



International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)



International  
Labour  
Office

## ***IPEC Evaluation***

**Building the knowledge base on the  
design and implementation of impact  
evaluation of child labour interventions  
(Mid-term evaluation)**

***and***

**Impact assessment framework: Further  
development and follow-up to Tracer and  
Tracking Methodologies (Final evaluation)**

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**A combined independent mid-term and final evaluation by a team of  
external consultants**

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**This document has not been professionally edited.**

## NOTE ON THE EVALUATION PROCESS AND REPORT

This independent evaluation was managed by ILO-IPEC's Evaluation and Impact Assessment section (EIA) (formerly the Design, Evaluation and Documentation section) following a consultative and participatory approach. EIA has ensured that all major stakeholders were consulted and informed throughout the evaluation and that the evaluation was carried out to highest degree of credibility and independence and in line with established evaluation standards.

The evaluation was carried out by external evaluation consultant<sup>1</sup>. The Geneva mission took place in June 2011. The opinions and recommendations included in this report are those of the authors and as such serve as an important contribution to learning and planning without necessarily constituting the perspective of the ILO or any other organization involved in the project.

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Background and overall approach to impact evaluation**

This report presents the final evaluation of the Impact Assessment Framework Project: Further Development and Follow Up to Tracer Studies and Tracking Methodologies (IAF project) and the mid-term evaluation of the project: Building the Knowledge Base on the Design and Implementation of Child Labour Interventions” (UCW Impact Evaluation IE project). The primary purpose of this evaluation is to be strategic and forward looking in nature, looking at these two projects in combination and identifying implications for follow up. The theme and approaches of these two projects are complementary with intended synergy between them as part of the overall ILO-IPEC work with US Department of Labor (USDOL) on impact assessment and impact evaluation.

The term “impact evaluation” has been defined by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and by NONIE (the Network of Networks on Impact Evaluation) to refer to specific types of evaluations that are primarily concerned with assessing final results of interventions, which in the case of ILO-IPEC refers to changes in child labour (CL), and particularly its worst forms. The OECD/DAC and NONIE, as well as the international evaluation literature, emphasise that there is not “a single set of analytical methods that should be used above all others in all situations.”

IPEC’s approach to impact assessment (IA)/impact evaluation (IE) is generally consistent with the above international consensus on the meaning of IE. IPEC, however, is the only organisation that I am aware of that attempts to differentiate between IA and IE, using the former to refer to assessment of impact or changes in a given context such as country or sector attributed to a range of interventions and the latter to refer to evaluation of a single intervention, where so far the approaches have been specifically using “statistically robust” methods. As statements above suggest, this contrasts with the general recognition that there is not one right method that should be used for IE in all cases. Thus, there is perhaps little point to maintain this distinction unless the distinction is further clarified and communicated.

IPEC’s overall IA strategy underlying these two projects recognises that CL is a complex phenomenon arising through multiple factors and that needs to be addressed through a variety of approaches in combination, including those aimed at the enabling environment as well as those provide directly to children, families, and communities. The Impact Assessment Toolkit (IA Toolkit) representing the major output of the IA Framework project in particular and to which work undertaken by the UCW project constitutes a significant contribution, represents the most comprehensive model within the UN system that provides for a range of different types of evaluation approaches at different levels and that collectively fully addresses all aspects of the issue.

### **The IAF Project**

The major achievement of the IAF project was the creation of an IA toolkit, with a variety of tools that can be used, by IPEC and by its partners, to assess the impact of a wide variety of CL interventions, including those aimed at the enabling environment (such as government policy) as well as at children and families. Full work on the project started late, due to the decision to time y the recruitment of a replacement technical officer when it was vacant in order to bring implementation of the project more in parallel with the UCW IE project, given the intended complementarities between the projects. While the project appeared to be on track to accomplish its major outputs, the decision on the timing of the full start meant

that work on most of the IAF project components were carried out in a compressed time frame and was still under way during the course of this final evaluation.

The IA toolkit contains a variety of tools that can be grouped under the following categories:

- Planning for impact.
- Design/planning for IA.
- Expanded M&E to include a component on IA/IE (e.g. Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation System [CMES]; Expanded Final Evaluations [EFE]).
- Indirect impact (e.g. identifying policy impact, National Action Plans).
- Direct impact (e.g. tracer studies, UCW's statistically robust counterfactual impact evaluation designs).

The *tracer studies*, using a retrospective approach to trace changes in children over time, represent a major component of the project. Six tracer studies were undertaken, building upon the experiences of earlier pilot approaches supported by IPEC. These studies collectively used a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches, including an anthropological life transition study. The approach to the tracer studies, involving long-term follow up of the same individuals, represents an unusual, path-setting approach with the potential to provide very valuable data that cannot readily be obtained through other means. The combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches in particular can provide a means of understanding the reasons for changes in the life conditions of children.

Changes to various aspects of *the enabling environment*, such as government policies and legislation, are likely to have a far greater influence on the extent of CL than specific projects directed explicitly at children, which invariably can only influence the behaviour and outcomes of a limited number of people. The toolkit includes two tools with respect to the assessment of impact of indirect interventions, including guidelines for impact assessment of the enabling environment, and a framework for evaluating national action plans. This is a critically important and somewhat neglected area that could warrant even further attention in the future.

The *Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation System (CMES)* represents an approach for expanding the range of traditional M&E activities. The CMES approach was conceptualised and initially developed and implemented for USDOL funded FY2010 IPEC implemented projects, and includes IE of selected interventions supported and implemented by the thus far has been used primarily with the UCW IE project, providing a means of coordination across the IAF project and the UCW IE project and in particular a means of integrating statistically robust impact evaluation with other monitoring and evaluation activities. This provides essential information, in particular about programme activities, which is essential for meaningful IE, and can serve as a framework and model for an integrated approach to M&E, facilitating the combination of multiple methods and look more specifically at the interaction and impact of multiple interventions happening simultaneously.

### **The UCW Impact Evaluation Project**

This is a research project directed towards providing knowledge from robust empirical methods about factors contributing to decreases in CL. The project has three major components:

- Modular evaluations, where UCW supports the inclusion of CL considerations within broader IEs carried out by other organisations.

- Detailed design of IEs of three IPEC projects using counterfactual designs.
- Creation of a web-based Knowledge Centre with information about IE results and methods.

The *modular evaluations*, which probably could benefit from a somewhat different moniker, have involved integrating CL modules within four broader IEs in relevant social policy areas in different parts of the world, thus far all sponsored by the World Bank. This represents a very cost-effective means of enabling IEs to take CL considerations into account, and is considerably less expensive than stand-alone evaluations. This approach also can have additional spinoffs such as increasing interest and awareness of CL considerations within broader social policy areas and within other organisations. Embedding CL considerations as part of evaluations of broad policy undertakings also opens the potential of exploring how CL can be influenced by wider social policy initiatives.

*Project impact evaluations* represent the core component of the UCW project. The scope of the current project provides for the design of impact evaluations of three child labour projects, with actual implementation of the research expected to follow, with implementation of baseline surveys covered by funding in UCW IE project and in the individual projects for which IE of selected interventions are done, and with the follow-up or end-line survey subject to additional funding to be identified by USDOL. Discussions with governments and other key stakeholders are well advanced in El Salvador and in the Cocoa Project (Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire) where impact evaluations are also currently planned for Ghana and Thailand. However, for reasons completely beyond the control of the UCW IE project in Thailand (), it is not yet clear what may be possible to undertake in this setting. This reflects the fact that CMES and IE is integral to projects and therefore needs to follow the project implementation process – i.e. CMES and IE cannot drive the projects. The implementation of the UCW IE project is then affected by a range of matters, including the institutional and political context in which the project operates into which the IE is inserted.

Planning for the project impact evaluations of selected interventions has been undertaken in close cooperation with the IAF project (CMES consultant). The UCW IE project has shown itself to be very flexible, within the constraints of using some form of counterfactual design, to adjust its research approach to the situation and to the interests of key stakeholders. It has demonstrated its openness to engage with stakeholders as necessary in order to develop buy-in and support for the research, including agreement upon how the programme intervention itself would be modified as need be. A key learning from this experience is that this process of negotiation and design is much more complex and time consuming than anticipated.

The other major output of the project concerns creation of a *web-based Knowledge Centre*, to consist, at least initially, of two main components: an inventory of 40-60 impact evaluations using a Randomised Control Trial (RCT) or quasi-experimental design and mostly carried out by the World Bank; and a review paper, summarising findings from across the various studies. The Knowledge Centre, along with the inventory of studies, was expected to be up and running by about mid-July 2011, with the review paper planned for September. It is expected that these outputs would be updated over time.

These two elements may constitute significant outcomes. To date, however, they appear somewhat more limited than what was initially envisioned in the Project Document, which stated that the Knowledge Centre would also have appropriate links to other sources of information on CL. This might include, for example, methods and information produced by the IAF project. UCW has indicated very clearly that its own area of expertise is restricted to statistically robust research rather than to evaluation, although it is not opposed to links to other forms of information about the effectiveness of CL. With nearly 18 months left for the project to run, there is still plenty of time to consider ways in which other forms of information, both about IA methods and results can be added or linked to the Knowledge Centre.

Overall, much of what has been done thus far in this project seems to be of very high quality. The project appears to be very much on target to achieve its objectives, as revised. The particular research approach taken by this project to IE complements the approaches within the IAF project, in particular through its liaison with the CMES, and adds an important methodology to the toolkit. Its openness to engage as necessary with stakeholders and to adapt its approaches as necessary also appears to be exemplary. UCW has considerable standing within the research community and with other agencies, along with a history of inter-agency cooperation. This all contributes to the overall credibility of IA/IE work at IPEC.

Nevertheless, statistically robust counterfactual research designs, as with all other methodological approaches, have strengths and limitations. This approach in particular is very costly, in terms of financial and time requirements and frequent restrictions on how programmes can be implemented. While there is a definite place for such counterfactual research designs as part of an IA/IE toolkit, they will only be applicable in a limited number of situations. It would be helpful for the UCW IE project to identify those circumstances where such a methodological approach could provide evidence that would warrant the associated costs and constraints.

### **Synergies between the two projects and with other parts of ILO-IPEC**

The two projects were intended to be complementary, rather than to operate as two fully discrete, separate endeavours. As has already been identified, there are a number of good examples of this taking place, in particular with the CMES that is essential to both projects. Indeed, the UCW Director has expressed concern about how this form of necessary support would continue following the conclusion of the IAF project. There are various examples of how the two projects collectively have been complementary and build upon the respective strengths of both UCW and ILO-IPEC.

The Project Document had indicated that a Project Coordinating Committee (PCC) and a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) would be formed, to provide strategic oversight and guidance and specialist input regarding the technical components of the project. To date, however, these mechanisms have not been fully activated (two face to face meetings of the PCC took place – one in Geneva and one in Washington DC as part of one of two meetings of the TAG)<sup>2</sup>, probably for administrative convenience, although it appears that they are still very much needed and, in retrospect, if fully used, might have been able to facilitate greater coordination with the IAF project for the PCC, and perhaps support and advice regarding implementation at the country/community level and other technical issues for the TAG. For example, in order to support its core activity of the project impact evaluations that required more effort than originally anticipated, the Project discontinued original plans for the proposed evaluability framework and for some capacity development activities, both of which were expected to overlap with the IAF project. A formal mechanism could also have provided for fuller discussion and coordination on some other activities as well.

The two projects collectively have succeeded in arranging with IPEC's Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme for Child Labour (SIMPOC) to make modifications to the baselines surveys, at least in El Salvador, so that they can be useful for impact evaluation. There may be further opportunities for greater coordination between IPEC's work on evaluation and the research activities undertaken by the IPEC Policy and Research Unit. There may also be opportunities for greater coordination between IPEC's work on IA with other parts of ILO. IPEC is recognised as being far ahead of other parts of ILO with respect to IA and thus much of the joint engagement at the moment would involve taking advantage of IPEC's leadership in this area, as well as perhaps exploring the potential for joint work on IA that might include CL and other programme areas within ILO.

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<sup>2</sup> As reported in UCW IE project work plans and Technical Progress Reports (TPRs), two PCC and two TAG meetings were held (PCC: December 8, 2008 and April 2009; and TAG: April 7, 2009 and October 12, 2010)

Perhaps most importantly, there appears to be opportunity for IPEC management and staff to become more familiar with the on-going work on IA, and to consider more explicitly implications of this work for IPEC's policies and implications, and how it can engage and support its partners.

### **Strategic implications for follow up**

This evaluation was expected to take a strategic approach, to consider not just what the two projects could be expected to achieve by their respective completion dates, but also to identify strategic implications arising for future related work. Following is a summary of the major strategic implications that have been identified and that are discussed in more detail in the body of this report.

1. *Continue with the current impact assessment strategy.* The most important finding of this evaluation is that IPEC's overall approach to impact assessment, taking into account the complementarities of the two projects, represents ambitious, leading edge work, beyond anything similar within the UN system that I am unaware of. But by design, the focus of both projects was limited to *initial* development of a range of tools and approaches. *Thus the most important strategic implication arising from this evaluation concerns the need to continue, and to build upon, the work represented by these two projects.*
2. *Engage and support partners in undertaking IA.* The intention of the IA toolkit is to enable countries and other partners to undertake IA themselves. Thus far, by design, there was limited involvement of the intended users of these tools. Thus an essential follow-up step is for ILO-IPEC to engage with its partners to develop support and buy-in to IA.
3. *Facilitate/support use of the tools that have been developed.* The IAF project is resulting in the creation of an impressive number of tools. The next step is for these to be tried out and applied, by IPEC itself as well as by interested partners.
4. *Provide guidance for how to use the evaluation toolkit and its tools.* While the collection of tools in the toolkit represents a useful and necessary first step, there now is a need to provide guidance for how and when various tools can be applied. The need for this was recognised by the IAF project and represents the primary objective of the proposed evaluability framework. This represents an essential resource, which upon reflection might be positioned somewhat differently than originally conceived and led by IPEC's Design, Evaluation and Documentation (DED) section rather than by UCW.
5. *Keep it simple – but not simplistic.* Feedback from participants attending the Impact Assessment Expert Meeting organised by IPEC in June 2011 as part of this project, as well as from others, strongly indicates that guidance and tools for IA should be kept as simple as possible. The dilemma is that while there appears to be a demand for simple tools and simple guidelines without overwhelming people with too many options, the reality is that one size does not fit all. There are a variety of related strategies that perhaps could be incorporated in the guidance that might be able to help address the dilemma of providing simple but not simplistic guidance.
6. *Provide for various forms of capacity development – plus technical support.* If partners in the future are to be expected to undertake and to use IA activities on their own, there will be a need to support the creation of more expertise in this area. Work in this regard can represent an important follow up to both the IAF and the UCW projects.
7. *Review and update the toolkit.* While the IA toolkit represents a valuable resource, the tools that have been developed are still mainly in draft form and will need to be tested, and likely revised to at least some extent. The toolkit should also be viewed as a living resource, and other tools may also be required. In particular, participants at the Expert Meeting observed that the current mix of tools is skewed towards evaluation of direct interventions/projects, and that there



is a need to rebalance this somewhat with more attention to assessing the impact of the spectrum of enabling environment interventions.

8. *Expand the tracer study methodology.* IPEC's work in this area is ground-breaking, with this methodology representing a rare application of a longitudinal (or more technically for tracer studies, a retrospective) approach to follow what actually happens to a cohort of individuals over time. It should now be possible to build upon IPEC's experiences to date to support future tracer studies that combine quantitative and qualitative approaches as well as somewhat simpler approaches that can be applied more easily and more frequently.
9. *Expanding the knowledge base of child labour.* IPEC portrays itself as a facilitator of knowledge on CL. One way of fulfilling this role is to expand upon the work to date on the Knowledge Centre to include knowledge from other sources besides the scientific literature, that for example may include IPEC's evaluations, and also good practices based upon what IPEC has been able to learn from its experiences over the years as well as those of its partners.

## Recommendations

The body of the report presents a number of recommendations under the following categories, mainly with respect to next steps such as identified above.

### *In general for ILO-IPEC*

- ILO-IPEC should acknowledge the ground-breaking work represented by the multi-dimensional and multi-method approach to IA developed collectively by these two projects, but at the same time recognise that both projects, by design, have involved just initial steps. ILO-IPEC should seek funding to enable necessary follow-up activities.
- ILO-IPEC management should recognise IA as a strategic tool to aid in improving the effectiveness of its own work as well as that of its partners, and should periodically consider implications of impact assessment work undertaken to date.

### *For the remainder of the UCW IE project*

- The project should maintain its current strategy, given the quality of its work and that it generally is on track to achieve its identified outputs. But it should begin looking immediately for funding support in order to be able to carry through with its commitments to complete the impact evaluations started through this project.
- The Project Coordinating Committee and the Technical Advisory Group should be activated. Using these mechanisms, the Project should discuss ways in which it may still be possible to support the original objectives of the proposed evaluability framework, as well as how the Knowledge Centre could be expanded during the remainder of the project to address its initial objectives to include a broader range of sources of information.
- The project should identify capacity development implications so that in-country expertise for future IE activities can be maximised. It should document what has been learned from the process of undertaking this project, in particular the steps and time requirements needed to gain necessary stakeholder buy-in and support, and it should identify those situations where a counterfactual research design would be most appropriate and would justify the generally high cost and time demands for this approach.

*Follow up to the IAF project*

- IPEC should continue with the current IA strategy, seeking funding and other forms of support to be able to follow up the initial work undertaken through this project. A priority for follow up should be to engage stakeholders in actively applying the toolkit, providing appropriate guidance and technical support. It should also work together with UCW in expanding the sources of information included in the Knowledge Centre.
- SIMPOC, in consultation with DED, should continue the preliminary work starting in Latin America in order to make future baseline surveys applicable for IA purposes.
- IPEC/DED should make greater effort to increase awareness about the value of IA, with IPEC staff (HQ and field), with key partners, and as applicable with other parts of ILO. It should consult with the central ILO evaluation unit (ILO/EVAL) about how IPEC's experiences with IA approaches might be adapted for other ILO areas, as well as the potential for future joint work.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background and purpose

1. The Impact Assessment Framework Project: Further Development and Follow Up to Tracer Studies and Tracking Methodologies (IAF) (GL/06/51/USA) was started on 30 September 2006 and, taking into account a five-month no-cost extension, will be finishing August 2011. This project has been managed by the Design, Evaluation and Documentation section (DED) of ILO-IPEC. The project: Building the Knowledge Base on the Design and Implementation of Child Labour Interventions (UCW IE project) (GL/08/58/USA) started 30 September 2008 and is expected to finish 31 December 2012. This project is being managed by the Understanding Children's Work Programme based in Rome, although funding and reporting is through ILO-IPEC. Both projects have been funded by the United States Department of Labour (USDOL) as ILO-IPEC implemented projects within the work of ILO-IPEC on impact assessment and impact evaluation, technically backstopped by DED
2. The theme and approaches of both projects are complementary and therefore a strong synergy between the two projects has been expected. For this reason, the final evaluation of the IAF project and the mid-term evaluation of the UCW IE project have been merged into a common exercise. It is expected that the evaluation will provide lessons about how the UCW could benefit from the IAF project in its remaining period until December 2012 and how DED can propose leverage from both projects regarding promoting impact evaluation of Child Labour (CL) for better contribution to IPEC and to the Global Action Plan on Child Labour. More specifically, it is expected that this evaluation can help provide guidance with respect to IPEC's future directions regarding impact assessment (IA)/impact evaluation (IE).
3. In both cases, the titles do not do full justice to these projects. This is reflected in part in approved project revisions. As discussed later, the flexibility of both projects in being able to go beyond this represents a strength.
4. The Terms of Reference (Annex 1) identifies the main purposes of this evaluation as follows:
  - Determine to what extent the IAF project has achieved its stated objectives and how and why they have been/have not been achieved; and to what extent the UCW IE Project is well oriented to achieve its objectives (i.e. how and why).
  - Assess the implementation effectiveness of the Projects' management.
  - Assess the IAF and UCW IE projects' synergies in fulfilling complementary objectives, and of the UCW IE Project to follow-up on achievements and learning from the IAF project
  - Reflect on the level of applicability of the completed and under development projects' products (i.e. response to stakeholder needs).
  - Provide recommendations on how to build on the achievements of the projects to continue strengthening the strategy of IPEC on Impact Assessment, including the role of technical specialists such as DED and ownership by IPEC staff and ILO constituents.
  - Identify and document lessons learned and good practices to be used further in CL projects and programmes, including in projects and initiatives on developing, implementing and supporting impact assessment and related work.

5. The TOR also suggests some more specific questions that the evaluation should address as applicable and possible.
6. While this evaluation is expected to comment upon the status and actual/expected achievements of the two projects, its primary purpose is not on monitoring compliance with specific outputs that are addressed in the Technical Progress Reports. Rather, as the terms of reference suggests, and reinforced through interviews with key stakeholders reinforce, this evaluation is expected to be mainly strategic and forward looking in nature. It is expected to help suggest directions for future activities related to impact assessment by IPEC. In this respect, the evaluation takes into account the extent to which these projects build upon and link with other areas and previously related work within ILO-IPEC.

## **1.2 Methodology**

### **1.2.1 Evaluation approach and methods**

7. This evaluation in essence took the form of an expert review by a senior consultant familiar with the child labour area, with ILO-IPEC, and with the impact evaluation areas in general. It made use of three basic means of data gathering:
  - Review of relevant documentation (Annex 2), e.g.:
    - Project Documents, internal reviews and documentation of project revisions, progress reports, examples of reports of various activities, descriptions of proposed deliverables as well as some examples, where available, of work in progress, various presentations, etc.
    - Some of this documentation was reviewed prior to a data-gathering mission to Geneva and interviews (face-to-face and telephone interviews). Other relevant documents were identified and requested in the course of interviews, e.g. in some cases to provide supporting documentation for verbal statements of work that has been undertaken.
    - It was not the intent of this evaluation to repeat what has already been done. In particular, it was not the intent of this evaluation to look specifically at all possible outputs that have already been documented in monitoring/progress reports, but to take this information into consideration as applicable
  - Interviews with a range of stakeholders (Annex 3), e.g.:
    - IPEC staff involved in work on the IAF Project, UCW staff involved in its Project, other IPEC HQ staff covering a variety of perspectives, selective field staff, EVAL, USDOL, and consultants working on key Project outcomes.
    - Most interviews took place during a mission to Geneva (week of 6 June), with additional telephone interviews as necessary following this mission.<sup>3</sup>
    - The approach to the interviews involved open-ended questioning by an experienced evaluator. Each interview, and the specific topics and questions to be discussed, was adapted to address the particular experience, position, and perspectives of each respondent, and in turn evolved in response to initial comments. As such, formal interview guides were not required for this exercise.

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<sup>3</sup> The initial plan was also to undertake a visit to UCW HQ in Rome. At the suggestion of the UCW Project Director, this was changed to a telephone interview with the Director and two other key staff.

- Following are the general types of questions explored in interviews:
    - Familiarity with the two projects.
    - Understanding of the purposes of the two projects including how these are viewed, e.g.: strengths/limitations; major accomplishments/ challenges, including perceived good practices.
    - How these projects (and impact evaluation in general) are viewed, or likely to be viewed, by countries and other partners.
    - How these projects are viewed by other parts of ILO (e.g. EVAL) and other parts of IPEC.
    - Probes in particular around the three main planned outputs: the toolkit, evaluability assessment, the planned web-based knowledge centre.
    - Complementarities with other related approaches.
    - Complementarities and coordination between the two projects.
    - Considerations with respect to project management and use of findings and tools of the projects.
    - What would make IA approaches most likely to be used? What forms of support might be required?
    - Potential next steps.
  - In many cases, initial interviews were followed up by e-mail/telephone calls with subsequent questions and/or requests for additional information and documentation.
  - The Expert Meeting (29-30 June 2011) and the Stakeholder Meeting (1 July)
    - The Expert Meeting involved a series of presentations by some people already interviewed as well as a number of others. These confirmed, and in some cases, added to information already taken into account by this evaluation. Subsequent side discussions also added useful information for the evaluation.
    - These two meetings provided an opportunity for validation of some of the tentative findings and conclusions of the evaluation, and discussion about implications and potential recommendations. To ensure the independence of the evaluation, the independent evaluator took into account but was not bound by this input in presenting the findings, conclusions, and recommendations in this report.
8. Triangulation came through cross-checking information from various sources, e.g. various forms of documentation and interviews, and also looking for consistency (and/or reasons for different perspectives) among viewpoints of different types of stakeholders. The Expert Meeting also provided opportunities to consider and to reconcile any variations in viewpoints among different stakeholders.

### **1.2.2 Values and constraints**

9. **Values.** This evaluation, including its findings, conclusions and recommendations, represents to the highest extent possible, an independent, impartial, data-based exercise. Nevertheless, as discussed at the Expert Meeting, all objective researchers and evaluations also bring to any evaluation certain values and beliefs. Following are some additional one that this evaluator would like to put forward:
- Opposition to child labour and particularly its worst forms (WFCL).
  - Accordingly, in support of interventions against CL and the WFCL – provided that they try to be effective and that one learns from what works well as well as from what does not.

- Child labour is a complex phenomenon, invariably resulting from multiple factors, and consequently interventions of various forms generally are needed to address it.
  - There is potential for evaluation, including IA/IE, to be useful, for example in helping to suggest how interventions can be improved and to suggest other possible strategies and approaches.
  - But the value of evaluation, including IA/IE is not automatic, and in some cases it can even do harm. Its major purpose is be used in some way. For this, it needs to be as practical and useful as possible, with academic “perfection”) of secondary importance.
  - Given the complexity of child labour, invariably a multi-faceted approach to impact assessment will be needed, recognising that *all* evaluation methods have strengths and limitations
10. The evaluator has had previous involvement with IPEC, including assisting in 2002-2004 with some early work on a preliminary impact assessment framework, as well as more recently, such as an evaluation of the tracking/tracer pilot project in 2004 and a mid-term review of the IPEC Knowledge Project in 2008. It was thought that this familiarity with the child labour area, with ILO-IPEC and with previously related work in evaluation, along with a particular expertise in the impact assessment area would add to the strategic value of this evaluation. The evaluator has had no involvement with either of these projects that are subject to this current evaluation.
11. **Constraints/limitations.** This evaluation was, of necessity, carried out in a very condensed time period. While it was possible to conduct a limited number of interviews with IPEC staff based in the field, it was beyond the scope of this evaluation to undertake field visits, including consultation with IPEC stakeholders. Outputs of both projects were mainly work-in-progress at the time of the data gathering stage of the evaluation. Thus it was not possible to review final products.

## 2. What is impact Evaluation? To what extent is this reflected in the approach to these two projects?

### 2.1 What is meant by “impact evaluation”?

12. The OECD/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC), and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) define “impacts” as follows:

*“Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.”*

13. Annex 4 present the document prepared by the OECD/DAC Evaluation Network (EvalNet): *“Evaluating Impacts – An Overview”*. This document also draws from material produced by NONIE.<sup>4</sup> Following are some key quotes from this brief overview that have pertinence to IPEC’s approach to IE.

- The term **impact evaluation** is used to indicate specific types of evaluations that are primarily concerned with final results of interventions (programs, projects, policy measures, reforms) on the welfare of communities, households, and individuals. Impact evaluation is one tool within the larger toolkit of monitoring and evaluation, including broad program evaluations, process evaluations, ex ante studies, thematic evaluations, participatory assessments, etc. (NONIE Guidance, 2009).
- Impact evaluations are interested in effects caused by a development intervention, or, to use evaluation language, in attribution. This means going beyond describing what has happened to look at causality. Evaluating impact will, therefore, often require a counterfactual, or an assessment of the effects the development intervention has had, compared to what would have happened had the intervention not taken place.
- However, interest in attributing results does not mean that a single set of analytical methods should be used above all others in all situations. In fact, the internationally agree NONIE Guidance on Impact Evaluation underlines that no single method is best for addressing the variety of evaluation questions and aspects that might be part of impact evaluations. Particular methods or perspectives complement each other in providing a more complete “picture” of impact. The most appropriate and useful methodology should be selected based on the specific questions or objectives of a given evaluation (as described in the DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation, 2010).<sup>5</sup>

14. The above international consensus on the meaning of IE and how it should be approached can be summarised as follows:

- IE is concerned in some way with final results.
- Attribution in some form is a basic aspect of IE.
- No single method is best.
- Mixed methods can provide a more complete picture of impact.

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<sup>4</sup> Network of Networks on Impact Evaluation, that includes: UNEG, DAC/EvalNet, The Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG, representing multilateral development banks), and the International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE, representing civil society/evaluation organisations of all forms around the world).

15. There is, however, an alternative definition of IE, currently advocated in particular by a number of economists that defines impact as the difference in the indicator of interest (Y) with the intervention (Y1) and without the intervention (Y0), with impact evaluation employing a specific methodological approach to ascertain this. There does seem to be more potential for greater use of this approach with respect to some CL interventions. Nevertheless, even strong advocates of this approach acknowledge that it can only be applied to a small minority of development interventions<sup>5</sup>, and even then, a mixed method approach is preferable.

## 2.2 Some implications for IPEC

16. The above considerations are largely reflected in how IPEC has approached IA/IE. For example, IA/IE is recognised as just one type evaluation that needs to be connected with other forms of evaluation, rather than as something very different in nature and that should be treated in isolation. As discussed later, the Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation System (CMES) represents a concrete step of integration.
17. IPEC has defined the purpose of impact assessment with respect to child labour as follows:

*“To examine to what extent the ultimate objective —the progressive elimination of child labour, with emphasis on the urgent elimination of the worst forms of child labour – has been achieved in the areas of impact as a result of specific interventions.”*
18. This is consistent with the focus of IE on the final results of interventions, as in the above definition.
19. Also, in common with the above perspective, IPEC’s approach recognises that the most appropriate method of IA/IE will depend upon the particular question, type of intervention (e.g. policy or project level), context, available resources, and other factors. Thus a range of potential methods needs to be considered, with no particular methodology viewed a priori as superior. Participants at the Expert Meeting, including the Head of DED and the Director of UCW, endorsed this perspective.
20. IPEC, however, is the only organisation that attempts to differentiate between IA and IE, using the former to refer to assessment of impact or changes in a given context such as country or sector attributed to a range of interventions and the latter to refer to evaluation or determination of the impact of a single intervention, where so far the approaches have been specifically using “statistically robust” methods the latter to refer to approaches specifically using “statistically robust” methods such as those undertaken by UCW/UCW IE, with IA used to refer to other approaches. As suggested above, this is an artificial distinction, with IA/IE being used synonymously, with “IE” the current preferred moniker. In addition, many IPEC staff and others have some difficulty distinguishing between the two projects and the fine distinctions between IA and IE.
21. It is suggested that IPEC revise its own terminology to reflect how IE is generally viewed and defined elsewhere. In the balance of this report, the IA or IE is generally used to mean the same thing.

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<sup>5</sup> E.g. the Director of the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3IE) has acknowledged that RCT and related designs can only be applied appropriately in about 5% of development interventions. Also, see Forss, K. and Bandstein, Sara. (2008). 'Evidence-based Evaluation of Development Cooperation: Possible? Feasible, Desirable?' *IDS Bulletin*, Vol 39, No 1. This empirical study analysing evaluations of major donors on the OECD/DAC DERE database found much the same thing.



### 3. General observations regarding the approach to IA at IPEC

#### 3.1 The child labour context<sup>6</sup>

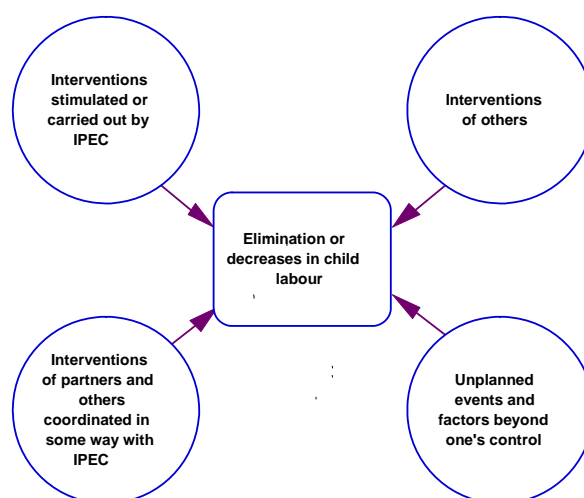
22. The following box summarises some key characteristics of child labour interventions carried out by IPEC that have major implications how the assessment of impact needs to be carried out.
23. Most IPEC interventions work on a number of different areas simultaneously. Following are some examples (note that this is not a complete list, and the actual activities involved will vary widely from situation to situation):

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poverty reduction.</li> <li>• Legislation and policy development.</li> <li>• Mainstreaming of child labour into social policies.</li> <li>• Institutional strengthening.</li> <li>• Mobilizing social organizations.</li> <li>• Sensitising public opinion (of the general population, as well as of specific audiences).</li> <li>• Macro-economic performance considerations.</li> <li>• Education.</li> <li>• Improving working conditions, including use of effective monitoring systems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressing the demand among employers for child labour.</li> <li>• Direct action with children at risk of child labour or currently involved in child labour, especially the worst forms.</li> <li>• Direct action with families, e.g. addressing economic, cultural and attitudinal barriers that result in child labour.</li> <li>• A range of activities designed to prevent child labour.</li> </ul>
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#### Some Characteristics of IPEC's CL Interventions

- Multi-dimensional, involving simultaneous action on several fronts.
- Includes both indirect actions on the enabling environment as well as direct actions with children and families.
- Long term in nature.
- Involves the participation of partners and others.
- Usually play a catalytic role, engaging all sectors of society, increasingly with capacity building components.
- Success dependent to a large extent upon context and on actions of others and factors beyond the direct control of the project or programme.
- Impact will emerge through the interaction of many factors happening in combination, rather than of a single activity on its own.
- A focus on learning and improvement a key objective of all IPEC interventions.

<sup>6</sup> Information in this section is adapted from IPEC's internal draft: *How to Plan and Carry Out Impact Assessment of Child Labour Interventions*. April 2004.

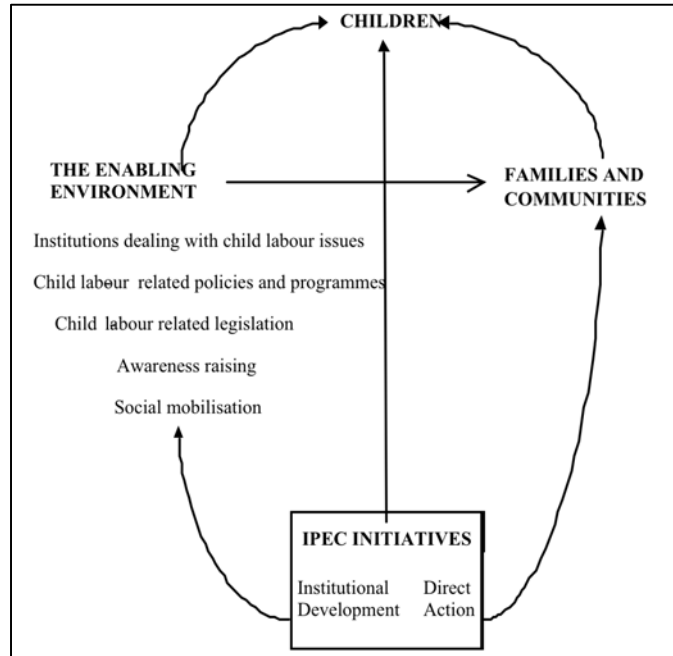


24. As the accompanying diagram illustrates, actual impact on child labour and on its worst forms will result from a *combination* of:
- The full range of interventions, both direct and indirect, including those sponsored or stimulated directly by the IPEC as well as others carried out by partners. Examples could include: changes in policy or legislation, educational interventions, direction action with children and families.
  - Other interventions that can influence child labour. These for example could include activities of others attempting to eliminate child labour that are uncoordinated with the programme or project. But they could also include activities doing the reverse, such as practices in certain industries that lead to pressures to increase child labour.
  - Unplanned events and factors beyond one's control that nevertheless can have an important bearing on the prevalence of child labour, such as large-scale financial crises, wars and insurrections, environmental disasters, and changes affecting the numbers of children in the population.
25. This has major implications for how IA needs to be carried out. For example:
- Impact will occur as a result of the combination of various interventions at different levels, ranging from national-level policy to direct interventions with children, *happening together*.
  - It is necessary to take into account *indirect* interventions, many of which would be expected to have impact in the long term rather than immediately.
  - Impact in the long run will be dependent upon putting in place the conditions such that child labour, and in particular its worst forms, will no longer be viewed as acceptable, with sustainable mechanisms that will carry on as a matter of course.
  - One needs to consider the overall impact of the full range of interventions on reductions in child labour, in both the short and long term, taking into account the contributions of the various initiatives and programmes.

- Because no one has all the answers, one needs to carry out IA in order to learn from what is working well or not in order to identify how IPEC and others active in the struggle against CL can increase their effectiveness in reducing and eliminating CL.

26. As the diagram to the right illustrates, impact on child labour will come about through two major domains of action:

- The enabling environment – addressing factors that influence child labour.
- Direct action with families and with child.



27. IPEC increasingly has been shifting its emphasis towards a greater emphasis on “upstream” or indirect work (policy and institutional level), with activities aimed at the enabling environment and joint activities with others. Increasingly, IPEC’s priority has been moving towards a greater emphasis in playing a capacity-building role, in working catalytically rather than directly. Impact for indirect interventions along these lines is likely to be more long term in nature than with direct, project-based activities.

28. While the above considerations have been expressed with respect to IPEC, they also apply more generally to IPEC’s country partners. IPEC increasingly has been recognising the importance of national ownership – for CL initiatives as well as for evaluation of these initiatives, including the assessment of impact. This has been reflected, for example, in the approaches to the various Time-Bound Programmes supported by IPEC. It is also highly relevant that the recent (2010) Roadmap, agreed to at The Hague Global Child Labour Conference, indicates that it is the responsibility of governments to assess the impact of relevant policies on CL/WFCL.

29. This context has important implications for the approach to IA by IPEC, including the objective of the IAF project in particular to develop tools that countries and partners might be able to use themselves for undertaking IA. The following section discusses in general how these considerations are being addressed by the two IA/IE projects collectively. Following sections of the report then look more specifically at activities under way or nearing completion, strengths and limitations, and implications for future needs.

### 3.2 The overall approach to IA underlying the two projects

30. As the above sections have indicated, it is necessary that a strategy for evaluation of the impact of interventions against child labour recognise and be able to address the range of factors responsible for CL, as well as for its alleviation, and make use of a range of IA/IE methods, in combination.

31. A key conclusion of this evaluation is that IPEC’s overall IA strategy underlying these two projects generally is consistent with the above considerations. It has the potential to be able to address the

needs of various stakeholders for information about the impact of CL interventions. The IA framework, taking into account the wide range of tools that are being developed, is highly ambitious. Indeed, many of the inevitable challenges that have come about relate very much to the ambitiousness of what is being done.

32. The framework that has been developed is both comprehensive and multi-faceted. For example, it encompasses various tools and techniques to assess both indirect and direct interventions, including interventions aimed at the enabling environment (e.g. policies, national action plans), at families and at children directly. The framework provides means both to assess what impact has occurred, and also to get at the reasons for these changes.
33. Given the range of different types and scale of CL interventions, as well as the on-going discussions within the evaluation community about how best to assess impact<sup>7</sup>, it is clear that there is not one right way that would be appropriate in all circumstances. Every possible research/evaluation method has strengths and limitations, and there is not always full consensus about these. IPEC's IA framework, including the work undertaken by the two projects collectively, encompasses a wide range of both "soft" and "hard" methodological approaches. Given the international debate and diversity of views regarding what constitutes appropriate approaches to IE, it is appropriate that IPEC itself collectively covers the entire range.
34. Similarly, the IA framework can be consistent with use of complexity theory for the evaluation of complex interactions. The importance of such approaches is increasingly being recognised in the recent evaluation literature, which acknowledges that there are situations where impact is not linear or incremental and that requires the use of evaluation approaches that can take this into account.<sup>8</sup>
35. The model on page 9 indicating the expected interactions between indirect interventions aimed at the enabling environment, interventions aimed at families and communities, and interventions aimed directly at children that underlies much of IPEC's approach to IA represents an example of an easy-to-understand theory-of-change model.
36. The IA toolkit, representing the major output of the IA Framework project in particular (and to which work undertaken by the UCW IE project constitutes a significant contribution) contains a variety of tools that are described in detail in project documentation. Given the above discussion, it is useful to note that tools have been developed that can be included under the following categories:
  - Planning for impact (e.g. the Strategic Programme Impact Framework (SPIF) approach to theory of change based strategic planning, concept note on baseline studies).
  - Design/planning for IA.
  - Expanded M&E to include a component on IA/IE (e.g. Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation System [CMES]; Expanded Final Evaluations [EFE]).
  - Indirect impact (e.g. identifying policy impact, National Action Plans).

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<sup>7</sup> This is evident at any gathering of experts involved in impact evaluation. The most recent (March 2011) NONIE meeting represents but one example of this, with even proponents of particular methodologies acknowledging the limitations of these approaches and the need to use a range of methods.

<sup>8</sup> One example is Patricia Roger's recent work distinguishing among simple, complicated, and complex programme logics and the implications of this for approaches to evaluation: Patricia Rogers. 'Using Programme Theory to Evaluate Complicated and Complex Aspects of Interventions. *Evaluation* Vol 14(1): 29-48, 2008.

- Direct impact (e.g. tracer studies, UCW's statistically robust counterfactual impact evaluation designs).
37. From experience, it is unusual to find a model and approach to IA that is as comprehensive and inclusive as the IA framework that underlies these two projects. Indeed, it is considered that nothing as comprehensive exist elsewhere within the UN system, that provides for a range of different types of evaluation approaches at different levels and that collectively fully address all aspects of the issue.
  38. Nevertheless, as discussed below in more detail, it is helpful to have a sense of realism about how far these projects have been able to come taking into account time and other constraints, and what else will still be needed following the formal conclusion of both projects. What has been done to date can best be described as very promising work in progress with great potential. At the time of preparation of this report, most tools were still in the process of being identified or finalised. It is beyond the scope of both projects for these tools to be fully tested and implemented, in particular by IPEC partners. Thus follow-up work will be required in order to be able to capture the benefits of both projects that by design represents just initial steps.
  39. Both projects, individually and collectively, also found that the context for developing and undertaking IA/IE work was more complex than anticipated. In particular, it became apparent that developing support and buy-in among government officials and other stakeholders requires a considerable amount of time and interaction. Yet this is crucial for meaningful IA work to take place, for it to be seen as of value and hence for subsequent evaluation findings to be used, and also for countries and partners to undertake IA work themselves in the future.
  40. This represents a significant finding in and of itself. It is always possible to impose an evaluation in a given area. But this is unlikely to lead to use of evaluation to improve future interventions or to an openness to engage in further evaluation efforts and thus can be self-defeating.
  41. These, and related considerations, are discussed in more detail in the following sections of this report.

## 4. The IAF Project

### 4.1 Strategic focus and implementation

42. The IAF Project was entitled: Impact Assessment Framework: Further Developments and Follow up to Tracer Studies and Tracking Methodologies. While a significant component of the project did indeed include a follow-up to tracer studies (see discussion below), the project, fortunately, and very positively, went well beyond this. As discussed above, the project supported the development of a wide variety of tools as part of a comprehensive framework for assessing a wide range of different types of impacts.
43. The IAF project development objective is to contribute to the progressive elimination of child labour by improving understanding of the effectiveness of programs addressing CL.
44. The immediate objectives are:
  - Impact Assessment Framework in place with methodologies and tools established and pilot tested to plan for and measure direct and indirect impact, focusing on key practical interventions, and for use by partners.
  - A number of impact assessment initiatives identified and supported; and results available as applicable as part of IPEC's knowledge base.
45. The starting date of the project was Sept 2006, scheduled initially to end March 2011. Initially, the project had difficulty in recruiting a satisfactory technical officer to replace the original technical officer who had worked on a previous USDOL funded impact assessment related project. The decision was then to put recruitment on hold so that implementation of the project could take place in parallel with the UCW project given the intended complementarities.<sup>9</sup> A replacement technical officer eventually came on board in July 2009. The project subsequently received a no-cost extension to the end of August 2011. A practical effect of this decision was that what was originally conceived as a 4½-year project became in effect a two-year project, and as a result much of the work of the IAF project was still in the process of completion when this evaluation was undertaken.
46. In August 2009<sup>10</sup>, an internal project review, in lieu of a mid-term evaluation of the project was undertaken. The purpose of the exercise was to “perform a thorough reorganisation and review of the Project and design a plan of action that takes into account both the shorter time frame but also the synergies that can be tapped as a result of the parallel implementation of the UCW IE project.” This review resulted in a number of new and adjusted outputs for the project, subsequently approved in a project revision.
47. This reassessment of the project's strategic focus emphasised IPEC's role as setting the foundation for supporting governments and other partners in being able to carry out impact assessments. This envisions a longer-term perspective on the provision of technical know-how, and various forms of assistance and support by IPEC.

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<sup>9</sup> This decision was reported in the TPRs of April 2009

<sup>10</sup> An initial project review meeting took place on 20 August 2009, and the report is dated June 2010.

48. This strategic focus led to some adjustments to outputs and activities for the remainder of the project. In particular, it led to increased emphasis on the IA toolkit and development of tools within the toolkit. As well, the evaluability framework, while forming part of the UCW IE project, was highlighted as a major part of the toolkit. Thus revised outputs for the IAF project included working jointly with UCW regarding the development of the evaluability framework, and also with respect to the web-based knowledge centre to broaden content.

## **4.2 The tools: Some observations**

49. As already identified, the development of a comprehensive framework including a wide range of tools represents a major, indeed exemplary, achievement of the IAF project. Following are some observations and comments on the major tools that have been or are in the process of being developed, along with some implications for future directions as applicable.

### **4.2.1 Tracer studies**

50. A major component of the project consisted of the undertaking of six new tracer studies. These studies took place in different types of settings, addressing somewhat different types of populations, and collectively used a variety of methodological approaches, including both quantitative and qualitative follow up and a life transition (anthropological) study.
51. Tracer (and tracking) studies involve long-term follow-up<sup>11</sup> of the same individuals over a significant period of time. This is an unusual, indeed a path-setting approach that has the potential to provide very valuable data that cannot readily be obtained through other means.
52. These six tracer studies follow earlier pilot approaches supported by IPEC. They seem for the most part to build upon the experiences of the previous pilots, including the conclusions and recommendations of the final review of these pilot tracking/tracer studies<sup>12</sup>. While final reports were still in preparation at the data-gathering stage of this evaluation, available information including presentations at the expert meeting identified many other strong aspects of these studies. For example, while these as well as the earlier pilot studies identified locating previous beneficiaries as a challenge, these projects made use of innovative approaches and achieved some remarkable response rates, such as 80 per cent in the Kenya project, and 50 per cent in the DRC/Burundi project that focused on children involved in armed conflict, a particularly challenging group to locate.
53. A major output of the project, arising from this work, consists of the *Tracer study manual* which in turn consists of three parts: a methodology manual, a training manual, and model questionnaires. In addition, there are plans for a global tracer study database, potentially linked in some way with the Knowledge Centre being developed by the specific UCW IE project and to be continued as part of the work of the UCW project in general.
54. The researchers responsible for the various tracing studies were very open in acknowledging challenges that they faced, as well as potential challenges to this type of research. These included: difficulties in finding the children who had been assisted, often some years previously, by CL interventions, while adhering to ethical guidelines; difficulties of recall of past events and

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<sup>11</sup> Longitudinal approaches involve follow up of the same individual at different points of time. As the tracer approach is retrospective in nature, technically it not quite fit this criterion. Nevertheless, as it uses recall and to the extent possible, other data to identify previous situations, it can represent a good approximation of this approach.

<sup>12</sup> This review was carried out by Burt Perrin, with the final report submitted in September 2005.

experiences, often after some years, including sometimes difficulties for some individuals to be able to recall having taken part in the actual project intervention: dangers of distorted recall in some situations; and a potential danger of distorted samples in some cases, in particular with small sample sizes and individuals suggested by implementing agencies. Researchers also found in general that the questionnaires used tended to be overly long, even though these have simplified somewhat from those used in the earlier pilot tracer studies.

55. These are commonplace challenges, similar to those generally faced by retrospective studies of this scale and nature. The available evidence suggests that the researchers were able to take appropriate steps to mitigate these challenges (e.g. obtaining data from multiple sources, asking about life milestones and associated event that respondents could recall), and tempering conclusions as need be.
56. For findings from these and similar studies to be useful, it is essential that they do more than document what has taken place (or not), but also identify the factors that have contributed to meaningful change. In my view, a particular strength of these tracer studies was the use of a qualitative data-gathering approach in some cases, including one study that specifically took an anthropological (life transition) approach. This form of data-gathering has been able to identify factors that were associated with changes in children's lives.
57. **Some conclusions.** These tracer studies have clearly demonstrated what is possible, providing considerable valuable data, including insights that may be able to help inform future CL interventions, such as the importance of family dynamics. As indicated above, it is rare to have longitudinal data on the same individuals over a period of time, which can be very powerful in identifying important findings that might not emerge through other forms of research. It remains to pull out and clearly identify findings such as these and implications for programme interventions, such as through some form of easy-to-read synthesis report. There appears to be plans to do at least some of this. But it may be appropriate to be more proactive, including communicating the findings and implications in various forums.
58. The overall approach to tracer studies still remains complex. It remains to be seen if countries and other partners would be open to undertaking such studies on their own, and what forms of support they may require in order to be able to do so. This can be explored as follow up in a subsequent undertaking following the formal conclusion of the IAF project. Greater simplification of the overall approach can help, such as simplified questionnaires, which was indeed recommended by a number of the tracer studies, may also help make the approach more useable. Also, it may be possible to use somewhat smaller sample sizes, which if carefully chosen may still be sufficient to be able to provide useful information.
59. These most recent tracer studies have demonstrated the value of qualitative data. For future tracer studies, it is suggested combining both quantitative and qualitative elements, which in combination can demonstrate changes that have taken place, as well as factors responsible for these changes, thereby providing a better understanding of the dynamics by which children move in and out of CL.
60. This leads to the question of attribution, which came up at the expert meeting, concerning how it could be possible to be able to attribute changes in children's lives to specific interventions rather than to extraneous events. The most recent Tracer Manual does have some useful discussion about attribution. To some extent, it may be possible to use community-wide data as a form of comparison to individuals served by specific interventions. It may be appropriate to undertake follow up with some children who did not as well as with those who did receive the



intervention<sup>13</sup>. But the use of qualitative techniques, as discussed above, has the potential to identify causal pathways through which change came about. Such an approach to causality is quite consistent with the literature and general scientific practice (in particular Scriven's work on "following the signature" and General Elimination Methodology).

61. It also appears that there is a lack of any form of tracker approach<sup>14</sup> in the IAF project, which was recommended in the review of the previous Tracing/Tracer studies. Perhaps a reason for this is that they can be logistically more complicated. While a tracer study can be implemented as a stand-alone research study, tracking studies in comparison need to be built into the design of CL projects and require cooperation by project staff. But such cooperation is not impossible, particularly if project sponsors insist upon such cooperation. The UCW IE project experience in El Salvador and Ghana in negotiating inclusion of an IE component in projects may also be instructive.
62. Nevertheless, tracking studies have the potential to be less costly as well as to provide for better quality data than tracer studies, as project staff potentially can do much of the actual data gathering at the time the selected children join the project and then when they leave (although practically this may not be possible in all cases and staff may require some assistance), requiring just one subsequent follow-up interview (or "reading") at some point in the future. And by using project records and interviewing children and others about what is taking place at the current time, many of the challenges faced by the tracer studies, in particular with respect to problems of recall, can be minimised. Use of programme records can also make it easier to use shorter questionnaires, including for the follow-up reading.

#### **4.2.2 Assessing the impact of indirect interventions**

63. As indicated above, changes to various aspects of the enabling environment, such as government policies and legislation, are likely to have a far greater influence on the extent of CL than specific projects directed explicitly at children, which invariably can only influence the behaviour and outcomes of a limited number of people. Work at this level is consistent with the expectation that countries take primary responsibility for addressing CL, and with IPEC's more upstream work. It is also consistent with the focus of much of the work by various UN agencies, including ILO, that are working directly more at the normative level, yet still need to identify how the impact of such work can be assessed.
64. The toolkit includes some tools with respect to the assessment of impact of indirect interventions, including guidelines for impact assessment of the enabling environment, and a framework for evaluating national action plans (NAP). The work on developing guidelines are unusual in that this involved field visits to three countries in order to get a sense of what would be most useful to IPEC's partners. One of the findings from this research was the need, in particular for managers who are not evaluation specialists, to keep things as simple as possible. As discussed at the expert meeting, this finding will likely have implications for other components of the toolkit, as well as for the overall toolkit itself.
65. While the work that has been undertaken and is still on-going in this area seems quite appropriate, it still is preliminary in nature, involving the development of draft guidelines that still will need to be tested, and likely later revised. Also, what has been initiated thus far is limited in nature. For

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<sup>13</sup> It could be possible to construct a comparison group based upon an analysis of the actual range and extensiveness of services provided to children. Some who entered a programme may in fact have received little or no attention.

<sup>14</sup> A prospective approach, starting when children enter a project, as opposed to the entirely retrospective approach of tracer studies.

example, there likely will be a need for more specific tools to aid in assessing the impact of different forms of interventions intended to affect the enabling environment. For example, assessing impact of policy and legislative changes may require a somewhat different approach than assessing the impact of awareness raising and other aspects of the enabling environment.

66. It is considered that attention to the enabling environment is critically important, and that the work that has been undertaken thus far represents just a good start. Thus there will be a need for more attention to IA of interventions of this type in subsequent follow-up work to the IAF project.

#### **4.2.3 Integrated and expanded approaches to M&E**

67. The toolkit contains two approaches for expanding the range of traditional M&E activities to include a IA/IE component: the CMES and the Expanded Final Evaluations (EFEs).
68. The CMES represents a more rigorous approach to typical M&E activities, specifically with an integrated IE component. It also can provide a basis for considering the interaction of different types of interventions and for the interaction and complementarity of different IA methods. Through such an integrated approach, the CMES can consider not just what has happened, but also why, along with more credible evidence of the impact and interactions of interventions. The CMES contains the following five elements:
  - Theory of change
  - Impact measurement framework
  - Baseline and data collection
  - Monitoring
  - Review and evaluation
69. Thus far, the CMES approach has been initially developed and implemented for USDOL funded FY2010 IPEC implemented projects, primarily in El Salvador and Ghana, and includes IE of selected interventions supported and implemented by the UCW IE project, providing a means of coordination across the IAF project and the UCW IE project. The CMES approach has been used primarily in conjunction with the UCW IE projects in El Salvador and Ghana. This represents a significant means of facilitating integration of the IAF and the UCW IE projects, with a variety of associated benefits.
70. The Expanded Final Evaluations (EFEs) represent a way of expanding traditional end-of-project evaluation reports to also include an IA component through the sub-studies focusing on in-depth analysis of impact or changes in specific areas of work within the project, such as policy level for instance.
71. Both these approaches have the potential to provide for an integrated approach to monitoring and evaluation. The CMES in particular can serve as a framework for expanding upon traditional M&E activities to also include an IA component, which need not be limited to statistically robust counterfactual designs as at present. It can serve as a framework facilitating the combination of multiple methods and look more specifically at the interaction and impact of multiple interventions happening simultaneously.
72. In discussion at the expert meeting, the general consensus was that it might be best to refer to this approach as an integrated M&E strategy, or something similar. This might represent a more

accurate description of what it offers, and also make it sound more accessible and less daunting than a “comprehensive” approach.

73. Thus far, these approaches have just been applied in a pilot mode, with extensive technical support available. At the expert meeting, there was some question about how partners might react to this approach, perhaps viewing it as seemingly overly complicated. This is something that can be explored in future follow up. The strategy does represent a way of combining a number of separate elements, and depending upon how it is positioned, may even be viewed very positively.

#### **4.3 Status of the toolkit and needed follow up**

74. As indicated earlier, the overall toolkit, with its diversity of tools and approaches that can be used to help assess the impact of CL interventions of all forms, is very impressive. At the time of the data-gathering phase of this evaluation when the IAF project was nearing completion, most of the tools were still in the process of being finalised in draft form. Thus by the conclusion of the project, there should be a complete toolkit (although one would expect a continual process of refining and perhaps adding to the toolkit, so in a sense it may not be appropriate ever to refer to it as “complete”).
75. Thus given the status of the tools, most still have not yet been tested or used except in limited pilot circumstances, and likely may benefit from further refinement. In particular, there is a need to test the appropriateness and usefulness of these tools by their intended users.
76. IPEC has indicated that the major objective of the IAF project, and of the toolkit, was to develop tools that countries and other partners could use themselves to carry out impact assessment (although IPEC would still be seen as one user). Despite this intention, thus far countries and other partners largely have not been involved in the development of the tools. This was by design, with this phase envisioned as following the current project.
77. This is considered an essential step, and it is important that ILO-IPEC find the means to engage potential users through various means. The rationale for first developing tools is that it is necessary to present partners with concrete approaches and tools in order to be able to make informed choices, and there is considerable to be said for this argument. But it is now appropriate to follow up, to test out with various partners how they view the usefulness of these tools. Similarly, it would be helpful to support actual testing and implementation by partners of tools that have been developed. This is sure to provide valuable information that can aid in further refinement of what has been developed to date. For example, feedback to date suggests that while the range of tools overall may be appropriate, users are likely to need assistance in making informed choices and in using these appropriately. Similarly, feedback received during the course of this evaluation suggests that this is likely to be a need for continuing technical support, as well as assistance with capacity development. ILO-IPEC can play a significant role in this respect, including setting up mechanisms for countries and partners to share experiences in CL impact assessment.
78. This evaluation also found that there is limited knowledge and understanding of the IAF project even within IPEC, both at HQ and in the field. The potential value of IA does not appear to be fully appreciated in all cases. This would seem important for at least a couple of reasons. First, IPEC staff should be viewed as users of impact evaluation. When they are more familiar with the findings and implications of various forms of impact evaluations, this will enable them to be more informed in providing technical support in the development and implementation of CL interventions at all levels. Also, IPEC staff will need to play a major role in engaging with countries and partners, in encouraging them to undertake IA activities and to make use of the resulting findings. It will be hard to get buy in without at least some degree of involvement.

## 5. The UCW Impact Evaluation Project

79. The Project Document describes this project as a research project directed towards providing knowledge from robust empirical methods about factors contributing to decreases in CL. The project has three major components:
- Modular evaluations, where UCW supports the inclusion of CL considerations within broader IEs carried out by other organisations.
  - Detailed design of IEs of three IPEC projects using statistically robust counterfactual designs.
  - Creation of a web-based Knowledge Centre with information about IE results and methods.
80. This project is currently in progress, having started in September 2008 with an end date of December 2012. Thus this evaluation constitutes a mid-term evaluation, taking into account results achieved to date and what is likely to be achieved by the formal end of the project. Unusually for UCW, accountability and reporting for this project is through DED at IPEC, given that the work is part of the ILO-IPEC approach to monitoring, evaluation, impact assessment and impact evaluations as a strategic area of work.

### 5.1 The modular evaluations

81. The modular evaluations involve integrating/mainstreaming CL modules within broader IEs in relevant social policy areas conducted by other organisations. Initially the UCW IE project had considered working on four projects, in Bangladesh, India, DRC, and Nicaragua, all being undertaken by the World Bank, but currently are working only Bangladesh and India and Nicaragua under this component.<sup>15</sup> The work in DRC is under component 1 on child labour evaluation of programme directly targeting child labour.
82. This type of work can generate and increase interest and awareness of CL considerations within broader social policy areas, and also result in IEs of initiatives affecting CL that might not have taken place otherwise. Embedding CL considerations as part of evaluations of broad policy undertakings also opens the potential of exploring how CL can be influenced by wider social policy initiatives. This can be difficult or impossible to do when focusing specifically just on CL. UCW's strong inter-agency connections and joint work that can result from this can have other potential positive spinoffs.
83. This approach can also represent a very cost-effective way of enabling IEs with respect to CL. UCW indicates that the cost of such work can be as little as USD 20K per project, which is considerably less than undertaking a stand-alone IE.
84. For the above reasons, this seems to be an example of a very good practice, and one that takes advantage of UCW's expertise and networks. Indeed, this might represent an area thus far has been exclusively with the World Bank. It could be helpful to explore opportunities in the future for joint work with other agencies. Even if this does not initially result in collaborative research activities, discussions potentially can help increase awareness of how various economic and social policies can have an impact on CL, and it would be appropriate at a minimum for other agencies when carrying out IE activities to take this into account, such as building in changes in CL as a dependent variable. In addition, it might be worthwhile to explore other possible partnerships than could

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<sup>15</sup> i) The impact of rural electrification on child labour in India and Bangladesh; and ii) The impact of RIB on child labour in Nicaragua.

include a greater mix of research approaches, i.e. not necessarily limited to experimental/quasi-experimental designs.

85. As a minor point, labelling this type of joint work as “modular” evaluations may be a bit of a misnomer. It might help to increase understanding and appreciation of the value of this approach by coming up with a more accurate and descriptive term.

## **5.2 The project impact evaluations of selected interventions**

86. The core component of the UCWUCW IE project, at least in terms of time and resource requirements and degree of complexity, concerns the design and initial implementation of impact evaluations of selected interventions of three child labour projects. Following discussion with USDOL and within ILO-IPEC and a result of project revisions, the following projects were chosen in which to implement impact evaluations of selected interventions: El Salvador, Thailand and the Cocoa Community Project (Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire). The original intention of the UCW IE project was to do impact evaluations for one USDOL funded IPEC implemented project, for one USDOL funded Education Initiative non-IPEC project and in a WB project. USDOL then expressed the wish to do it for all USDOL funded IPEC implemented FY2010 projects instead of the EI project and cover the WB project through the modular evaluations. The impact evaluations are being undertaken in these projects with technical support and some funding for baselines and technical work related to baseline close from the UCW IE project, and in the context of the particular with the CMES as discussed above.
87. The UCW IE project, by intent, and as a result of the project revision, was limited to research design and obtaining the necessary buy-in and cooperation from governments and programme staff, and in some cases initial data collection. The implementation of the baseline work is included in the UCW IE project with funding for technical support and contribution to the funding for the baselines to complement funding in the projects for which IE is done for selected interventions. Full implementation and funding of the follow-up survey or end-line survey, however, was largely outside the scope of this particular project although USDOL has consistently informed IPEC that funding for the follow-up surveys would be provided. This assurance of continued funding to be able to implement the entire design does not appear to have been presented to the countries during negotiations<sup>16</sup> but funding to enable full implementation of the project need to be secured as otherwise there is a danger of lack of sustainability, including the creation of false expectations and perhaps also raising ethical implications. It therefore would seem important that USDOL, UCW and ILO-IPEC do what it can to be able to secure the continuation of the research studies that it has committed to implement and inform the stakeholders accordingly
88. At the present time, work is well under way in El Salvador and Ghana as part of the Cocoa project. In both countries, there have been considerable exchanges and discuss, in close association with the IAF project and using the CMES approach, with government and other key stakeholders, with some tentative agreements on design.
89. The situation, for reasons totally beyond the control of UCW IE project, is less certain in Thailand. Work on the Thailand project, dealing with child labour in the shrimp farming industry, was awaiting the arrival of the CTA, and also the government at the time has been reluctant to acknowledge a child labour problem. At the time of writing, a new government was just elected, but it is premature to ascertain how this might affect the status of the ILO-IPEC project, or openness to impact evaluation.

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<sup>16</sup> For example, see the minutes of a recent meeting in El Salvador with government officials.

90. Thus, at the present time, work is as far advanced as can be reasonably expected. There are many strengths to the approach that has been taken. In particular, the UCW IE project has been willing to engage in extensive discussions, as needed, to explain the purpose of the research, to generate support for this among key government officials as well as programme staff, and to discuss how both the programme and the research approaches can be adapted to complement one another. These discussions have taken place in conjunction with the IAF project CMES contact person, providing for complementarity across the two projects. As discussed in the following section of this report, SIMPOC has also been engaged successfully in order to make the baseline survey, at least in El Salvador, useable for IE purposes.
91. In particular, the UCW IE project has shown itself to be willing to be very flexible, in order to be able to adjust its research approach to the situation and to the interests of key stakeholders. For example, the Ghana government has agreed to the UCW IE project's first choice of a randomised design. However, it appears that this type of approach will not be acceptable to the El Salvador government for reasons of equity and ethics, but the project has indicated that it is willing to adopt alternative designs such as a regression discontinuity methodology that will be more acceptable. From the available information, it does appear that the project has gone about the process of engaging key stakeholders in the right way, including developing their interest and support for IE and adapting the research approach to the situation and interests of key stakeholders.
92. On the other hand, the above process of developing buy-in and support for the research has proved to be much more complex and time consuming than anticipated. As one stakeholder has observed: "One cannot underestimate the time required to develop a common understanding [among programme people] about evaluation design." This has required revisions to the overall project outputs, as discussed in the following subsection. Nevertheless, it is suggested that this experience be treated positively as a significant learning in and of itself, and that the project document some of the steps involved and what would be realistic in terms of budgeting for this.
93. It is also clear from experiences to date with this project, as well as with many others, that designing and carrying out rigorous research in real-life settings is complex. Particularly over the extended period of time necessary to implement and design such research, the context can change in a variety of respects (e.g. political situation, what the projects are actually doing and how this may change over time, the overall economic and community context) that can affect the ability to undertake the research, or at least to maintain the necessary rigour.
94. There are also somewhat differing views about the use of randomisation, with both ethical and practical considerations being raised. For example, some people suggest that staggered entry into a programme, or use of a lottery when the demand for a programme exceeds the ability to respond, can both make randomisation possible and also be ethically appropriate. But there is not universal agreement about this. A randomised research design also places some constraints on the design and implementation of a programme. It is imperative that these types of decisions are taken in account, with the objectives of the research necessarily taking second place to those of the programme. While there has been some concern expressed about this, the impression is that the UCW IE project has taken considerable steps to adapt the programme requirements.
95. Some interviewees as well as participants at the Expert Meeting also questioned how a randomised control group would be compatible with the Integrated Area-Based Approach. Also, as some participants at the Expert Meeting indicated, while randomised designs are recognised for being strong in internal validity, they are also weak in external validity, in providing explanation and generalizability to other settings and situations. In order to provide information about how and why

changes have been brought about, it is necessary to combine experimental designs with other, usually more qualitative approaches. In this respect, the close connection of the UCW IE project with CMES potentially might be able to aid in providing some understanding the project dynamics and how change comes about, provided that this is built into the IE design.

### 5.3 The Knowledge Centre

96. One of the objectives of the UCW IE project is to create a web-based Knowledge Centre. This currently is expected to consist of two main components:
  - An inventory of 40-60 impact evaluations, mainly of CL programmes having child labour as an outcome. These are limited to RCTs or quasi-experimental designs, mostly carried out by the World Bank.
  - A review paper, summarising findings from across the various findings.
97. During June, 2011, UCW IE project indicated that they expected to have the website, along with the inventory of IEs, in place by about mid-July, with the review paper planned for September. Both of these outputs are expected to be updated over time.
98. These two components, once in place, may represent significant outcomes. To date, however, they appear somewhat more limited than what was initially envisioned in the Project Document, which stated that the Knowledge Centre “will serve as a ‘hub’ for information both on impact evaluation methods ... and on impact evaluation results.” The Knowledge Centre originally was also intended to “have established appropriate linkages to other knowledge centres on child labour such as the one established by ILO-IPEC and others.” The current components also somewhat more limited than what was envisioned by the IAF project, which expected the Knowledge Centre as well to incorporate the methodologies developed by the IAF project, including a global database of Tracer Studies and other impact assessments (i.e. not restricted just to statistically robust research studies) by ILO and also carried out by academics, NGOs, think tanks, government and other partners.
99. UCW has indicated very clearly that its own area of expertise is restricted to statistically robust research studies, although it is not opposed to links to other forms of information about the effectiveness of CL. With nearly 18 months left for the project to run, there is still plenty of time to consider other ways in which other forms of information, both about IA methods and results can be added to or linked to the Knowledge Centre. This however is still not clear at the moment.

### 5.4 General observations

100. Overall, much of what has been done thus far in this project seems to be of very high quality. The project appears to be very much on target to achieve its objectives, as revised<sup>17</sup>. The particular research approach taken by this project to IE complements the approaches within the IAF project, and adds an important methodology to the toolkit. UCW has considerable standing within the research community and with other agencies, along with a history of inter-agency cooperation. This all contributes to the overall credibility of IA/IE work at IPEC.
101. In addition, the project’s willingness to engage with stakeholders, including taking part in discussions as extensive as necessary in order to develop understanding and to agree upon common approach, also appears to be exemplary. The project has demonstrated considerable flexibility,

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<sup>17</sup> Per the February 2011 Project Revision.

within the constraints of a rigorous counterfactual design, to adapt its methodological approach to the constraints of the particular situation and the wishes of stakeholders.

102. As well, the UCW project has worked very closely with the IAF project through the CMES. The UCW Director has indicated that the CMES represents an integral and necessary part of the UCW impact evaluations. The CMES, for example, will provide the essential information about the nature of the interventions that is a prerequisite to drawing any possible causal conclusions. It may be challenging for the UCW project to effectively implement the project evaluations unless there will be on-going support following the conclusion of the IAF project along these lines that has been provided up to now.
103. UCW very clearly portrays its expertise as in research rather than in evaluation. It has indicated that its major point of reference is with the academic research community rather than with the international evaluation community. It is considered that there is very clearly a place, among the overall mix of methods, for the type of research approach that UCW has the expertise to undertake. As indicated earlier, this adds to the overall comprehensiveness and credibility of IPECs's overall IA strategy.
104. Nevertheless, statistically robust counterfactual research designs, as with all other methodological approaches, have strengths and limitations. This approach in particular is very costly, in terms of financial and time requirements as well as the need for very specialised expertise that may be difficult to find, particularly in countries where CL interventions are undertaken. In addition, this methodological approach can require compromises in the design and manner of implementation of CL programmes, and perhaps impose other constraints (e.g. such as an insistence that the same basic approach remain constant over an extended period of time, in order to avoid contamination of the experimental and control groups).
105. Thus while there is a definite place for such counterfactual research designs, they will only be applicable in some, but not in other, situations. It would be helpful for the UCW project to identify, as explicitly as possible, those circumstances where such a methodological approach would be most appropriate, where it could provide evidence not possible through simpler approaches, and where it would warrant the associated costs and other constraints.
106. As indicated above, the UCW found that developing support and designing project IEs was much more complex and time consuming than initially expected, particularly when it the scope was expanding from IE in one IPEC implemented project to three IPEC implemented projects. In order to be able to devote the necessary time to this core project activity, the Project through a February 2011 Project Revision request shifted more resources into this activity. In order to do this, it discontinued some other planned activities, including initial data collection as part of the project impact evaluations, proposed capacity development activities including training workshops and the development of technical protocols, and the evaluability framework. Changes of this nature are not surprising for a project of this nature, where there are a number of unknowns that cannot always be predicted in advance. However, the decision to drop these activities, in particular the evaluability framework and capacity development activities, should have been discussed and considered in more detailed as part of the broader IA/IE strategy of IPEC and the work of IAF, since these are viewed as integral to the overall IAF strategy.
107. The Project Document indicated that a Project Coordinating Committee (PCC) would be formed to "play a central role in providing strategic oversight to and guiding implementation of all phases of the project [and that] a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) made up of agency and external experts will also be formed to provide specialist input regarding the technical components of the project."



Nevertheless, while both the PCC the TAG has met on two occasions (without any formal minutes), to date these proposed mechanisms, intended to support planning, governance and coordination for the PCC and to provide specialist input regarding technical aspects of the project for the TAG, have not been fully activated and utilised. It seems that they have been viewed as an additional administrative burden, rather than as useful vehicles that could provide for greater coordination and alignment between the UCW project and the IAF project as well as other ILO-IPEC evaluation activities, and also serving as a mechanism for providing support and advice for the inevitable issues arising in a project of this nature. It is reported in TPRs that a rethinking of the TAG is underway based on experience generated during the first three years of implementation that indicated informal communications are likely to be more effective in providing technical inputs and in allowing for the required flexibility.

108. Some examples of considerations that in retrospect could have benefited from greater discussion/coordination in advance at the PCC include: the proposed changes to project outputs and implications, in particular for the evaluability framework; the nature of the Knowledge Centre and how the original objectives for this could be best implemented; revisions to baselines surveys including associated cost implications; and achieving consensus about the objectives and value of each of the modular evaluations. A small TAG, provided that it has experts with programme expertise as well as those with more of a research background, could also potentially have served further as a vehicle to assist in anticipating the realities and necessary compromises of engaging with key stakeholders and designing and implementing practical IEs.
109. It is suggested that terms of reference be developed for both groups. In both cases, meetings need not be lengthy and could be by teleconference, supplemented by e-mail exchange. The primary purpose of the PCC should be to review developments and progress of both the UCW IE project and related IPEC/DED activities, and in particular to discuss jointly any proposed changes and factors that may have broader implications. While the original intent of the PCC was a technical group between key USDOL, UCW and ILO-IPEC/DED staff working on the project to ensure “technical independence” of the project, it is suggested that membership consist of the UCW Director, the Head of DED, and IPEC’s Chief of Programme and Planning, with others involved as applicable. Meetings should be as frequent as necessary, with a minimum of once per quarter, with topics identified in advance and a written note prepared afterwards summarising the discussion and in particular agreed-upon action points.

## 6. Synergies between the two projects and with other parts of ILO-IPEC

### 6.1 Synergies between the two projects

110. As previously indicated, the two projects were intended to be complementary, rather than to operate as two fully discrete, fully separate endeavours. As has already been identified, there are good examples of this taking place. In particular, there has been strong liaison, both at the field and HQ levels, between development of the UCW IE projects and the CMES. As discussed above, liaison and consultation/negotiations with countries has involved both IAF and UCW working together. The UCW Director has acknowledged, indeed emphasised, that monitoring and other forms of data about programme activities and services represents an essential element of its approach to IE at the project level, and has expressed concern how necessary support from IPEC can be continued following the conclusion of the IAF project.
111. These two projects collectively have also resulted in other synergies that go beyond what either would have been able to accomplish on its own. As indicated earlier, the overall IA framework and toolkit is enriched through inclusion of statistically robust methodologies brought through the UCW project, resulting collectively in a very comprehensive range of approaches that also adds broader credibility to the collective IE work of IPEC. The modular evaluations and inter-agency work of UCW also adds an additional dimension that can both help stimulate interest in IE of CL in broader contexts, complementing the work of IPEC that is more narrowly focused on specific CL interventions. UCW has also indicated that the joint work has helped it learn more about the realities of IPEC operations and CL interventions in the field, which can aid it in better designing and implementing future impact evaluations.
112. Nevertheless, it is inevitable that coordination across two separate organisations can meet with some practical challenges, in particular taking into account different types of organisations, different cultures and incentive systems, somewhat different methodological orientations and relations with different scientific/evaluation networks, and projects on different timetables with separate reporting requirements. Under these circumstances, the degree of coordination that has been achieved is noteworthy, and seems to have been gradually improving.
113. Communications between UCW and DED have been extensive, primarily concerning operational issues with respect implementation of the project impact evaluations and coordination with CMES. Contacts to date appear to have been more focused on administrative and operational functions, and more ad hoc than formal when on technical or strategic issue. This has worked well in some, but not in all, instances. As noted in the previous discussion, the proposed mechanism of the UCW Project Coordinating Committee has not been used. In retrospect, a formal mechanism such as this could have been helpful to provide for greater coordination in strategic planning involving the two projects. Given the continuation of the UCW project and on-going need for coordination with DED, it would still be appropriate to put in place such a formal mechanism.
114. In particular, in retrospect there appears to have been insufficient discussion and agreement in advance about proposed changes to UCW outputs included in the February 2011 Project Revision Form, which led in particular to dropping the evaluability framework from the UCW project, even though it was identified as an important new output on the IAF project revision. The importance of this step has been highlighted in IAF documentation, such as the June 2010 internal project review. The need for this, or something similar, was confirmed at the expert meeting and by this evaluation. Indeed, without guidance about how to choose methods, which was the intent of the proposed

evaluability framework, questions can be raised about the viability of the IA toolkit. It appears that the evaluability framework was included initially under the UCW project for administrative convenience. However, UCW has indicated that development of such a tool is beyond its own particular area of expertise, and indeed it does appear to be a better fit under the IAF project (or DED more generally).

115. As well, there does not appear to have been sufficient discussion about the Knowledge Centre, which at the time of preparation of this report is about to be launched by UCW. DED appears to envision this in somewhat broader terms than does UCW. As the following section of this report indicates, I can see potential for this to be broader still. It might be useful as well to revisit the plan for the knowledge centre as outlined in the Project Document. While support for development of the Knowledge Centre represents one of the IAF project's intended outputs, it might be best to think more strategically about alternative forms this can take, such as providing various modules directly at the website, positioning it as a portal to other sites, etc. Given that this represents work in progress for the UCW project, it would be appropriate to discuss ways together with IPEC in which its value can be maximised.
116. In more general terms, it might also be useful to explore ways in which there could be still further synergies between the two projects (or between UCW and DED given the conclusion of the IAF project while the UCW project will still be on-going). The UCW project takes a very strong research orientation, aimed at creating explicit knowledge using particular academic/scientific methodologies. This represents a somewhat different mind-set from programme evaluation, with more of a focus on creating and sharing practical knowledge that often may be tacit in nature. Reconciling these two traditions, with somewhat different values, is not always easy. And while there may be room for increasing complementarities, collectively these two projects have made a very good start, with many examples of collaboration.

## **6.2 Synergies with other parts of ILO-IPEC**

117. The only rationale for investing in IA/IE is for it to be used in some way, such as informing future directions and strategies, for accountability and advocacy by indicating the value of CL interventions, and to facilitate more outcome-oriented thinking among those involved in the fight against CL. A significant implication of this is that work on IA cannot be confined just within an evaluation unit, but needs to be considered by the broader organisation.
118. More specifically, this implies that IPEC management and, perhaps, operations, should give more consideration to the implications of IA work for policy and programming. This need not represent anything extensive, but at a minimum this might involve periodic gatherings to consider work that has been done on IA and to discuss potential implications. This might also represent an opportunity for identifying priority areas for future evaluation of various forms. Such an approach can also help create a better understanding across IPEC of the value of IA. This is essential in order for IPEC itself to make best use of IA findings and implications, and also for the entire organisation to promote and support its partners in engaging themselves in IA.
119. These two projects, through their collective efforts, have also succeeded in achieving some degree of cooperation with IPEC's Policy and Research Unit, and in particular with SIMPOC. For the first time, SIMPOC has indicated its openness to modifying the baseline surveys (at least in El Salvador) so that they can be useable for IA/IE purposes. This formed part of the topic of discussion at a very recent Lima workshop. In addition, the DRC/Burundi tracer study concerning children affected by armed conflict also has resulted in joint work with Policy and Research, where this study is seen as supporting other work regarding children in armed conflict. Ideally, work undertaken by Policy and

Research and by DED, including work on IA, should be complementary. There may be opportunities for additional symmetries, including ways in which SIMPOC's activities can be better suited for evaluation purposes.

120. There may also be opportunities for greater coordination between IPEC's work on IA with other parts of ILO. IPEC is recognised as being far ahead of other parts of ILO with respect to IA (for example by the Director of EVAL who has observed that "There is nothing else like the IAF in the house."). Along these lines, a field office director similarly indicated that IPEC's work through the IAF project on indirect impact, and in particular on the NAPs, can also be useful for other areas within ILO. Thus much of the joint engagement at the moment would involve taking advantage of IPEC's leadership in this area in sharing its experiences and expertise, which probably could be applied to other areas with a minimal degree of adaptation.
121. In addition, there potentially could be opportunities for joint work on IA, such as with respect to Decent Work that could include consideration of CL. While much of the expertise for IA would need to come from IPEC, this potentially could provide opportunities to assess the impact of broader economic and labour market considerations and policies on CL, and perhaps open up possibilities for additional sources of funding.

## 7. Strategic implications for follow up

122. This evaluation was expected to take a strategic approach, to consider not just what the two projects could be expected to achieve by their respective completion dates, but also to identify strategic implications arising for future related work. The text above has suggested a number of areas where additional work will be required. This section summarises strategic implications for follow-up activities in order to be able to capitalise and to build upon what has been accomplished by these projects, learning from the experiences to date.

### 1. Continue with the current impact assessment strategy

123. The most important finding of this evaluation is that IPEC's overall approach to impact assessment, taking into account the complementarities of the two projects, represents ambitious, leading edge work. As indicated earlier, there is not anything similar to the IA framework and toolkit elsewhere within the UN system.
124. Thus the most important strategic implication arising from this evaluation concerns the need to continue, and to build upon, the work represented by these two projects. By design, the focus of both projects was limited to *initial* development of a range of tools and approaches to IA. Follow-up activities of at least some sort will be essential in order to be able to capitalise on the work that has been funded and carried out by these two projects and to make this sustainable.
125. Both projects have created expectations that require efforts beyond the scope of the current funding to be able to achieve. The UCW project in particular has investing considerable time and effort in seeking the cooperation and agreement of governments with respect to implementation of IE project, extending beyond current funding commitments that will require some modifications in the actual CL interventions in order to be compatible with the research design. There can be ethical questions raised if the impact evaluations are then not implemented. ILO-IPEC, UCW, and inevitably the donor may look bad if initial work begun by both project is not continued in at least some way.
126. Following are ideas about potential follow-up steps that can build upon the work begun by these projects, in particular in order to result in actual use of IA tools and strategies by IPEC's partners.

### 2. Engage and support partners in undertaking IA

127. By design, the IAF project focused on the development of concrete tools and approaches. With some exceptions, there was limited involvement of the intended users of these tools, in particular countries and other ILO-IPEC partners. Thus it is not yet clear how much interest these partners actually would have in engaging in IA work, the suitability and usability of the tools developed to date and what changes might be required, and the degree and forms of support that may be required. Feedback from ILO-IPEC staff that have worked in the field and from the expert meeting suggests that there likely will be a need for more specific guidance about how the tools can be used, perhaps some modifications to the tools themselves, and various forms of support. These particular steps are highlighted below.
128. Thus an essential follow-up step is for ILO-IPEC to engage with its partners to develop support and buy-in to IA, and to identify how the IA framework might require some modification. There are a

variety of ways in which this can be done. It is beyond the scope of this evaluation to consider these in any detail. Approaches may include a mix of the following, as well as related activities:

- Identify partners who are interested and willing to try out tools that have been developed. Then provide a vehicle where these actual experiences can be communicated with others.
- Use IPEC field staff to encourage and to assist their clients in undertaking IA. This in turn will require engaging field staff so that they themselves can appreciate the potential benefits of IA in order to act as ambassadors.
- Work through major INGOs, who in turn can then encourage their own staff and partners to undertake IA activities.
- Use regional gatherings, for example of governments and other partners, to stimulate interest and to share experiences.

### **3. Facilitate/support use of the tools that have been developed**

129. The IAF project is resulting in the creation of an impressive number of tools. But these mainly can only be considered as drafts. The next step is for these to be applied, by IPEC itself as well as by interested partners. This will provide a basis for testing these in actual situations to learn how appropriate these tools are in practice and how they can be refined. This will require, however, significant capacity within IPEC in order both to support use of the tools and also to learn how they are working out and to be able to make appropriate modifications.

### **4. Provide guidance for how to use the evaluation toolkit and its tools**

130. As this evaluation has highlighted, the Impact Assessment Toolkit is quite impressive, particularly in its comprehensiveness. However, perhaps for this very reason, feedback obtained thus far suggests that it will be very difficult without at least some form of assistance for non-evaluation specialists to decide which mix of methods to use in given situations. While the collection of tools in the toolkit represents a useful and necessary first step, there now is a need to provide guidance for how and when various tools can be applied.
131. The need for this was recognised by the IAF project and represents the primary objective of the proposed evaluability framework. As discussed above, this originally for administrative reasons was placed under the UCW project but then dropped due to the need to focus resources on other priorities. However, a finding of this evaluation is that this is an essential tool in order for the toolkit to be used appropriately. This would also be a better fit under IPEC-DED than UCW, with the latter freely acknowledging that this extends beyond its own particular area of expertise.
132. Thus, this has emerged as an essential follow-up step. While the original objectives of the evaluability framework are valid, feedback as well as discussion at the Expert Meeting suggests that it might be useful to consider repositioning and relabeling this as a guide to planning, designing, implementing, and using IA. ("Evaluability" is a technical term rarely used outside the evaluation community that upon reflection might be best avoided in this context.) Development of this resource is consistent with the request for more simplicity. From my experience, development of such a guide will not be easy, and will require testing and revision. It will be necessary to budget appropriately in terms of funding, time, and expertise required for the development of this resource.

## **5. Keep it simple – but not simplistic**

133. Feedback from participants attending the Expert Meeting, as well as from others, strongly indicates that guidance and tools for IA should be kept as simple as possible. The paradox is that while one of the strengths of the toolkit is its diversity of approaches, feedback suggests that too many choices can overwhelm people, particularly those without an evaluation background, who sometimes say that they would like to be provided with a specific template rather than a menu of choices.
134. The dilemma is that while there appears to be a demand for simple tools and simple guidelines without overwhelming people with too many options, the reality is that one size does not fit all. Different types of situations and questions will require somewhat different approaches to IA. High quality IA, particularly if one is to get into statistically robust statistical designs, is not easy. No one has really figured out the best way of addressing this dilemma.
135. There can be great benefit if a follow-up initiative to the IAF project would attempt to address this challenge. This in turn can have wider benefits, such as with respect to related policy issues (such as poverty reduction, general children welfare) being addressed by IPEC's partners as well as other areas within ILO). An important starting point for addressing this challenge can be through the guidance identified above.
136. There are a variety of related strategies that perhaps could be incorporated in the guidance that might be able to help address the dilemma of providing simple but not simplistic guidance. For example:
  - Use a checklist approach, where depending upon answers to questions on the checklist (potentially dealing with such considerations as: the characteristics of the situation, priority questions, human and financial resources available, degree of precision actually required, etc.), suggestions can then be given about preferred choice of methods and tools.
  - Consider an approach often used with technology (e.g. digital cameras, photo-editing software) with two or three options: 1. the easy "press a button fully automatic option" (although even here, one would need to provide some simple parameters); 2. a semi-automatic mode, with a limited range of options and choices; and 3. the fully open approach, with a range of methods and some guidance about the strengths and limitations of each that can be tailored for the particular situation.
137. As well, it would be helpful to provide some guidance to partners about what level of scientific rigour may actually be required, when fast, simple, and low-cost approaches can provide sufficient confidence to take necessary decisions, and when it might warrant the extra effort and cost to undertake more sophisticated designs and approaches, including counter-factual designs. For example, Brian Atwood, the new DAC Chair (former Head, USAID), has recently indicated to the DAC Evaluation Network that randomised and similar methods are expensive and time consuming and can only be used in a small number of instances. The same can be said for some other sophisticated evaluation approaches, which may be very useful in some situations but would need to be undertaken strategically.
138. Ultimately, case studies providing actual examples of how others have implemented IA approaches may be of considerable value. Many people relate much better to interaction with others who have addressed similar situations than to what may be perceived as abstract written guidance.

## **6. Provide for various forms of capacity development – plus technical support**

139. Following from the above, it is important to acknowledge that if partners in the future are to be expected to undertake and to use IA activities on their own, there will be a need to support the creation of more expertise in this area. In the long run, this can be the best way of addressing the dilemma discussed above. Work in this regard can represent an important follow up to both the IAF and the UCW projects.
140. Greater knowledge and expertise with respect to IA is needed in at least two areas: for managers, more awareness of the value of IA and how information about the impact of CL policies and interventions can aid in improving the effectiveness of strategies and programmes at all levels; and technical expertise to M&E practitioners about how to undertake IA.
141. Frequently capacity development methods are limited to formal top-down training. It is suggested that this be viewed as but one step to aid in the development of expertise and evaluation capacity. More actual and usable learning generally comes from more interactive approaches, such as support in trying things out. And while there is a need to create greater expertise, it is important to acknowledge that there already are people in different parts of the world with expertise in IA. Thus an important element of capacity development can involve facilitating connections and the use of local or regional expertise where this is available.
142. Similarly, another approach to the development of IA capacity is to implement mechanisms for sharing the expertise and experiences, both successful and otherwise, among IPEC's partners. This could be done through various face-to-face gatherings and support for networking. One possible approach could be the creation of a Community of Practice. Experiences elsewhere indicate that this potentially can represent a very useful and powerful way of sharing experiences and tacit knowledge and for enabling practitioners to support each other. However, experiences indicate that this would require resources in order to provide for essential moderation and periodic preparation of summaries of discussions.
143. In addition to the above, feedback obtained during the course of this evaluation suggests that even with guidance, it may be very difficult for many partners to be able to undertake IA on their own without technical support (e.g. from IPEC directly and/or through a roster of colleagues and other experts as suggested above). This can represent a very practical way of capacity development.

## **7. Review and update the toolkit**

144. As previously indicated, the IA toolkit is a very valuable resource. But as indicated above, the tools that have been developed will need to be tested. Inevitably, this will mean that at least some tools will require some revision and some others may need to be added. I would strongly urge that follow-up to the IAF project provides for this.
145. At the Expert Meeting, it was observed that the current mix of tools is skewed towards evaluation of direct interventions/projects. Consequently, it would be appropriate in the next phase to rebalance this somewhat, with somewhat more attention to assessing the impact of the spectrum of enabling environment interventions. This can include government policy (and legislative) development and implementation, but also a variety of other approaches including advocacy and public awareness activities, community mobilisation, and many other activities, including those directed at the demand side for CL. While the toolkit has some initial guidance on the overall area of the enabling environment, it might be useful to develop some more specific tools for interventions such as the above.



146. As well, it would be helpful to provide guidance about how to look at the big picture, recognising that most significant impact in reducing CL will come about not through isolated interventions but through the combination and interaction of various types of approaches at a range of levels.
147. None of the above should be taken as a criticism of the work that has been taken to date on the toolkit. It is appropriate to view it as a living resource that will need to be updated based upon the experiences with earlier versions.

## **8. Expand the tracer study methodology**

148. As discussed earlier, this methodology represents a rare application of a longitudinal (or more technically for tracer studies, a retrospective) approach to follow what actually happens to a cohort of individuals over time. IPEC's work in this area is ground-breaking.
149. As previously suggested, it should now be possible to build upon IPEC's experiences to date to support future tracer studies that:
  - Combine quantitative and qualitative approaches (that can both indicate what changes have occurred, and also the mechanisms how they changes have come above).
  - Can be applied more frequently and more simply, such as through simpler questionnaires and protocols and smaller samples sizes, and also through exploring ways in which a tracking approach can be built into the design of selective CL projects.

## **9. Expanding the knowledge base of Child Labour (CL)**

150. IPEC portrays itself as a facilitator of knowledge on CL. This information can come from a variety of sources, including the research literature, impact (and other forms of) evaluation, and through experiences of IPEC itself as well as its partners. IPEC has been active long enough that it should be able to document in many areas what has been learned about how to approach the CL problem.
151. This implies the need for some sort of system to capture what has been learned as well as for sharing this information in ways that will reach those who can make use of this information. Without some form of a system, considerable institutional knowledge resting mainly in IPEC staff is almost certain to be lost. IPEC has experimented with various approaches, including good practices and a knowledge project, but this area has proved challenging to support in a sustainable way.
152. The Knowledge Centre, as part of the UCW project, initially will include a database of selected studies from the research literature, as well as a review paper. This represents an important start. But it represents just one form of knowledge. Consequently, it would be appropriate for IPEC, as a follow up to the IAF project, to identify and to support ways in which the preliminary but restricted knowledge base can be expanded. There can be a variety of ways in which this can be done, ranging from building separate areas in the Knowledge Centre with different types and sources of information, to providing links to where these could be found.
153. But the term *facilitator* of knowledge, by which IPEC describes its role, implies the need for a knowledge centre that is more than a depository of technical research studies, but also mechanisms for identifying implications of this knowledge that can be used to improve strategic and programmes concerned with CL. One important step is to place more emphasis on *synthesis* and thematic reviews, given that implications for new directions rarely can come from single studies. In this respect, the UCW project's plan for a review paper represents a positive step. This however will

be based upon a review restricted to a limited range of scientific research studies and thus may be limited in its policy focus. It is considered that there are opportunities, and a major need, for other syntheses drawing upon a wider range of evidence, including from all forms of evaluation conducted by IPEC and by others, and that are presented in language specifically oriented to policy makers rather than to researchers. This would be best done by IPEC itself, and could a useful follow up to the IAF project.

154. Consistent with the above, it would also be appropriate as a follow up to the IAF project in particular to test out alternative forms of dissemination and communications of key IA findings and implications. There is a literature on this subject.<sup>18</sup> This was also the topic of discussion at the June 2011 meeting of the OECD/DAC Evaluation Network meeting, involving most major donors, where various ideas that were discussed include; short, easily accessible and attractive “briefs” (e.g. 2-4 pages with photos and attractive type, highlighting major implications), podcasts, Webinars, interactive sessions, and related means.
155. Communication of the implications of evaluation is often treated as an afterthought, and as a result a step that often gets limited attention. Identifying and communicating the implications of evaluation findings can represent a quite significant undertaking, requiring significant resources to do this right. But there is little point in investing in IA, which has limited intrinsic value in and of itself, unless this information is used to aid in improving strategies, policies and programmes to address the challenge of CL. Thus there potentially can be a high payback in investing in means of better consolidating and communicating knowledge and implications gained from a variety of forms of IA, as well as what has been learned from IPEC’s now considerable experience in working in the CL area.

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<sup>18</sup> E.g. Rosalie T. Torres, Hallie S. Preskill, and Mary E. Piontek. *Evaluation Strategies for Communicating and Reporting: Enhancing Learning in Organizations*. Sage, 1996.

## 8. Recommendations

### 8.1 In general for ILO-IPEC

- ILO-IPEC should acknowledge the ground-breaking work represented by the multi-dimensional and multi-method approach to IA developed collectively by these two projects.
- ILO-IPEC should recognise that both projects, by design, involve initial steps that would require continuation in order to ensure the testing and actual use of tools that have thus far been developed in draft. In order to capitalise on the work that has been done, ILO-IPEC should seek funding to enable necessary follow-up activities.
- ILO-IPEC management should recognise IA as a strategic tool to aid both in improving the effectiveness of IPEC's own interventions and also in enhancing the capacity of countries/partners in addressing CL. Specifically it periodically should consider implications for its own work of impact assessment work undertaken to date.

### 8.2 For the remainder of the UCW Impact Evaluation project

- The project should maintain its current strategy, given the overall quality of its work to date and that it generally is on track to address to achieve its outputs, as revised and agreed.
- Given that the scope of current project is restricted to the design of impact evaluations, while giving the strong impression that implementation will follow, the project should begin looking immediately for funding support in order to be able to carry through with its commitments to complete the impact evaluations.
- The Project Coordinating Committee and the Technical Advisory Groups should be fully activated, *inter alia* to provide for greater coordination with IPEC's evaluation activities.
- The UCW IE Project should: discuss with IPEC/DED ways in which it may still be possible to support the original objectives of the proposed evaluability framework.
- The UCW IE Project should discuss with IPEC how the Knowledge Centre could be expanded during the remainder of the project to address its initial objectives, with the inclusion in some way of information about other techniques and sources of knowledge about what is known about effective CL interventions.
- The UCW Project should document what has been learned from the process of undertaking this project, in particular the steps and time requirements needed to gain necessary stakeholder buy-in and support for IE activities and an acceptable research design.
- The UCW Project should identify capacity development implications for future approaches similar to those used in this project so that in-country expertise for future IE activities can be maximised.
- The UCW IE Project should highlight the strengths and limitations of the counterfactual research design, identifying those situations where this approach would be feasible and where the evidence that can be obtained would justify the generally high cost and time demands for this approach.

### 8.3 Follow up to the IAF project

- IPEC should continue with the current IA strategy, seeking funding and other forms of support to be able to follow up the initial work as discussed in this evaluation report.
- In particular, follow up should engage stakeholders in actively applying the toolkit, making revisions and updates to the tools as need be.
- IPEC should provide guidance for intended users about how to apply the evaluation toolkit. This can take the form both of a guidance document (following on the original intent of the evaluability assessment) as well as the provision of technical support through various means. Consideration should be given to how the guidance, choice and application of IA tools can appear as simple as possible to maximise use by partners.
- Tracer studies should be recognised as a valuable source of information about the dynamics of CL and how this can be combated. This approach should be supported in the future, but with somewhat greater simplification, such as simpler protocols and sample sizes and integration of the quantitative and qualitative approaches, and the feasibility of tracker approaches should also be explored.
- IPEC/DED should make greater effort to increase awareness about the value of IA, with IPEC staff (HQ and field), with key partners, and as applicable with other parts of ILO.
- IPEC should work together with UCW in expanding the sources of information included in the Knowledge Centre in some way, to include knowledge from IPEC-sponsored evaluations, good practices identified from IPEC's experiences, and knowledge from partners and other sources.
- SIMPOC, in consultation with DED, should continue the preliminary work starting in Latin America in order to make future baseline surveys applicable for IA purposes.
- IPEC should consult with EVAL about how IPEC's experiences with IA approaches might be adapted for other ILO areas, as well as the potential for future joint work.

## **Annexes**

1. Terms of Reference
2. Documents consulted (to follow)
3. List of interviewees (to follow)
4. *Evaluating Impacts - An Overview* (OECD/NONIE) (attached)

## Annex 1: Terms of Reference



**International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour**

**ILO/IPEC**

**Final**

**Terms of Reference**

### **Independent Evaluation**

*Impact Assessment Framework and Impact Evaluation of Child Labour Interventions Projects*

<b>ILO Project Code</b>	<b>GLO/06/51/USA</b>	<b>GLO/08/58/USA</b>
<b>ILO Project name</b>	Impact Assessment Framework: Further developments and follow up to Tracer studies and Tracking methodologies (IAF Project)	Building the knowledge base on the design and implementation of impact evaluation of child labour interventions (UCW Project)
<b>ILO Project Number</b>	340.06.901.051	340.08.901.058
<b>ILO Iris Code</b>	100575	101452
<b>Country</b>	Global	
<b>Duration</b>	59 months	39 months
<b>Starting Date</b>	30 September 2006	30 September 2008
<b>Ending Date</b>	30 August 2011	31 December 2012
<b>Type of evaluation</b>	Final	Mid term
<b>Project Language</b>	English/French/Spanish	
<b>Executing Agency</b>	ILO/IPEC	ILO/IPEC and Understanding Children's Work (UCW) Project
<b>Financing Agency</b>	USDOL	
<b>Donor contribution</b>	USD 2,300,000	USD 1,500,000

## List of abbreviations

<b>3ies</b>	International Initiative for Impact Evaluation
<b>AEA</b>	American Evaluation Association
<b>AP</b>	Action Programme
<b>C182</b>	ILO's Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, No. 182 of 1999
<b>CL</b>	Child Labour
<b>CMES</b>	Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation System
<b>DED</b>	ILO/IPEC Geneva's Design, Evaluation and Documentation Section
<b>DWCP</b>	Decent Work Country Programmes
<b>HQ</b>	Headquarters
<b>IAF</b>	Impact Assessment Framework Project
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>IO</b>	Immediate Objective
<b>IOCE</b>	International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation
<b>IPEC</b>	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
<b>ITC</b>	International Training Centre
<b>NAP</b>	National Action Plan
<b>SIMPOC</b>	Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour
<b>SPIFTBP</b>	Time Bound Programme
<b>UCW</b>	Understanding Children Working
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNDAF</b>	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
<b>USDOL</b>	United States Department of Labour
<b>WFCL</b>	Worst Forms of Child Labour

## I. Background and Justification

### ILO-IPEC

1. The aim of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child labour (IPEC) is the progressive elimination of child labour, especially its worst forms. The political will and commitment of individual governments to address child labour - in cooperation with employers' and workers' organizations, non-governmental organizations and other relevant parties in society- is the basis for IPEC action. IPEC support at the country level is based on a phased, multi-sector strategy. This strategy includes strengthening national capacities to deal with this issue, legislation harmonization, improvement of the knowledge base, raising awareness on the negative consequences of child labour, promoting social mobilization against it, and implementing demonstrative direct action programmes (AP) to prevent children from child labour and remove child workers from hazardous work and provide them and their families with appropriate alternatives.
2. A Time Bound Programme (TBP) is essentially a national strategic programme framework of tightly integrated and coordinated policies and initiatives at different levels to eliminate specified Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL) in a given country within a defined period of time. It is a nationally owned initiative that emphasizes the need to address the root causes of child labour, linking action against child labour to the national development effort, with particular emphasis on the economic and social policies to combat poverty and to promote universal basic education. ILO, with the support of many development organizations and the financial and technical contribution of the United States' Department of Labour (USDOL) has elaborated this concept based on previous national and international experience. It has also established innovative technical cooperation modalities to support countries that have ratified the ILO's Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, No. 182 of 1999 (C182) to implement comprehensive measures against WFCL.<sup>19</sup>
3. The most critical element of a TBP is that it is implemented and led by the country itself. The countries commit to the development of a plan to eradicate or significantly diminish the worst forms of child labour in a defined period. This implies a commitment to mobilize and allocate national human and financial resources to combat the problem.<sup>20</sup>
4. From the perspective of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the elimination of child labour is part of its work on standards and fundamental principles and rights at work. The fulfilment of these standards should guarantee decent work for all adults. In this sense, the ILO provides technical assistance to its three constituents: government, workers and employers. This tripartite structure is

<sup>19</sup> More information on the TBP concept can be found in the Time Bound Program Manual for Action Planning (MAP), at <http://www.ilo.org/childlabour>.

<sup>20</sup> The term "national TBP" normally refers to any national programme or plan of action that provides a strategic framework for or plan for the implementation of Convention 182 on the worst forms of child labour. TBP is a generic term for such frameworks and for a concept or proposed general approach which will be used in different ways in different national contexts. In many cases the terminology TBP is not used even though the process and the framework will have many of general characteristics of the approach. ILO/IPEC has formulated the TBP concept and approach based on the work of ILO and partners. ILO/IPEC is providing support to the TBP process as in the different countries through "projects of support", which is seen as one of the many component projects, interventions and development partner support to the TBP process.



the key characteristic of ILO cooperation and it is within this framework that the activities developed by the Time-Bound Programme should be analyzed.

5. ILO Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) have subsequently been developed and are being introduced in the ILO to provide a mechanism to outline agreed upon priorities between the ILO and the national constituent partners within a broader UN and International development context. For further information please see : <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/decent.htm>
6. The DWCP defines a corporate focus on priorities, operational strategies, as well as a resource and implementation plan that complements and supports partner plans for national decent work priorities. As such, DWCPs are broader frameworks to which the individual ILO project is linked and contributes to. DWCPs are beginning to be gradually introduced into various countries' planning and implementing frameworks.
7. The operational strategy of IPEC has, over the years, focused on providing support to national and local constituents and partners through their project and activities. Such support has to be, to the extent possible, provided in the context of national frameworks, institutions and process that have facilitated the building of capacities and mobilisation for further action. It has emphasized various degrees of a comprehensive approach, providing linkages between action and partners in sectors and areas of work relevant for child labour. Whenever possible, specific national frameworks or programmes have provided such focus.
8. Over the last years, ILO/IPEC's role has been gradually changing. It moved from direct implementation to facilitation and provision of policy/technical advisory services to countries in formulating concrete policies and programmes in pursuit the two Child labour Conventions objectives.
9. While the scope of IPEC interventions has broadened, a new strategic framework has been developed to enhance the multiplier effects and synergies in order to increase the impact of the supported activities. As the impact of IPEC is increasingly at an upstream level, for example through the support provided to member states on interventions associated with the TBP approach, there is an increased focus on indirect impact and, consequently, a need to provide tools with which to measure such impact. In addition, the global action plan formulated in the Global Report on Child Labour 2006 calls for the development and support to the application of methodologies to measure the child labour impact of interventions and policies with a view to identifying those with more effective and more rapid results.
10. Achievements of IPEC should be measured and assessed according to the changes generated in the lives of the children and families, both as a result of the enabling environment and as a result of targeted interventions.

### **Impact assessment in ILO-IPEC**

11. Since 2000, a strategic area of work for IPEC has centred on developing approaches to impact assessment. Impact assessment is a key area that enhances the capacity of IPEC and partners to implement child labour activities and build the knowledge base on which interventions work, how and why (which ones have an impact). The centrality of impact assessment should be viewed in the context of ILO-IPEC's target of 2016 for eliminating the worst forms of child labour set in the second Global Report of 2006. With five years remaining, it is imperative to substantially upscale and accelerate action. This requires properly identifying what are the most suitable and sustainable

strategies. This is where the work of evaluation and impact assessment continues to be crucial. A number of global projects have provided the resources for this work.

12. In January 2002, the Design, Evaluation and Documentation (DED) unit of IPEC convened an informal expert meeting in Geneva. The meeting centred on how to integrate a theory of change approach to the work of IPEC and the potential development of new methodologies that could support learning on the longer term impacts on children and families of child labour interventions.
13. The 2002 meeting identified three key principles to guide the planning and implementation of impact assessments; that impact assessments should be practical, credible and, above all, useful. Impact assessment methodologies, it was concluded, needed to be able to demonstrate what had been accomplished whilst providing evidence of what remained to be done. A concrete result of the meeting was the decision to develop a framework to capture and analyse the theory of change of a project or programme. The Strategic Programme Impact Framework (SPIF), produced as a result, is an instrument that has been used extensively to facilitate strategic planning and illustrate the expected paths of change from an intervention or set of interventions.
14. During ILO-IPEC's development of the Time Bound Programme (TBP) approach and concept, DED commissioned a paper, "A Guide to Assessing the Impact of Time Bound Programmes."<sup>21</sup> The paper introduced impact assessment in the context of a TBP as an exercise looking at the "big picture", the overall contribution of a broad array of interventions on the ultimate goal, the elimination of child labour. It identified the importance of also thinking about the ultimate benefits of "indirect" strategies (for example policy development, capacity building, institutional development, coordination, and awareness raising).<sup>22</sup>
15. Towards the end of 2002 DED embarked on its first "impact" project: "Measuring Longer Term Impact on Children and Families through Tracer / Tracking Methodologies." The aim of the tracer methodology was to develop an instrument that could be used in providing evidence of impact on children and families that had been part of an ILO-IPEC intervention. The approach centred on gathering of data at one point in time *after* a specific intervention had finished. The tracking methodology presented a systematic approach for following a specific sample of participants through repeated enquiry over a period of time. A Final Review Meeting of the Tracer methodology took place in Geneva in December 1-2, 2004. The lessons from the pilot tracer studies were explored and adjustments to the methodology agreed. A Synthesis Report from the five pilot studies provided an overview of the main findings.
16. In 2006 IPEC's Global Action Plan, formulated in the Global Report on Child Labour, called for the development of and support to the application of methodologies that measure the impact of child labour interventions and policies. The purpose is to improve the identification of those interventions with effective and rapid results.
17. That same year, IPEC embarked on a new 5 year project; "Impact Assessment Framework Project, Follow-Up to Tracer and Tracking Methodologies." The project built on the work accomplished earlier, for example, by using the adjusted Tracer methodology for six additional Tracer Studies. The project recognised the opportunity to set the foundation, with a longer term perspective, on the type of technical assistance and support it would offer governments and other partners on impact assessment. To be better positioned to offer this technical support the project embarked on the

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<sup>21</sup> Burt Perrin, "A Guide to Assessing the Impact of Time-Bound Programmes" Paper V-2 of TBP MAP Kit, 2003.

<sup>22</sup> A paper produced shortly after the one prepared for the TBP was: Burt Perrin, "How to Plan and Carry out Impact Assessments of Child Labour Interventions" DED 2004.

development of other specific tools and methods (to be eventually integrated into an “impact assessment toolkit”) such as the “guidelines for assessing indirect impact of policy development, institutional building, legislative support and awareness raising.”

18. It was recognised that the impact methods, developed up until then, were limited in their capacity of establishing unqualified causality between observed impact and an intervention. Conceptually this had been managed through the idea of “plausible attribution.”<sup>23</sup> At the end of 2008, ILO-IPEC initiated a new project: “Building the knowledge base on the design and implementation of impact evaluation of child labour interventions.” Implemented by the interagency, Understanding Children’s Work (UCW) Programme this project foresaw the design and implementation of pilot impact evaluations in selected. These impact evaluations would overcome through statistical counterfactual analysis the issue of attribution.
19. These two last projects are the purpose of this evaluation. They are described below.

### **The “Impact Assessment Framework: Further Developments and Follow-up to Tracer and Tracking Methodologies” project (IAF)**

20. The IAF project is an effort to test, validate and adapt impact assessment methodologies. Several products are currently being developed through the IAF and the UCW projects. A central umbrella product is the “Impact Assessment Toolkit.” This toolkit (on going) will assemble relevant methodologies and guidelines for planning and assessing impact of the range of child labour interventions that ILO-IPEC supports and implements. The methodologies cover both approaches: to assess impact as a result of work on the “enabling environment”, and impact as a result of direct action and targeted interventions.
21. Also a recent development in DED has been the support to the development of Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Systems (CMES) in USDOL funded FY 2010 projects. The CMES are putting in place elements to monitor and evaluate the achievements of the project as well as the contribution of the project to broader outcomes at the institutional and policy level.
22. The project concentrates on developing and further refining methodologies to measure higher-level, but less direct, impacts on child labour.
23. As part of the effort to put in place a broad M&E system, IPEC is in the process of integrating experimental and quasi experimental impact evaluations in selected interventions. By crafting a counterfactual, these types of evaluations have the ability to establish if differences in outcomes between groups can be attributed to an intervention. Impact evaluations will generate learning on whether specific approaches or interventions produce the type of change (impact) that IPEC is looking for, and that it can advocate as model interventions. This is discussed after presenting the IAF project.
24. The **IAF project development objective** is to contribute to the progressive elimination of child labor by improving understanding of the effectiveness of programs addressing CL.

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<sup>23</sup> The expert meeting in 2002 had concluded that one should aim to demonstrate a reasonable attribution or credible association between CL interventions and the impact that was observed. The paper on “How to Plan and Carry out Impact Assessments of Child Labour Interventions offered guidance on how to do this in practice.

25. The **immediate objectives** are:

- Impact Assessment Framework in place with methodologies and tools established and pilot tested to plan for and measure direct and indirect impact, focusing on key practical interventions, and for use by partners.
- A number of impact assessment initiatives identified and supported; and results available as applicable as part of IPEC's knowledge base.

26. Basically, the project planned to provide a package of relevant methodologies and guidelines for planning and assessing impact of the range of interventions on child labour that ILO-IPEC is promoting, supporting and implementing. Methodologies cover both, indirect impact as a result of work on the enabling environment, and direct impact as a result of targeted interventions. These impact assessment methodologies and guidelines should enhance the capacity of the programme to provide technical advisory services concerning how to measure and evaluate the effects of the interventions on child labour.

27. The project 4 work areas (reorganised in August 2010, see next point):

- Planning and monitoring of impact.
- Direct impact as follow-up to previous work.
- Indirect impact as part of expanding of impact assessment framework.
- Impact assessment as part of knowledge base of IPEC.

28. In August 2010 an Internal Project Review was carried out, instead of the Project's mid-term evaluation (planned for September 2008). The principal decision from the Internal Project Review was to move forward in the strategic decision of focusing on the development of an Impact Assessment Toolkit, a toolkit that would gather many of the outputs originally envisioned in the Project document, bringing them together under the umbrella of one distinctive product. The toolkit was also perceived as a way to identify the impact methodologies that would need to be addressed by the toolkit in the future. The review was produced in the context of looking for synergies with the UCW project (see below) that started in 2008.

29. Major project outputs are:

- Inventory of experience in impact assessment.
- 6 tracer studies developed and implemented in Africa, Asia and Latin America.
- Global tracer data set.
- Guidelines for life transition study.
- Concept paper on baseline studies and baseline surveys in the context of impact assessment.
- Direct support to multiple IPEC projects in expanded final evaluations and design of tracer studies.
- Guidelines on how to guide macro-level impact assessment studies.
- Training and dissemination of IPEC impact assessment approach (Turin and Cairo) meeting.
- Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy (CMES) for projects in El Salvador and Ghana initiated (jointly with the UCW project, see below).
- Impact assessment toolkit: introduction to the toolkit and to each included methodology (on process).
- Guidelines for assessing impact of policy development, institutional building , legislative support and awareness raising (in process).

- Framework for the evaluation of National Action Plans on Child Labour (in process).
- “Review of Impact Assessment Framework Project & Exploring the way Forward for ILO-IPEC on Impact Assessment” Expert meeting (to happen in June 29-30, 2011).

**The “Building the Knowledge Base on the Design and Implementation of Impact Evaluation of Child Labour Interventions” project (UCW Project)**

30. This project is oriented to produce statically-robust empirical evidence relating to the impact of policies and programs on child labor to identify the factors behind success, through combining methodological development, targeted field research, capacity building and research dissemination.
31. The project is developing, with local partners, impact evaluations (i.e. experimental or quasi experimental approach) to provide evidence concerning not only whether specific child labor program interventions work, but also on how they work and on their relevance for broader replication. The evaluations will provide answers concerning what impact specific interventions have on a set of child labor- and education-related outcomes under what specific conditions. Where possible, the project will also look at costs, in order to compare the relative efficiency of various interventions.
32. The evaluations should complement qualitative information generated by ILO-IPEC through the development of the SPIF, use of qualitative techniques, and the tracer studies.
33. The current project covers the first of what is envisaged as a two-stage research effort. This current stage focuses on evaluation design and initial data collection for three selected CL-related program interventions, while the second stage (beyond the scope of the current project) will involve follow-up data collection for the three selected program interventions, allowing for a comprehensive evaluation of both short- and longer-term impact.
34. The project is part of the broader UCW strategy of using research to mobilize and inform action against child labour. The project is structured around the following development and immediate objectives:

**The project development objective:** To contribute to the progressive elimination of child labor by improving understanding of the effectiveness of programs addressing CL.

**Immediate objectives:**

- By the end of the project, the evidence base on CL program impact will be extended through initial data collection for comprehensive CL impact evaluations and through modular impact evaluations.
  - By the end of the project, capacity in CL impact evaluation will be strengthened through development of replicable impact evaluation protocols and targeted training.
  - By the end of the project, access to information on impact evaluation methods/results in the area of child labour will be increased through the establishment of a web-based knowledge center.
35. The project comprises 5 components:
    - Inventory and review of CL programs, type of interventions, impact evaluations and possible methodologies.
    - Initial data collection for child labor impact evaluations.

- Modular child labor impact evaluations.
  - Capacity building on CL-related impact evaluation for further impact evaluation.
  - Dissemination and technical support of methodologies and data collection on impact evaluations on child labor (through web-based knowledge center and other activities).
36. The project is managed under a Project Coordinating Committee made up of USDOL, ILO/IPEC and the UCW Secretariat to provide strategic oversight and guidance in the implementation of the project. Moreover, a Technical Advisory Group made up of agency and external experts contributes with specialised technical inputs as required.
37. Key outputs are:
- The “Evaluability framework” that integrates the IAF project Impact Assessment toolkit (on initial stage).
  - Initial design and implementation of impact evaluations in El Salvador, Ghana (and Cote D’Ivoire) and Thailand.
  - Modular impact evaluation in Bangladesh and Nicaragua.
  - Web-based knowledge centre (on initial stage).

### Background to the evaluation

38. As per ILO evaluation policy and procedures all programmes and projects over a certain duration and funding level have to be evaluated by an independent party. An evaluation focusing on the strategic achievements and experience can form the basis for discussion on further action in this area of work.
39. Evaluation for the purpose of learning and planning and building knowledge is an essential part of ILO/IPEC approach. It contributes to building the knowledge base on action against CL and the capacity for using such knowledge. This is particular so for regional strategic programme such as this one.
40. The IAF project is finishing in August 2011 and the UCW project in December 2012. The theme and approaches are complementary and therefore there has been a strong synergy between them. Due to that, both evaluations have been merging in a common exercise. It is expected that the evaluation will provide lessons about how the UCW could enrich from the IAF project in its remaining period until December 2012 and how DED can propose leverage from both projects regarding promoting impact evaluation of CL for better contribution to IPEC and the Global Action Plan on CL.
41. The complementarities and synergies between these two projects are presented in the following table:

UCW Impact Evaluation Project (ILO-IPEC)	Component	Impact Assessment Framework Project (ILO/IPEC)
Design and implementation of Impact evaluation for two/three selected projects	<i>Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Framework</i> <i>(1) ILO-IPEC specific: El Salvador and Ghana</i> <i>(2) Model Impact Measurement Framework)</i>	Monitoring and evaluation elements of the Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation System (CMES)

UCW Impact Evaluation Project (ILO-IPEC)	Component	Impact Assessment Framework Project (ILO/IPEC)
Examples of statistically robust impact evaluations	Evaluability Framework – <i>guide to choosing design and methods</i>	
Examples of inserting CL in WB projects		
Examples of statistically robust impact evaluations	Knowledge centre on Impact Assessment and Evaluation – <i>resources, examples and findings on impact assessment</i>	Example of platform
Examples of inserting CL in WB projects		Tracer Study Global Data base
Building on success in reducing child labour drawing policy lessons from Latin America experience (Mexico city)	Impact Assessment Toolkit <i>tools and guidelines</i>	Tracer Studies (retrospective for defined beneficiary target group)
		Guidelines on macro level policy impact
Training workshops	Capacity Building and Promotion of Impact Evaluation of Child Labour Interventions	
		Support to Turin Centre Workshops on Impact Evaluation

*Source: Impact Assessment Framework project TPR September 2010 (2010:32)*

## II. Purpose and scope

### Purposes

42. The purposes of this evaluation are:

- Determine to what extent the IAF Project has achieved its stated objectives and how and why have been/have not been achieved; and to what extent the UCW Project is well oriented to achieve their objectives (i.e. how and why)
- Assess the implementation effectiveness of the Projects' management
- Assess the IAF and UCW Projects synergies in fulfilling complementary objectives and of the UCW Project to follow-up on achievements and learning from the IAF project
- Reflect on the level of applicability of the completed and under development projects' products (i.e. response to stakeholder needs)
- Provide recommendations on how to build on the achievements of the Projects to continue strengthening the strategy of IPEC on Impact Assessment, including role of technical specialists such as DED and ownership by IPEC staff and ILO constituencies
- Identify and document lessons learned and good practice to be used further in Child labor projects and programmes, including in projects and initiatives on developing, implementing and supporting impact assessment and related work

### Scope

- The evaluation will look at all activities and results implemented from September 2006 to June 2011.
- The evaluation should look at the programme as a whole, including issues of initial project design, implementation, lessons learnt, follow-up in charge of stakeholders, and degree of replicability and scalability, regarding in particular future programmes.

45. The evaluation should cover expected (i.e. planned) and unexpected results in terms of non planned results (i.e. side effects or externalities). Some of these unexpected changes could be as relevant as the ones planned. Therefore, the evaluation should reflect on them for learning purposes.
46. The analytical scope should include identifying levels of achievement of objectives and explaining how and why have been attained in such ways (and not in other alternative expected ways, if it would be the case).
47. The two projects should be covered as part of the strategic approach to impact assessment in ILO-IPEC as well as two separate components within the strategy, with more emphasis on the project ending.

### III. Suggested aspects to address

48. The evaluation should be carried out in adherence with the ILO Evaluation Framework and Strategy, the ILO Guideline, the specific ILO-IPEC Guidelines and Notes, the UN System Evaluation Standards and Norms, and the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standard.
49. The evaluation will address the overall ILO evaluation concerns such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability to the extent possible as defined in the ILO Guidelines to Results-Based Evaluation: Principles, Rationale, Planning and Managing for Evaluations', Version 1, January 2010
50. For gender concerns the evaluator should review the ILO Guidelines "Considering Gender in Monitoring and Evaluation of ILO Programmes and Projects" 2007 (further information is also available at [www.ilo.org/gender](http://www.ilo.org/gender)).
51. In line with results-based framework approach used by ILO-IPEC for identifying results at global, strategic and project level, the evaluation will focus on identifying and analysing results through addressing key questions related to the evaluation concerns and the achievement of the Immediate Objectives of the project as stated in the Project document.
52. Annex I contains specific suggested aspects for the evaluation to address. Other aspects can be added as identified by the evaluation team in accordance with the given purpose and in consultation with ILO/IPEC Geneva's Design, Evaluation and Documentation Section (DED) and Project team. It is not expected that the evaluation address all of the questions detailed in the Annex; however the evaluation must address the general areas of focus. The evaluation instrument (summarised in the Inception report) should identify the general areas of focus listed here as well as other priority aspects to be **addressed in the evaluation.**
53. Below are the main suggested aspects that can be addressed in the evaluation:
  - Design
  - Achievements (Implementation and Effectiveness) of Objectives
  - Relevance of the project
  - Sustainability
  - Special Aspects to be Addressed



#### IV. Expected outputs of the evaluation

54. The expected outputs to be delivered by the evaluation team are:

- Inception report: this report based on the Desk review should describe the evaluation instruments, reflecting the combination of tools and detailed instruments needed to address the range of selected aspects. The instrument needs to make provision for the triangulation of data where possible.
- The report will consider the points defined in the DED Inception report outline.
- Presentation of findings, conclusions and recommendations in a stakeholders workshop after first draft has been delivered (Expert meeting in Geneva June 29th -30th and separate stakeholder meeting on July 1st)
- Draft evaluation report. The evaluation report should include and reflect on findings from the field work and the stakeholder workshop
- Final evaluation report including:
  - Executive Summary with key findings, conclusions, recommendations, lessons and good practices
  - Clearly identified findings
  - A table presenting the key results (i.e. figures and qualitative results) achieved per objective (expected and unexpected)
  - Clearly identified conclusions and recommendations
  - Lessons learnt
  - Potential good practices and effective models of intervention.
  - Appropriate Annexes including present TORs
  - Standard evaluation instrument matrix (adjusted version of the one included in the Inception report)

55. The report will include subsections per project and for commonalities or integrated issues.

56. The total length of the report should be a maximum of 30 pages for the main report, excluding annexes; additional annexes can provide background and details on specific components of the project evaluated. The report should be sent as one complete document and the file size should not exceed 3 megabytes. Photos, if appropriate to be included, should be inserted using lower resolution to keep overall file size low.

57. All drafts and final outputs, including supporting documents, analytical reports and raw data should be provided both in paper copy and in electronic version compatible for Word for Windows. Ownership of data from the evaluation rests jointly with ILO-IPEC and the consultants. The copyright of the evaluation report will rest exclusively with the ILO. Use of the data for publication and other presentations can only be made with the written agreement of ILO-IPEC. Key stakeholders can make appropriate use of the evaluation report in line with the original purpose and with appropriate acknowledgement.

58. The final report will be circulated to key stakeholders for their review. Comments from stakeholders will be consolidated by the Evaluation officer from the Design, Evaluation and Documentation Section (DED) of ILO/IPEC Geneva and provided to the evaluator. In preparing the final report the

evaluator should consider these comments, incorporate as appropriate, and provide a brief note explaining why any comments might not have been incorporated.

## **V. Evaluation methodology**

59. The following is the proposed evaluation methodology. While the evaluator can propose changes in the methodology, any such changes should be discussed with and approved by the IPEC Evaluation Officer, provided that the research and analysis suggest changes and provided that the indicated range of questions is addressed, the purpose maintained and the expected outputs produced at the required quality.
60. The evaluator will be asked to include as part of the specific evaluation instrument to be developed, the standard evaluation instruments that ILO/IPEC has developed for documenting and analyzing achievements of the projects and contributions of the projects to the programme; summarized in the DED Inception report outline.
61. The evaluation will be carried out using a desk review of appropriate materials, including the project documents, progress reports, and other outputs of the programme, results of any internal planning process and relevant materials from secondary sources. At the end of the desk review period, it is expected that the evaluation consultant will prepare a brief document (i.e. inception report) indicating the methodological approach to the evaluation in the form of the evaluation instrument, to be discussed and approved by DED and provided to the Programme for input prior to the commencement of the field mission.
62. Interviews with the donor representatives and ILO/IPEC HQ and backstopping officials, and programme officers will be carried through face-to-face interviews or conference calls during the evaluation process.
63. The evaluator will undertake a visit to IPEC HQ in Geneva and phone contact with UCW, partners and implementer agents in the intervention countries.
64. The evaluator will be responsible for drafting and finalizing the evaluation report, including feedback from stakeholders to the draft report during the Experts meeting in Geneva (29 June-1 July).
65. The evaluation will be carried out with the technical and administrative support of the IPEC-DED section Evaluation Manager assigned<sup>24</sup>. He will be also responsible for consolidating the comments of stakeholders and submitting them to the team leader.
66. It is expected that the evaluator will work to the highest evaluation standards and codes of conduct and follow the UN evaluation standards and norms.

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<sup>24</sup> The Evaluation manager has not been involved in the project implementation.

67. The evaluator responsibilities and profile:

Responsibilities	Profile
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review of programme documents</li> <li>• Development of the evaluation instrument/ Inception report</li> <li>• Briefing with ILO/IPEC-DED</li> <li>• Interviews with IPEC HQ, UCW donor, projects consultants and others</li> <li>• Participate in the Impact Assessment project final and the stakeholders workshops</li> <li>• Draft evaluation report</li> <li>• Finalize evaluation report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No prior active involvement in the project implementation</li> <li>• Significant expertise in the Impact assessment current discussion, in particular regarding ILO and IPEC approach and child labour thematic area.</li> <li>• Relevant background in social and/or economic development.</li> <li>• Experience in the design, management and evaluation of development and projects, in particular with policy level work, institutional building and local development projects.</li> <li>• Experience in evaluations in the UN system or other international context as team leader.</li> <li>• Experience in the area of children's and child labour issues and rights-based approaches in a normative framework and operational dimension are highly appreciated.</li> <li>• Experience in the UN system or similar international development experience including preferably international and national development frameworks in particular PRSP and UNDAF.</li> <li>• Fluency in English and French.</li> <li>• Experience facilitating workshops for evaluation findings.</li> </ul>

### Evaluation Timetable and Schedule

68. The total duration of the evaluation process including submission of the final report should be within two months from the end of the field mission.

69. The evaluation consultant will be engaged for a total of 22 days.

70. The timetable is as follows:

Phase	Responsible Person	Tasks	No of days
I	Evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of DED/IPEC briefing material</li> <li>• Desk Review of programme related documents</li> </ul>	5
II	Evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visits to IPEC HQ</li> <li>• Interviews with stakeholders</li> </ul>	13
III	Evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft report based on desk review, interviews and validated findings</li> </ul>	7
IV	Evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders workshop</li> </ul>	3
V	DED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulate draft report to key stakeholders</li> <li>• Consolidate comments of stakeholders and send to team leader</li> </ul>	0
VI	Evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalize the report including explanations on why comments were not included</li> </ul>	2
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>22</b>

71. Summary schedule:

Phase	Duration	Dates
I	5 days	June 5-9
II	13 days	June 10-22
III	6 days	June 23-28
IV	3days	June 29-July 1
V	14 days	July 3-17
VI	3 days	July 20-25

72. Sources of Information and Consultations/Meetings

Available at HQ and to be supplied by DED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects document</li> <li>• DED Guidelines and ILO guidelines</li> <li>• Technical Progress Reports</li> <li>• Consultancies reports</li> </ul>
Available in UCW and to be supplied by UCW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultancies reports</li> <li>• Relevant publications</li> </ul>

73. Consultations with:

- Projects management, staff (IPEC HQ and UCW and pilot countries)
- Consultants that have worked and/or are working with the projects
- ILO/HQ and regional/country level program officer and programme heads
- Partner agencies in pilot countries that implemented projects' outputs (i.e. studies)
- Government stakeholders
- Policy makers
- USDOL M&E Unit (i.e. Impact Assessment officer)

**Final Report Submission Procedure**

74. For independent evaluations, the following procedure is used:

- The evaluator will submit a draft report to IPEC DED in Geneva
- IPEC DED will forward a copy to key stakeholders for comments on factual issues and for clarifications
- IPEC DED will consolidate the comments and send these to the evaluator by date agreed between DED and the evaluator or as soon as the comments are received from stakeholders.
- A stakeholders workshop will be held to discuss comments from stakeholders
- The final report is submitted to IPEC DED who will then officially forward it to stakeholders, including the donor.

## **VI. Resources and management**

### **Resources**

75. The resources required for this evaluation are:

- Fees for an international consultant for 30 work days
- Fees for local DSA in Geneva (8 days)
- Travel from consultant's home residence to Geneva and Rome in line with ILO regulations and rules

76. A detailed budget is available separately.

### **Management**

77. The evaluation will be managed by an IPEC evaluation officer that has not been involved in the project. Any technical and methodological matters with DED will be discussed with him, should issues arise.

78. IPEC will be responsible for providing administrative and logistical support during the evaluation mission.

## **Annex I: Suggested aspects to address**

### **Design**

- Determine the validity of the project's design, the effectiveness of the methodologies and strategies employed and whether it assisted or hindered the achievement of projects goals as set out in the Project Document.
- Assess whether the programme design was logical and coherent and took into account the institutional arrangements, roles, capacity and commitment of stakeholders.
- Assess the internal and external logic of the programme (degree to which the programme fits into existing mainstreaming activities that would impact on child labour).
- Analyze whether available information on the subject (different approaches, political implications of approaches, etc.) was taken into consideration at the time of the design and whether these were reflected in the design of the programme.
- To what extent were external factors identified and assumptions identified at the time of design? Have these underlying assumptions on which the programme has been based proven to be true?
- Assess whether the problems and needs were adequately analyzed and determine whether the needs, constraints, resources and access to project services of the different beneficiaries were clearly identified taking gender issues into concern.
- Are the time frame for programme implementation and the sequencing of programme activities logical and realistic? If not, what changes are needed to improve them regarding the UCW project?
- Is the strategy for sustainability of programme results defined clearly at the design stage of the programme?
- How relevant are programme indicators and means of verification? Please assess the usefulness of the indicators for monitoring and measuring impact.
- Were the objectives of the programme clear, realistic and likely to be achieved within the established time schedule and with the allocated resources (including human resources)?
- Were the linkages between inputs, activities, outputs and objectives clear and logical? Do the projects designed under the programme provide clear linkages and complement each other regarding the programme strategies and programme components of intervention?

### **Achievements of objectives (Implementation and Effectiveness)**

- Examine delivery of programme outputs in terms of quality and quantity; were they delivered in a timely manner?
- Have unplanned results been identified and if so, why were they necessary and to what extent are significant to achieve project objectives?
- How did positive and negative factors outside of the control of the programme affect programme implementation and programme objectives and how did the programme deal with these external factors?
- Assess the programme's gender mainstreaming activities.
- Assess the process of integration of the two projects.
- Assess the current effect of the projects in IPEC projects and policies: (e.g. replicate project proposed studies like tracer studies).
- How have the projects already influenced SIMPOC and what is the potential for further complementarity or integration with the work of SIMPOC?
- Have the selection of pilot projects been accurate in terms of capacities and replicability?
- Discuss the relevance of the knowledge centre, considering other available knowledge centre beyond IPEC and UCW.

- How will the approach to evaluations managed under IAF and UCW projects (i.e. CMES and experimental/quasi-experimental impact evaluations) complement systematically the more qualitative evaluation process undergone by IPEC? Could this be integrated into one model?
- How is the CMES answering this challenge, or how could it be answered it?
- How was the capacity of the implementing partners and consultants to develop effective action against child labour enhanced as a result of programme activities?
- To what extent were project outputs shared with relevant stakeholders?
- How is the programme responding to obstacles (both foreseen and unforeseen) that arose throughout the implementation process? Has the programme team been able to adapt the implementation process in order to overcome these obstacles without hindering the effectiveness of the programme?
- What alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving the Project's objectives?
- Have resources been used efficiently? Has the implementation of activities been cost-effective? Will the results achieved justify the costs? Could the same results have been attained with fewer resources?

### **Enabling environment**

- How effective has the programme been at stimulating interest and participation in the programme at the national and international level?
- Examine how the ILO/IPEC project interacted and possibly influenced national level policies, debates and institutions working on child labour.
- Assess the quality and extent of dissemination (i.e. utility) of methodologies and techniques produced.

### **Relevance of the Project**

- Examine whether the programme responded to the real needs of the beneficiaries and stakeholders.
- Assess validity of the programme approach and strategies and its potential to be replicated.
- Assess whether the needs and demands that gave rise to the programme still exists or have changed.

### **Sustainability**

- Assess the likely sustainability of impact assessment process initiated under the IAP.
- Assess to what extent a phase out strategy was defined, planned and if steps have been taken to ensure sustainability (i.e. government involvement and ownership). Assess whether these strategies had been articulated/explained to stakeholders.
- Assess what contributions the programme has made in strengthening the capacity and knowledge of national stakeholders and to encourage ownership of the programme to partners.
- Assess programme success in leveraging resources for ongoing and continuing efforts in CL impact assessment measurement and application for learning and management of CL initiatives and beyond.

### **Special aspects to address**

- **Strategic issues:**
  - Assess the technical capacity of both projects to respond to IPEC needs in terms of impact assessment?
  - Is DED-IPEC ready to consolidate its approach or what is needed in terms of capacities, products, etc.?

- Assess the process of integration of both projects can be moved forward, considering that the IAF project has been completed.
- How can IPEC and UCW work better based on the complementarities and experience of this project?
- How strategic and relevant has been the training and dissemination activities (i.e. participation in evaluation events) to present IPEC approach in impact assessment and how should be moved forward, if it should?
- How strategic have been both projects regarding involvement and influence stakeholders. Assess next steps that DED should pursue?
- Should Impact assessment continue to be a priority area in IPEC? If it would, what are the implications for DED organization, staffing and development, and for IPEC as a whole?
- **Regarding the methodologies and tools developed by both projects:**
  - How participatory have been the process of design and implementation of the methodologies and why have they worked in that way? Please specify concrete lessons to move forward
  - Assess the flexibility, evolution and responsiveness of products developed vis-à-vis IPEC needs and the global discussion on Impact assessment (i.e. evolution of 3ies, AEA, IOCE positions among others, etc.)?
  - How far do the tools take the perspective of the clients (i.e. government, social partners and other partners involved in designing and implementing interventions)?
  - What is the perception of key stakeholders (i.e. IPEC and partners at HQ, regional and country levels) in terms of relevance/value added and feasibility of implementation of tools and methodologies developed?
  - Assess potential of the different products: tracer studies, life transition studies, experimental and quasi-experimental studies, and the global tracer data set to contribute to IPEC goals in terms of accountability, management and learning and in which direction we should move forward
  - Assess the quality of the Impact Assessment toolkit and the Evaluability framework as practical means
  - Is or can the evaluability framework be a basis for further work, including a link between the projects?
  - Reflect on the cost and ethical issues of tracer studies, experimental and quasi experimental from both project experiences
- **Regarding UCW Project:**
  - In which areas could the UCW project follow-up from the IAF Project and in which not. Please provide recommendations to areas from the IAF Project that should be followed about how to do that follow up?
  - How relevant are the UCW Project selected pilot projects to present good cases that could identify learning about impact of child labour interventions?
  - Please assess advantages and disadvantages of working though an interagency programme like UCW.



## Annex 2: List of documents reviewed

- Annotated Bibliography on Impact Assessment and Evaluation. Prepared as part of Impact Assessment Framework Project (GLO/06/51/USA) Internal Note. ILO/IPEC. March 2011.
- Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Strategies (CMES). Impact Assessment Framework Project (GLO/06/51/USA).Initial Generic Guidance Note. ILO/IPEC. March 2011.
- Concept Note/Guide on Baseline Studies and Impact Assessment. International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour. International Labour Organization. August 2011.
- Criteria and guidelines for the evaluation of the impact of child labor interventions. M. Manacorda. UCW. February 2009.
- Detailing the necessary steps to set up and manage a Tracer Study. Impact Assessment Framework Project (GLO/06/51/USA) ILO-IPEC. Impact Assessment Framework. Internal Note. January 2011.
- Eliminating Child Labour in El Salvador through Economic Empowerment and Social Inclusion: IMPACT EVALUATION DESIGN. UCW. April 4, 2012.
- Estimating the number of indirect beneficiaries of ILO/IPEC projects and programmes. Impact Assessment Framework Project (GLO/06/51/USA.) Internal Note for Monitoring and Reporting Purposes. ILO-IPEC. March 2008.
- Guidelines for Impact Assessment of Enabling Environment Interventions for the Elimination of Child Labour. ILO-IPEC. July 2011.
- Impact Assessment Framework: Follow up to Tracer and Tracking Methodologies. GLO/06/51/USA. Annex G: List of Studies and Products (all quantitative and qualitative studies).
- International Labour Organization – IPEC. Technical Progress Report (TPR) – [Global]. April 2011.
- International Labour Organization – IPEC. Technical Progress Report (TPR) – Global. March 2009.
- International Labour Organization – IPEC. Technical Progress Report (TPR) – Global. March 2010.
- International Labour Organization – IPEC. Technical Progress Report (TPR) – Global. September 2010.
- International Labour Organization – IPEC. Technical Progress Report (TPR) – Global. September 2009.
- International Labour Organization (ILO). International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). Multi-bilateral Programme of Technical Cooperation (Final Version: 25 SEPTEMBER 2008).Government of the United States of America. (The “Project Document”).
- Introduction to Child Labour Impact Assessment Toolkit. ILO/IPEC. June 2011.
- Inventory of Tracer Studies and or Impact Assessment Studies in USDOL FY 05-08. Impact Assessment Framework Project (GLO/06/51/USA). ILO/IPEC. July 2009.

- Street Children Support Project (DRC): Impact Evaluation Strategy. Revised Draft (February 2, 2011). Michele Tarsilla. Evaluation Consultant. World Bank.
- Technical criteria for the impact evaluation of USDOL-funded Child Labour Education Initiative (EI) projects. UCW. July 2009.
- Technical issues for the impact evaluation of components of ILO/IPEC projects. UCW. September 2009.
- The selection of USDOL EI programs to be subject to Impact Evaluation: general considerations. UCW. July 2009.
- USDOL-funded ILO Projects. Project Revision Form. USDOL modification number:01. Submission Date: 14 February 2011.

### **Annex 3: List of people interviewed**

- Projects management
  - UCW IE Project
    - Furio Rosati, CTA, UCW IE Project
    - Gabriella Breglia, Project Staff, UCW IE Project
  - IAF
    - Bharati Pflug, Technical Officer (until 2008)
    - Claudia Ibarguen, Technical Officer (from June 2009)
    - Peter E. Wichmand, Head of DED (coordinator of ILO-IPEC work on Impact Assessment, technical backstopping for UCW IE project)
- Project staff in projects with impact evaluation
- ILO-IPEC
  - Constance Thomas, Director IPEC
  - Geir Myrstad, IPEC Head of Operations
- ILO Evaluation Unit
  - Guy Thijs, Director
- USDOL M&E Division
  - Brandie Sasser, Chief
  - Maureen Jaffe, M&E Officer
- Others
  - Participants at the Impact Assessment Expert Meeting June 2011, Geneva (see meeting documentation for list) (included external experts, consultants implementing key components of the IAF project and ILO and UN system staff working on similar issues)

## Annex 4: Evaluating Impacts - An Overview<sup>25</sup>

This page provides a brief introduction to the concepts of impact and impact evaluation and an overview of the work of the Network, in particular through the Network of Networks on Impact Evaluation (NONIE).

### What is impact evaluation?

Impact is one of the five core [evaluation criteria](#) for assessing development results, along with relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. Impact is defined by the DAC as: "Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended" (OECD DAC 2002).

In international development, many evaluations include impact as one of the criteria used to evaluate a development project or programme. The term **impact evaluation** is used to indicate specific types of evaluations that are primarily concerned with final results of interventions (programs, projects, policy measures, reforms) on the welfare of communities, households, and individuals. Impact evaluation is one tool within the larger toolkit of monitoring and evaluation, including broad program evaluations, process evaluations, ex ante studies, thematic evaluations, participatory assessments, etc. (NONIE Guidance, 2009).

Impact evaluations are interested in effects *caused by* a development intervention, or, to use evaluation language, in *attribution*. This means going beyond describing what has happened to look at causality. Evaluating impact will, therefore, often require a *counterfactual*, or an assessment of the effects the development intervention has had, compared to what would have happened had the intervention not taken place.

However, interest in attributing results does not mean that a single set of analytical methods should be used above all others in all situations. In fact, the internationally agreed NONIE [Guidance on Impact Evaluation](#) underlines that no single method is best for addressing the variety of evaluation questions and aspects that might be part of impact evaluations. Particular methods or perspectives complement each other in providing a more complete "picture" of impact. The most appropriate and useful methodology should be selected based on the specific questions or objectives of a given evaluation (as described in the DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation, 2010).



The NONIE [Guidance on Impact Evaluation](#) highlights key conceptual and methodological issues in impact evaluation, covering such topics as delimitation, intervention theory, attribution, and combining methods. It also presents an introduction to such topics as participatory approaches to impact evaluation and assessing impact for complex interventions.

### Rising Interest in Impact Evaluation

Impact evaluation is now high on the development agenda. The increased importance of this type of evaluation is linked to the focus on outcomes, as embodied in the Millennium Development Goals, and the need to demonstrate to donor nations the impact of the development projects they help finance. Driven by

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<sup>25</sup>OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation.

[http://www.oecd.org/document/17/0,3746,en\\_21571361\\_34047972\\_46179985\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/17/0,3746,en_21571361_34047972_46179985_1_1_1_1,00.html).

the results agenda, there is increased international attention by policy makers, practitioners, and evaluators to impact evaluation. Managing for development results implies a number of changes in the way interventions are designed, implemented, monitored, and managed. The role of evaluation in this context is to assess results in a credible and independent fashion, contribute to learning and accountability, and for effective policy decisions and programme improvement.

The Network of Networks for Impact Evaluation, or NONIE (see below), has made considerable progress in expanding awareness of impact evaluation and developed guidance. The World Bank Group's [Development Impact Evaluation Initiative \(DIME\)](#) has supported a number of impact assessments. A new international agency, 3IE, or the [International Initiative for Impact Evaluation](#), was created with the support of DAC members and others to fund and strengthen impact evaluations. A number of other initiatives in and beyond the donor community are looking at assessing impacts in specific sectors or areas of development cooperation. Visit [DEReC](#) to browse DAC member impact evaluations (use the title or keyword search) and for [links to other impact evaluation databases](#).

### **The Value of Impact Evaluation**

Impact evaluation can, if done well under the right circumstance, be a credible and useful tool for understanding development results and the role of development cooperation programmes in supporting change.

International experiences with impact evaluations highlight some of the ways this approach can be useful to development partners (Independent Evaluation Group [Room Doc 3/A](#), 2008):

- Supporting or questioning a program: Impact evaluations demonstrated the effectiveness of conditional cash transfer programs on school attendance, children's visits to clinics, and consumption poverty at a time when these programs were being dismissed by development practitioners. On the other hand, impact evaluations have also shown that some development projects, while popular, do not have the intended impacts.
- Tracking cross-sectoral benefits: Some of the strong development impacts come from interactions across sectors. An impact evaluation showed the linkage between a nutrition program in Bangladesh and secondary schooling for girls. Evaluation of the Mexican piso firme project that upgraded dirt floors to cement in slum housing revealed that the intervention also reduced the incidence of diarrhoea, anaemia, and parasitical infection in children. More recently impact evaluation has shown the education and health effects of rural electrification projects, even though the original emphasis of these projects was on infrastructure.
- Helping to depoliticize decision making: Impact evaluations can help to focus the support for programs on the basis of evidence of the benefits, depoliticizing decisions to some extent. By building an evidence-based case for a programme, they make it difficult for politicians to discontinue their support for the intervention after a change of government. This feature has important implications for decisions within development agencies and bureaucracies as well.

Of course, impact evaluation has important limitations and is not easily applied in the case of a good number of development programmes or policy situations. Impact evaluation is not intended to supplant or displace other evaluation tools. Furthermore, full-scale impact evaluation can be costly. This is one reason why impact evaluation cannot reasonably be expected to be done for more than a relatively small percentage of operations. It is important, therefore, to select subjects carefully so as to build a collection of policy-relevant knowledge.

There are cases where a full-blown, rigorous impact evaluation isn't necessary and where attribution is obvious. For example, where the installation of a pump in a village reduces the amount of time villagers spend walking to get water, a scaled-down impact analysis, namely a simple before-after analysis, without a control group, would be sufficient.

### **NONIE: the Network of Networks on Impact Evaluation**

The DAC Network on Development Evaluation has joined forces with three other major networks to form NONIE (the Network of Networks on Impact Evaluation). In addition to the DAC Evaluation Network, NONIE includes the UN evaluation group (UNEG), the multilateral development banks Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG) and the IOCE, the main evaluation association grouping country evaluation associations. The groups meet to share experiences and discuss how to improve evaluation practice to better capture impacts, as well as strategies for using impact evidence in development policy and programming.

Together these Networks have developed a [Guidance on Impact Evaluation](#)

Read more: [10th Meeting of NONIE](#) (2010)

NONIE was formed to promote quality impact evaluation. NONIE fosters a programme of impact evaluation activities based on a common understanding of the meaning of impact evaluation and approaches to conducting impact evaluation. NONIE focuses on impact evaluation and does not attempt to address wider monitoring and evaluation issues.

To this end NONIE aims to:

- Build an international collaborative research effort for high-quality and useful impact evaluations as a means of improving development effectiveness.
- Provide its members with opportunities for learning, collaboration, guidance, and support, leading to commissioning and carrying out impact evaluations.
- Develop a platform of resources to support impact evaluation by member organizations.