



Independent Interim Evaluation

– *Paraguay Okakuaa* –
"Paraguay Progresses" Project

Implemented by:
Partners of the Americas

Evaluator:
Dwight Ordóñez

Cooperative Agreement Number: IL-28094-15-75-K-11
Financing Agency: US Department of Labor
Dates of Project Implementation: Nov 2015 – Nov 2019
Evaluation Fieldwork Dates: April 2 – 13, 2018
Total Project Funds from USDOL: USD \$6,683,557.87



Sistemas, Familia y Sociedad
Consultores Asociados

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report describes in detail the interim evaluation of the *Paraguay Okakuaa* Project that was conducted between April 2 and April 13, 2018. Dwight Ordóñez, independent evaluator, conducted the evaluation in collaboration with the project team and stakeholders and prepared the evaluation report according to the terms in the contract with the United States Department of Labor. Mr. Ordóñez would like to express sincere thanks to all parties involved in this evaluation for their support and valuable contribution.

Funding for this evaluation was provided by the United States Department of Labor under Task Order 1605DC-17-T-00094. Points of view or opinions in this evaluation report do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the United States Department of Labor, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the United States Government.

ACRONYMS

ADN	<i>Análisis de Demandas y Necesidades</i> (Analysis of Labor Demand and Needs)
AECID	<i>Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo</i> (Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development)
ALDA	<i>Fundación ALDA</i>
CA	Children and Adolescents
CAAP	<i>Centro Azucarero y Alcohólico del Paraguay</i> (Paraguayan Sugar and Alcohol Center)
CIRD	<i>Centro de Información y Recursos para el Desarrollo</i> (Information and Resource Center for Development)
CL	Child Labor
CLAC	<i>Coordinadora Latinoamericana de Pequeños Productores de Comercio Justo</i> (Latin American Coordinator of Small Producers of Fair Trade)
CODENI	<i>Consejería Municipal por los Derechos del Niño, la Niña, y el Adolescente</i> (Municipal Council for the Rights of the Child, the Girl and the Adolescent)
CONAETI	<i>Comisión Nacional para la Prevención y Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil y la Protección del Trabajo de los/as Adolescentes</i> (National Commission for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of Adolescent Work)
CMEP	Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
CSJ	<i>Corte Suprema de Justicia</i> (Supreme Court of Justice)
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DBMS	Direct Beneficiary Monitoring System
DGIFT	<i>Dirección General de Inspección y Fiscalización del Trabajo</i> (General Directorate of Labor Inspection)
DGPNA	<i>Dirección General de Protección a la Niñez y la Adolescencia</i> (General Directorate for the Protection of Children and Adolescents)
EpC	<i>Espacios para Crecer</i> (Spaces to Grow)
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HCL	Hazardous Child Labor
KII	Key Informant Interview
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAG	<i>Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería</i> (Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock)
MEC	<i>Ministerio de Educación y Ciencias</i> (Ministry of Education and Sciences)
MTESS	<i>Ministerio de Trabajo, Empleo y Seguridad Social</i> (Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security)

OCFT	USDOL Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking
PETROPAR	<i>Petróleos Paraguayos</i>
POA	Partners of the Americas
POK	<i>Paraguay Okakuaa</i> Project
QL	Quantum Learning
RAT	<i>Registro del Adolescente Trabajador</i> (Adolescent Workers Registry System)
RUC	<i>Registro Único del Contribuyente</i> (Unique Taxpayer Registry)
SAS	<i>Secretaria de Accion Social</i> (Secretary of Social Action)
SENAVE	<i>Servicio Nacional de Calidad y Sanidad Vegetal y de Semillas</i> (National Service for Plant and Seed Quality and Health)
SINAFOCAL	<i>Sistema Nacional de Formación y Capacitación Laboral</i> (National System of Labor Training and Formation)
SNNA	<i>Secretaría Nacional de la Niñez y Adolescencia</i> (National Secretariat of Childhood and Adolescence)
SNPP	<i>Servicio Nacional de Promoción Profesional</i> (National Service of Professional Promotion)
TOR	Terms of Reference
TPR	Technical Progress Report
USDOL	United States Department of Labor

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Context

In Paraguay, 416,425 (22.4%) children and adolescents (CA) between the ages of 5 to 17 years old are working, and 95.1% of them do so in hazardous jobs. The incidence of child labor (CL) is significantly higher in rural than in urban areas, and hazardous child labor (HCL) is highest in three sectors: agriculture, domestic work, and in the informal sector.¹ Almost half (49.2%) of CA engaged in CL in Paraguay are found in the agricultural sector. Paraguayan legislation establishes 14 years as the minimum age for employment, but adolescent workers are generally not formally registered. Employers that do not respect minimum wages and safe work conditions for adolescents and adults, do so with impunity.

Project Description

In November 2015, the United States Department of Labor's (USDOL) Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking (OCFT) awarded a US\$ 6 million cooperative agreement to Partners of the Americas (PoA) to implement a project entitled, "*Paraguay Okakuaa*: Project to Reduce the Worst Forms of Child Labor and Improve Labor Law Enforcement and Working Conditions in Paraguay." *Paraguay Okakuaa* (POK) is being conducted over a period of 48 months, from November 3, 2015 through November 2, 2019. The project is implementing educational and livelihood activities focused on children and adolescents engaged in CL or at risk of CL, whose households are in the Department of Guairá. Institutional capacity building activities are carried out at a national level and in Guairá. A project revision was approved in December 2017 which added US\$ 683,557.87 in funds in order to incorporate a fourth component, with a focus on preventing forced labor in the Chaco. POK works with the implementing agencies *Fundación ALDA* (ALDA, which implements the educational component) and *Fundación Centro de Información y Recursos para el Desarrollo* (CIRD, which implements the livelihood component).

Evaluation Overview

The main purposes of the interim evaluation are: (1) to review the ongoing progress and performance of the project (the extent to which immediate objectives and outputs are being achieved); (2) to examine the likelihood of the project achieving its objectives and targets; (3) to identify ways to improve delivery of services and enhance coordination with key stakeholders; and (4) to identify promising practices and ways to promote their sustainability. The evaluation also describes how the project worked to build the capacity of the government and identify successes, challenges and lessons learned for working with existing programs in Paraguay.

Evaluation fieldwork was conducted in Asunción and Guairá's five target districts from April 2-11, 2018. The evaluation methodology and timeframe are detailed in the Terms of reference (TOR, Annex B).

¹ *Magnitud y características del trabajo infantil y adolescente en el Paraguay*. EANA 2011 (Report)

Findings

Relevance of Project Design

POK project strategies have been relevant to the country's institutional needs and effective in strengthening the Paraguayan Government's efforts to address child labor.

Effectiveness

By April 2018, POK is carrying out educational and livelihood activities for 917 households in 16 localities in five districts of the Department of Guairá (namely Villarrica, Iturbe, Borja, MJ Troche and Paso Yobai). POK has 1,409 direct participants aged 5-17 years old who receive educational services through *Espacios para Crecer* (EpC) / Supercamps (965 participants) and 4-H Clubs (462 participants). There are 149 households receiving a least one livelihood service, which represents 31% of the planned target by April 2018.

By March 2018, 31.5% of child laborers within the first cohort of the project had withdrawn from child labor. In order to assess the initial results of the project on the reduction of child labor, the interim evaluation requested information on the labor status of children enrolled in the project by March 2017 (326 individuals). Out of these 326 individuals, 108 had been engaged in CL/HCL in March 2017. One year later (March 2018), only 74 of these 108 children remained in CL/HCL. This is a promising, and good, initial result.

POK has largely met its objectives with regards to the insertion and articulation of its strategies within relevant government agencies, such as the *Ministerio de Trabajo, Empleo y Seguridad Social* (MTESS), the *Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia* (MEC) and the *Secretaría Nacional de la Niñez y la Adolescencia* (SNNA), among others; a fact which will contribute to the sustainability of its activities after the project's end of life.

Regarding its educational strategy, by April 2018 POK was on track to achieve its life-of-project target and has provided educational or vocational services (through EpC and 4-H Clubs) to 49% of the project's global target, including both children engaged in or at high-risk of entering CL. EpC is having a positive impact on children's formal education process. Teachers and parents interviewed by the evaluator suggested that participation in EpC motivates children to learn more and that their performance in formal schooling tends to improve. EpCs strengthen children's formal education-related skills (e.g. math, writing, reading), which in turn contributes to their learning process and improves children's understanding of the educational content.

Children's participation in 4-H Clubs also produces some observable changes in their personal development. According to teachers, facilitators and adolescents, children participating in 4-H Clubs increase their communication and social abilities, reduce shyness and develop assertiveness, improve their self-esteem, increase their motivation, propose and carry out educational and/or productive activities, and implement collective answers to social problems identified in their communities.

Regarding its livelihood strategy, the project is significantly delayed in achieving its targets, related both to households and to participant individuals. By April 2018, POK's livelihood services had reached only 31% (189) of its current target (610 households) and 14% of its life-of-project target

(1,350 households). Only 9% of POK's life-of-project target (62 out of 675 adults) has been provided with economic strengthening services.

Regarding its awareness-raising strategy, although POK has designed and printed various relevant materials on CL, the project has yet to develop mass awareness-raising campaigns and other advocacy activities in target communities.

Regarding the launch of a system for labor inspection (for the MTESS) and of software in support of the *Registro del Adolescente Trabajador* (Adolescent Workers Registry System [RAT]), POK provided hardware and developed software for these institutions. POK also trained 27 labor inspectors at MTESS and child advocates and other staff in five *Consejería Municipal por los Derechos del Niño, la Niña, y el Adolescente* (Municipal Councils for the Rights of the Child, the Girl, and the Adolescent [CODENIs]). However, after several months these systems were not being properly used due to other problems that are still to be addressed.

Efficiency

Monitoring System

POK has a solid monitoring system, with clear routines for data collection, verification, processing and reporting. Implementing agencies' (ALDA & CIRD) staff persons have been trained and actively participate in this system. Roles and responsibilities seem to be clearly allocated. Monitoring practices include both the quantitative and qualitative follow-up of EpC and 4-H Club educational routines as well as other activities. The Direct Beneficiary Monitoring System (DBMS) proposed by IMPAQ could not be implemented due to shortcomings in the development of that software. As a result, the project has been using MS EXCEL to aggregate/report on project indicators and MS ACCESS to handle its participant database. The main two weaknesses of the monitoring system are related to its focus (e.g. the fact that it does not use information on HCL status as lead criteria to prioritize POK's interventions), and the fact that monitoring information is not being **rapidly** looped back into management decisions, in order to plan/improve implementing agencies' performance. As part of the follow up of implementing partners' activities, some targets where implementation has been delayed may need to be expressed and followed up per district on a monthly basis.

Other Challenges Regarding Efficiency

Many households in Guairá have a positive view of CL and households usually expect that adolescents work in order to contribute to their families' welfare. Thus, legal-aged working children need to acquire work skills in specific crafts that may allow them to engage in non-hazardous work activities and replace their current, hazardous sources of income.

The project first enrolled children in the EpCs and 4-H Clubs before offering livelihood services to their households. The project undertook this approach because it allowed these households to have exposure to the project through the educational services and was a means of building trust and interest in the project on the part of the households. Although this approach assisted the project in its enrollment, it delayed the implementation of the livelihood strategy. Therefore, the project may need to speed up the implementation of livelihood services in the remainder of the project.

Although POK has established partnerships and signed cooperation agreements with relevant government vocational training agencies (*Servicio Nacional de Promoción Profesional*/National Service of Professional Promotion [SNPP] and *Sistema Nacional de Formación y Capacitación Laboral*/National System of Labor Training and Formation [SINAFOCAL]), it has not been able to carry out enough actions and contributions to put these agreements into practice, due to a lack of sufficient material and logistical means among government agencies to implement vocational training courses. Also, POK's livelihood component would be more effective if participants perceive that they will be able to put the knowledge they acquired into practice as early as possible and receive some material support from the project to do so.

Sustainability

POK has contributed significantly to institutional capacity building to address CL in Paraguay. It has successfully articulated its proposals to work with the relevant Paraguayan government agencies that implement activities to protect children and prevent child labor. Project staff persons have established strategic alliances with the MTESS, the MEC, the SNNA and CODENIs. The project has also promoted the coordination of institutional efforts among key Paraguayan institutions within the *Comisión Nacional para la Prevención y Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil y la Protección del Trabajo de los/as Adolescentes* (CONAETI). These efforts toward coordination have allowed POK to reach consensus with government agencies and develop activities and tools that benefit the agencies above. Several of the methodologies and products developed by the project are being incorporated within the work of government institutions, a fact that will contribute to the sustainability of project activities by the end of the project life.

Conclusions

POK has significantly contributed to strengthening the institutional capacity of Paraguayan government organizations in order to address child labor at the country and department level. Among other features, POK has significantly contributed to the training of labor inspectors, CODENIs, MEC and other government institutions' staff at national and local level. Likewise, the project has contributed to inter-institutional coordination among key agencies in Paraguay. All institutional stakeholders and most of the project participants interviewed by the evaluator in Asunción and Guairá found POK interventions to be relevant and expressed their satisfaction with regards to the support received from the project. However, some of POK's strategies and products (e.g. RAT and labor inspection software, awareness raising campaigns) need to be rolled out in a more systematic way to reach their full potential.

By March 2018, 31.5% of child laborers within the first cohort of the project had withdrawn from child labor. This is a promising and good initial result.

While POK's educational and livelihood strategies are beneficial for the development of children, adolescents and families, the greatest difficulty for the project was to engage children 11-17 years old in its services, particularly with regard to the alternative livelihood skills training options being offered to 14-17 year olds. The implementation of the livelihood strategy was greatly delayed due to the process of roll-out, and this component needs to be revised and strengthened in order for activities to catch up with planning.

Lessons Learned

- Networking activities may take longer time than planned if the goal is to reach programmatic consensus and establish meaningful institutional relationships that ensure the future sustainability of project activities. In some cases, projects may need more than three or six months to smooth things out and clarify roles with all partners.
- Projects should work at multiple levels with national stakeholders, helping them bridge relationships and action at country and local levels. This would help avoid bottlenecks and promote the implementation of activities as needed in all levels.
- Local context-related issues, such as frequent change of government staff or political instability among local authorities, may affect capacity building efforts and lead to a need to repeat actions with new stakeholders.
- Waiting for children to attend educational activities before starting livelihood activities with households leads to inconvenient delays in project implementation. It is convenient not to condition the start of one component on the development of another one.
- Content of vocational training activities should be attractive and respond to the needs of each specific age cluster and the possibilities of insertion into work.
- Projects may benefit from having some flexibility and compensate (at least provisionally) for the absence of some material resources among counterparts (e.g. training materials), in order to facilitate the latter in providing their specific technical expertise (e.g. training curricula, training staff). Otherwise, projects may suffer critical delays that may affect their final outcome.

Good Practices

- Capacity building processes should be part of the implementation strategy for the different project components (education, livelihood or awareness-raising). By “doing with” stakeholders instead than “for” them, and working at country and local levels, POK has promoted the sustainability of its activities.
- While adequately coordinating with multiple government stakeholders and clarifying their specific responsibilities toward the project, POK protected the leadership role of its main partner (MTESS) within the project. This has contributed to an adequate working relationship with all partners and maintained ongoing support from MTESS.
- By focusing on generating outputs that contribute to improving the quality and efficiency of government institutions and their processes, POK actions have remained relevant to country stakeholders.
- It is important to support institutional development and work with those government staff that will remain in place within each organization despite political changes. This should help POK better address the upcoming change in national authorities, ministries and regional governments in 2018.
- Focusing POK’s direct interventions (e.g. education and livelihood) in one sole geographic region has contributed to a more efficient use of project resources, as opposed to distributing work among several distant regions.

Recommendations

1. POK should expand its job training/employment activities to address the situation of adolescents aged 14-17 who are engaged in HCL. POK should increase its focus on interventions related to HCL. The project has a database on CL status that could serve to follow up more closely on cases as well as tailor and prioritize its response in order to promote that these children move into less hazardous jobs (e.g. by offering them vocational training, alternative job opportunities, start-up kits and doing a quarterly follow up of this group). If children in HCL are attending high school, POK could work with MEC in order to include these children in MEC's scholarship program (from MEC's *Dirección de Atención Educativa a Niños/as, Adolescentes y Jóvenes en situación de Riesgo*) as an incentive to stop involvement in HCL.
2. POK should promote that MTESS and CODENIs develop registration, law enforcement and awareness raising actions not only in the sugarcane sector of Guairá, but also regarding the mining sector and children in domestic child labor (including but not limited to *criadazgo*).
3. It would be convenient for POK to express its bi-annual results using a system of thresholds that may provide management and implementing partners with early information on their progress toward targets. This may help POK review its bi-annual/quarterly planning and introduce monthly follow-up and corrective action to address any shortcomings in specific targets. As part of the follow up of implementing partners' activities, some targets where implementation has been delayed may need to be expressed and followed up per district, on a monthly basis.
4. It would be convenient that POK's monitoring system provides disaggregated information on the type of activity/ sector in which participant child laborers are engaged, as well as on the number of days/ weeks that children missed school in the previous month to educational status data collection.
5. It would be convenient for POK to review its livelihood strategy in order to include additional costs/investments and thus compensate for any shortcoming from SNPP and guarantee that vocational training is provided in a timely and continuous fashion. POK should consider including among its offer to households Agricultural Extension training from the *Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería* (MAG), as well as technical agriculture courses already approved for youth by SINAFOCAL. In further implementing the livelihood component, POK may have interest in learning about the SAPE'A program's experience in Guairá (implemented by PLAN International, with support from AECID—the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development) and the experience of the governmental *Tenonderá* program.
6. During the months leading to end of project life, POK should intensify its efforts to optimize coordination mechanisms among country and department/district levels of the MTESS, MEC, SNNA and the Supreme Court of Justice. POK should focus its efforts in Guairá on promoting that all concerned agencies carry out increasingly regular activities on child labor.
7. Finally, it would be convenient for POK to consider implementing the detailed list of recommendations provided under section 3.5.14 of this report regarding how to promote greater sustainability of project achievements (e.g. suggested priority actions regarding: (1) the enforcement of CL regulations; (2) Educational services; (3) Livelihood services; and (4) Involvement of corporate stakeholders).

I. PROJECT CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION

1.1 Project Context

In Paraguay, 416,425 (22.4%) children and adolescents (CA) between the ages of 5 to 17 are working, and 95.1% of them do so in hazardous jobs. The incidence of child labor (CL) is significantly higher in rural than urban areas, and hazardous child labor (HCL) is highest in three sectors: agriculture, domestic work, and the informal sector.² Paraguayan legislation establishes 14 years old as the minimum age for employment, but adolescent workers are generally not formally registered. Employers that do not respect minimum wages and safe work conditions for adolescents and adults do so with impunity.

Almost half (49.2%) of CA engaged in CL in Paraguay are found in the agricultural sector. Sugar cane is one of the main commercial crops produced in Paraguay, and the country is one of the major exporters of organic sugar in the world, exporting mainly to the United States and Europe. The Department of Guairá is the most important producer of sugar cane in Paraguay, representing 39% of the country's production. More than 50% of the population farms this crop. It is worth highlighting that the incidence of informal employment in Paraguay among rural youth between 15 to 24 years of age is nearly 80%.³

In 2011, a study financed by USDOL and implemented by ICF International regarding CL in the sugar industry in Paraguay⁴ revealed that approximately 196,000 children over the age of five have participated in sugar cane related activities. Beyond these 196,000, based on the household survey, approximately 28.1% of the workers of the sugar cane industry that had worked in the last seven days were children.

The study indicated that since sugar cane is a labor-intensive crop and requires significant physical strength, most people that work in the sugar cane industry are male children (81.5% in the last week). Approximately half of the children that work had reached the legal working age (14 to 17 years of age); nevertheless, the study indicated that they conduct tasks that exert great physical demands.

Of the various contributing factors related to child labor in the Department of Guairá in Paraguay, the *Okakuaa* project has identified three key contributing factors:

² *Magnitud y características del trabajo infantil y adolescente en el Paraguay. Encuesta Nacional de Actividades de Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes (EANA) 2011* (Report)

³ http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---americas/---ro-lima/documents/publication/wcms_361990.pdf

⁴ Child Labor in the Sugarcane Industry in Paraguay, ICF, 2012

1. Few opportunities for education, due to: poverty; cultural barriers such as a positive view of CL; low value on education among families; poor educational infrastructure in communities; low academic performance and low motivation to study among children.
2. Poor socioeconomic development among households, due to: limited access to local social programs and projects; lack of access to financial resources for generating economic opportunities; limited access to employment opportunities; and deficient infrastructure for offering products in local markets.
3. Low compliance with labor laws, due to: lack of capacity in the enforcement and compliance of labor laws; lack of information systems about enforcement; and lack of funding and mechanisms directed toward enforcing compliance with protections for children and adolescents.

1.2 Project Description

In November 2015, the United States Department of Labor's (USDOL) Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking (OCFT) awarded a US\$ 6 million cooperative agreement to Partners of the Americas (POA) to implement a project entitled, "*Paraguay Okakuaa: Project to Reduce the Worst Forms of Child Labor and Improve Labor Law Enforcement and Working Conditions in Paraguay.*" *Paraguay Okakuaa* (POK) is being conducted over a period of 48 months, from November 3, 2015 through November 2, 2019. A project revision was approved in December 2017 which added US\$ 683,557.87 in funds in order to incorporate a fourth component, with a focus on preventing and combating forced labor in the Department of Boquerón and activities to improve labor law compliance and acceptable working conditions. This added component is not addressed by this evaluation.

Paraguay Okakuaa is led by the *Ministerio de Trabajo, Empleo y Seguridad Social* (MTESS) and implemented by POA. The general objective of POK is to "Reduce child labor in the Department of Guairá." To achieve this objective, POK works with the implementing agencies *Fundación ALDA* (ALDA, which implements the educational component) and *Fundación Centro de Información y Recursos para el Desarrollo* (CIRD, which implements the livelihood component) to achieve the following results:

- Increased participation of children and adolescents in educational opportunities, through the application of the *Espacios para Crecer* (EpC) and 4-H Clubs/Supercamps methodologies;
- Households with increased access to livelihood through vocational training, employment opportunities and economic strengthening services for adults; and
- Improved application of labor laws that protect children and adolescents in CL through the development of specific products (manuals, curricula, procedures, studies) and software in support of the same.

The project is implementing activities focused on children and adolescents engaged in CL or at risk of CL, whose households are in the Department of Guairá. Institutional capacity building activities are carried out at a national level and in Guairá. *Paraguay Okakuaa* targets the following 5 districts for the project's interventions: Borja, Iturbe, Mauricio José Troche, Paso Yobai, and Villarrica.

The context of rural communities in Guairá poses some relevant difficulties for the implementation of project activities. For example, households are scattered through vast areas, a fact that increases the logistical challenge to organize activities. On the other hand, households' expectations about the material benefits they may receive from social development projects or from other government and non-governmental institutions may limit their interest in participating in the project. The closing in recent years of the sugar mill in Iturbe has brought economic hardship to the region and promoted the migration of men and youth in search of income into other activities/zones. Seasonal or definitive migration of adults and youth in search of work is a factor that challenges the delivery of project services to some households. Finally, political uncertainty in the Guairá region during most of 2017 (e.g. a conflict for the control of the Regional Government) seriously limited the capacity of local authorities to carry out their duties. The project has succeeded in addressing these issues and in rolling out its activities within such context.

The children and adolescents who receive services from POK as direct beneficiaries are between 5 to 17 years of age at the time of beginning the intervention. POK provides livelihood services to households with at least one child or adolescent that meets the project's selection criteria.

In addition to the direct beneficiaries, among the activities to improve the application of labor laws and conditions, training is provided to: (1) workers, especially adolescents who work; (2) families who are vulnerable to labor rights violations and/or exploitative work conditions; (3) inspectors and staff from the MTESS; (4) *Secretaria Nacional de la Niñez y Adolescencia* (SNNA) staff and the *Consejería Municipal por los Derechos del Niño, la Niña, y el Adolescente* (CODENI); and (5) members of the Judiciary (Supreme Court of Justice [CSJ]). The indirect beneficiaries include individuals and families from target communities who benefit from POK activities with regards to institutional capacity building, awareness campaigns, and educational and livelihood interventions.

POK also developed a Baseline Study in the five target districts of Guairá, as well as an Analysis of Labor Demand and Needs (ADN) in key project communities. These studies are relevant inputs to assess the project's context and orient its activities.

II. EVALUATION PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Evaluation Purpose

The main purposes of the interim evaluation are:

1. To review the ongoing progress and performance of the project (extent to which immediate objectives and outputs are being achieved);
2. To examine the likelihood of the project achieving its objectives and targets;
3. To identify ways to improve delivery and enhance coordination with key stakeholders; and
4. To identify promising practices and ways to promote their sustainability.

The evaluation also describes how the project worked to build the capacity of the government, and identifies successes, challenges and lessons learned for working with existing programs in Paraguay. The interim evaluation is intended to provide OCFT, Partners of the Americas, project staff, implementing partners and key stakeholders with information to assess and revise, as needed, the relevant work plans, strategies, objectives, partnership arrangements and resources in order to maximize the potential impact of the project and increase the likelihood that intended targets and objectives will be achieved.

The evaluation questions appear in the Terms of Reference (TOR) in Annex B.

2.2 Methodology

The interim evaluation approach was qualitative and participatory in nature. Qualitative information was obtained through field visits, interviews and focus groups as appropriate. The participatory nature of the evaluation contributed to the sense of ownership among beneficiaries.

Evaluation Schedule: The evaluator reviewed project documents, developed data collection instruments, and prepared for the fieldwork during the month of March. Fieldwork was conducted in Asunción and Guairá's five target districts from April 2 to 11, 2018. Fieldwork culminated with a presentation and discussion of the preliminary findings with key project stakeholders on April 13. The bulk of the data analysis and report writing occurred between April 23 and May 3.

A list of interviewed stakeholders is included in Annex C. A schedule of fieldwork activities can be found in Annex D.

Selection of Field Locations: The selection of locations for the field visits was done in consultation with the *Paraguay Okakuaa* project team, based on the following criteria:

- Communities and/or schools where education and livelihood strategies were successfully and unsuccessfully implemented from the perception of key stakeholders. The rationale is that extreme cases, at some extent, are more helpful than average cases for understanding how the process worked and which results have been obtained.

- Communities/schools with a sizable number of beneficiaries, from which to carry out adequate sampling.
- Locations that have been identified as providing particular good practices or bringing out particularly challenging issues as identified in the Technical Progress Reports (TPR).
- Accessibility to the locations.

Based on the above criteria, the following sites were selected:

Table 1: Field Visits to Districts/Communities	
District	Communities
Villarrica	Rincón 1, San Miguel
Borja	Boquerón
Iturbe	Potrero
MJ Troche	Cerro Punta, Itacurubí
Paso Yobai	Mangrullo

In all selected communities, participants in focus groups were randomly selected. The evaluator's work in Guairá was supported by an interpreter fluent in Spanish-Guaraní.

Data Collection and Analysis: The TOR contained a list of evaluation questions that served as the basis for the evaluation. The questions were used to develop the key informant interview guides, focus group discussion guides, and document reviews. The following methods were employed to gather primary and secondary data.

Document Reviews: The evaluator read a variety of project documents and other reference publications. These documents included the cooperative agreement, project document and project revision, comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan (CMEP), TPRs, work plans, policy and organizational documents for MTESS, baseline survey report, market assessment, educational material for children and adolescents (EpC handbooks, facilitators' guidelines, information on Quantum Learning methodology), awareness raising materials, documents on project-supported software, special reports on project data prepared by the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) team, etc.

Key Informant Interviews (KII): The evaluator conducted individual and group interviews with USDOL managers, POA representatives, project staff, implementing partners' staff, project facilitators and promoters (from ALDA and CIRD), government agency representatives at country and local level (MTESS, SNNA, *Ministerio de Educación y Ciencias* [MEC], CSJ, CODENIs), labor inspectors, school directors and teachers, representatives of *Servicio Nacional de Promoción Profesional* (SNPP), *Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería* (MAG), *Petróleos Paraguayos* (PETROPAR), representatives of the US Embassy in Asunción, etc.

Focus Group Discussions (FGD): FGD were carried out with POK participants (children, adolescents, adult participants in livelihood activities, women's groups) in all target districts.

Observation of spontaneous interaction among participants in EpC, 4-H Clubs and adult livelihood trainings: The evaluator had the opportunity to visit and observe the interaction among participants in several EpC, 4-H Clubs and livelihood training courses in various target districts.

Demonstration of software: The evaluator also had the opportunity to receive a demonstration of the Labor Inspection software and Adolescent Workers' Register software (RAT), both by an IT specialist at MTESS and by the intended users of both systems (respectively, labor inspectors and CODENI representatives in two districts).

Data Analysis: The document reviews, KII, FGD, non-participative observation, demonstration of software, and other methods of data collection generated a substantial volume of raw qualitative data. The evaluator used qualitative data analysis methods to categorize, triangulate, synthesize, and summarize the raw data captured from the interview notes. The data analysis was consistent with the evaluation questions in the evaluation TOR.

Limitations: The scope of the evaluation specified two weeks of fieldwork, which limited the evaluation to a small range of stakeholders participating in the project, as well as the time allocated to interview and to interact with the project team. However, the evaluator believes that the sample of sites visited, interviews and FGDs that were conducted accurately represent the views and experiences of key stakeholders and project beneficiaries. However, the findings cannot be generalized to the total population.

III. EVALUATION FINDINGS

The following sub-sections develop the evaluation main findings, addressing the fourteen issues (evaluation questions) highlighted in the TOR for this evaluation.

3.1 Relevance of Project Design

1. Are the project strategies appropriate and effective at reducing child labor in Paraguay?

Although it may still be early to fully respond to this question, a comparison of the labor status of the “first cohort” of POK participant children (326 individuals)⁵ one year after project intervention⁶ shows that 31.5% of children (34 out of 108 individuals) that were in child labor by March 2017 had withdrawn from CL by March 2018.⁷ This information is based on those project participants for which the project was able to collect information by March 2018.

At the same time, as shown within Table 2 below, there were 55 individuals (17% of children enrolled by March 2017) that were not attending any more project services, and for whom no information could be collected. It would be helpful for POK staff to follow up on the sex, age and labor status of these missing participants (one-sixth of the initial project caseload from March 2017).

Table 2: Labor Status of Children aged 5-17 who were enrolled by March 2017 (“first cohort”) – March 2017 vs. March 2018

POK Participants’ Labor Status	March 2017 (1)		March 2018 (2)	
	N = 326	%	N = 326	%
a. At risk of child labor (RCL)	218	67%	212	65%
b. In child labor (CL)	23	7%	20	6%

⁵ In order to assess this issue, the evaluator considered the “first cohort” to be all those children registered as project participants by March 2017 (at the start of delivery of POK’s educational and livelihood activities) and requested project monitoring data of their labor status by March 2018.

⁶ Data shown is compared for the same period in two different years. Given that the agricultural cycle and labor demand shows relevant differences between semesters (e.g. April – September; October-March) it is not useful to compare information from different periods. The same applies to the information from the intake form. Given that the intake process was carried out during the second semester of 2016 and took several months to complete, it may not be suitable to compare labor status information from this source with that of March each year.

⁷ In order to assess the initial results of the project on the reduction of child labor, the interim evaluation requested information on the labor status of children enrolled in the project by March 2017 (326 individuals). Out of these 326 individuals, 108 had been in CL/HCL by March 2017. One year later (March 2018), only 74 of these 108 children remained in CL/HCL.

POK Participants' Labor Status	March 2017 (1)		March 2018 (2)	
	N = 326	%	N = 326	%
c. In hazardous child labor (HCL)	85	26%	39	12%
d. Children not attending POK services anymore by 2018, on whom information could not be collected			55	17%
TOTAL		100%		100%

Source: Project Database. (i) Data on total number of participants registered in POK by March 2017 (POK "first cohort").
(ii) Follow up of "first cohort."

According to the April 2018 TPR, based on data for 1,247 participants, while the ratio of male to female children engaged in child labor is relatively even (52% are female and 48% are male), among project participants there are more male children (55%) engaged in HCL than females (45%).

There are also some relevant differences regarding child labor within specific age brackets. While 17% of children aged 5-10 years old are engaged in HCL, **47% of those within the 11-17 year-old group are engaged in HCL**. That is, a significantly greater number of adolescents are engaged in HCL than those children who are less than 10 years old.

Table 3: Labor Status per Age Range (N=1,247 individuals)

Labor Status (%)	5 - 10 years old	11-17 years old
At risk of CL	77	47
In CL	6	6
In HCL	17	47
Total	100	100

Source: Project Database by March 2018

Though it is likely that many child laborers are engaged in one form of agricultural work or another, POK's database does not provide information on child labor disaggregated by type of activity/sector.

Child labor rates observed among both periods may be influenced by other factors, such as:⁸

- The fact that by the time of the interim evaluation's fieldwork, POK's educational and livelihood strategies had only been implemented for a short period of time (and in the case of livelihood

⁸ Otherwise, comparisons based on the information provided above should be taken with caution: Data on POK participant's labor status could not be collected for 11.5% of participants in March 2018 (that is 162 out of 1,409 participants). Likewise, 10% of POK participants were included for the first time in project reports in March 2018. All this may lead to bias in the interpretation of the above results in one direction or the other.

activities, on a limited number of households), which means that their effects may take longer than a year to become evident.

- Most POK participant children (67%) are under 14 years old, while 20% are 11-13 years old and only 13% are 14-17 years old. According to POK's baseline study, child labor and HCL in the Department of Guairá affects mostly children 14-17 years old, who are legally allowed to work. Thus, POK is reaching a limited number of adolescents in this age bracket. This may also contribute to a limited effect of project strategies on child labor.⁹

On the other hand, child laborers participating in project activities show some reduction in the number of hours worked. This may be linked to the fact that the number of children attending school increased from 87% to 97% between October 2017 and March 2018 (only 3% of children and youth responded they did not attend or had dropped out of school).

2. Has the project's special focus on females been effective in providing greater opportunities for girls? If so, in what ways?

Most households in the target districts (62.4%) are headed by women.¹⁰ This has led POK to mainly work with adult women when developing its livelihoods strategy. Likewise, a majority of children participants in EpC and 4-H Clubs are girls. As part of its livelihoods strategy, POK has contributed to creating and consolidating Women's Committees in several communities. This has served to strengthen both community and productive organizations. Members in some of these committees have started to form groups to buy inputs for their productive initiatives (such as raising pigs) or have plans to do so for other income generating activities (such as producing cleaning products or establishing sewing/garments workshops).

A greater number of women (28 participants) have received economic strengthening services (for example, technical assistance to raise pigs in Cerro Punta) than men (10 participants). However, given that only a small number of households (189 out of 1,350) had received livelihood services by March 2018, it may still be early to assess the effects of POK's livelihood strategy on providing greater opportunities for females.

Regarding the education strategy, the number of female beneficiaries (775) is higher than that of males (634). POK does not have a differentiated strategy to address girls' issues within the educational activities of the project (EpC, 4-H Clubs). However, the project has worked with girls' families and partners to counter attitudes of opposition regarding sending adolescent girls to project activities (e.g. girls' unaccompanied outdoor transit is sometimes perceived as dangerous due to fear of sexual harassment; project staff has discussed with parents on the importance of

⁹ At the same time, POK interventions for children aged 14-17 years old do not lead directly to income generation activities that may replace HCL in the short term (please see Section 3.2 on "challenges" and question #12 within this Findings section of the report).

¹⁰ Source: POK baseline study

educational activities and how relatives may contribute to girls' safety so they may attend project activities). Likewise, the project has advocated within communities regarding the hazardous effects of domestic labor for girls, including *criadazgo*.¹¹

3.2 Implementation

3. Is the project meeting its objectives and targets? What challenges have been encountered thus far and how is the project overcoming these challenges?

POK has contributed to strengthening the institutional capacity of various government organizations in order to address child labor at country and department level. By April 2018, POK is carrying out educational and livelihood activities for 917 households in 16 localities in the five target districts. POK has 1,409 direct participants aged 5-17 years old who receive educational services through the methodologies *Espacios para Crecer* and Supercamps (EpC: 965 participants) and 4-H Clubs (462 participants). There are 149 households receiving a least one livelihood service, which represents 31% of the planned target by April 2018.

POK has largely met its objectives with regards to the insertion and articulation of its strategies within relevant government agencies, such as the *Ministerio de Trabajo, Empleo y Seguridad Social* (MTESS), the *Ministerio de Educación y Ciencias* (MEC) and the *Secretaría Nacional de la Niñez y Adolescencia* (SNNA), among others; a fact which will contribute to the sustainability of its activities.

Regarding its **educational strategy**, by April 2018 POK was on track to achieve its life-of-project target and had provided educational or vocational services (through EpC and 4-H Clubs) to 49% of the project's global target (including both children engaged in or at high-risk of entering CL). Of these, 54% were children at high risk of child labor. The greatest difficulty for the project was to engage children 11-17 years old, and particularly 14-17 year olds, within its services (e.g. 4-H Clubs). This difficulty made the project seek a project modification/revision of its age-related targets by the end of 2017. Most of the children attending EpC and 4-H Clubs attend school. This may also imply that POK services are not reaching 14-17 year old children who have dropped out from school.

Regarding its **livelihood strategy**, the project is significantly delayed in achieving its targets, both related to households and to participant individuals. By April 2018, POK's livelihood services had reached only 31% (189) of its current target (610 households) and 14% of its life-of-project target

¹¹ Not all domestic labor is the same as *Criadazgo*. Some Paraguayan children (mostly girls) work as domestic servants in exchange for food, board, and occasionally education or a small stipend in a system called *criadazgo*. Many of these children are trafficking victims and this may lead in many cases to sexual exploitation of children.

(1,350 households). Only 9% of POK's life-of-project target (62 out of 675 adults) had been provided with economic strengthening services.

Regarding the inclusion of POK participant households among the beneficiaries of local social protection programs, during September 2017 the project signed an agreement with the *Secretaria de Accion Social* (SAS) so that project participants who meet government criteria may be included in the cash-conditioned *Tekoporá* program. Planning of activities is underway.

Regarding its **awareness-raising strategy**, although POK has designed and printed various relevant materials on CL in support of sensitization activities at community level (on the RAT, HCL, *criadazgo*, etc.), the project has yet to develop massive awareness-raising campaigns and other advocacy activities for target communities.

Regarding **the design of software and launch of a system for labor inspection** (in charge of the MTESS) **and of software in support of the Adolescent Workers Registry System** (RAT, in charge of the district-level CODENIs), POK provided hardware and software to these institutions and trained 27 labor inspectors within the MTESS, as well as child advocates and other staff at five CODENIs. However, after several months these systems were not being properly used, due to other problems that are pending to be addressed (please see Section 3.3.7).

By April 2018, POK had also trained 44 local stakeholders and justice system officials, increasing their knowledge about how to combat CL.

Challenges detected during the evaluation and the way they are or may be addressed:

- a. **Regarding the educational strategy:** Many households in Guairá have a positive view of CL and households usually expect that adolescents contribute through their work to their families' welfare. Thus, legal-aged working children need to acquire work skills in specific crafts that may allow them to engage in non-hazardous work activities and replace their current, hazardous sources of income. It may be useful that the POK extends vocational training services provided by the SNPP to those participants aged 15 to 17 years old. SNPP would issue a professional certificate for children completing training when they become 18 years old.
- b. **Regarding the livelihood strategy**, the project first enrolled children in the EpCs and 4-H Clubs before offering livelihood services to their households. The project undertook this approach because it allowed these households to have exposure to the project through the educational services and was a means of building up trust and interest in the project on the part of the households. Although this approach assisted the project in its enrollment, it delayed the implementation of the livelihood strategy. Therefore, the project may need to speed up the implementation of livelihood services in the remainder of the project. The project intends to address this gap by: (1) Monthly monitoring the achievement of individual and household enrollment targets per district and community; (2) Visiting families with children in EpC to provide them technical assistance and training for employment; (3) Reviewing data for families with children in EpC that may have children 11-17 years old, to include these in 4-H Clubs; (4)

Focusing on schools to provide children 11-17 years old with soft skills through their participation in 4-H Clubs and including their families in employment training and technical assistance services; and (5) Focusing CIRD promoters' action in applying intake forms to new, potential participants in livelihood services.

Also regarding the livelihood strategy, although POK has established alliances and signed cooperation agreements with relevant government vocational training agencies (SNPP, *Sistema Nacional de Formación y Capacitación Laboral* [SINAFOCAL]), it has not been able to carry out enough actions and contributions to put these agreements into full practice. The reasons for this are multiple:

- A lack of sufficient material and logistical means among government agencies to implement vocational training courses: The SNPP is willing to implement vocational training courses for POK participants and can provide trainers and machines for this objective; however, it lacks funds to provide training materials and sometimes transportation costs for the trainer. POK expects to obtain local support from other sources to cover these costs, but if these are not provided, training activities cannot be implemented. The amount needed to get things moving is not enormous. For example, according to a SNPP garment workshop trainer, training materials for such courses cost no more than \$400 for a 10-person training course. Other agencies, such as PLAN International, provide this type of contribution.
- A lack of sufficient means among participants to put into practice the knowledge acquired in training courses: As described by one respondent, "It is good to teach people to fish, rather than giving them fish, but if possible, provide them with a fish hook; otherwise they may not put into practice the knowledge they acquired." POK's livelihood component would become more effective if participants perceive that they will be able to put into practice as early as possible the knowledge they acquired. For example, if the project looks to strengthen participants' economic activity, groups of 10 or more participants in the training course on producing garments would benefit if, by the end of their training, they may receive a couple of industrial sewing machines (cost: \$800 each) to establish a communal workshop for groups of women. According to the participants in one of these workshops, they would have a viable business by producing school uniforms and sportswear for the district schools.
- The need to develop links with other available sources in support of livelihood component activities:
 - For example, the Department of Agricultural Extension at the Ministry of Agriculture (MAG) handles demonstration plots and provides training on the improvement and diversification of agricultural production for 1,600 people per year in the Department of Guairá. While they do not have the means to organize additional courses, they are open to the possibility that POK participants in each district may be included within the training courses they provide. Participants would need to be transported to the place where bi-monthly training courses occur, though. One year ago CIRD staff discussed possible cooperation with MAG. Not much has occurred since then, but they met again

on April 4, 2018. MAG would need to sign an agreement with POK to make cooperation activities viable.

- PETROPAR, the government-owned sugar and alcohol company that operates in Guairá, established a Department of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in 2017. PETROPAR may consider providing support to POK activities under PETROPAR's CSR program, provided that they could negotiate in 2018 such support for 2019, in order to introduce this into their budget. Activities could include support to education, livelihood or awareness-raising activities. In the short term, they could provide POK with some transportation that would meet their participants' needs, as they have buses available to support POK's activities. POK may have interest in prospecting other corporate support for project activities within the private sector.

4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of *Paraguay Okakuaa's* monitoring system? This includes implementation of the CMEP, the Direct Beneficiary Monitoring System (DBMS) and other data collection and reporting processes. What improvements can be made to strengthen monitoring?

POK has a solid monitoring system, with clear routines for data collection, verification, processing and reporting. Implementing agencies' (ALDA & CIRD) staff has been trained and actively participates in this system. Roles and responsibilities seem clearly allocated. Monitoring practices include both the quantitative and qualitative follow-up of the EpC and 4-H Club educational routines and that of other activities. When POK staff persons detect inconsistencies in the information provided by implementing partners, they implement activities to address the same. The quality of information provided by CIRD would improve if this organization would allocate exclusive monitoring responsibilities to one of its staff (as ALDA does), in order to double-check the information received from the field.

CMEP implementation has been done according to foreseen procedures; although there was some delay due to the time it took POK to get approval from USDOL on the final version of the CMEP document.

The DBMS proposed by IMPAQ could not be implemented in Paraguay due to shortcomings in the development of that software. As a result, the project has been using MS EXCEL to aggregate/report on project indicators and MS ACCESS to handle its database on beneficiaries. Although it demands additional effort from staff, this formula has worked well.

The main two weaknesses of the monitoring system are related to its focus (e.g. the fact that it does not use information on HCL status as lead criteria to prioritize POK's interventions), and the fact that project monitoring information is not being **rapidly** looped back into management decisions, in order to plan/improve implementing agencies' performance.

Although this information is available in the project's intake forms and database, POK's monitoring routines do not focus on follow-up regarding a child's labor status, particularly for children in HCL. If this information could be used properly, these children would have an HCL monitoring plan

tailored to their particular needs. For example, the use of specific interventions (such as vocational training or other) could be offered to that child and his/her household in order to stop HCL (if under 14 years old), or help move 14-17 years old adolescents into other non-hazardous jobs. This would be possible if POK starts disaggregating every 6 months and monitoring children's labor activities (in agriculture, domestic labor, etc.) more closely.

3.3 Institutional Capacity Building

5. How has *Paraguay Okakuaa* coordinated activities with key stakeholders?

POK has successfully articulated its proposals with the work of relevant Paraguay government agencies that implement activities to protect children and prevent child labor. The project has established strategic partnerships with the MTESS, the MEC and the SNNA.

These coordination efforts have allowed POK to reach agreement with government agencies and develop activities and tools that benefit the MTESS, MEC and SNNA. Several of the methodologies and products developed by the project are being incorporated within the work of government institutions, a fact that will contribute to the sustainability of project activities by the end of the project life.

POK has also initiated coordination activities with the Supreme Court of Justice (CSJ), such as organizing two training workshops on a "Protocol for the detection, registry, derivation and follow up of child laborers and protection of adolescent workers" aimed at local judiciary stakeholders in the five project target districts, as well as training sessions on the child domestic labor (*criadazgo*) bill for judges and judicial stakeholders in Guairá.

Likewise, POK has coordinated activities with the SNPP and SINAFOCAL and has initiated coordination activities with the *Coordinadora Latinoamericana de Pequeños Productores de Comercio Justo* (CLAC) and *Petróleos Paraguayos* (PETROPAR). POK has also promoted a closer coordination of activities among member institutions of the *Comisión Nacional para la Prevención y Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil y la Protección del Trabajo de los/as Adolescentes* (CONAETI). POK has developed awareness-raising activities on child labor aimed to sensitize staff of these institutions.

Some initial contacts have been established with the departmental office of the *Dirección de Extensión Agraria* (belonging to the MAG) in Guairá. POK may have interest in further strengthening its relationship with SNPP, PETROPAR and the Departmental Direction of Agricultural Extension in order to improve the development of livelihood services for project participants.

At local level, POK has coordinated activities with Guairá's Departmental Council on Childhood and Adolescence and five CODENIs in the districts of Villarrica, MJ Troche, Borja, Iturbe and Paso Yobai. Two training workshops were held for CODENI counselors and other local stakeholders on the Roadmap on Child Labor (*Ruta de intervención para la detección, registro y derivación de situaciones*

de trabajo infantil). Likewise, CODENI counselors were trained on the Quantum Learning methodology (QL), by ENTRENA.

POK and its implementing partners ALDA and CIRD have also closely coordinated their activities with local referents, such as school directors and teachers, local clergymen, community leaders and others. POK has also developed some initial awareness-raising activities on child labor in various target communities. For example, two awareness workshops on the risks of child labor in mining, aimed at families, children and teachers, were developed for communities in Paso Yobai.

POK hired the Dominican organization ENTRENA to carry out training for ALDA and CIRD staff, school teachers, CODENI representatives and other people in the QL Methodology. The training events organized by ENTRENA were of great quality and were spontaneously remembered and mentioned by different organizations during the evaluation. Generally speaking, POK has been sensitive to the requirements and needs of national stakeholders. Most representatives of Paraguayan institutions working with the project expressed to the evaluator that they are satisfied with project's activities and achievements.

The project has coordinated some activities with the CLAC, and fostered a linkage of its member associations with the MTESS in order to promote that they carry out joint action to combat child labor in Guairá. The project has not been successful in establishing a cooperation scheme with big private enterprises in the sugarcane sector (grouped under the *Centro Azucarero y Alcohólico Paraguayo* [CAAP]), due to a negative perception of the same regarding the existence of child labor within sugarcane value chain. POK may need to develop further advocacy and coordination efforts with regards to CAAP.

6. Have the project's strategies been effective at promoting coordination among government agencies to better protect adolescent workers and children from labor exploitation?

The project has promoted the coordination of institutional efforts among key Paraguayan institutions within the CONAETI. Among other events, POK provided support for the development of a national forum to strengthen the National System of Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights (*Sistema nacional de protección y promoción de derechos de la niñez y la adolescencia*).

Likewise, POK promoted the signing of inter-institutional agreements between the MTESS and the project's five target districts in the Department of Guairá. POK has contributed to the consolidation of five CODENIs in the target districts where the project operates, linking the efforts of local stakeholders against child labor.

Through the development of software for the RAT, POK has contributed to the establishment of closer coordination mechanisms among the MTESS and the SNNA/CODENIs in order to foster protection for adolescent workers. The RAT system was completed and approved by the *Dirección General de Protección a la Niñez y la Adolescencia* (DGPNA) and training on the use of RAT software was carried out for both DGPNA staff and CODENI staff in the five target districts.

Inter-institutional cooperation will also be strengthened by POK's implementation of a Data Management System for the SNNA (*Sistema Informático de Gestión de Datos de Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes en Situación de Trabajo Infantil o Riesgo*). The system is currently under development by a consultant with POK's support. The system, also known as *Observatorio de la Niñez*, aims to register and track children whose rights may be affected by different situations (victims of family violence, street children, child labor), as well as track the response being provided by different agencies. It will have a module on child labor, a register of referral institutions/organizations providing various services to children, and a follow up of the action undertaken by agencies.

Institutional coordination mechanisms regarding child labor are at an initial stage and need to be strengthened during the second half of the project life in order that they become an effective means to protect adolescent workers and children from child labor and exploitation, and so that these mechanisms are institutionalized and become sustainable after the end of the project.

7. How have the exchanges with other governments (e.g. Colombia) been helpful in achieving project objectives?

The visit of representatives from MTESS' DGPNA and the General Directorate of Labor Inspection (DGIFT) was key in order to provide Paraguayan government staff with:

- An improved understanding of the systems/software to be implemented by the project;
- An appraisal of the complexities of similar systems existing in other countries, as well as the possibility of exchanging ideas on the pros and cons of the diverse available options; and
- The opportunity to reflect and decide on the main features to be included within the design of the systems to be developed in Paraguay (RAT, labor inspection).

The technical assistance provided by a Colombian consultant who had participated in designing the systems in that country contributed to optimize resources, avoid repeating design errors and to tailor the existing options to the specific needs of Paraguayan stakeholders.

8. Are there gaps or areas that the project could help government agencies to address in order to increase compliance of labor laws?

a. Register of Adolescent Workers (RAT): By end of 2017 POK provided laptops, software and trained CODENI staff in the five target districts. However, the system has not been yet implemented by the CODENIs. The evaluation detected some discrepancies in the information being handled at different CODENIs concerning the RAT system (e.g. some stakeholders insisted in the use of the patronal number/RUC which are not mandatory vs. use of the personal ID of the employer; one stakeholder said that there was no need for parental authorization to register a child, etc.). It may be useful for POK to provide a refresher course on RAT to CODENI staff and at the same time help CODENIs to carry out a mass campaign on the adolescent workers' registry in order to pilot the system in each district. This would also serve to detect new cases of HCL and promote coordination among CODENIs and MTESS to address this issue.

b. Awareness-raising campaigns on CL at district level: POK has developed awareness workshops on the risks of child labor in mining aimed at families, children and teachers in communities in Paso Yobai. It has also supported the design and printing of various awareness materials on CL (e.g. on the 26 types of HCL activities identified by Paraguayan law, a roadmap for registration of adolescent workers, etc.). This material is kept at the CODENIs. It would be useful for POK to support the CODENIs' implementation of awareness-raising campaigns on CL, RAT and HCL in each district. The MTESS established a Regional Delegation in Guairá during the last quarter of 2017. It would be convenient for this local office of the MTESS to be engaged in all awareness-raising activities on CL and RAT supported by the project. At country level, the project could support the strengthening of relationships among delegations of the MTESS and CODENIs.

c. Labor Inspection System:

- By October 2017 MTESS had carried out 18 labor inspections in Guairá. However, labor inspectors expressed that they had limited experience with conducting inspections in the agriculture sector. It may be useful for the POK to provide logistical support to carry out labor inspections of agricultural activities in Guairá and thus pilot test the labor inspection software in this sector, in which many child laborers are engaged. According to the labor inspectors interviewed in this evaluation, MTESS may need to develop specific procedures to carry out this type of inspection. Given the centralized features of the Labor Inspection System in Paraguay, these inspections would need to be authorized first by the Minister of Labor.¹²
- MTESS has faced some serious challenges in implementing the Labor Inspection Software due to the frequent shortcomings of MTESS servers and of access to the internet. The problem seems to be the outdated infrastructure of the government provider firm COPACO, a fact which affects the quality and continuity of its services. While MTESS is working to upgrade its servers and address this problem, it may not be able to contract the services of another internet provider, a fact that will continue to make online access challenging for labor inspectors.¹³

d. Training of Justice Operators with support from the Supreme Justice Court: POK has started working with the CSJ in the five target districts of Guairá in order to improve the knowledge of justice operators on child labor-related regulations. POK should consider expanding this activity for judges and other justice operators at national level.

¹² Within the development of curricula for training of labor inspectors, one of the courses currently under development focuses on the implementation of labor inspections in the Agriculture sector.

¹³ Independently of the fact described above, some labor inspectors highlighted that the tablets they received from POK (AOC brand, model U706G/Data Sheet, Android 4.4, 8GB memory) may not be enough to run the Labor Inspection software. DGIFT and POK said that the tablets followed the specifications of the contracting firm that developed the software and that the real problem is unstable online access due to the shortcomings of COPACO. Notwithstanding this explanation, it may be useful for POK to check-out this query directly with labor inspectors. They may need some extra orientation in order to optimize the use of the labor inspection software.

e. General Coordination among Country level and Departmental level staff within key Stakeholder Institutions: POK should help optimize coordination mechanisms among country and departmental/district levels within MTESS, MEC, SNNA and the CSJ. Helping bridge communication among these levels would contribute to improved understanding and compliance with labor law.

9. Are there lessons learned regarding the project’s capacity-building assistance that USDOL should consider in its work with other countries?

The lessons learned below focus capacity building-related issues. Other lessons learned regarding other issues may be found in Section V of this report.

- Networking activities may take a longer time than planned if the goal is to reach programmatic consensus and establish meaningful institutional relationships that ensure future sustainability of project activities. In some cases, projects may need more than three or six months to smooth things and clarify roles with all partners.
- Projects should work at multiple levels with national stakeholders, helping them bridge relationships and actions at national and local levels. This would help avoid bottlenecks and promote the implementation of activities as needed in all levels.
- Local context-related issues, such as frequent change of government staff or political instability among local authorities, may affect capacity building efforts and lead to a need to repeat actions with new stakeholders.

3.4 Education and Livelihoods

10. What effect or impact has participating in *Espacios para Crecer* (EpC) had on children’s formal education process?

EpC is having a positive impact on children’s formal education process. 67% of POK participants are 5-10 years old, and thus participate in the EpC. Both teachers and parents interviewed by the evaluator suggested that participating in EpC motivates children to learn more and that their performance in formal schooling tends to improve. The strengthening of children’s formal education-related skills (e.g. math, writing, and reading) in turn contributes to their learning process and improves children’s understanding of the educational content received at school.

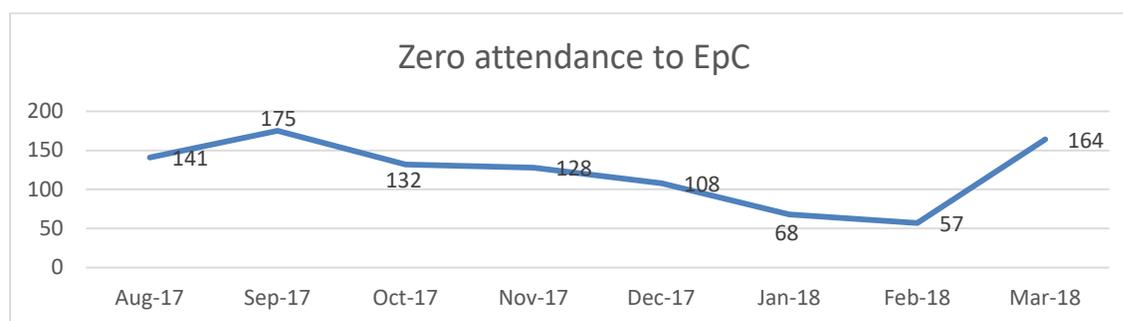
During the evaluation, children expressed that they were very happy to participate in EpC. Children said they valued the opportunity to play, paint, sing and receive additional support to strengthen their formal education-related skills. In the case of all EpCs visited during this evaluation, children participated spontaneously and willingly in all activities being offered by ALDA facilitators. The number of boys and girls was similar in all groups visited. Children suggested they would appreciate that the EpC include some outdoor activities (such as one-day visits to places of interest outside school facilities).

Their contact with the EpCs has also motivated some school directors and teachers at target schools to start using innovative tools that promote children’s learning and make of formal school a more enticing and enjoyable experience.

Children in EpC are divided into two groups: *Peces* or “Fish” (5-7 year olds), and *Pájaro Campana* or “Birds” (8-10 year olds). In most EpCs, both groups are addressed in parallel by one sole facilitator. Handling both groups at the same time poses some difficulties for facilitators. In order to address this challenge, in some cases (e.g. Santa Clara *Potrero*) facilitators have opted for organizing separate EpC for each of the two groups, a fact that improves the focus and intensity of their work with children.

On the basis of 946 participants registered in EpC, the following table shows the number of children not attending EpCs at all, during one month or the other, between August 2017 and March 2018.

Table 4: Total Number of Absentees in EpC Service per Month (Aug. 2017 – March 2018)



Source: POK database

Due to various factors,¹⁴ 164 of the children registered in EpC (17%) did not attend any EpC session in March 2018. On the other hand, 56% of children attended more than 70% of EpC sessions and 75% children attended more than 50% of sessions throughout the 8-month period. The reduction in the number of absentees during the months of January and February coincides with the annual period of school vacations, when it seems that some children have more time to attend EpC.

POK considers a “dropout” from EpC to be any child that does not attend any session of EpC during the past 3 months. Based on this standard, by March 31 2018, only 3.6% of children in EpC had dropped out from the program.

The effects of EpC on the advancement of children from one grade to the next are not easy to assess. Under the current formal education system, all children attending 1st to 6th grades are automatically promoted to the next grade. Schools do not keep attendance sheets for formal schooling either.

¹⁴ According to ALDA facilitators, school directors and teachers, these include: long distances between home and school, bad weather, the child’s or family’s lack of interest, child labor, fear that girls may be harassed or attacked, etc.

Image 1: Children and Facilitators in EpC at Cerro Punta, Borja



11. In implementing 4-H clubs, have behavior or attitude changes been observed among the beneficiary participants? If so, describe the change(s) observed.

Children's participation in 4-H Clubs encouraged some observable changes in their personal development. According to teachers, facilitators and adolescents, children participating in 4-H Clubs increased their communication and social abilities; reduced shyness and developed assertiveness; improved their self-esteem; increased their motivation; proposed and carried out educational and/or productive activities; and implemented collective answers to social problems identified in their communities (for example, members of one 4-H Club started providing support to older people who were in distress in their community).

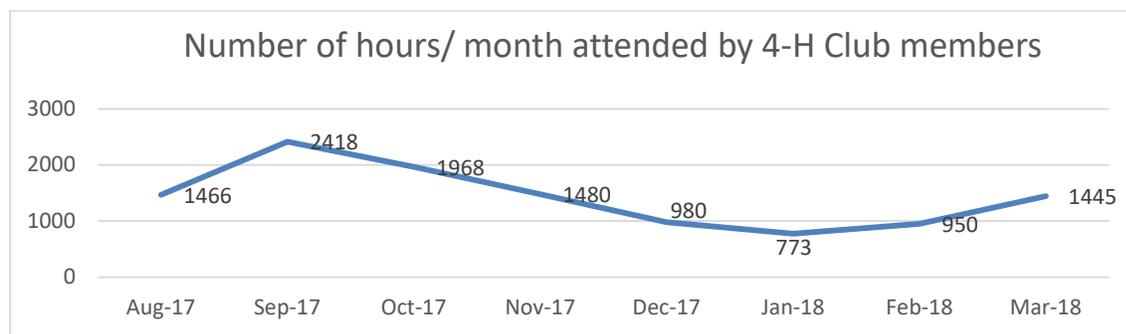
Children also learn practical abilities that they can use in their day-to-day life. During his visits to 4-H Clubs sessions, the evaluator observed children being amused, at ease, and actively engaged in the activities proposed to them by CIRD promoters. The number of boys and girls was similar in all groups visited. In one case, children were learning how to thread colorful bracelets. In another 4-H Club they were learning how to make and bake *chipas* (a popular maize pastry). 4-H Club members had sold part of a previous batch of *chipas* they produced in order to fund group activities.

One-third of POK participants are 11-17 years old, and are thus covered by 4-H- Clubs (20% are 11-13 years old and 13% are 14-17 years old). As expected, the number of children 14-17 years old participating in 4-H Clubs observed by the evaluator during his visits was noticeably smaller than that of 11-13 year olds.

Generally speaking, participation of adolescents in 4-H Clubs has been less stable than children in EpC. During the past 8 months (August 2017 – March 2018), 80% of participants (369 children out of a total of 465 children registered in 4-H Clubs) had an attendance of less than 50% of the hours needed (120 hours) to complete the program. 16% of children (76 adolescents) had completed between 60 and 99 hours and 4% (18 children) had attended 100 or more hours in the 4-H Clubs.

On the basis of 465 participants registered in 4-H Clubs, the following table shows the total number of hours children attended all 4-H Clubs, during one month or another, between August 2017 and March 2018.

Table 5: Total Number of Hours attended by 4-H Club Members per Month (Aug. 2017 – March 2018)



Source: POK database

Contrary to what was observed for children in EpC, the number of hours that members attended 4-H Clubs dropped by half at the beginning of the annual school vacation period.

POK considers as having “dropped out” from 4-H Clubs any child or adolescent that has not attended any session since the start of the same. By March 31, 2018, 15% of adolescents in 4-H Clubs (69 children) had dropped out from the program.

According to CIRD promoters and children interviewed, the reasons for dropping out from 4-H Clubs are more related to some of the children’s limited interest in educational activities being proposed; child labor; families’ fear that young girls may be approached by unknown people on their way to 4-H Clubs; and migration of children/families (11 participants in 4-H Clubs migrated between August 2017 and March 2018).

The number of children with parenting responsibilities among POK beneficiaries is small (3 adolescents). According to POK’s intake forms, 5% of participant’s households contain a child under 18 years old who is not living with their parents. Although this was not directly declared by households, these children may be in a situation of domestic labor (and eventually, in some cases, of *criadazgo*).

Image 2: Children making *chipas* in 4-H Club in San Miguel, Villarrica



12. What effect or relevance have the project's educational and livelihoods services had on reducing child labor?

By March 2018, 31.5% of child laborers within the first cohort of the project had withdrawn from child labor. While, as stated before, the project has shown some promising initial results regarding the reduction of child labor, it is difficult to relate this result specifically to a specific educational or livelihood service. It may be still too early to assess this issue, even more so given that a majority of children have not yet completed the ongoing educational interventions proposed by the project, and that by the time of the interim evaluation, the project's livelihoods interventions had reached a reduced number of target households and participants.

On the other hand, there seems to be some mismatch between the age of the majority of participants in POK and that of children involved in CL, and particularly HCL in that region. In the case of educational services (EpC, 4-H Clubs), most POK participants are in the 5-13 year-old cluster (87%), while the project's baseline study highlights that the percentage of adolescents aged 14-17 who are engaged in child labor is more than 4 times higher (26.2%) than that of children aged 5-13 years (6.2%). Thus, the beneficiaries of POK educational services are mostly children who can be considered high-risk, but not already engaged in child labor.¹⁵

¹⁵ This information could not be initially factored-in due to operational need to start the enrolment of direct participants. The project started enrolling target children almost immediately after completing the baseline's fieldwork.

POK is lacking (and would need to introduce) within its program some specific vocational training activities for adolescents 14-17 years old, in order for them to learn some trade or specific work-related skill. This would make the program more attractive for this age cluster and may help them replace their current, mainly hazardous labor for work in other non-hazardous activities.

By April 2018, livelihood services for adults/households have had a very limited implementation (145 participants in training courses; 38 participants in technical assistance activities). Thus, it may be too early to assess its effects on the reduction of child labor. No evidence on this possible effect was obtained from the evaluator's discussion with women participating in livelihood training activities (production of garments, production of cleaning products, raising pigs).

By April 2018, POK had completed four training courses with the support of SNPP (three related to kitchen and one on the production of cushions), one with support of the *Servicio Nacional de Calidad y Sanidad Vegetal y de Semillas* (SENAVE, on management of plagues in horticulture) and one with support of the Catholic University (on financial education). CIRDP promoters developed the technical assistance activities related to agriculture (on community organization, horticulture, use of incubators in egg production, planning of plots, cassava processing, production of fertilizers, compost and recycling of organic trash). By April 2018, SNPP is developing training courses for POK participants in Borja and Villarrica on the production of garments and on manicure and pedicure. Courses involve, on average, around 10-15 participants. While all courses aim to improve family income, with the rationale that this may lead in the long term to a reduction in child labor, POK is not conditioning its training and/or technical assistance on their commitment to reducing child labor.

Increasing the awareness of children in EpC and 4-H Clubs, as well as their families, regarding children's rights, the importance of education, and identifying those activities considered as HCL may contribute to the prevention of child labor among POK participants. Mass awareness-raising activities on CL and HCL need yet to be implemented in project target districts, as well as those related to registering adolescent laborers in the same and enforcing labor inspection, particularly in the agriculture sector.

Image 3: Training in Garment Production at Mangrullo, Paso Yobai



3.5 Sustainability

13. What strategies and/or tools has the project implemented in order to promote the sustainability of actions carried out?

As mentioned previously, POK has carefully articulated its actions with the main national stakeholders (MTESS, MEC, SNNA, CSJ, CODENIs, etc.) in order to promote that they adopt several of the methodologies and systems proposed by the project (EpC, 4-H Clubs, RAT, Labor Inspection Software, SNNA data management system, etc.).

In this context, POK has developed several strategies and tools in order to promote the sustainability of its actions:

a. POK has helped MTESS develop several tools that have contributed to strengthening the latter's institutional capacity and to improving its action on child labor. These include, among others, the following products:

- Development of the MTESS annual management plan, with emphasis on child labor and the protection of the adolescent worker.
- Support for the development of MTESS's Institutional Strategic Plan.

- Review and update of the “Guidelines for intra-institutional assistance of people under 18 years old.”
- Review and update of the “Guidelines for inter-institutional coordination for the assistance of workers under 18 years old.”
- Review and printing of the protocol for cases of domestic child labor (*criadazgo*).
- Analysis of technical tools for labor inspections in agriculture.
- Development of manual of organization and functions for the DGIFT.
- Design and printing of a guide to evaluate working conditions for DGIFT.
- Development of the Labor Inspection software for DGIFT.
- Design and printing of communication materials on the obligation to pay bonuses for workers (*aguinaldo*) and minimum wage.
- Design of awareness materials on the 26 hazardous child labor activities according to Paraguayan law.
- Support to the DGIFT in the development of 10 talks on labor formalization with employers and workers.

b. POK has supported the training of DGIFT’s labor inspectors and institutional exchange activities. POK has strengthened MTESS’ labor inspection function through specific activities, such as:

- Training workshops on national and international legislation on child labor and protection of adolescent workers.
- Training for labor inspectors on Occupational Safety and Health.
- Training for labor inspectors on labor inspection in agriculture, developed by the head of the Wage and Hour Division of USDOL.
- Training for labor inspectors on the labor inspection software system.
- Exchange with the Ministry of Labor of Colombia to strengthen the DGIFT.

c. POK has strengthened the work of other key agencies in relation to child labor by developing specific software/data registration systems for the same, such as:

- The RAT developed for the CODENIs and the SNNA, which can also be accessed by DGPNA at MTESS. The project is supporting a pilot implementation of this system in POK’s five target districts in the Department of Guairá. The SNNA will need to ensure the rollout and application of the system in the rest of the country.
- A data management system for the SNNA (*Sistema Informático de Gestión de Datos de Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes en Situación de Trabajo Infantil o Riesgo*). This software is currently being developed.

d. POK has strengthened the role and capacity of the Ministry of Education through insertion of the methodologies and learning material proposed by the project (EpC) within the curricular activities approved by the MEC.

- For example, MEC has issued *Resolución N° 3340* declaring the materials and the EpC methodology of educational interest at the national level. This lays the groundwork for potential replication, scale, and sustainability of these methodologies at country level.
- Likewise, through *Resolución N° 381/16*, MEC has authorized and recognized the continuous training of teachers, facilitators, promoters, and technicians from the different target districts. Thus, the training in the QL/EpC methodology provided by the project will count towards hours that help teachers progress in their professional career as educators.
- These educational methodologies proposed by the project may potentially be replicated in other regions, or included within MEC's *Jornada Extendida* program. In this context, POK is supporting the development of pilot experiences of the *Jornada Extendida* methodology in some of its target districts.

e. POK has provided training to key staff of various institutions on specific issues. By October 2017, POK had trained 44 local and country staff from various institutions on issues and procedures related to child labor (e.g. staff from CODENIs, CSJ, MTESS, MEC, Departmental Council on Childhood and Adolescence, Governor's Office, Civil Registry, government programs [*Abrazo* on child labor, and *Tekoporá* on conditional cash transfer], National Police, and others). These included, among others:

- Two training workshops with local actors from the five target districts on the "Roadmap for detection, register, referral and follow up of child labor and protection of adolescent workers."
- Training of CODENI counselors on the Quantum Learning methodology, by ENTRENA.
- A training session for judges and judicial stakeholders of Guairá on the *Criadazgo* bill.

f. POK has promoted inter-institutional coordination among key national stakeholders. The project has contributed to inter-institutional coordination among key agencies in Paraguay by supporting CONAETI's activities and helping establish an institutional network that may continue POK educational, awareness-raising and livelihood-related activities after the end of the project life. In this context, POK has supported:

- A national forum to strengthen the "National system of protection and promotion of Children's Rights."
- The signing of inter-institutional agreements between the MTESS and the five target districts.
- The inclusion of SNPP in support of project activities, providing vocational training for adult participants. If properly addressed and funded by MTESS, SNPP could continue providing services in support of child labor elimination in Guairá. As stated before, similar support may be obtained from other sources (Ministry of Agriculture, PETROPAR).

- The establishment or reactivation of the *Consejos de Desarrollo Distrital* (District Development Councils) in Borja, Iturbe, Paso Yobai and MJ Troche and the *Consejo Municipal de la Niñez* (Municipal Council on Childhood and Adolescence) in Villarrica, which reunite the main stakeholders at local level.

POK's strategy to promote sustainability will need to be intensified during the second half of the project life, in order to ensure the continuity of project activities (please refer to the following section of this report).

14. Are there recommendations that the project should consider for greater sustainability of project achievements?

During 2018-2019, POK will be facing a complex scenario regarding its future sustainability, due to: (1) A change in National and Department authorities, which may demand that starting August 2018 they need to establish and reinforce links with the new authorities in each Ministry/government body; (2) The need to reach rapid agreement with government agencies so that they may dedicate some funding to start a process leading to the sustainability of project activities; and (3) Alternatively or concurrently to the above, the need to invest project funds in a series of key issues (or get funds from additional local sources) to ensure sustainability of the project's key activities.

National elections for President, Congress and Department Governors were held on April 22, 2018. As a result, the incumbent Colorado party retained executive power and control of Congress, but new authorities will come into office on August 2018. The new government's budget is to be prepared by each Ministry/agency before August. POK would have interest in discussing with government agencies' current incumbent authorities to ensure that these agencies budget some funding in support of the priority educational, awareness-raising and livelihood activities highlighted below. Additionally, POK will need to establish a good relationship with upcoming incumbents and sensitize them on the project's work and the benefits it has produced for institutional stakeholders and participants.

a. Suggested priority actions to promote sustainability in relation to the enforcement of CL regulations:

- It would be convenient that POK intensifies its work with MTESS and SNNA in order to support the pilot implementation of RAT by CODENIs in the five target districts of Guairá. Implementation of RAT should be accompanied by the development of awareness raising campaigns on CL, HCL and RAT in each target district (e.g. using local radio stations, web pages, printed material and SMS in cellphones). Such campaigns would provide an opportunity to unite the efforts of CODENIs, MTESS, SNNA, MEC and other local stakeholders. Sponsorship from local enterprises may be sought for part of this campaign.
- POK should also promote a pilot implementation of the Labor Inspection system in Guairá and other departments. Given that MTESS intends to create two positions for labor inspectors in Guairá, this could be a good opportunity to put into practice the software and refresh training for labor inspectors.

- In coordination with CSJ, POK may consider expanding country-wide the training on child labor-related regulations provided to justice operators.

b. Suggested priority actions to promote sustainability in relation to educational activities:

- It would be convenient for POK to start discussing the costs of the concrete options envisaged in order to ensure the continuity of EpC and 4-H Club services by MEC. What would be the best options? Should the services continue running on opposing shifts from the school classes, or integrated into regular schooling under the *Jornada Extendida* program? What would be the pros and cons for EpC/4-H Club activities to be developed by the regular teachers or facilitators (as done by POK) hired by MEC (these could be young people from each community)? POK should find an agreement with MEC on all these issues.
- Based on the agreement above, POK would need to design and implement a training program on EpC/4-H Club/QL methodologies addressed to MEC staff at country level. POK should coordinate with MEC so that the training provided to teachers is appropriately certified by MEC, and that the teachers or facilitators trained in the above methodologies may become trainers of other teachers.
- POK should define what the needed requirements for printed materials would be for the continuation of EpC by MEC during 2020 and 2021 (e.g. workbooks for children and teachers [*Peces, Pájaro Campana*], facilitator guidelines). POK may need to print and forward this to MEC by the end of the project life, so that MEC may continue implementing this activity. Eventually, the printing of these materials could be sponsored by private or public enterprises, such as PETROPAR, or by local foundations.

c. Suggested priority actions to promote sustainability in relation to livelihood activities:

- It would be convenient for POK to invest some funding to provide work materials for vocational courses to be developed by SNPP until a better agreement is obtained with MTESS to cover these small costs (see Section 3.2.3.b of this report for the challenges). It would also be convenient for POK to consider funding small investments to support collective productive initiatives by adults and start-up kits for adolescents 14-17 years old who are completing vocational training (please see Section VI – Recommendations).
- In order to carry out the above, POK may need to leverage the existing strategic alliances (SNPP, MAG, PETROPAR). POK would need to start diversifying its sources of financial support (e.g. by applying for support from CSR programs in the sugar and alcohol industry). Given that budgets for 2019 are discussed in 2018, POK should approach potential local sources of support as early as possible.
- It would be convenience for POK to start discussions with government stakeholders at the local level (e.g. *Consejos de Desarrollo Distrital* in 4 districts and *Consejo Municipal de la Niñez y Adolescencia* in Villarrica, Regional Directorate of MTESS for Guairá, Directorate of Agriculture Extension in Guairá, SNPP, SINAFOCAL, PETROPAR, etc.) in view of establishing an institutional network that may ensure the continuity of livelihood services for households with children in HCL in the five target districts. Which institution will assume a

future leadership role for this program (currently carried out by CIRD)? What will be the contribution of each institution to such a program? What mechanism will be used for the selection of livelihood services beneficiaries after the end of the project life?

d. Suggested priority actions to promote sustainability in relation to the involvement of corporate stakeholders:

- In order to promote further sustainability of project activities, it may be convenient for POK to try to engage more industrial, commercial, public and private enterprises in support of the project (e.g. searching for the sponsorship of specific project activities and awareness-raising campaigns).
- POK should consider discussing with public and private enterprises the usefulness of implementing codes of conduct that include the elimination of child labor within the value chain of the sugarcane sector.

Recommendations on other relevant topics are included in Section VI of this report.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

POK has contributed to strengthening the institutional capacity of government organizations in order to address child labor at the country and department level. By April 2018, POK is carrying out educational and livelihood activities for 917 households in 16 localities in five districts of the Department of Guairá. POK has 1,409 direct participants aged 5-17 years old who receive educational services through the EpCs and 4-H Clubs. There are 149 households receiving a least one livelihood service.

All institutional stakeholders and most of the project participants interviewed by the evaluator in Asunción and Guairá found POK interventions to be relevant and expressed their satisfaction with regard to the support received from the project.

POK has largely met its objectives with regard to the insertion and articulation of its strategies within the efforts of relevant government agencies, such as the MTESS, the MEC and the SNNA, among others, a fact which will contribute to the sustainability of its activities. Likewise, the project has contributed to inter-institutional coordination among key agencies in Paraguay by supporting CONAETI's activities and helping establish an institutional network that may continue the POK educational, awareness-raising and livelihood-related activities after the end of the project life. POK has completed the design of labor inspection software for the MTESS and of software in support of the RAT system for the SNNA and CODENIs. These systems still need to be rolled out in a systematic way. POK has significantly contributed to the training of labor inspectors, CODENIs, MEC and other government institutions at country and local level.

By March 2018, 31.5% of child laborers within the first cohort of the project in Guairá had withdrawn from child labor. This is a promising and good initial result.

Regarding its educational strategy, by April 2018 POK was on track to achieve its life-of-project targets and had provided educational or vocational services to 49% of the project's global target. The greatest difficulty for the project was to engage children 11-17 years old, and particularly 14-17 year olds, within its services. Given that many households in Guairá have a positive view of CL and that households usually expect that adolescents work in order to contribute to their families' welfare, it may be useful that legal age working children acquire work skills in specific crafts that may allow them to engage in non-hazardous work activities and replace their current, mainly hazardous, sources of income.

Regarding the livelihood strategy, the project first enrolled children in the EpCs and 4-H Clubs before offering livelihood services to their households. The project undertook this approach because it allowed these households to have exposure to the project through the educational services and was a means of building up trust and interest in the project on the part of the households. Although this approach assisted the project in its enrollment, it delayed the implementation of the livelihood strategy. Therefore, the project may need to speed up the implementation of livelihood services in the remainder of the project.

V. LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

5.1 Lessons Learned

- Waiting for children to attend educational activities before starting livelihood activities with households led to inconvenient delays in project implementation. It is convenient not to condition the start of one component on the development of another one.
- Content of vocational training activities should be attractive and respond to the needs of each specific age cluster and its possibilities of insertion into work.
- Projects may benefit from having some flexibility and compensate (at least provisionally) for the absence of some material resources among counterparts (e.g. training materials), in order to facilitate that the latter can provide their specific technical expertise (e.g. training curricula, training staff). Otherwise, projects may suffer critical delays that may affect their final outcome.

Other lessons learned regarding capacity building assistance are included in Section III: Findings.

5.2 Good Practices

- Capacity-building processes should be part of the implementation strategy for the different project components (education, livelihood, or awareness-raising). By “doing with” stakeholders instead than “for” them, and working at country and local levels, POK has promoted the sustainability of its activities.
- While adequately coordinating with multiple government stakeholders and clarifying their specific responsibilities in the project, POK protected the leadership role of its main partner (MTESS) within the project. This has contributed to an adequate working relationship with all partners and ongoing support from MTESS. All government stakeholders expressed satisfaction with the project’s work and achievements.
- By focusing on generating outputs that contribute to improving the quality and efficiency of government institutions and their processes, POK actions have remained relevant to country stakeholders.
- It is important to support institutional development, and work with those government staff that will remain in place within each organization despite political changes. This should help POK better address the upcoming change in national authorities, ministries and regional governments in 2018.
- Focusing POK’s direct interventions (e.g. education and livelihood) in one sole geographic region has contributed to a more efficient use of project resources, as opposed to distributing work among several distant regions.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. POK should expand its job training/employment activities to address the situation of adolescents aged 14-17 years who are engaged in HCL and focus its interventions more directly on HCL. The project has a database on CL status that could support a closer follow-up so that the project could tailor and prioritize its response in order to promote that these children move into less hazardous jobs (e.g. by offering them vocational training, alternative job opportunities, start-up kits and doing a quarterly follow up of this group). If children engaged in HCL are attending high school, POK could work with MEC in order for these children to be included in MEC's scholarship program (from MEC's Risk Directorate) as an incentive to stop their involvement in HCL.
2. POK should promote that MTESS and CODENIs develop registration, law enforcement and awareness-raising actions not only in the sugarcane sector of Guairá, but also regarding the mining sector and children in domestic child labor, including *criadazgo*.
3. It would be convenient for POK to express its bi-annual results using system of thresholds that may provide management and implementing partners with early information on areas where they are not meeting their targets. This may help POK review its bi-annual/quarterly planning and introduce monthly follow-up and corrective action to address any shortcomings in specific targets. As part of the follow up of implementing partners' activities, some targets where implementation has been delayed may need to be expressed and monthly followed up per district.
4. It would be convenient for POK's monitoring system to add to their educational status data collection by providing disaggregated information on the type of activity/sector in which participant child laborers are engaged, as well as on the number of days/weeks that children missed school in the previous month.
5. It would be convenient for POK to review its livelihood strategy in order to include additional costs/investments and thus compensate for any shortcoming from SNPP and guarantee that vocational training is provided in a timely and continuous fashion. POK should consider including among its offer to households MAG's Agricultural Extension training, as well as technical agriculture courses already approved for youth by SINAFOCAL. In further implementing the livelihood component, POK may have interest in learning about the SAPE'A program's experience in Guairá (implemented by PLAN International, with support from AECID) and the experience of the government's *Tenonderá* program.
6. During the months leading to the end of project life, POK should intensify its efforts toward optimizing coordination mechanisms among country and department/district levels of the MTESS, MEC, SNNA and the CSJ. POK should focus its efforts in Guairá on promoting that all concerned agencies carry out increasingly regular activities on child labor.
7. Finally, it would be convenient for POK to consider implementing the **detailed list of recommendations provided under Section 3.5.14 of this report on how to promote greater sustainability of project achievements**. This includes suggested priority actions to promote greater sustainability of: (1) The enforcement of CL regulations; (2) Educational services; (3) Livelihood services; and (4) Involvement of corporate stakeholders.

ANNEX A: Overview of Project Progress

Objectives	Indicators	April 2018 Targets and Results	
		Target	Actual
Project Objective: Reduced Child Labor in the Department of Guairá	POC1: % of beneficiary children engaged in CL	Target	22%
		Actual	31%
	POC2: % of beneficiary children engaged in HCL	Target	17%
		Actual	24%
	POC4: % of beneficiary children who regularly attended any form of education during the past six (6) months	Target	87%
		Actual	97%
	POH1: % of livelihood beneficiary households with at least one child engaged in child labor	Target	N/A
		Actual	
	POH2: % of livelihood beneficiary households with at least one child engaged in hazardous child labor (if applicable)	Target	N/A
		Actual	
	POH4: % of livelihood beneficiary households with all children of compulsory school age attending school regularly	Target	N/A
		Actual	
OUTCOME 1: Increased participation of Children and Adolescents in educational opportunities	OTC 1: # of children ages 5-17 <u>promoted</u> to the next grade level	Target	1,247
		Actual	1,210
	OTC 2: # of children that complete educational opportunities	Target	N/A
		Actual	
Outcome 1.1: Children and Adolescents aged 5 to 17 access formal and non-formal education programs	E1: # of children engaged in or at high-risk of entering CL provided education or vocational training services	Target	497
		Actual	1,409
	E2: # of children engaged in or at high risk of entering child labor provided formal education services	Target	72
		Actual	0
	E3: # of children engaged in or at high risk of entering child labor provided non-formal education services	Target	497
		Actual	1,409
	OTC 3: # of children aged 5 to 17 years reinserted in the formal education system	Target	72
		Actual	72
	OTC 4: # of children aged 5 - 17 years brought	Target	72

Objectives	Indicators	April 2018 Targets and Results	
	up to the correct grade level in the formal education system	Actual	0
	OTP 1: # of children who receive school and family support activities	Target	0
		Actual	1,342
Outcome 1.2: Communities supporting CL prevention and elimination	OTC 5: % of beneficiary households who agree that CA should attend school	Target	N/A
		Actual	
	OTC 6: % of beneficiary households who agree that CA under the <u>legal working age</u> should not work	Target	N/A
		Actual	
	OTP 2: # of awareness workshops and campaigns conducted	Target	5
		Actual	26
OTP 3: # of adults participating in awareness activities to prevent and combat CL	Target	200	
	Actual	221	
OUTCOME 2: Households with increased access to livelihood	L1: # of households receiving <u>livelihood services</u>	Target	610
		Actual	189
	L2: # of adults provided with <u>employment services</u>	Target	610
		Actual	171
	L4: # of individuals provided with <u>economic strengthening services</u>	Target	490
		Actual	62
	OTC 7: % of target households regularly meeting <u>basic needs</u>	Target	N/A
		Actual	
OTC 8: % of beneficiaries inserted into decent work	Target	N/A	
	Actual		
Outcome 2.1: Adolescents aged 14 to 17 with increased skills and personal competencies to continue with their education and/or access to a future decent work	OTC 9: % of adolescents from 14 to 17 years of age who apply at least 60 percent of <u>social work skills</u>	Target	N/A
Actual			
Outcome 2.2: Adults with better competencies for access to employment	OTC 10: % of target households with better competencies for access to employment	Target	N/A
Actual			

Objectives	Indicators	April 2018 Targets and Results	
		Target	Actual
	OTP 4: # of adults in target households who complete courses for vocational training	Target	N/A
		Actual	
Outcome 2.3: Adults with operating entrepreneurship strengthened	OTC 11: % of operating entrepreneurship strengthened	Target	N/A
		Actual	
	OTP 5: # of adults in target households who receive <u>technical assistance</u>	Target	490
		Actual	62
Outcome 2.4: Greater access by beneficiary households to the Social Protection Programs and/or projects at the local level	OTC 12: % of target households who use <u>social protection programs</u> that are available in the Department of Guairá	Target	N/A
		Actual	
	OTP 6: # of district development plans that include actions to prevent and combat CL	Target	2
		Actual	0
OUTCOME 3: Improved Application of Labor Laws that Protect Children and Adolescents	OTC 13: % of inspections conducted at a central and local level regarding CL	Target	Guairá: 1% Rest of the Country: 4%
		Actual	Guairá: 16% Rest of the Country: 84%
	OTC 14: # of sanctions applied to businesses who do not comply with labor laws that protect CA	Target	20
		Actual	0
	OTC 15: # of referrals sent to the competent agency by the MTESS through CL inspections	Target	20
		Actual	0
Outcome 3.1: A strengthened System of Inspection for compliance with labor and Child and Adolescent laws (regarding Child Labor)	OTC 16: # of inspections that use updated procedures and/or protocols	Target	130
		Actual	177
	OTP 7: # of MTESS inspectors trained in procedures for CL inspection	Target	30
		Actual	27
Outcome 3.2: Increased Knowledge for Local Stakeholders and Justice System Officials for the Application of Labor and Child and Adolescent Laws in Guairá	OTC 17: # of local stakeholders and justice system officials with greater knowledge about combating CL	Target	20
		Actual	22
Outcome 3.3: Strengthened CODENIs in target districts, to improve the articulation between member institutions of the	OTC 18: # of priority actions for the project implemented by the CODENI (items b, d and e of article 34 of the CNA) of the target districts, for the prevention and elimination of CL and protection of adolescent workers	Target	5
		Actual	1

Objectives	Indicators	April 2018 Targets and Results	
CONAETI	OTC 19: CL monitoring mechanisms implemented	Target	1
		Actual	2

ANNEX B: Evaluation Terms of Reference

I. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

USDOL - OCFT

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

Since 1995, the U.S. Congress has appropriated over \$900 million to USDOL for efforts to combat exploitive child labor internationally. This funding has been used to support technical cooperation projects to combat exploitive child labor in more than 90 countries around the world. Technical cooperation projects funded by USDOL range from targeted action programs in specific sectors of work to more comprehensive programs that support national efforts to eliminate child labor. USDOL-funded child labor elimination projects generally seek to achieve five major goals:

1. Reducing exploitative child labor, especially the worst forms through the provision of direct educational services and by addressing root causes of child labor, including innovative strategies to promote sustainable livelihoods of target households;
2. Strengthening policies on child labor, education, and sustainable livelihoods, and the capacity of national institutions to combat child labor, address its root causes, and promote formal, non-formal and vocational education opportunities to provide children with alternatives to child labor;
3. Raising awareness of exploitative child labor and its root causes, and the importance of education for all children and mobilizing a wide array of actors to improve and expand education infrastructures;
4. Supporting research, evaluation, and the collection of reliable data on child labor, its root causes, and effective strategies, including educational and vocational alternatives, microfinance and other income generating activities to improve household income; and
5. Ensuring the long-term sustainability of these efforts.

USDOL-funded child labor elimination projects are designed to ensure that children in areas with a high incidence of child labor are withdrawn and integrated into educational settings, and that they persist in their education once enrolled. In parallel, the program seeks to avert at-risk children from leaving school and entering child labor. The projects are based on the notion that the elimination of exploitative child labor depends, to a large extent, on improving access to, quality of, and relevance of education. Without improving educational quality and relevance, children withdrawn/prevented from child labor may not have viable alternatives and could resort to other forms of hazardous work.

In FY2010, Congress provided new authority to ILAB to expand activities related to income generating activities, including microfinance, to help projects expand income generation and address poverty more effectively. The addition of this livelihood focus is based on the premise that if adult family members have sustainable livelihoods, they will be less likely to have their dependent children work and more likely to keep them to school.

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

Project Context¹⁶

In Paraguay, 416,425 (22.4%) of children and adolescents (CA) between the ages of 5 to 17 work, and 95.1% of them do so in hazardous jobs. The incidence of child labor (CL) is significantly higher in rural than urban areas, and the Worst Forms of Child Labor (WFCL) is highest in three sectors: agriculture, domestic work, and in the home and informal sector.¹⁷ Paraguayan legislation establishes 14 years of age as the minimum for employment, but adolescent workers are generally not formally registered. Employers that do not respect minimum wages and safe work conditions for adolescents and adults, do so with impunity.

Almost half (49.2%) of CA engaged in CL in Paraguay are found in the agricultural sector. Sugar cane is one of the main commercial crops produced in Paraguay, and the country is one of the major exporters of organic sugar in the world, exporting mainly to the United States and Europe. The Department of Guairá is the most important producer of sugar cane in Paraguay, representing 39% of the country's production. More than fifty percent of the population farms this crop. It is worth highlighting that the incidence of informal employment in Paraguay among rural youths between 15 to 24 years of age is nearly 80%.¹⁸

In 2011, a study financed by USDOL and implemented by ICF International regarding CL in the sugar industry in Paraguay¹⁹ revealed that approximately 196,000 children over the age of five have participated in sugar cane related activities. Beyond these 196,000, based on the household survey, approximately 28.1% of the workers of the sugar cane industry that had worked in the last seven days were children.

The study indicates that since sugar cane is a labor-intensive crop and requires significant physical strength, most people that work in the sugar cane industry are male children (81.5% in the last week). Approximately half of the children that work had reached the legal working age (14 to 17

¹⁶ Adapted from Project CMEP

¹⁷ *Magnitud y características del trabajo infantil y adolescente en el Paraguay. Encuesta Nacional de Actividades de Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes (EANA) 2011 (Report)*

¹⁸ http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---americas/---ro-lima/documents/publication/wcms_361990.pdf

¹⁹ Child Labor in the Sugarcane Industry in Paraguay, ICF, 2012

years of age); nevertheless, the study indicated that they conduct tasks that exert greater physical demands.

Of the many contributing factors that cause child labor in the Department of Guairá in Paraguay, the *Okakuaa* project has identified three key contributing factors:

1. Few opportunities for education, due to: poverty; cultural barriers such as a positive view of CL; low value on education among families; poor educational infrastructure in communities; low academic performance and low motivation to study among children.
2. Poor socioeconomic development among households, due to: limited access to local social programs and projects; lack of access to financial resources for generating economic opportunities; limited access to employment opportunities; and deficient infrastructure for offering products in local markets.
3. Low compliance with labor laws, due to: lack of capacity in the enforcement and compliance of labor laws; lack of information systems about enforcement; and lack of funding and mechanisms directed toward enforcing compliance with protections for children and adolescents.

Project Specific Information²⁰

In November 2015 the United States Department of Labor's (USDOL) Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking (OCFT) awarded a US\$ 6 million cooperative agreement to Partners of the Americas to implement a project entitled, "*Paraguay Okakuaa: Project to Reduce the Worst Forms of Child Labor and Improve Labor Law Enforcement and Working Conditions in Paraguay.*" *Paraguay Okakuaa* will be conducted over a period of 48 months, from November 3, 2015 through November 2, 2019. A project revision was approved in December 2017 which added US\$ 683,557.87 in funds in order to incorporate activities to improve labor law compliance and acceptable working conditions, with a focus on preventing and combating forced labor.

Paraguay Okakuaa is led by the *Ministerio de Trabajo, Empleo y Seguridad Social* (MTESS) and implemented by Partners of the Americas (Partners). The general objective of the project is to "Reduce child labor in the Department of Guairá". To achieve this objective, *Paraguay Okakuaa* works with the implementing agencies *Fundación ALDA* (ALDA, which implements the educational component) and *Fundación Centro de Información y Recursos para el Desarrollo* (CIRD, which implements the livelihood component) to achieve the following results:

- Increased participation of children and adolescents in educational opportunities
- Households with increased access to livelihood
- Improved application of labor laws that protect children and adolescents in child labor (CL)

The project is implementing activities focused on children and adolescents engaged in CL or at risk of CL, whose households are in the Department of Guairá. Institutional capacity building activities

²⁰ Adapted from Project CMEP, Cooperative Agreement and Project Modifications

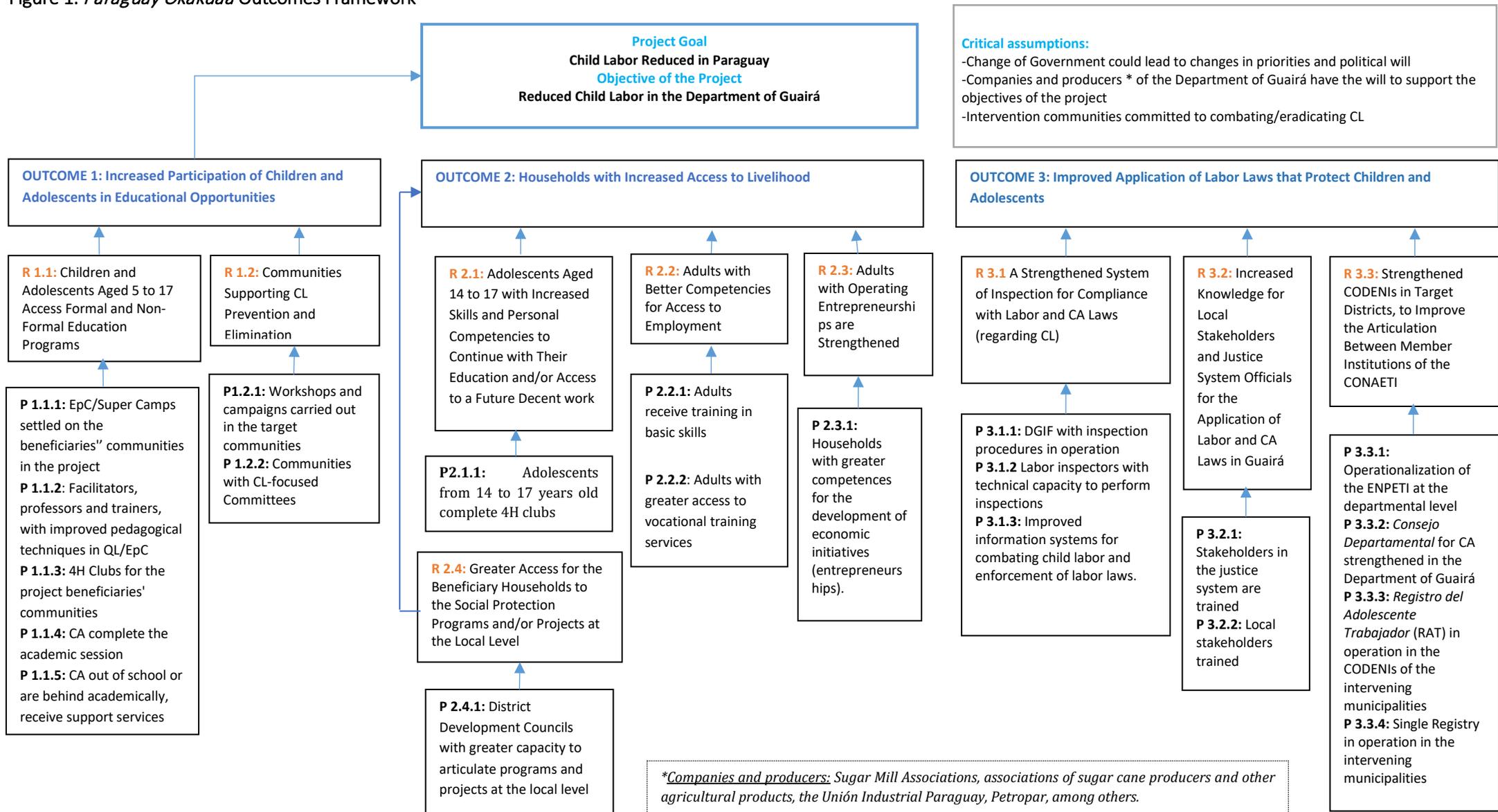
are carried out at a national level and in Guairá. *Paraguay Okakuaa* targets the following districts for the project's interventions: Borja, Iturbe, Mauricio José Troche, Paso Yobai, and Villarrica.

The children and adolescents who receive services from the project as direct beneficiaries are between 5 to 17 years of age at the time the intervention begins. *Paraguay Okakuaa* provides livelihood services to households with at least one child or adolescent that meets the prior criteria.

In addition to the direct beneficiaries, among the activities to improve the application of labor laws and conditions, training is provided to: (i) workers, especially adolescents who work; (ii) families who are vulnerable to labor rights violations and/or exploiting work conditions; (iii) inspectors and staff from the MTESS; (iv) *Secretaria Nacional de la Niñez y Adolescencia* (SNNA) staff and the *Consejería Municipal por los Derechos del Niño, la Niña, y el Adolescente* (CODENI); and (v) members of the Judiciary. The indirect beneficiaries include individuals and families from target communities, who are benefitted by project activities with regards to institutional capacity building, awareness campaigns, and educational and livelihood interventions.

The project's Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (CMEP) identifies the following outcomes and results:

Figure 1. Paraguay Okakuaa Outcomes Framework



II. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF EVALUATION

Evaluation Purpose

The main purposes of the interim evaluation are:

1. To review the on-going progress and performance of the project (extent to which immediate objectives and outputs are being achieved)
2. To examine the likelihood of the project achieving its objectives and targets
3. To identify ways to improve delivery and enhance coordination with key stakeholders
4. To identify promising practices and ways to promote their sustainability

The evaluation should also describe how the project worked to build the capacity of the government, and identify successes, challenges and lessons learned for working with existing programs in Paraguay. The interim evaluation should provide OCFT, Partners, project staff, partners and key stakeholders with information to assess and revise, as needed, the relevant work plans, strategies, objectives, partnership arrangements and resources in order to maximize the potential impact of the project and increase the likelihood that intended targets and objectives will be achieved.

Intended Users

The evaluation will provide OCFT, Partners, other project stakeholders, and stakeholders working to combat child labor more broadly, an assessment of the project's experience in implementation, its effects on project beneficiaries, and an understanding of the factors driving the project results. The interim evaluation findings, 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 interim 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.

Evaluation Questions

Relevance of Project Design

1. Are the project strategies appropriate and effective at reducing child labor in Paraguay?
2. Has the project's special focus on females been effective in providing greater opportunities for girls? If so, in what ways?

Implementation

3. Is the project meeting its objectives and targets? What challenges have been encountered thus far and how is the project overcoming these challenges?

4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of *Paraguay Okakuaa's* monitoring system? This includes implementation of the CMEP, the Direct Beneficiary Monitoring System (DBMS) and other data collection and reporting processes. What improvements can be made to strengthen monitoring?

Institutional Capacity Building

5. How has *Paraguay Okakuaa* coordinated activities with key stakeholders?
6. Have the project's strategies been effective at promoting coordination among government agencies to better protect adolescent workers and children from labor exploitation?
7. How have the exchanges with other governments (e.g. Colombia) been helpful in achieving project objectives?
8. Are there gaps or areas that the project could help government agencies to address in order to increase compliance of labor laws?
9. Are there lessons learned regarding the project's capacity building assistance that USDOL should consider in its work with other countries?

Education and Livelihoods

10. What effect or impact has participating in *Espacios para Crecer* (EpC) had on children's formal education process?
11. In implementing 4-H clubs, have behavior or attitude changes been observed among the beneficiary participants? If so, describe the change(s) observed.
12. What effect or relevance have the project's educational and livelihoods services had on reducing child labor?

Sustainability

13. What strategies and/or tools has the project implemented in order to promote the sustainability of actions carried out?
14. Are there recommendations that the project should consider for greater sustainability of project achievements?

III. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND TIMEFRAME

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

A. Approach

The interim evaluation approach will be qualitative and participatory in nature. Qualitative information will be obtained through field visits, interviews and focus groups as appropriate. The participatory nature of the evaluation will contribute to the sense of ownership among

beneficiaries.

Opinions coming from beneficiaries will improve and clarify the use of quantitative analysis (please see TOR Annex 1 for a list of quantitative project indicators to be included in the evaluation). Quantitative data will be drawn from the CMEP and project reports to the extent that it is available and incorporated in the analysis.

The interim evaluation will be conducted by an independent evaluator. 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.

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 interim evaluation team will consist of:

1. The international evaluator: Dwight Ordóñez
2. As appropriate an interpreter fluent in Guarani will travel with the evaluator.

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

The international evaluator will be responsible for developing the methodology in consultation with SFS, USDOL, and the project staff; assigning the tasks of the national consultant and interpreter for the field work; directly conducting interviews and facilitating other data collection processes; analysis of the evaluation material gathered; presenting feedback on the initial findings of the evaluation to the national stakeholder meeting and preparing the evaluation report.

The responsibility of the interpreter is to ensure that the evaluator is understood by the stakeholders as far as possible, and that the information gathered is relayed accurately to the evaluator. Interpretation will be needed for field visits in the Department of Guairá, but not for meetings with key stakeholders in Asuncion. The interpreter will also provide contextual and cultural insight for the evaluator as possible.

C. Data Collection Methodology

1. Document Review

- Pre-field visit preparation includes extensive review of relevant documents
- During fieldwork, documentation will be verified and additional documents may be collected
- Documents may include:
 - CMEP documents and data
 - Baseline and endline survey reports, if available at the time of the evaluation
 - Project document and revisions,
 - Cooperative Agreement,
 - 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 (baseline studies, market assessment), 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 findings are coming from. The Contractor will share the question matrix with USDOL and Partners of the Americas.

3. Interviews with stakeholders

Informational interviews will be held with as many project stakeholders as possible. The evaluation team will solicit the opinions of children, community members in areas where awareness-raising activities occurred, parents of beneficiaries, teachers, government representatives, legal authorities, union and NGO officials, the action program implementers, and program staff 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 key informant interviews (KII) or focus groups. Technically, stakeholders are all those who have an interest in a project, for

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

- OCFT staff responsible for this evaluation and project prior to the commencement of the field work
- Implementers at all levels, including child labor monitors involved in assessing whether children have been effectively prevented or withdrawn from child labor situations
- Headquarters, Country Director, 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
- School teachers, assistants, school directors, education personnel
- Project beneficiaries (children withdrawn and prevented and their parents)
- International NGOs and multilateral agencies working in the area
- Other child protection and/or education organizations, committees and experts in the area
- U.S. Embassy staff member

4. Field Visits

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

D. Site Sampling, Data Collection Protocols, and Data Analysis Methods

1. Site Sampling:

Apart from interviewing key stakeholders in Asunción, the evaluator will visit Villarrica and from there he will carry out field visits during several days to a relevant sample of stakeholders in at least eight communities in two of the surrounding target districts of Borja, Iturbe, Mauricio José Troche, Paso Yobai, and the same Villarrica.

The selection of the field visits locations will be done, in consultation with the *Paraguay Okakuaa* project team, be based on the following criteria:

- Communities and/or schools where education and livelihood strategies successfully and unsuccessfully implemented from the perception of key stakeholders. The rationale is that extreme cases, at some extent, are more helpful than average cases for understanding how process worked and which results have been obtained
- Communities/ schools with a sizable number of beneficiaries, from where to carry out adequate sampling.
- Locations that have been identified as providing particular good practices or bringing out particularly challenging issues as identified in the TPRs
- Accessibility to the locations

Field visits to Districts/communities	
District	Communities
Villarrica	Rincón 1, San Miguel
Borja	Boquerón
Iturbe	Potrero
MJ Troche	Cerro Punta, Itacurubí
Paso Yobai	Mangrullo

2. **Data Collection Protocols:**

The evaluation will use qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. These will combine the following:

a. **Individual/ group interviews**

Strategically designed questions and open-ended discussion will be used to collect data through interviews and focus group discussions. The evaluator will carry out individual and/or interviews of staff/representatives of the following entities:

- *Paraguay Okakuaa* project staff
- CIRD staff
- ALDA's staff
- Dirección General de Protección de la Niñez y Adolescencia (DGPNA) and the Dirección General de Inspección y Fiscalización del Trabajo (DGIFT) at the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security (MTESS)
- *Secretaría Nacional de la Niñez y Adolescencia* (SNNA)
- Consejerías Municipales por los Derechos del Niño, la Niña y el Adolescente (CODENI) at target districts
- *Comisión Nacional de Prevención y Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil y Protección del Trabajado de los/as Adolescentes* (CONAETI)

- Ministry of Education and Sciences –Supervisión Villarrica
- *Servicio Nacional de Promoción Profesional (SNPP)*
- *Sistema Nacional de Formación y Capacitación Laboral's (SINAFOCAL)*
- Ministry of Agriculture staff (Dirección de Extensión Agrícola y Ganadera de Guairá)
- Corte Suprema de Justicia (CSJ)
- Private sector sugarcane producers and representative organizations (e.g. *Coordinadora Latinoamericana de Pequeños Productores de Comercio Justo (CLAC)*, PETROPAR, other local sugarcane producers)
- Community leaders in a sample of target communities
- School directors in a sample of target schools
- US Embassy in Asunción

Likewise, the evaluator will tele-interview POA HQ representatives (via Skype), USDOL staff and ENTRENA representatives.

b. Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

FGD will be developed on a sample of the following stakeholders and beneficiaries:

- Labor inspectors receiving training from/ with project support
- School principals and/or teachers trained with project support (Quantum Learning,
- Children and adolescents benefiting from educational services –EpC, 4H-Clubs, Supercamp groups).
- Families that received livelihood support
- Women-committee members that have received project support

c. Document Review

Evidence of the project's progress will be collected through review of relevant project documents, scholarly and media reports. The evaluator will review the following documents/ project-related information:

- Baseline study
- Awareness-raising materials for diverse target groups
- Curricula and training materials for MTESS, SNNA, CODENI and other institutions' staff (judicial facilitators, private sector members, unions), community leaders, etc.
- The *Análisis de Demandas y Necesidades (ADN)* study completed five target districts
- Livelihood-related training services curricula and materials

- *Ruta de intervención para la detección, registro y derivación y seguimiento de situaciones de trabajo infantil*
- Methodology description of Quantum Learning, *Espacios para Crecer*, 4H-Clubs and Supercamp groups
- Description of the Jornada Extendida program and its adaptation to project needs
- Ficha Hogar tool
- Drafts of policy and regulatory documents

d. Software developed with project support

The evaluator will review the following products:

- *CODENI's Registro del Adolescente Trabajador (RAT)* computer system
- Electronic case management system for the Labor Inspectorate
- MTESS' integrated data sharing system on WFCL
- DBMS (*Okakuaa* database in Access, adaptation of IMPAQ-generated software)

e. Review of project Database and Observation of project activities

Direct observation of project activities (e.g. trainings) will be carried out where possible.

The evaluation will assess the quality of the project's monitoring system and the way in which the project has incorporated modules from the new Direct Beneficiary Monitoring System (DBMS) piloted by USDOL/ IMPAQ in to their Management Information System. It will assess if/how did the grantee used the information generated by the monitoring system to periodically inform decision making and carry out programmatic adjustments. The evaluation report will contain an annex with updated information on the status of project CMEP indicators at the time of the interim evaluation. *Okakuaa* project staff will be asked to produce information on various project/CMEP indicators accordingly to the evaluation needs.

3. Data Analysis Methods:

The interim evaluation will address each of the project sub-components. The evaluation will assess project's progress towards its intended outcomes:

- Is implementation timely and on track to produce the expected outputs by end of LOP? Are the target population and the government stakeholders responding positively to the project's proposed strategy? If not, what else (or what more) should be done, or done in a different or increased way?

In order to ensure the credibility and validity of results, the information provided by stakeholders will be triangulated using multiple sources.

The evaluator will assess the stakeholders' and beneficiaries' satisfaction with the project, contrast the validity of project strategies used in the field, appraise the quality of services delivered, identify key strengths and weaknesses in project implementation and identify unexpected effects of project activities as well as other relevant features of project implementation.

In addition to questions related to project activities and outcomes, the evaluator will ask questions addressed to assess contextual (e.g. economic, social, political) factors affecting project implementation.

E. Ethical Considerations and Confidentiality

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

Efforts will be made to include parents' and children's voices and beneficiary participation generally, using child-sensitive approaches to interviewing children following the ILO-IPEC guidelines on research with children on the worst forms of child labor (<http://www.ilo.org/ipeinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=3026>) and UNICEF Principles for Ethical Reporting on Children (http://www.unicef.org/media/media_tools_guidelines.html).

F. Stakeholder Meeting

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

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

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

1. Presentation by the evaluator of the preliminary main findings
2. Feedback and questions from stakeholders on the findings
3. Opportunity for implementing partners not met to present their views on progress and challenges in their locality

4. If appropriate, Possible Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) exercise on the project's performance
5. Discussion of recommendations to improve the implementation and ensure sustainability. Consideration will be given to the value of distributing a feedback form for participants to nominate their "action priorities" for the remainder of the project.

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

G. Limitations

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

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

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

H. Timetable

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

Task	2018 Dates
SFS sends Draft TOR to USDOL and Partners	Tues, Feb 6
USDOL submits Evaluation purpose and questions to Contractor	Tues, Feb 13
Evaluator submits Methodology and Sampling Plan for TOR	Thurs, Feb 15
Partners submits Evaluation questions to Contractor	Fri, Feb 23
Partners submits list of stakeholders and suggested project sites for field visits to Contractor	Fri, Mar 2
Evaluator submits Draft itinerary	Wed, Mar 7
Logistics call - Discuss logistics and field itinerary	Fri, Mar 9
Finalize TOR	Tues, Mar 13
Finalize field itinerary and stakeholder list for workshop	Wed, Mar 14
Cable clearance information submitted to USDOL	Thurs, Mar 15
Evaluator submits Question Matrix to Contractor	Fri, Mar 16

Task	2018 Dates
SFS submits Question Matrix to USDOL and Partners	Mon, Mar 19
Interview call with USDOL	Wed, Mar 21
Interview call with PoA HQ	Thurs, Mar 22
Fieldwork	April 2-12
Stakeholder Meeting	Fri, Apr 13
Post-fieldwork debrief call	Wed, Apr 25
Draft report to Contractor for quality review	Thurs, May 3
Draft report to USDOL & Partners for 48 hour review	Wed, May 9
48 hr Comments due to Contractor	Fri, May 11
Revised report sent to Contractor	Mon, May 14
Revised report sent to USDOL and Partners for full 2-week review	Tues, May 15
USDOL and Partners stakeholder comments due	Tues, May 29
Revised report to Contractor for quality review	Fri, Jun 1
Revised report to USDOL and Partners	Tues, Jun 5
Final approval of report from USDOL	Tues, Jun 19
Final copy edited & 508 compliant report submitted to COR	Tues, Jul 3
Final edited report to Partners and stakeholders	Wed, Jul 4

IV. EXPECTED OUTPUTS/DELIVERABLES

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

- I. Table of Contents
- II. List of Acronyms
- III. Executive Summary (no more than five pages providing an overview of the evaluation, summary of main findings/lessons learned/good practices, and key recommendations)
- IV. Evaluation Objectives and Methodology
- V. Project Description
- VI. Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations
 - A. Findings – the facts, with supporting evidence. This should include answers to each of the evaluation questions, with supporting evidence included
 - B. Conclusions – interpretation of the facts, including criteria for judgments
 - C. Lessons Learned and Good Practices

- D. Key Recommendations - critical for successfully meeting project objectives
 - judgments on what changes need to be made for future programming
- VII. Annexes - including list of project indicators (see TOR Annex 1); documents reviewed; interviews/meetings/site visits; stakeholder workshop agenda and participants; TOR; etc.

The total length of the report should be approximately **30 pages** for the main report, excluding the executive summary and annexes. All drafts and annexes will be written in English.

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

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

V. EVALUATION MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Sistemas, Familias y Sociedad (SFS), the Contractor, will be responsible for Evaluation Management and Support.

SFS has contracted as Evaluator Mr. Dwight Ordóñez, a Peruvian evaluator based in Lima, with ample experience in the evaluation of child labor and workers' rights projects in African, Asian and Latin American countries. Mr. Ordóñez has carried out several evaluation assignments for USDOL-funded projects and ILO projects. He has worked six times on M&E assignments in Paraguay. In 2010, acting on behalf of ICF Macro, Mr. Ordóñez carried out field research funded by USDOL on child labor in the sugarcane industry in the districts of Colonia Independencia, Paso Yobai and Eugenio A. Garay in Guairá (*Methodology Paper: Developing Methods to Study Child Labor: A Case Study on the Sugarcane Industry in Paraguay*). This study was the basis for ICF Macro's USDOL-funded study on the same issue the following year: *Child Labor in the Sugarcane Industry in Paraguay* (2012).

SFS will provide logistical and administrative support to the evaluator, including travel arrangements (e.g. plane and hotel reservations, purchasing plane tickets, providing *per diem*) and all materials needed. SFS will also be responsible for providing the management and technical oversight necessary, including quality reviews of all deliverables, to ensure completion of the evaluation milestones and adherence to technical standards as well as the clarity and comprehensiveness of the evaluation report.

ANNEX C: List of Stakeholders Interviewed

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ANNEX D: Schedule of Fieldwork Activities

DAY/Time	Sun 1 April	Mon 2	Tue 3	Wed 4	Thu 5	Fri 6	Sat 7
AM	<i>Evaluator arrives to Paraguay</i>	ASUNCION 8:30 Meeting with Paraguay Okakuaa project staff	ASUNCION 7:45 Corte Suprema de Justicia 9:00 DGPNA at MTESS 10:30 DGIFT at MTESS 12 pm FGD with labor inspectors	ASUNCION 9:00 pm CONAETI 11:30 Ministro MTESS	VILLARRICA DISTRICT 7:30 Ministerio de Educación y Ciencias – Coordinación Departamental Villarrica Community of Rincón 1 9:00 FGD with children benefitting from educational services (EpC, Supercamps) 10:00 Interview with teachers trained in Quantum Learning Methodology	BORJA DISTRICT Community of Boquerón 7:30 Interview with teachers trained in Quantum Learning Methodology 9:00 am Interview with local CODENI staff VILLARRICA DISTRICT 11:00 am Interview with local CODENI staff	VILLARRICA DISTRICT Community of San Miguel 8:00 FGD with children benefitting from educational services (4-H clubs) BORJA DISTRICT Community of Boquerón 10:30 FGD with children benefitting from educational services (4-H clubs)
PM		14:00 ALDA project staff 16:00 CIRD project staff	14:00 SNNA 15:30 US Embassy – Labor Attaché	14:00: MEC – Dirección de Currriculum 15:30: MEC – Coord. Pedagógica <i>17:00 Evaluator travels to Villarrica</i>	VILLARRICA DISTRICT 14:00 CLAC Community of Rincón 1 17:30 FGD with beneficiaries of lifeskills groups	VILLARRICA DISTRICT 15:30 SNPP – Regional Natalicio Talavera 17:00 Interview with ALDA facilitators	PASO YOBAI DISTRICT Community of Mangrullo 15:30 FGD with beneficiaries of lifeskills groups

DAY/Time	Sun 8	Mon 9	Tue 10	Wed 11	Thu 12	Fri 13	Sat 14
AM	Free	<p>BORJA DISTRICT Community of Boquerón 9:00 FGD with children benefitting from EpC</p> <p>ITURBE DISTRICT Community of Potrero 11:30 FGD with children benefitting from EpC</p>	<p>MJ TROCHE DISTRICT Community of Cerro Punta 8:30 am Interview with local CODENI staff</p> <p>9:30 am FGD with children benefitting from educational services (EpC)</p>	<p>ITURBE DISTRICT 9:30 Interview with City Mayor</p>	Preparation of Stakeholders Meeting presentation	9am – 1 pm Stakeholders’ Meeting	<i>Evaluator leaves Paraguay</i>
PM	Free	<p>MJ TROCHE DISTRICT Community of Itacurubí 14:30 FGD with beneficiaries of lifeskills groups</p> <p>VILLARRICA DISTRICT 17:00 Interview with community promoters trained in the Farmer to Farmer Program</p>	<p>VILLARRICA DISTRICT 13:30 MTESS – Oficina Regional DGIF 14:30 Ministerio de Agricultura – Dir. de Extensión Agrícola y Ganadera de Guairá</p>	<i>11:30 Evaluator travels back to Asunción.</i>	Preparation of Stakeholders Meeting presentation		
Evaluator sleeps at:	Villarrica	Villarrica	Villarrica	Asunción	Asunción	Asunción	

ANNEX E: Participants in Stakeholder Meeting – April 13, 2018

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