

FUNDED BY THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Independent Midterm Evaluation of the Combating Exploitive Child Labor Through Education in Colombia Project

WorldVision

Cooperative Agreement Number: E-9-K-4-0059



2007

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ASOCOLFLORES	<i>Asociación Colombiana de Exportadores de Flores</i> (Colombian Association of Flower Exporters)
ASOJUNTAS	<i>Asociación de Juntas del Municipio</i> (Association of Municipal Committees)
CINDE	<i>Centro Internacional de Educación y Desarrollo Humano</i> (International Center of Education and Human Development)
CECLE	Combating Exploitive Child Labor Through Education Project
FUNDESCUR	<i>Fundación para el Desarrollo Económico Social y Cultural</i> (Foundation for Economic, Social, and Cultural Development)
ICBF	<i>Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar</i> (Colombian Institute of Family Welfare)
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPEC	International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour
IRE	<i>Índice de Riesgo Escolar</i> (School Risk Index)
PER	<i>Proyecto de Educación Rural</i> (Rural Education Project)
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDOL	United States Department of Labor

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The NGO World Vision has been implementing the Combating Exploitive Child Labor through Education in Colombia Project in the Municipalities of Madrid and Funza, Department of Cundinamarca, Colombia, since October 2004. The project hopes to assist 4,500 children between ages 5 and 17 who work in different activities through the design and implementation of educational projects that will guarantee their enrollment and retention in school.

Based on the terms of reference of the solicitation from the United States Department of Labor (USDOL), World Vision designed a project for the eradication of child labor in the flower plantations of Funza and Madrid. However, during the first months of execution, it was decided to expand the project to all agricultural activities, since it was found that most of the flower production companies in these localities are included in the formal sector and adhere to the labor standards that preclude the hiring of minors.

The goal of the project is to reduce and prevent child labor in the agricultural region of Central Colombia and to achieve participation of the children that work or are at risk of working in the rural intervention area of the project in formal and informal education programs developed by the project. The project further seeks to achieve the following results: (1) awareness raised among parents, governmental institutions and local leaders about the importance of education for children removed/withdrawn from work or those at risk; (2) implementation of formal and informal pilot education programs which are appropriate for children removed/withdrawn from work or those at risk; (3) parents support children in their formal and informal education, and take a stand to prevent child labor; (4) local institutions and community organizations have decided to develop and support projects in various areas for the prevention and reduction of child labor; and (5) public policies associated with child labor in rural areas are revised, or reformulated by key policy makers and authorities. It is worth mentioning that the reduction and prevention of child labor are only specified as part of the project goal. However, they are not contained in the purpose or products of the project.

The project has designed a solid and coherent educational strategy, in line with the country's policies. It has adopted the best of the educational experiences of Colombia and of other countries and has generated a model that it seeks to validate through an experimental method. Contributions such as this have great potential for contribution to the public policies of the country and carry in them the seeds of sustainability. Nevertheless, the experimental model developed by the project does not consider child labor as one of the variables that must be directly impacted, since the schools and classrooms where it will be applied do not consist only of child laborers or children who are at risk of working. In addition, the activities of the non-educational components of the project are weak and poorly developed (Results 1, 3, 4, and 5).

The management of the project exhibits weaknesses in three aspects: (1) lack of consistency among the team members; (2) lack of an external communications strategy; and (3) poor compliance with the established program. These weaknesses put the achievement of results at risk, and it is therefore essential to correct them as soon as possible.

On the other hand, the monitoring system definitions of direct and indirect beneficiaries and prevented and withdrawn beneficiaries are not adjusted to what has been established by USDOL. Therefore, the figures corresponding to the common indicators must be revised based on the USDOL definitions.

The evaluation recommends that the project deepen relations with the Ministries of Education and Social Protection, as well as with the Child Labor Eradication Committee and the International Labour Organization's International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC); make better use of the results of the studies carried out; and include the child labor issue, clearly and visibly, in the educational models. In the project performance area, it is recommended that a work plan be designed for the rest of the period that will guarantee the achievement of results, especially those that are less developed. In addition, it is suggested that the project's logical framework be redesigned, so that it better reflects the project's strategies and activities. These exercises should be used as a basis to solve the cohesion problems observed among the members of the team.

I **CONTEXT, BACKGROUND, AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT**

To properly understand the contributions and challenges of the Combating Exploitive Child Labor Through Education (CECLE) Project being carried out in Colombia, it is convenient to start this report with a succinct introduction to some contextual elements about the education and child labor policies of the country and about some important background facts of the project's formulation. This section also includes a brief description of the results the project intends to achieve.

1.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EDUCATION POLICY IN RURAL AREAS

More than a decade ago, Colombia launched a process of decentralization of the education administration, assigning the Ministry of Education the role of establishing regulations and setting policies, although not enforcing them, which is the role of the municipalities. When a municipality lacks sufficient technical or administrative capabilities to take on the administration of the educational sector, the respective departmental secretariat of education assumes such activity. Funza and Madrid, the municipalities in which the project is working, still have not assumed the administration of the education sector, for which they depend on the Secretariat of Education of the Department of Cundinamarca.

The rural education institutional structure is made up of school networks, including a central school and various adjacent schools. While the latter offer only primary education (first to fifth grade), the central schools provide full primary and secondary education. Given a classroom shortage and great demand, the central schools operate in three shifts: morning, afternoon, and evening.

The *Proyecto de Educación Rural* (Rural Education Project or PER) is the most important initiative taken by the country to improve quality and extend educational coverage in rural areas. It offers a portfolio of pedagogic models that emerged in Colombia and other countries, and which have been proven effective. The CECLE Project has adopted two such models, which are part of its pedagogic proposal: *Escuela Nueva* (New School) and *Aceleración del Aprendizaje* (Acceleration of Learning). *Escuela Nueva* was born in Colombia in 1975 with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as a means to improve the quality of education in the single-teacher rural schools. Since then, the methodology has spread throughout the country and has been formally adopted by the Ministry of Education. *Aceleración del Aprendizaje* is a model initiated in Brazil to respond to the problem of school lag and was formally replicated in Colombia. Both models have been validated and applied up to the fifth grade of primary basic education.

1.2 THE CHILD LABOR ERADICATION COMMITTEE

Additionally, it is worth mentioning that the Child Labor Eradication Committee has been active for more than 10 years and has a high level of institutionalization. It has implemented three child labor eradication plans, the evaluations of which show growing positive results.¹

1.3 CHILD LABOR IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF FUNZA AND MADRID

The request of the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) to submit proposals for the implementation of the CECLE Project established the following:²

There are reports that children illegally employed in Colombia's flower cutting industry are exposed to hazardous working conditions. They handle highly toxic pesticides, mixing them in tanks without gloves, masks or any kind of protection. The long-lasting health effects pesticides cause can be aggravated by malnutrition, which is also endemic among these children. Children also work long hours and at a very fast pace, especially during Christmas and Valentine's Day holidays. Intermediary employment agencies reportedly bring children to work when demand for flowers rises. Commercial flower cultivation takes place in the Savannah in the outskirts of Bogotá, and it has been reported that most children working in the flower industry live in the localities of Madrid and Funza. Children's participation in the flower industry is difficult to ascertain. As of yet, there is no reliable data on participation, working conditions, or how these children's education and well-being are affected.

Based on these assertions, World Vision designed a project for the eradication of child labor in the flower plantations of Funza and Madrid. However, during the first months of implementation, it was decided to expand the project to all agricultural activities, since it was found that most of the flower production companies of these municipalities are in the formal sector and adhere to the labor standards that preclude the hiring of minors.³

The municipalities of Funza and Madrid are part of the outskirts of Bogota, so their socioeconomic dynamics are strongly associated with this city. Most of the population lives in the municipal zones (92% Funza and 86% Madrid) and many people work in Bogota. The agricultural sector is characterized by large property developments or units requiring great investment, such as the flower plantations. Smallholdings, therefore, are not prevalent in this region.

Approximately one out of every four children and adolescents between 5 and 17 years of age works in these municipalities. The following table shows the sectors in which they work:⁴

¹ Gloria Vela, 1986, *Contribución a la consolidación de la Política Nacional para la prevención y eliminación del Trabajo Infantil en Colombia. Informe de Evaluación Final/Contribution to the consolidation of the National Policy for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labor in Colombia. Final Evaluation Report.* Bogota: stencil copy.

² Federal Register/Vol. 69, No. 143/Tuesday, July 27, 2004/Notices.

³ Interviews with the Project Director, the President of ASOCOLFLORES, and the Director of CINDE. Additionally, Project Revision Form dated July 6, 2006.

⁴ National University of Colombia, Project Baseline Survey, 2006.

Table 1: Child Labor Incidence, by Sector

Sector	Funza	Madrid
Agriculture and Livestock	29.6%	22.7%
Manufacturing Industry	2.5%	11.2%
Construction	13.7%	12.8%
Trading	27.1%	19.3%
Transport, Storage, and Communications	1.9%	0.9%
Hotels and Restaurants	4.0%	6.6%
Household Services	15.0%	18.8%
Social and Personal Services	5.0%	7.8%
Distribution of gas, electricity, etc.	1.1%	

1.4 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

World Vision has been implementing CECLE in the municipalities of Madrid and Funza of the Department of Cundinamarca in Colombia since October 2004. The project beneficiaries are 4,500 children between ages 5 and 17 who work or are at risk of working in different sectors. Through the design and implementation of educational actions and support to the families and the community, the project seeks to prevent the children from working or to withdraw them from work if they are already working.

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II EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this evaluation are:

- To assist the grantee in identifying areas of good performance and areas where the project could improve its implementation.
- To support USDOL in learning what works and what does not work concerning the conceptualization and design of projects.
- To assess the degree of fulfillment of the objectives of the project.
- To assess the progress of the project concerning the labor and educational situation of children.
- To assess the accuracy of the project performance data for the USDOL common indicators.
- To assess the quality of the educational services provided to the beneficiary children of the project.
- To assess the degree of sustainability of the project interventions.

To achieve these objectives, the following design and implementation aspects of the project will be analyzed:

- Project design and implementation
- Coordination and partnerships
- Management and budget
- Sustainability and impact

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III METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The following techniques were used to collect the information:

Document Analysis

The following documents were analyzed: project document, cooperative agreement, solicitation of grant applications, management procedures and guidelines, progress reports, technical and financial reports, performance monitoring plan (PMP), work plan, research reports (International Center of Education and Human Development—CINDE and University of the Andes), baseline study, tools and indices developed during project implementation, and other background documents.

Interviews and Focus Groups

The following persons were interviewed:

- Washington, DC World Vision Representative
- World Vision National Director in Colombia
- Director of the project
- Education expert
- Monitoring and evaluation expert
- Project field staff
- National government agency representatives: Ministry of Education, Secretariat of Education of Cundinamarca, Ministry of Social Welfare, *Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar* (Colombian Institute of Family Welfare or ICBF), National Child Labor Eradication Committee
- Representatives of the Funza and Madrid Municipalities
- Representative of ILO-IPEC
- Representatives of nongovernmental organizations and project partners: FUNDESCUR, CINDE, National University, University of the Andes, PRODEOCSA, ASOCOLFLORES, *Volvamos a la Gente* (Back to the People) Foundation, Social Vision
- Leaders of the community organizations of Funza and Madrid (ASOJUNTAS)
- Teachers of the schools participating in the project

Additionally, focus groups were planned with project beneficiary parents and children from Funza and Madrid. However, since only a few accepted the invitation, interviews were conducted instead. It is worth mentioning that up until January 2007, the project had only accomplished limited activities with children and their families; therefore, the evaluation mission had little information directly provided by the beneficiaries.

Feedback

Once the task of gathering information was completed, a presentation was prepared on the initial results for consideration by the project stakeholders.

VI EVALUATION FINDINGS

4.1 ANALYSIS OF THE DESIGN

As stated in Point 1.3, the original project design consisted of a proposal to eradicate child labor in the flower plantations of the Madrid and Funza Districts, in response to the erroneous information of the terms of reference developed by USDOL. Later, the project realized that the flower industry did not employ minors as workers, confirming what the Colombian Association of Flower Exporters (ASOCOLFLORES) had stated in this respect.⁵ This error had two negative effects. First, after the baseline study results were known, substantial aspects of the project had to be modified which, at the same time, delayed the completion of the initial timetable. Second, a skeptical perception of the project arose in some organizations, which considered the problem of working on flower plantations to be non-existent and the focus on the districts of Funza and Madrid a non-priority, thus generating an initially unfavorable climate for the development of inter-institutional relations.

The final logical framework of the project was elaborated in August 2005 and established the following framework.

Goal: Child labor in the central agricultural area of Colombia has been reduced and prevented.

Purpose: Children who work or are at risk of working in rural intervention areas participate in the formal and nonformal education programs developed by the project.

Results:

1. Parents, authorities, and local leaders are aware of the importance of education for working children.
2. Formal and nonformal education pilot programs appropriate for children that work or at risk of working are implemented.
3. Parents support the formal or nonformal education of their children and prevent child labor.
4. Local institutions and community organizations have decided to develop and support projects to prevent and reduce child labor.
5. Public policies associated with child labor in rural areas have been revised or reformulated by the authorities.

⁵ ASOCOLFLORES sent USDOL a letter on September 17, 2004 acknowledging awareness of the proposal request (SGA 04-10), indicating that its associates do not employ minors and requesting the change of the project target population.

As can be seen, the logical framework establishes that the goal of the project is to reduce and prevent child labor. Nevertheless, the purpose and the results do not include that principle; only the fourth result mentions the reduction of child labor, but as will be seen later, it focuses more on the sustainability of the actions than on the accomplishment of the goal and the purpose.

In addition, only one indicator of the purpose expresses the intention to reduce child labor: number of children withdrawn from the worst forms of labor. This, however, is not consistent with the declaration of the purpose, which does not mention the reduction of child labor, but exclusively schooling of working children.

Finally, there is a lack of correspondence between the activities actually carried out by the project and those described in the logical framework. Among other things, the logical framework only considers conducting a study on child labor in Funza and Madrid (the baseline study mentioned in Activity 1.1.1), but the project has performed four studies: the baseline study in Funza and Madrid; the child labor characterization study in the agricultural sector in eight municipalities; a study on academic achievements, school attendance, and child labor; and lastly, the School Risk Index study.⁶ This aspect and other similar ones will be addressed in detail as achievement of each result is analyzed.

On the other hand, it is worth mentioning, as will be seen later, that the project is adapted to the country's policies on child labor and seeks to achieve the four objectives of the Educational Initiative of USDOL. In fact, child labor policies are included in the 2003–2006 National Child Labor Eradication Plan, three objectives of which are part of the project strategy: (1) deepening the knowledge on child labor issues; (2) boosting the development, consolidation, and implementation of public policies directly or indirectly related to social inclusion processes conducive to child labor prevention, restitution of the rights of child laborers (female and male), among them universal education; and (3) changing the cultural standards that legitimate and promote child labor.⁷ It must be mentioned that on child labor issues, this plan is the instrument of the Ministry of Social Welfare, headed by the Technical Secretariat of the Child Labor Eradication Committee. The Ministry of Education policy concerning the rural sector is implemented by the PER project. The educational models promoted by the project are part of the PER innovation portfolio. Additionally, from the perspective of the ICBF, the World Vision project is adequately framed in the institutional policy for the eradication of child labor and has succeeded in articulating the child labor issue with education and in directing its actions to the rural area, thus filling a space unoccupied by another institution.⁸ Furthermore, the project abides by resolution 004448 of the Ministry of Social Welfare, prohibiting some forms of labor for children younger than 18 years of age⁹ by including them among the criteria that define the worst forms of labor in the monitoring system. Finally, it is worth mentioning that the National Attorney General's Office is the entity responsible for monitoring public policies on child

⁶ Although this last one is part of the monitoring and evaluation system, and consequently is not strictly a study, it is advisable to consider it as such, due to the methodological complexity of the instrument and the resources and time the project has invested in it.

⁷ OIT, 2003, Third National Plan for the Eradication of Child Labor and the Protection of Youth Labor 2003–2006, ILO; Bogota.

⁸ Interview with Lila Flores, Special Population Groups Coordinator, ICBF.

⁹ Ministry of Social Welfare, 2005, Resolution N° 004448. December 2nd, 2005, Ministry of Social Welfare, stencil copy.

protection and, consequently, supervising municipal and provincial authorities' compliance with the national policy on child labor issues. Since the project intends to promote the participation of municipal authorities, its strategy supports the work of the Attorney General's Office.¹⁰

4.2 ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.2.1 Result 1: Parents, authorities, and local leaders are aware of the importance of education for child laborers

The project considered achieving this result through a strategy based on the elaboration of a study on the nature and magnitude of child labor in Funza and Madrid and the subsequent dissemination of results as a means to raise awareness among the local stakeholders. In effect, World Vision invited several universities to submit proposals and the winner was the National University. The study results were presented to different local and national audiences. However, this activity by itself is not considered a sufficient mechanism to raise awareness among parents, authorities, and local leaders, since the time of exposure of the different audiences was minimal.

Additionally, the project contracted the International Center of Education and Human Development (CINDE) to conduct a study titled, "Description of the Child Labor Situation in some Agricultural Sectors and Related Factors in Eight Colombian Districts," aimed at extending the benefits of the project beyond Funza and Madrid, an activity that was not foreseen in the logical framework. Based on the research results, CINDE conducted feedback workshops with the main stakeholders of the eight municipalities. In addition, it prepared an educational calendar for families, with messages about education and child labor based on the research findings. Since World Vision has not begun activities in favor of child labor eradication in those municipalities, the main benefit of the work performed by CINDE is considered to be limited to the research, and this has not promoted the increase of awareness of the main stakeholders with respect to education for child laborers.

It must be mentioned that both studies have an unquestionable technical and academic value. They are thorough and represent a significant contribution, not only to the problem of insight into child labor in Colombia, but also to the arsenal of research methods in this field. Nonetheless, the dissemination of results—even among the informed public—has been scant. On the other hand, the format in which the results are presented has not helped their disclosure, either. Two format types have been considered: the publication of full reports and the publication of summary booklets for mass distribution. However, the reports are large and even specialists refrain from reading them. In fact, only one out of the more than 20 experts interviewed confirmed having read the reports, despite having them in electronic copy. It is advisable that the project design new dissemination materials about the studies conducted: PowerPoint presentations, videos, press material, technical summaries, etc.

The deficiencies observed in the field of the dissemination of the studies are only one aspect of a more serious problem: the absence of an institutional and social communications strategy. Actually, most of the representatives of local and national institutions interviewed had only a general idea about the activities the project is conducting. Some institutional stakeholders had

¹⁰ ILO, 2003, (op cit)

only had indirect contact with project personnel, and most of them were not even aware of the pedagogical proposal. Moreover, a minority has the perception that the project has only conducted marginally useful studies and that the money should be invested in more direct action. In view of this, it may be concluded that until now, the project has not been able to convey to its stakeholders the logic of its intervention, the contribution of the studies conducted, and the vision of its pedagogical change proposal. This has happened among the project associates that share the same vision with respect to child labor as well as among the institutions that have been targeted for the project's awareness-raising activities.

Despite the above, at the local level, the project has managed to obtain the support of the municipal authorities, the community leaders, and the educational authorities. In effect, these actors contributed to the adequate development of the studies and the educational activities that the project has conducted until now and which will be examined in the next section. In particular, the Association of Municipal Committees of Funza (ASOJUNTAS) and the Municipality of Madrid have become very important partners of the project. It is predicted that during the second stage, the local stakeholders will play a more important role. Additionally, the project has established a relationship with PRODEOCSA, a local NGO formed by several companies within the sector, an alliance that is expected to yield fruitful results.

Finally, the project also conducted a survey on attitudes and perceptions with public sector officials, with a view to gathering information to supply the 1.1.1 indicator of this result. Since the second round of the survey has not been applied yet, it is not possible to know whether or not there were changes caused by the project.

4.2.2 Result 2: Formal and informal education pilot programs appropriate for children who work or are at risk of working are implemented

This result is the focus of the project's action and the one in which the most resources and time have been invested. The activities of this result may be broken down as follows:

Table 2: Project Activities, by Year

Activities	Execution Year
1. Studies about academic achievement and the risk of school desertion	2005, 2006
2. Establishment of agreements with municipal, departmental, and national authorities to implement pedagogical models in Madrid and Funza	2005, 2006
3. Identification of pedagogical models and design of educational material	2006
4. Implementation of the Home Curriculum	2006, 2007
5. Implementation of <i>Escuela Nueva</i> and <i>Aceleración del Aprendizaje</i> programs	2007, 2008

Studies about academic achievement and the risk of school desertion

The Center for Economic Development Studies of the University of the Andes was commissioned to carry out the study “Academic achievement, school attendance, and risk of child and youth labor in the Bogotá Savannah,” the final report of which has already been published by the university.

The study about the *Índice de Riesgo Escolar* (School Risk Index or IRE) was coordinated by an external consultant, with the support of the project team, and will be one of the instruments for monitoring the results of the experimental application of the pedagogical models. The IRE seeks to establish the impact of a set of variables (school system, family environment, educational activity) on the learning and desertion of children. None of the variables considers child labor.

The same observations made in the previous section apply to the study carried out by the University of the Andes. The quality of the work done and its conclusions deserve greater dissemination. This research work and the one conducted by CINDE have the potential to provoke important reflections on educational policies and the eradication of child labor. Therefore, greater dissemination of the results would be appropriate in both academic media as well as among the institutions in charge of public policies.

Establishment of agreements with municipal, department, and national authorities to implement pedagogical models in Madrid and Funza

With a view to implementing educational models in Funza and Madrid, the project has established agreements with the Secretariat of Education of Cundinamarca, with the Municipalities of Funza and Madrid, and with the schools and educational centers in the area. The agreement with the Secretariat of Education is of fundamental importance, since this office will be the one in charge of formalizing the pedagogical models once they have been validated. The project has managed to establish a smooth and solid relationship with this Secretariat, despite the absence of a written agreement. Municipal authorities are adequately informed and support the execution of the project, as do the school authorities.

Identification of pedagogical models and design of educational material

The project has designed three types of intervention in the schools of Funza and Madrid: experimental, pre-experimental, and general. Table 3 shows the details of the pedagogical model, the objective, and the beneficiaries of each one.¹¹

¹¹ According to the Project database, as at December 2006, there were 1.779 beneficiaries. This table does not include 132 children belonging to the “control group” schools, which do not receive any kind of direct benefit.

Table 3: Descriptions of Interventions in Schools

Type of intervention in schools	Pedagogical Model	Objective	Target population	Number of beneficiaries
Experimental	<i>Escuela Nueva</i> (New School)	Improve the quality of education to increase achievement and prevent school desertion.	Seventh and ninth grade grammar and mathematics students	183
	Home Curriculum	Improve the contribution of parents to the education of their children	Parents	190
	<i>Escuela Nueva</i> and Home Curriculum	Improve the quality of education to increase achievement and prevent school desertion and improve the contribution of parents to the education of their children.	Seventh and ninth grade grammar and mathematics students and their parents	245
Pre-experimental	<i>Aceleración del Aprendizaje</i>	Educate children who have stopped attending school for three or more years and provide them with an adequate learning model.	Child laborers over 10 years old who have quit school for three years or more	216
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School subsidies • Provision of educational material • Other specific actions 	Depends on each action.	Depends on each action.	298 515

Experimental participation in schools

As already mentioned, *Escuela Nueva* is an educational model with a long tradition of application in Colombia that, nonetheless, has been restricted mostly to rural single-teacher primary schools, with great success. The project seeks to introduce this same model in schools that offer basic secondary education, initially through the grammar and mathematics subjects of the seventh and ninth grades. The *Volvamos a la Gente* (Let's Return to the People) Foundation has been commissioned by the project to design the educational material and to provide training to teachers. The application of this model will begin during the current year (2007).

The inclusion of a model aimed at parents is justified by the findings of the research on academic achievements and schooling (University of the Andes) referring to the close relationship between the academic achievements of the students and the educational environment at home. The Home Curriculum seeks, precisely, to improve the family environment in favor of the education of the children through parental training. The project began using this model in Funza, in 2006.

The experimental nature of the *Escuela Nueva* and Home Curriculum models consists of studying the effects of their application in the learning achievements of the children. Four school groups have been formed according to a scheme that includes schools that form a control group, where there will be no pedagogical intervention, another group of schools where only the *Escuela Nueva* model will be applied, a third group where only the Home Curriculum will be applied, and one more group where both models will be applied.

Control Group

Escuela Nueva

Home Curriculum

Escuela Nueva + Home Curriculum

The instrument that will be used to observe the effects of the models will be the Education Risk Index already mentioned. According to the *Volvamos a la Gente* Foundation, this is the first time in more than 30 years of operation of the *Escuela Nueva* that the methodology is the subject of a study of this kind. It considers that the results of this intervention will have very significant effects in the educational policies of the country, since they would prove that there are more effective educational models that could be introduced in all schools.

The experimental model developed by the project does not consider child labor as one of the variables which it will affect directly, since the schools and classrooms where the *Escuela Nueva* model will be applied are not composed only of child laborers or children at risk. Nor does the School Risk Index consider child labor as one of the factors associated with retention in school and educational achievement. The project has adopted the criterion that child labor is associated with school desertion and non-attendance, which would be the result of low educational achievement, which in turn would be directly related to the quality of education, understood as school education and home upbringing. Under this criterion, an improvement in the quality of education would increase school achievement and schooling, and this would decrease child labor. Nevertheless, introducing the child labor variable into the IRE would enable the project to study the effect of child labor on academic achievement and school desertion.

Pre-experimental participation in schools

Aceleración del Aprendizaje (Accelerated Learning) is an answer for those children and adolescents who have been absent from primary school for more than three years and cannot therefore be readmitted to regular school programs. The model consists of offering the children an accelerated curriculum that compacts primary education (grades 1 to 5) into one year of 157 class days of four hours a day. The children that complete the model receive a certificate of having completed the primary education cycle and may then enroll in a regular school. This model was created in Brazil, where it was highly successful. Through a bi-national agreement, it was officially introduced by the Ministry of Education in Colombia in the year 2000. World Vision also has the support of another NGO (Social Vision) for the training of teachers who will work with first to fifth grade children. Additionally, the project seeks to expand the model up to the ninth grade, since until now it only offers the first to fifth grades. To that end, it has entrusted the preparation of educational material to FUNDESCUR, which will soon have it ready. The project team will be in charge of training teachers in the use of this new material.

As with *Escuela Nueva*, the application of this model will begin this year. Social Vision already trained the teachers of Funza in 2006 and will do the same with the teachers of Madrid in 2007. It is worth mentioning that this intervention is the only one of the three specifically aimed at child laborers.

General participation in schools

General participation activities are activities that the project carries out in schools where no experimental or pre-experimental interventions will be carried out and are mostly specific actions. In effect, with funds from World Vision US, different from those of USDOL, the project delivered computers to several schools in the “control group” last year, thus guaranteeing their participation in the project, but without any pedagogic interventions that might add biases and hinder the experimental exercise. However, this delivery has not been well explained to the school authorities of some establishments that participate in the experimental mode, who believe that their schools have been unfairly deprived of that benefit.

Last year, the project also gave educational subsidies in Funza, in coordination with the municipal authorities. The idea was to support a district program consisting of giving subsidies to children who were not able to enroll in public schools because of over enrollment and, therefore, there was a shortage of vacancies. Since the municipality does not have the funds required to open more schools, it created a subsidies system through which it pays private schools to educate the children who cannot be enrolled. The project joined that initiative, granting subsidies for 300 children. Nevertheless, the distribution of the subsidies was not strict and in some cases benefited children with a profile that did not match the one that the project should serve.¹² In addition, the project will not follow up with the children who received subsidies, so this activity does not seem to be sustainable.

In Madrid, in turn, the project promoted schooling of children older than 12 years who were not attending school, and who had not completed primary school. This took place through an agreement with private schools in Madrid which, using project funds, hired teachers specifically for these children and provided accelerated education (although they did not have adequate material or training). After sitting for a final exam, 75% of the participants obtained their primary school certificate issued by the Secretariat of Education. The project team, in addition, held different recreational and educational events with these students. The project has not yet decided whether or not it will support schooling of these children during 2007.

Beneficiaries’ opinions about Home Curriculum program in Funza and schooling in Madrid

The evaluation mission interviewed the parents who attended Home Curriculum in Funza and the children who participated in the schooling activities in Madrid. During the interviews with the parents, it could be observed that the model had indeed contributed to improving the support given by the parents to their children through changes in the daily home routine, the adaptation of spaces for studying, and other changes in family habits and values. Those interviewed were of

¹² Specifically, the Santa Ana school subsidized students who had already been in the school in previous years, who had a good academic record, and who did not work. The school principal was in charge of the selection, together with the Education Official of the Municipality, as there were no selection regulations available. Furthermore, the President of ASOJUNTAS stated that the Municipality grants subsidies to children that do not need them.

the opinion that the model was very useful and appeared happy to have participated. The interviews with the children whose parents attended the training workshops confirmed the changes mentioned by the parents. They stated that after their parents attended the workshops, they started to support them more with their school homework and now they don't interrupt them while they are doing it. Furthermore, they do not allow them to skip classes and they congratulate them when they get good grades.

The students who participated in the schooling activities in Madrid, mostly working teenagers over 12 years of age, showed much enthusiasm about going back to school and intention to continue studying even at the expense of quitting work. They felt especially comfortable about studying with children of their own age who face problems similar to their own. They were wondering if the project would continue to support them the next year (2007).

Observations about the results obtained

In the first place, it is worth underscoring the pertinence of the education strategy of the project and of the models selected with respect to the national education policy. In effect, the project opted to contribute to the evolution of two models that were already underway in the country (*Escuela Nueva* and *Aceleración del Aprendizaje*), creating the materials required to extend them beyond the primary cycle/lower school. Furthermore, it is predicted that Home Curriculum will be a significant contribution to the efforts of Colombia to improve the education that children receive. Once the materials for these models have been validated and formalized by the Ministry of Education, the sector will have more and better educational tools. Soon, these models may be part of the portfolio of methods promoted by the PER, which would guarantee their replication in the rural areas of the country. This perspective is in the agenda of both the Ministry of Education and the Secretariat of Education of Cundinamarca, so it may be expected that the methodologies will be successfully transferred. The institutions specialized in educational and child labor issues (Colombian Institute of Family Welfare, *Volvamos a la Gente* Foundation, FUNDESCUR, CINDE) consider this the most relevant contribution of the project. In addition, the IRE prepared by the project could be a significant contribution to educational action in the country, as it is an instrument that would enable guiding the teachers and authorities in their struggle against school desertion.

Additionally, these models respond to some educational problems that emerge among the child laborers: (1) lack of adequate school offerings for children who are many years behind in school studies, (2) the difficulty of changing the family culture that promotes child labor and does not encourage education, and (3) the poor quality of education in public schools, which encourages school absenteeism and does not promote academic achievement. The project has been able to identify solutions to these basic problems of the educational system that prevent education from becoming the primary element in combating child labor.

In the second place, there is insufficient incorporation of the child labor issue in educational models. In particular, the teacher training could include more content and materials for reflection about child labor, since it is well known that this is an issue about which teachers have little awareness. The introduction of specific modules about child labor in the training process of the *Escuela Nueva* and *Aceleración del Aprendizaje* programs would contribute to changing the culture among the teachers that promotes child labor. The workshops that Home Curriculum

conducts with the parents would also be enriched if a specific module on child labor were added. The materials already developed and validated by other organizations such as IPEC could be used for this.

In the third place, there is a lack of coordination between the activities conducted with the group of schools that the project calls *general participation* and the other groups of schools (experimental and pre-experimental). The project's intervention in the general participation schools aims at raising school enrollment but without addressing the practices that promote child labor and without fostering greater awareness among teachers and parents regarding the issue.

It would also be advisable to add educational and recreational activities to the *Aceleración del Aprendizaje* model, using the children's free time. This kind of activity has great potential for stimulating personal growth in adolescents and promoting their vocational formation. In fact, the project team organized centers of interest with the children of Madrid who attended classes for over-age children, which attracted their utmost interest. However, it was not well structured, nor was it an activity that formed part of the pedagogical model. The personal history of the children that are several years behind has been marked by premature labor, events that have been harmful to their development, and the lack of protective and guiding experiences. The educational model could well offer them room for reflection, support, and socialization, even though specific, which may enable them to grow better.

4.2.3 Result 3: Parents support the formal or informal education of their children and prevent child labor

This result incorporates the following sub-results: (1) achieve parents' support for formal and informal education of their children and prevent child labor and (2) achieve improvement by parents of their capacity to support economically their children's education.

Based on an analysis of the previous result, Home Curriculum is the model that is charged with achieving the first sub-result. In fact, the project has not conducted any other intervention in this field, so this sub-result should form part of Result 2 and not of Result 3.

With respect to the second sub-result, World Vision developed a labor supply and demand study in Madrid and determined that the best way to improve parental income is to implement a training project on organic agriculture that will be implemented during 2007 and will benefit approximately 400 people. The project obtained from the municipality a contribution of six hectares of land for agricultural activities and technical assistance. It is expected that participants completing the course will receive the support of the *Producir* (To Produce) Foundation (under World Vision) to obtain seed capital and form production associations.

Given the great geographical dispersion of the project beneficiaries, it is hard to predict the impact that this activity will have on the households' economy.

4.2.4 Result 4: Local institutions and community organizations have decided to develop and support projects for the prevention and reduction of child labor

To date, the project has not engaged in actions for achieving this result, with the exception of the relationship built with the ASOJUNTAS of Funza and Madrid and with the nongovernmental organization PRODEOCSA. In the future, these relations might lead to the design of projects for the prevention and reduction of child labor. However, the project is not conducting activities for achieving this result, nor does it have a defined strategy for achieving it.

Given the emphasis placed on the development and implementation of educational models and the volume of work it entails for the project field team, it is not very likely that this result will be adequately implemented. Additionally, it does not appear to be consistent with the analyzed educational strategy, basically focusing on the schools and with hardly any contact with community organizations.

4.2.5 Result 5: Public policies associated with child labor in rural areas have been revised or reformulated by the authorities

The main activity of the project aimed at obtaining this result has been to inform the local and national authorities about the objectives of the project and the research results. In particular, the project achieved the inclusion of the results of the studies in the new child labor eradication plan.

Due to the emphasis of the project on the educational aspect, it is not expected to develop much capacity to influence the public policies associated with child labor.

Furthermore, the work in the eight rural municipalities where the CINDE study was developed is just starting and it is not expected that significant progress will be achieved during the next two years; thus the contribution of World Vision to the national child labor policy in the rural area appears weak.

On the contrary, its contribution to educational policies may be substantial, as explained in the analysis of Result 2. If the project should introduce more child labor-related elements in the educational models, as previously suggested, its contributions could cover not only education but also its relationship with child labor.

4.3 MONITORING

The core of the monitoring system of the project is the IRE, through which it seeks to establish if the *Escuela Nueva* and *Currículo del Hogar* models had any effect on the learning achievements of the children. The project field team has invested a great deal of time gathering data for this system and it expects to continue doing so during 2008, once the application of the models has been completed. This system gathers data only from those beneficiaries participating in the models mentioned.

The other important component of the system is the biannual survey on educational and labor activities conducted by the children benefiting from the project. This is the basis for the

elaboration of the reports to the donor. The instrument contains seven questions about the labor activities performed by the children, including two on household chores, and includes detailed instructions about definitions and concepts. The survey is applied by the project field team, which hands it over to the children for them to fill out. If the children are unable to read and write, the project promoter does it for them.

Problems have been detected in the definition and use of the following key concepts of the monitoring system: (1) exploitive child labor, (2) withdrawn and prevented, and (3) direct and indirect beneficiaries.

4.3.1 Exploitive Child Labor

The project considers that a child is a worker, regardless of age, if he works for pay one or more hours per week or if he works unpaid, including household chores, for 15 or more hours per week. The project has not incorporated the definition of *exploitive child labor*, but only that of *worst forms of labor*. It has applied the latter definition to the monitoring system and has thus elaborated a list of children engaged in the *worst forms of labor*, which account for 58% of the children engaged in some labor activity (548 out of 948). The list has been prepared taking into account Resolution 004448, issued by the Ministry of Social Welfare concerning prohibited labor. Out of the total number of children that the project considers as working in the worst forms, 60% work in agriculture or selling for a business. However, it is worth noting that this work does not necessarily match the definition of worst forms of labor established by the ILO in Section 3, paragraphs (a) (b) (c) and (d) under Convention 182.

Although the project took Resolution 004448 into account to elaborate the list of worst forms of labor, it still needs to be refined. It must be mentioned, for example, that not all activities carried out by children in agriculture may be considered among the worst forms of child labor, since the resolution does not mention agricultural activities carried out as unpaid, family work, aimed at auto-consumption. Likewise, the resolution establishes that children must not work in *retail trade* and does not mention *sales* as does the project. It would be advisable for the project to disaggregate the type of agricultural activities and services conducted by the children and analyze, based on the definitions given by USDOL and the resolution of the Ministry of Social Welfare, which of them fall under the category of exploitive child labor. In particular, it would be advisable to identify the number of children that work in the modern agribusiness sector, especially floriculture, as the baseline report does not offer such information.

The definition of exploitive child labor is particularly complex in this project because, unlike other projects focused on communities with a high incidence of a certain type of exploitive child labor, this one works with an economically and socially heterogeneous population, where there is no main productive activity. As indicated by the project database itself, 10% of the children work in agriculture, 20% in sales businesses, 34% at their own homes, 8% in other families' homes, and the remaining 28% in 33 other activities. There is no single particularly exploitive labor activity predominating in these localities that can be easily detected (as it was presumed when it was determined that this project should eradicate child labor in the flower-growing sector).

4.3.2 Withdrawn and Prevented

On the other hand, the project has not adopted the definitions of USDOL regarding children prevented and withdrawn from labor. In effect, neither the database (tracking system) nor the report on the results of the labor survey prepared in December 2002 includes these variables, which indicates that the project is not recording them.

The PMP Data Tracking Table of July 2006 does not include these variables either; however, the one issued in September 2006 includes goals for the categories of children prevented and withdrawn from labor: in the first case, 122 and 516 in the second. It is not clear how the project calculated these figures. In any case, they do not correspond to the concepts used by USDOL, since they were not based on the monitoring data of the labor situation of each of the children, but rather on the number of children who had attended school previously and the number of children that have returned to schooling programs. Under these circumstances, it is highly probable that children still performing exploitive work may have been categorized as removed from labor. On the other hand, since the retention and completion rates are calculated based on the *withdrawn* and *prevented* concepts, these figures have not been properly calculated.

4.3.3 Direct and Indirect Beneficiaries

The project classifies direct beneficiaries in four categories: experimental, pre-experimental, direct benefits, and benefits. However, not all these types match the USDOL definition of direct beneficiaries, since not all of them receive direct educational services. As shown in the table below, children participating in Home Curriculum, experimental group, and “benefits” should be classified as indirect beneficiaries, since they have not received any educational service in a direct manner. Thus, the number of direct beneficiaries reported in 2006 should not be 1,779, but 942.

Table 4: Project Interventions, by Type of Service Received

Type of intervention	Educational model or activity conducted	Type of service received
Experimental	<i>Escuela Nueva</i>	Direct
	Home Curriculum	Indirect
	<i>Escuela Nueva</i> + Home Curriculum	Direct
	Control group	Indirect
Pre-experimental	<i>Aceleración del Aprendizaje</i>	Direct
Direct benefits	Subsidies and scholarships granted in Madrid and Funza	Direct
Benefits	Provision of educational material and equipment to schools	Indirect

From what has been observed to this point, the project should adjust its definitions to meet the USDOL standards concerning direct and indirect and prevented and withdrawn beneficiaries, and perform a more thorough analysis of the children that are engaged in exploitive labor. Finally, it would be advisable for the project to consider the possibility of including the child labor variable in the IRE.

4.4 COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

In the field of inter-institutional coordination, the project has managed to establish agreements with organizations of great prestige to execute the components of the studies and the design of educational material and training of teachers. In effect, it has had the collaboration of the National and the Andes Universities and of CINDE to carry out studies and has worked with the *Volvamos a la Gente*, FUNDESCUR, and World Vision Foundations to prepare the educational material and train the teachers. It is worth noting that all of these organizations are specialized and widely experienced in the execution of the project tasks.

Additionally, the project has established solid relations with the Secretariat of Education of Cundinamarca and with the ICBF, key institutions for the replication and sustainability of the educational proposal of the project.

On the other hand, it has had specific and limited relations with the Ministries of Education and Social Welfare (Vice Ministry of Labor Relations), with ILO-IPEC, and with the Child Labor Eradication Committee. These institutions, although acquainted with the project, have little information on the activities it performs, the targets it pursues, and the vision that the project has about education and child labor. The project has apparently not been able to identify the role that these organizations could play in the formalization and sustainability of its results and, on the other hand, still does not see the role that World Vision could play in the efforts of the country to eradicate child labor. The reflection about both aspects could assist the project to improve connections with these organizations.

In the local environment, it has established cooperative agreements with the municipalities and ASOJUNTAS of Funza and Madrid. In particular, the relations with the municipality of Madrid are quite productive, as it has achieved its contribution to developing a training project in organic agriculture, and the secretary of education is very involved in the project activities. Furthermore, World Vision participates in the Social Policy Board of the municipality. In addition, the project has a relationship with the non-governmental organization PRODEOCSA, with which it has planned to execute joint actions in the future.

4.5 MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Before analyzing the findings of the evaluation of the project's management, it would be advisable to present some elements of the institutional context that may help to understand the management dynamics.

In the first place, it must be noted that this is the first time that World Vision Colombia is executing a project that involves the field of local and national public policies and seeks to combat child labor through educational innovations. Until a few years ago, the projects that World Vision executed were basically directed to the delivery of services or resources to children and their families. Consequently, the execution of this project has represented a challenge to the organization. In the second place, it is worth recalling that the project had to reformulate its strategy after verifying that there were no children working in the flower-growing companies in Funza and Madrid, which delayed its execution.

World Vision responded to these challenges by creating a Support Committee formed by leaders of distinct areas of the organization, to supervise and provide advisory services as needed.

4.5.1 Management Strengths

The most important management strength of the project is having produced a solid educational proposal, relevant to the environment and with a strategic vision that, if it turns out as envisaged, could make a significant contribution to the country. Plenty has been said about this subject, so it suffices to mention it here briefly.

Another important strength consists of having adequately chosen the institutional partners that have collaborated with the development of the studies and of the educational materials. We refer to the National and the Andes Universities, entities with great academic prestige that managed to develop high quality products; and to FUNDESCUR, *Volvamos a la Gente* Foundation, and CINDE. The latter enjoy technical recognition not only nationally, but also on an international level. Furthermore, the management has been able to recruit professionals of wide international reputation to perform the educational intervention that, as has been said before, is visionary.

4.5.2 Management Weaknesses

The weaknesses of the project management may be divided into three aspects: (1) lack of consistency among the team members, (2) lack of an external communications strategy, and (3) weak program fulfillment.

The lack of consistency among the team members around a strategic vision and the project challenges is shown in the poor coordination and complementarity of the field team with the project management. In a way, different understandings have been created between both groups as to what the project is and what it should be, which are expressed in the dissatisfaction of the field team with the conduct of the project. Several factors seem to have contributed to creating this dissatisfaction. First, the weak intervention of the project in the two municipalities during the first two years, during which the studies were conducted and the educational materials were designed, created expectations among the authorities and local leaders that have not been met. Some of them have pointed out that the project has created too much diagnosis and too little action. This has generated a tense atmosphere, which the field team members have handled with difficulty, since they are not the ones that make decisions about when and how to intervene. Furthermore, they have dedicated a great part of their effort and time during 2005 and 2006 to gathering information, first for the survey on the educational and labor situation of the children and then, over four months, for the IRE. These activities have restricted their capacity to respond to the demands of the population to take action. Additionally, the sporadic presence in the field of the project's key personnel has contributed to the lack of coordination of the team as a whole and, most likely, has been one of the causes of errors such as the already-mentioned erroneous allocation of subsidies to some children in Funza and a troublesome announcement of the first training program for teachers.

Another management weakness has been the lack of an external communications strategy to explain to stakeholders the strategic vision of the project. Some of the national and local stakeholders do not have a very positive perception of the project, since they state that so many

resources should not have been invested in studies as Colombia already has enough of them. Very few of those interviewed stated that they were fully acquainted with the products which the project has developed and intends to develop. Added to this is, as explained previously, the poor dissemination strategy and use of the studies conducted.

The management has not been able to meet the implementation deadlines of the activities in the work plan; consequently, results 3 and 4 show significant delays in their execution. Thus, for instance, in July 2006, microenterprises should have been organized with the parents (Activity 3.2.3) and in November 2006, the successful experiences of community groups that developed initiatives to prevent child labor should have been presented (Activity 4.1.2). Neither of these two activities, important for reaching their corresponding goals, has been executed yet. Likewise, the implementation of the educational model to improve the education of children in mathematics and grammar (Activity 2.2.2) should have started in February 2006; however, one year later, the educational materials still were not ready.¹³ Despite several unforeseen events delaying the execution of the project (redefinition of the logical framework, delay in the execution of studies), the management has not been able to meet the established schedule, causing a serious delay in the project activities.

Finally, it should be mentioned that the project team has had a high turnover, since it has changed its Education and M&E Experts, and four Field Promoters. In general, these changes did not affect the progress of the project, but they do reflect the implementation problems explained before.

4.6 SUSTAINABILITY

The sustainability of the project's activities can be analyzed in two spheres: that of public policies, referring to the formalization and expansion of the educational models developed by the project; and the sphere of the intervention in the schools of the municipalities of Funza and Madrid.

With respect to the national public policy sphere, everything seems to indicate that if the project succeeds with the experimental model and is able to demonstrate the validity of the pedagogic proposals, the Secretariat of Education of Cundinamarca will do what is necessary before the Ministry of Education in order to formalize them. Moreover, the Ministry and the ICBF are interested in the results of the project with a view to replicating it. On the other hand, the institutional level of the education sector in Colombia is solid enough to carry out this task and PER seems to be the appropriate actor to include the products of the project in its portfolio of educational actions in the future.

In the sphere of the introduction of the models in the schools of Funza and Madrid, the prognosis is more uncertain, given the short time left for the project. The support of the Secretariat of Education of Cundinamarca, which is the agency that governs education in these municipalities, and the commitment of the Municipality of Madrid are factors that favor the sustainability of the

¹³ The school year began on January 15; on that date, the *Escuela Nueva* material should have been delivered to the schools.

project. Likewise, the soundness of the educational proposal is key to achieving the support of the authorities of the educational centers and teachers.

Nevertheless, the institutional structure that will allow the definitive establishment of the models and their expansion to other schools has yet to be built. This structure must consist of three elements: regulations, program, and budget. Without them, the municipalities will not be able to carry on with the project and turn the models into “their models.” It was expected that this process would take several more years, since it could involve actions aimed at achieving certification by the municipalities, according to the decentralization regulations of the Ministry of Education. In the short term, the most urgent task will be to convince the teachers and the school authorities that the models work and to get them to consider them their own, in addition to convincing the municipalities to allocate the human and financial resources that may be required.

Since the first two years of the execution of the Project have focused on studies and the design of the educational models, there is still no clear evidence of its impact on the direct and indirect beneficiaries. Nonetheless, during 2006, the implementation of both the Home Curriculum program in Funza and the re-schooling of over-age adolescents in Madrid began. Both activities were well accepted by the people and proved to be effective. Additionally, there has been a positive impact, although incipient, with respect to the mobilization of local institutions and organizations for the education of children and the eradication of child labor.

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V LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

It is still too early to establish the lessons learned and the best practices that have emerged from this project, since the application of the educational models is only starting this year. However, it would be appropriate to reflect on some of the aspects of the project design.

As previously mentioned, the original design responded to an erroneous perception about the existence of child labor in the flower plantations in the region. The logical framework was revised with the support of Management Systems International (MSI) in December 2004 and the PMP was revised in April 2005 with the assistance of Juárez and Associates. These exercises took place before the baseline study was ready and before other diagnostic elements on the region were available. Subsequently, other adjustments were made to the logical framework, but without changing its essence.

The education and child labor scenario uncovered by the baseline study merited a more thorough reformulation of the project, since the original design responded to premises that differed from reality. Actually, the municipalities of Funza and Madrid do not present only one type of exploitive child labor, which forced them to develop a method to identify the children that work in this condition and strategies to withdraw them from the work. Besides, these districts are not among the poorest in the country and their socio-demographic characteristics do not fit in the urban or in the rural area.

Although the project tried to adapt to the particularities of the environment by designing an appropriate educational strategy, the proposal as a whole did not vary, nor did it consider the above-mentioned characteristics. This has resulted in an unbalanced development of the results that the project intends to achieve, displaying great activity in the second result and hardly any or none in the rest.

It would have been appropriate to propose not only the total restructuring of the project, but even its geographical relocation. In this respect, a lesson that the project leaves is that in the face of a design based on erroneous premises, it is necessary to reformulate the entire project.

There are signs that the project will leave important lessons regarding the design of relevant learning models and their introduction into the local and national education system. To date, the project has shown that in order to improve education, it is necessary to consider previous experiences carefully in order to replicate what is already working, since Latin America has sufficient successful innovations in the educational field that can be expanded. Furthermore, the project has shown that in order to introduce a new model, it is necessary to work in parallel with the national and municipal authorities and to obtain the support of organizations specialized in education issues that may be capable of designing the materials and training the teachers.

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VI CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions derive from the analysis conducted thus far. First, the erroneous definition of the problem led World Vision to prepare a proposal that did not respond to the characteristics of the area of intervention. The subsequent modifications to the project, on one hand, and to the logical framework, on the other, have no correspondence between them. The logical framework does not express the results sought by the project and, therefore, there is no instrument that clearly explains the logic of the project intervention and the connection of the activities with the results and of these with the purpose. The existing logical framework is a formal document without any practical use. In fact, all the project activities focus on the introduction of educational models; however, what these models pursue and what mechanisms the project will use to expand them in the municipalities are unknown. In addition, the activities of the non-educational components of the project are weak and poorly developed (Results 1, 3, 4, and 5).

The project has invested substantial resources and time in studies (more than 15% of the budget and approximately one year of execution); however, the results observed are not comparable with that investment in terms of advances in the knowledge of institutions. Nor has an impact been observed in the debate on public education and child labor policies, nor a strategy created to produce this debate.

The project has developed a solid educational strategy, totally consistent with the country's policies. It has adopted the best of the educational experiences of Colombia and of other countries and has generated a model that it seeks to validate through a rigorous experimental method. Contributions such as this one have a great potential to contribute to public policies in the country and carry within them the seeds of sustainability.

The educational proposal barely introduces the child labor issue. The models created consider this issue implicitly; however, there is no clear intention to combat child labor through education. This tendency is evidenced in the lack or weakness of the subject in the contents of the training program for teachers and parents.

The project management exhibits weaknesses in three aspects: (1) lack of consistency between the team members, (2) lack of an external communications strategy, and (3) poor fulfillment of the established schedule. These weaknesses jeopardize the achievement of results and, therefore, it is necessary to correct them as soon as possible.

The definitions of the project's monitoring system with respect to direct and indirect and prevented and withdrawn beneficiaries are not in line with those established by USDOL. Therefore, the common indicator figures must be revised based on the USDOL definitions. Finally, it is important to reformulate the logical framework of the project and consider reprogramming that includes an addition execution period.

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VII RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO THE RESULTS

With respect to national partnerships, it is suggested to develop an information strategy about the progress of the project in addition to the educational strategy being implemented. It is also recommended to establish a closer relationship with the Ministries of Education and of Social Welfare, ILO-IPEC, and the Child Labor Eradication Committee, based on the identification of the role that these entities could play in the intervention and sustainability of the project and the role that World Vision could play in the eradication of child labor in Colombia. Additionally, it would be advisable for the project to build relations with the Rural Education Project.

With respect to the work with the Municipalities of Funza and Madrid, it is recommended to strengthen their institutional capacities with a view to: (1) applying the new child law on issues such as child labor and education and the National Child Labor Eradication Plan, (2) undertaking the certification process before the Ministry of Education. In the case of Madrid, the Social Policy Board could be the most appropriate authority to handle it. It is also recommended to contact the Attorney General's Office to coordinate actions around the municipalities, since that office is responsible for monitoring the implementation of public policies in matters such as child labor and children's rights.

With respect to research work, it is suggested to produce new materials for dissemination among officials of governmental and nongovernmental organizations in formats attractive to them: PowerPoint presentations, press releases, technical summaries, etc. This could be accompanied by dissemination activities and debates on the most relevant findings and their implications for the educational and child labor eradication policies. In particular, it is suggested to promote this debate within the educational sector.

It is recommended to give more space and visibility to the child labor issue in the educational strategy, introducing training and awareness-raising activities for teachers and parents in the *Escuela Nueva*, the Home Curriculum, and the *Aceleración del Aprendizaje* programs, for which the materials designed by other organizations can be used.

It is suggested to include activities for the productive use of free time as a part of the *Aceleración del Aprendizaje* model, thus responding to the educational needs of adolescents.

It is also suggested to consider the possibility of initiating exploitive child labor eradication activities in some areas, such as domestic labor and recycling. For this, the experience of other NGOs with combating this type of harmful activities could be used, incorporating them into the educational models which the project is implementing.

7.2 MANAGEMENT-RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS

The first and most important recommendation is to redesign the logical framework with a view to strengthening and giving priority to the educational and child labor eradication activities of the project. This recommendation is based on three facts: (1) despite the core of the project being the

generation of educational models, the logical framework does not establish any related products or activities, (2) the first activity of the third product (Home Curriculum) is a part of the educational models and should therefore be under the second product, (3) none of the products of the logical framework is designed to withdraw and prevent child labor. No suggestion is made here to eliminate the products that already exist within the logical framework, only to reorganize them around the educational intervention logic and to include the child labor withdrawal and prevention activities. Additionally, it is suggested that the redesign consider an extension for project implementation, for a period of 6 to 12 months more, as it is likely that the remaining time (18 months) will not be sufficient to achieve completion and to give sustainability to the educational models.

Whether or not the management opts to change the logical framework, it should design a work plan that will enable the achievement of results in the time remaining. This plan should take special care in programming the less-developed activities of the project. Consequently, with respect to the first result, the project should seek the dissemination and discussion of the completed studies, especially at the national and regional levels, not as isolated activities, but as part of a clearly defined communications strategy (Activity 1.2). The achievement of the second result demands greater attention to the articulation between educational models that are implemented and the activities aimed at withdrawing children from exploitive labor and their consequent monitoring. In order to achieve the third result, it would be advisable to start, as soon as possible, participatory strategic planning work in the municipalities, to identify pertinent and viable projects for the prevention and reduction of child labor (Activity 4.1). The attainment of the fifth result entails boosting the fulfillment of child labor-related goals and activities in the rural sector, included in the Child Labor Eradication Plan, which requires coordination with public and private institutions.

The discussion about programming and the logical framework, whether redesigned or not, should also be an opportunity to strengthen teamwork and to define the roles of the project's members according to the results sought. To this end, it is suggested to hire a team of professional experts to facilitate this type of process.

It is suggested that the project director dedicate more time to fieldwork and to the coordination of the activities of the promotion team. Her presence is important to consolidate the coordination work and the alliances with the municipalities and the schools, as well as to guide the promoters.

7.3 MONITORING-RELATED SUGGESTIONS

It is recommended to accept the concept of *exploitive child labor*, taking into account the definitions established by the ILO and Resolution 4448 of the Ministry of Social Welfare. Based on that, it is necessary to introduce the concepts of *withdrawn* and *prevented*, as well as retention and completion, as established by USDOL.

It is also recommended to incorporate the child labor issue in the School Risk Index in order to observe its relationship with academic achievement. It is specifically suggested to create an index that could quantify the danger of child labor based on the number of work hours, age, and type of work, occupational category, and school lag.