools has proven challenging in some cases. In the beginning, all reference schools met with some resistance by teachers and staff, whose concerns were various (e.g., the girls use drugs, they might seduce teachers or students). Training and networking activities were successful in overcoming this resistance in some cases but not in others. It is of major importance that these efforts are successful. A welcoming school environment is essential to removing girls from WFCL.

Municipal Budgetary Support

The reliance on local resources is a strength of the program, but it also brings with it challenges. Municipal resources are scarce, which places limits on what *Educar* can expect and can do (e.g., in terms of local training, training followup, the coordination of PETIs, availability of social educators, or the availability of school resources).

Continuity of Public Administration

Local elections in 2004 created serious challenges for *Educar*, as 80 percent of municipalities changed hands so there was a need to reestablish the buy-in and networking that is so important to program operation. The upcoming state and national elections later this year should not be as problematic because the municipalities remain stable. Nonetheless, *Educar* will likely face some challenges. Elections typically have prolonged periods of transition, especially when the incumbent is not reelected or if parties change, and this will slow the operation of state and Federal programs. Particular programs may be profoundly affected. For example, it is unclear what the current merger of the Family Grant program and PETI program will bring, especially regarding the extended day associated with PETI. This uncertainty may be compounded if there is a change of national government.

Family Support

While communities have been very supportive of *Educar*'s curriculum reforms, family support for the goals of the program varies. Over the past decade in Brazil, child labor has been publicized, and it seems that there has been a sizeable increase in the public recognition of the problems associated with child labor, but there are still significant segments of the population, especially in rural areas, that see child labor as normal, useful, or necessary. This is likely to be true even for WFCL.

Economic Conditions

Economic conditions are a constraint and challenge to any program activities in the Sertao. Though there are pockets of economic development (e.g., gypsum mining and agro-industry), poverty is widespread. Poverty is an integral part of a set of problems that make survival and earning a livelihood difficult. It places limits on what education can accomplish. For any project in this region to achieve true success it must face these realities. In particular, complementary development activities are needed that generate employment and income.

3.2.2 Training and Technical Assistance

Though training has been very successful, this success varies.

More Effort is Required for PETI

Though the majority of PETIs observed have incorporated PEADS methodology, the degree of incorporation is uneven. The PEADS research-based approach is more difficult to apply to PETI curriculum emphases such as art, music, and sports. Also, in CSE-targeted municipalities, PEADS is not applied on a systemwide basis as it is in *Educar* agriculture-targeted municipalities, so the few PETIs involved have less support for reform.

More Effort is Required for Grades 5 to 8

On the basis of classroom observations and discussions with teachers, the PEADS methodology has been more successfully incorporated in grades 1 to 4 than in grades 5 to 8. One possible reason for this is that grades 5 to 8 mark the beginning of subject matter specialization. More

effort needs to be made to apply a research-based approach to subjects like mathematics, science, and literature (the approach is clearly applicable and many classrooms have applied it). Another problem is that teachers at this level often teach in more than one school and their schedule leaves little time for the coordination and planning needed for PEADS application.

More Effort is Required for Urban Areas

On the basis of classroom observations, the PEADS methodology seemed to be more successfully applied in rural areas than urban areas. This is not surprising given Serta's rural orientation. Also, community research can become more difficult to organize when a school serves multiple communities in a disparate geographical area. Nonetheless, it is possible to do so as evidenced by some urban schools applying the reform quite successfully.¹⁴

Strong Demand for More Training

Together, the challenges and the successes of training activities discussed above have had one important consequence—there is a strong demand in every municipality visited for more PEADS training and more frequent and individualized follow-up.

Demands Placed on the Time of Teachers and Social Educators

Although there is a demand for more training, there is an associated challenge in that implementing PEADS requires a lot of time from teachers, social educators, and administrators in planning, coordinating, and interacting among themselves and with students and the community. Given the extra work required and that teachers earn a minimum salary¹⁵ and social educators often less, it is a measure of the success of the PEADS curriculum that there is so much enthusiasm about applying it.

3.2.3 Identification, Targeting, and Monitoring

Withdrawal and Prevention

The program faces a major challenge in applying USDOL's definitions of prevention and withdrawal from WFCL within processes that adequately monitor and verify these outcomes. A significant problem has been that, until now, *Educar*'s reporting was not in conformity with USDOL's definitions of withdrawal and prevention. Past TPRs have used a concept of "in the process of" prevention and withdrawal to estimate children reached by the program. During the midterm evaluation process, this problem was recognized and discussed by *Educar* and USDOL staff. At this time, the approach toward monitoring and verifying prevention and withdrawal are being reformulated and refined, but at this time, there is no verification of prevention or withdrawal.

¹⁴ Another problem in urban areas is that school-PETI integration is more difficult, in large part, because the physical location of PETIs are often distant from schools in urban areas and are much more proximate in rural areas.

¹⁵ Minimum salary is equal to RUS\$375/month or about US\$180.

Withdrawal of C&A from CSE and Meeting Program Targets

It is a slow and difficult process to remove C&A from CSE. More C&A could be reached in some communities if the communities had more social educators. The process is also hampered by the fact that those who leave work in CSE are not eligible for PETI in most municipalities. Further, the PETI age limit of 15 restricts beneficiaries and the relatively low grant for PETI attendance offers only a weak economic incentive to withdraw from CSE. To date, though more than 150 C&A have been observed in CSE, only 87 girls have been identified for program intervention, 58 of whom are now in school. Whether any of those 87 girls have withdrawn from CSE is not yet known. The monitoring and verification process that is being reformulated will critically rely on the social educator team, supported by CPD staff, who have developed one-on-one relations with the girls and the contextual knowledge necessary to verify withdrawal. Nonetheless, it is likely that, at this time, few girls have withdrawn, and, given the slow nature of the process and the problems with hiring social educators, that the goal of withdrawing 350 C&A from this WFCL will be difficult to achieve. Project staff remain hopeful that such a goal can be accomplished, but they are also examining ways to target prevention.

Identification and Targeting of C&A in Agriculture and Meeting Program Targets

From the census, there is a list of 6,813 C&A who were reported as in school and working, mostly in agriculture. Since early this year, *Educar* has been taking lists of these C&A to the relevant municipalities and working together with school authorities and teachers to verify the educational status of these children. Verification of relatively continuous school attendance will be used as one proxy indicator of withdrawal from IA, since working in marijuana production generally requires 1 to 3 months of extended stays in remote areas. Ensuring continued presence in schools without these long absences precludes the C&A from this WFCL.

Educar staff are also working with municipalities to develop complementary means to monitor and influence labor activities of C&A targeted for withdrawal from work. This may well require each municipality to establish a process for outreach to communities and families so as to visit with the parents of these C&A—perhaps an average of 400-500 families per municipality—and try to convince them to stop their children from working. Given the beliefs discussed earlier, this will not be easy. It will also be necessary to get these children into PETI, which will require the municipality to apply for expanding the PETI targets that currently limit enrollments.

The program target of 10,708 C&A cannot be reached with a focus only on the population of 6,813 C&A who are in school and working. The census data, however, also indicate another 13,376 C&A who could be the target of prevention and withdrawal efforts: 1,796 who are not in school and working; 5,131 who are not in school and not working; and 6,449 who are in school, not working, and in PETI. *Educar* staff, as part of the reformulation and refinement process of goals and means, is considering strategies to reach and monitor each of these potential target groups.

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IV LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

Local Ownership and Interagency Cooperation

Educar demonstrates that it is possible to overcome two significant hurdles in the development process. It is possible to build local ownership from the beginning of a project and to depend on interagency and inter-organization cooperation and coordination to build what has every chance of becoming a sustainable approach to dealing with WFCL.

The Social Educator Approach to CSE

Educar has pioneered an innovative approach to combating one of the worst of the WFCL, commercial sexual exploitation. The social educator approach, described above, offers a chance, albeit slowly and one child at a time, to help these C&A develop an alternative future.

Large-Scale Data Collection

Educar shows the feasibility and value of a very large scale data collection effort. *Educar* worked jointly with municipalities to generate a major educational census that offers data of interest to a variety of stakeholders. A caution is that substantial additional resources would likely be needed if municipalities were to be given sufficient MIS training to be capable of processing and analyzing the data on their own.

Rural Educational Transformation

Educational reform has generally not been successful in significantly improving education in rural areas, yet with *Educar*, major improvements in education resulted from relatively modest training efforts. Continued training and technical support are necessary to extend such changes and make them sustainable, but *Educar* has demonstrated the power of an innovative, research-based, rural-oriented, active learning, pedagogical reform.

School and PETI relationships

One particular consequence of the educational reform has been to demonstrate the possibility and power of integrating the education of schools and PETIs. Because the Brazilian school system only allows for a half-day period, an improved and better integrated extended day through PETI becomes critical to providing C&A removed from child labor with a full-day educational experience that reinforces their decision not to work.

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V CONCLUSIONS

The *Educar* Program is confronting some of the most difficult problems faced in today's world. Child labor, and particularly WFCL, is the result of multiple factors and is not easily amenable to intervention. The *Educar* Program has been successful in a number of ways. It has generated considerable local involvement and ownership, which bodes well for sustainability, and it has drawn upon and integrated the efforts of multiple actors in service provision. *Educar* has gone beyond its local focus to become a state and national player in issues of child labor. Its training activities have been successful. Most schools use the PEADS methodology and the Program has transformed work with students and community relations. PETI pedagogy has also been improved as have PETI relations with schools. *Educar* also produced a valuable census that is being used to target and monitor children working in agriculture and other WFCL. Finally, *Educar* developed a unique methodology through which social educators work with victims of CSE.

Nonetheless, the *Educar* Program also faces a series of significant challenges. In some of the CSE-targeted municipalities, work is only just beginning, as social educators are just being hired. In other municipalities, social educators face barriers to their work or are insufficient in number. Relations with programs like *Sentinela* or the Tutelary Councils are sometimes strained. Though local ownership has its advantages, tight local budgets limit program activities. Moreover, factors such as upcoming elections, family attitudes toward child work, and economic circumstances in the Sertao all place limits on what *Educar* can accomplish. Training activities have been less successful in certain areas such as PETIs, grades 5 to 8, and in urban areas. This lack of success increases the need for training overall.

Though these challenges are all important, the most immediate challenge *Educar* faces is to systematically and comprehensively reformulate and refine its approach to prevention and withdrawal from WFCL within a framework of verification and monitoring that connects it to program targets. As discussed earlier, withdrawal and prevention have been incorrectly used in project documents to date.¹⁶ *Educar* is currently engaging in a reformulation process, and has found that CSE targets may not be realistic given the slow nature of the withdrawal process. Perhaps more resources could speed up the process, and perhaps there are opportunities for prevention as well as withdrawal. In agriculture, the focus on the 6,813 students the census identified as in school and working needs a plan for how to get them to withdraw from child labor and how to monitor that withdrawal. If the original target of 10,358 is to be met, a plan is needed on how to target the other groups revealed by census data for withdrawal and prevention. Systematizing this in a comprehensive way is essential to productive use of the time and resources remaining in the program.

A related challenge facing the program is how to allocate its remaining resources over the final 16 months of the program. The program has been adversely affected by the exchange rate changes, yielding perhaps a loss of 20 percent or more of program funds. Though the program

¹⁶ This is a part of a complex history. Initially, in the project proposal, USDOL only required targets of "enrollment in educational programs," not of prevention or withdrawal (project documents now require both, which is a source of confusion). Moreover, the incorrect formulation of prevention and withdrawn subsequently used by *Educar* was not challenged in USDOL reviews of TPRs until recently.

revision last year helped by reducing the geographic scope and some of the related expenses, it did not compensate for the loss. Preliminary projections show that resources will be scarce. An expenditures report (as of April 30) showed that while 63 percent of the project implementation time had elapsed, 73 percent of total direct funds had been expended (and 86 percent of training funds).

Unless additional resources are forthcoming, some difficult tradeoffs will have to be made. There are three broad activities that require significant resources—training, targeting CSE, and targeting IA. More resources will likely be required to achieve CSE targets. While some of this could come from municipalities, it would also require more involvement of *Educar*'s CPD team. More resources will also likely be required for the targeting of C&A in agriculture to reach program goals. This leaves training as an area that could be cut back, yet training has been perhaps the most successful aspect of *Educar*, and though training may not affect the withdrawal of C&A from WFCL in the short term, in the long term, it is the transformed school and complementary education programs that are essential to keeping children away from such work.

VI RECOMMENDATIONS

This report's recommendations are based on the discussion of program challenges, and the justification for each is found in that section and in the concluding remarks.

- As part of the next TPR and/or a program revision, *Educar* should prepare a systematic and comprehensive review of all withdrawal and prevention plans, mechanisms, and targets, with a focus on verification and monitoring issues through final program implementation in FY 2007.
- Immediate attention needs to be focused on municipalities that have not yet hired social educators and on those with inadequate support structures (e.g., multiple and conflicting assignments) for social educators.
- Convince some municipalities to hire more social educators to expand CSE efforts.
- Lobby nationally and statewide for a change in PETI criteria to allow victims of CSE to qualify.
- Reference schools that have serious problems with the environment facing CSE victims require immediate effort to improve them and/or a selection of a different school as reference school.
- In some municipalities, relations between *Educar*, *Sentinela*, and the Tutelary Councils should be improved, but it may not be necessary to take action in this regard unless program operations are compromised by lack of cooperation.
- To the extent resources permit, increase training and related technical support activities.
- Future training activities should focus more on three areas: PETIs, grades 5 to 8, and urban schools.
- To accompany the current effort to get children to give up WFCL in agricultural work, it may be worthwhile to consider a traditional mass media campaign that supports the effort.
- Continued networking and technical assistance activities are necessary to maintain or increase the commitment of local resources.
- To the extent possible, *Educar* should promote and facilitate the initiation and operation of development activities in program communities that generate income and employment.