



IPEC Evaluation

PROGRESSIVE ERADICATION OF CHILD LABOR IN FIREWORK INDUSTRIES IN SAN JUAN SACATEPEQUEZ AND SAN RAYMUNDO, GUATEMALA

(GUA/99/05/050)

A Final Evaluation Report

prepared by

Álvaro Dobles (*Team Leader*) and Teresa García

San José, Costa Rica

May 2003

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<i>i</i>
I. INTRODUCTION	<i>1</i>
GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION	1
SPECIFIC BACKGROUND INFORMATION	2
PROGRAM DESIGN	3
DEVELOPMENT	6
MID-TERM EVALUATION	7
II. RESULTS	<i>8</i>
RELEVANCE	8
MANAGEMENT	12
MONITORING AND EVALUATION	17
CHILD LABOR MONITORING	20
EFFICIENCY	20
EFFECTIVENESS	21
UNFORESEEN EFFECTS	30
SUSTAINABILITY	31
III. RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>35</i>
FOR IPEC	35
OTHER GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS	38
FOR THE EDUCATION AND HEALTH COMPONENT	41
FOR THE STRATEGY TO GENERATE INCOME (BOTH FORMS)	42
FOR INITIATING OTHER SIMILAR ACTION PROGRAMS	43
FOR MAKING THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM WORK	43
IV. LESSONS LEARNED	<i>44</i>
PEACE SCHOLARSHIPS PROGRAM	44
SOLIDARITY GROUPS	45
MODEL FACTORIES AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES	45
NEW LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT	46
<i>Annex 1: SUMMARY OF MAIN DESIGN ELEMENTS</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>Annex 2: MAIN DOCUMENTATION EXAMINED</i>	<i>48</i>
<i>Annex 3: MISSION ITINERARY</i>	<i>49</i>
<i>Annex 4: GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS</i>	<i>55</i>
<i>Annex 5: METHODOLOGICAL SCOPE</i>	<i>56</i>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following is the report for the final evaluation of the project “Progressive Eradication of Child Labor in Firework Industries in San Juan Sacatepequez and San Raymundo, Guatemala,” IPEC-ILO P. GUA/99/05P.060.00-04, which was carried out at the end of November and in early December, 2002. The information was obtained from documents, open and in-depth interviews, questionnaires and direct observation of situations, attitudes and practices. Informants were personnel in charge of administration and development, project beneficiaries and other interested parties.

The following summary, as well as the body of the report itself, lists both the main achievements this evaluation found and a relatively large number of weaknesses, which do not necessarily cast a shadow on the achievements but that the evaluators consider deserve special attention.

RELEVANCE

Worth highlighting as achievements, the evaluation found a target population defined in both quantitative and qualitative terms, as well as several public institutions, both national and local, participating in ways and degrees that contributed to the final objectives of the project, under their leadership.

The main weakness found was that not all parties shared a common conceptual framework, which resulted in activities not always leading to the final objective. There were some incongruence in the planning, and the participation of beneficiaries could have been fostered much further. In this sense, more advantage could have been taken from lessons learned in other contexts. The baseline, its updating and the market study entered late. Other specific aspects were incorporated into the project design. Foreseen beneficiaries were not differentiated according to critical conditions. Some public institutions, both national and local, did not participate or did so in ways and degrees that did not contribute as much as expected to the final objectives.

Worth mentioning at this point is that the various implementing agencies demonstrated undeniable types of strength, which were both differential and supplementary (administrative, financial and technical). Such types of strength have enabled or increased their functions and achievement of objectives in the project. More specifically, it can be said that HABITAT, the first agency in charge of the Education and Health component, demonstrated adequate epidemiological conceptualization and use of tools. ASI, which replaced it and, besides, took charge of the community alternatives for income generation through micro-credit, stood out in terms of administrative management, team work and financial management. Besides, it performed very well in the field, and during its relations with communities, it showed awareness of cultural and linguistic differences and their implication for intervention. The agency in charge of relocation of firework industries, CONMIGUAT, demonstrated capacity for high-level institutional dialogue based on technical strength.

The various implementing agencies also demonstrated some weaknesses, also differential (administrative, financial and technical). These may not have been an obstacle to perform their main functions and achieve their goals, but in some way decreased the splendor of their success. For instance, HABITAT's proposal was not convincing and the agency did not perform well in the field. It did not contribute enough to create group identity and it did not share its database as much as expected. ASI showed passive resistance to central directives and some tendency to "set house apart." On the other hand, CONMIGUAT showed a high level of personnel flow and some degree of internal disagreement, which may have influenced the fact that the number of beneficiaries it organized was not close to the one expected.

Some of the intended synergy was achieved, but it must be said that it was not fostered enough. Institutional culture did not reach a sufficient level of collaboration, but a certain atmosphere of competition prevailed among the agencies and directive instances instead.

One of the best achievements of the entire project is that the agencies could develop important and clear institutional relationships with other relevant actors. They made these actors aware and ready for cooperation in formal aspects, although not always in concrete ones. The project director and the coordination of the national office for IPEC in Guatemala skillfully handled both the relationship with the press and the high-level diplomatic relations with the Government of the Republic.

Although the existing organizational structure was not known sufficiently well beforehand, the initial lack of participation on the part of the beneficiaries was mostly overcome. Likewise, it was possible to moderate the hostile attitude intermediaries developed once their initially active participation did not result in their intended co-opting for the project.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The fact that a baseline as such could not be established cannot be hidden. As a result, monitoring, reporting, follow-up and evaluation as factors to support decision-making had some limitation. It is worth stressing that quantitative indicators supplied a more precise common language, but at the same time it was also verified that feedback was generally only formal, and in some occasions it was also extemporaneous.

The mid-term evaluation supplied a series of observations and results that were potentially useful and that may have even resulted in a quantitative and also qualitative step forward; however, it must be said that their execution was rather variable, apparently due to a generally very long time needed for reaction by management. The meaning and usefulness of indicators for decision-making is not shared.

Another aspect to be improved is assignment of responsibilities and procedures to record, analyze and disseminate information, which would result in more complete records, better-defined analyses and sharing information beyond formal standards.

EFFICIENCY

This is another area where remarkable achievements were made. These include higher awareness against child labor by the various actors, better education and more access to it, better support to health, community organization around credit groups, trying out alternative sources of income, and better conditions for organized groups of firework producers. All this was done while following the budget as planned, which was adequate and balanced.

It must also be stated that the achievement of immediate objectives was uneven and did not reach the level expected. About 64% of the target population was reached through awareness raising activities and primary education, as well as health. Half the expected population was reached with micro-credit. Model industries included 15% of the target population. The percentage in technical education was too low.

Education

A certain level of achievement in education can be verified. The pre-school population was reached in educational centers whose good performance contributed to schooling by induction. Some 3000 out of the 4100 school-aged children were reached. According to teachers, the rates for return to school, permanence in school and performance have had a very positive change as a result of the project. No consolidated figures were available, but there is enough evidence to support this assertion.

Among the most outstanding results is the guarantee for Peace Scholarships and the consolidation of the scheme for administration by the community, to which end efforts were correctly made. This achievement meant resources available for school infrastructure, materials and equipment. On the other hand, an important achievement is the change towards a model of Active Rural School, which fosters motivation and permanence in school. A lot has been advanced in this area.

Very clear achievements include school attendance by girls, which has increased in numbers and quality, as well as participation by parents in school services and improvement of quality. Teacher education and training to address the needs of children who are working or at risk was also improved.

Worth highlighting as an achievement in this component are the primary health care campaigns carried out, with participation by the ministries of Health and Education and the corresponding component of the project. However, it is necessary to qualify this assertion by saying that the local health system was not visibly strengthened to improve health services provided to the target population, and neither was any improvement found in the safety and hygiene conditions in which firework production takes place in private homes.

Model industries

Due to the number of obstacles to be overcome, the initiation of the first model industry, run by 13 families that used to make fireworks at home, must be referred to as an outstanding achievement. Technology has been included and risk levels decreased, which were two of the results planned. It was not possible to verify any increase in profitability because not enough time had elapsed since the model workshop opened. This evaluation considers that an important weakness is that the marketing plan has not been stated in detail as a complete document. Another real concern is that transportation of the finished product has not been arranged for yet, and it is clear that the industries still have not eliminated the need for child labor families have.

Almost all partners in the industries are male. Men's role has changed from distributor and controller of domestic child labor to that of member of a group whose work he can only control in relation to the work he personally performs. Women's role has changed from being co-helpers in domestic production to concentrating on other type of household tasks.

It is necessary to verify in this section that technical assistance to Solidarity groups in the model industries has not led them to enough autonomy. The legal channels for the acquisition of raw materials are in the hands of the army and do not exclude intermediaries. The model workshop is fragile in this context. There is dependency on the chief engineer, hired as a consultant, in relation to marketing the product of the model workshop. The marketing plan is incomplete, weak and little formalized. Marketing channels were not detailed enough in it.

The model workshop strategy has not proved to be a generator of enough income so as to make child labor unnecessary. Its results do not compare to other income generation alternatives. It is unknown whether or not income rose for families in activities other than firework production, or if their income is enough to cover daily expenses without resorting to child labor, but that does not seem probable.

Micro-credit

Practically all beneficiaries from micro-credit are women, whose role has changed from co-helpers in domestic production controlled by the husband, to helpers in the generation of supplementary income, while still carrying out tasks for the family but with relatively more freedom. Man's role has changed from distributor and controller of domestic family work to that of provider, based on his income generated by another personal activity generally carried out outside the household, such as brickwork. Technical assistance has provided them with elements to handle credit, more than to manage micro-firms.

Awareness raising

Very important achievements are verified in this area: changes in discourse, awareness, perceptions and general attitudes among the various actors, which are all coherent with the progressive elimination of child labor in general. Conditions

have been created for the establishment of a local network to monitor child labor. Specific actors have suggested specific actions as part of a joint effort.

SUSTAINABILITY

Worth highlighting, as a crucial achievement, is the creation of necessary conditions in some actors for the continuation of results. Institutionalization and the development of the legal framework¹ have progressed, thus increasing sustainability, since they have given weight and visibility to the actions undertaken, while at the same time further committing actors, including the general public, to exercise influence and lobbying. Several public institutions have begun to develop strategies, both separately and jointly.

This said, it is however very risky to assert that the factors producing child labor in the firework industries in San Juan and San Raymundo have been eliminated, and it would be even more risky to state that it has been done so permanently. Some causal factors seem to have been addressed, since the symptoms of child labor, the focus of attention, has receded. Pre-schools have infrastructure and equipment. The cost of personnel and others items are not autonomous from external cooperation. In-depth implementation of the methodology for the Active Rural School is on the right track. School Boards are not all together independent. The Peace Scholarship program has greatly increased the visible impact of this fund, guaranteed for a specific agreement.

Still to be solved are relatively minor needs at the technical level. In the administrative-managerial area, there is strong dependence and training has not been completed. In the financial area, the first results are being obtained. Both groups have signed mortgages in favor of the implementing agency.

The family groups organized as part of the community alternatives to firework production take part in the administration and functioning of their micro-firms. The groups only work as such to obtain, guarantee and pay individual loans. Each individual member handles his own micro-project and the projects handled by a group are not in any way integrated vertically nor horizontally. Micro-firms are designed for a very small local market, and they work as generators of supplementary income within it.

New pertinent legislation has been developed. Local appropriation of the program is uneven; it has not been ensured in all aspects.

In summary, sustainability of the results obtained does not seem to be guaranteed if left on their own under the present conditions and, on the other hand, efficiency of results in terms of their contribution to achievement of the final objective seems to have good perspectives, but it has not shown all its potential yet.

¹ Law regulating imports, stocking, transport, use and trade of pyrotechnical components and its production (*Ley Reguladora de la Importación, Almacenaje, Transporte, Uso y Comercialización de los Componentes de Artificios Pirotecnicos y su Fabricación*).

On the basis of this view of sustainability, this evaluation strongly recommends an extension of the project that will keep qualified support to several of its activities, mainly those related to income generation and particularly the model workshop for firework production. Such an extension is recommended for a period of at least one year (preferably longer), and it would require the allocation of fresh funds, not necessarily from the same donor.

I. INTRODUCTION

GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Guatemala is a unitary, representative republic located in Central America. It has been independent since 1821, and institutionalism has undergone several instances of discontinuity since then. The most serious one took the form of a long internal war that very strongly affected civil population and ended in late 1996 with the signing of the last of the Peace Agreements between the Government of the Republic of Guatemala and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG²). These agreements are verified by MINUGUA, the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala, which will soon leave with mitigated success.

The data in the 2002 Census, whose fieldwork was carried out simultaneously with the fieldwork for this evaluation, are not available yet at the time of writing this report. However, projections by the agency in charge (INE, Instituto Nacional de Estadística del Gobierno Guatemalteco³ (National Statistics Institute of the Government of Guatemala)), based on the 1994 Census, estimate that by 2002 Guatemala had a population close to 12 million inhabitants, 43% of them under 15 years old.

According to the household survey of the year 2000 by the National Statistics Institute, 62% of the population in Guatemala lives in poverty conditions and 28% of them (practically 16% of the total) live in extreme poverty.⁴

Illiteracy, understood as the inability to read and write in Spanish (the official language in the country) is estimated at around 35% and is also differentiated, being considerably higher among indigenous people and women. A high percentage of the population speaks at least one of the more than twenty indigenous languages recognized as such, most of them part of the family of Mayan languages.

Part of this percentage, mainly in the case of women, is exclusively monolingual, or multilingual exclusively in Indian languages, but part of it also speaks Spanish with varying degrees of fluency. There are writing systems for many of these languages, but their use has not become widespread. More than 42% of the

² A list of abbreviations is included as Annex 4 in this report.

³ <http://www.segeplan.gob/ine/index.htm>

⁴ *Ibid.* The terms “poverty” and “extreme poverty” are defined, respectively, as income of 13 and 6,5 quetzales a day per person, close to 2 and 1 US dollars (<http://www.segeplan.gob.gt/spanish/pobreza/dramap/index.htm>). As a referent, the minimum wage for agricultural tasks in the year 2002 was 20 quetzales a day, less than 3 US dollars, according to the Central Bank of the Republic (www/banguat.gob.gt/ver.asp?id=estalco/sr/sr112).

population says to be part of one of the more than twenty indigenous ethnic groups found in the country.

It is estimated that more than 500.000 children between 7 and 15 years of age work in Guatemala, many of them in activities whose product is exported or involves highly dangerous conditions for those involved, or both.

SPECIFIC BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In this context, in June 1996 the Government of Guatemala signed a Memorandum of Understanding with ILO, which recognized in general the problem resulting from the persistence of child labor in the country and stated the need to take measures to fight against this problem. Based on this memorandum, IPEC started activities in the country. During that same year, as one of the first steps taken, IPEC supported a study carried out by the Ministry of Labor, to characterize the situation of child labor in the country.

IPEC's general policy in its mission to progressively eradicate child labor is to give priority to the so called "worst forms," as defined in ILO Convention No. 182 (1999), which was signed by Guatemala and ratified in August 2001, so it became effective in October, 2002. The study mentioned in the previous paragraph identified the production of fireworks as one of the worst forms of child labor in Guatemala. This identification was based mainly on the high level of hazard involved in this type of work.

Firework production is a highly hazardous activity in itself, and that condition is worsened by the working conditions prevailing in Guatemala, and especially as part of the system of home production. In each production stage, people involved in this activity, and especially children, face risks for their safety including mainly explosions and fires with consequences such as death, wounds that often make amputation necessary, cuts and burns.

Exposure to potentially irritating and toxic substances by contact and inhalation, as well as the body postures held, constitute a danger to health and, in the case of people not yet fully developed, for their physical development. Records by the press and others indicate that these risks become real more frequently than can be tolerated and that children are frequently the injured victims.

Lighting fireworks on certain occasions is a very strong cultural feature in Guatemala, cutting across social class and other divisions. At the explicit level, it is an expression of joy shared during all kinds of celebrations. At the unconscious level it could be speculated that, in as much as light, smoke and noise are condensed, fireworks make Indian and European features coincide on occasions at the threshold level, frequently implying some religious interpretation, that involve danger when moving from situation to another.

Local production in the municipalities of San Juan Sacatepequez and San Raymundo, in the Department of Guatemala, adds up to a total ranging between 85% and 95% of the national firework production, according to several estimates.⁵ Testimonial evidence gathered during the fieldwork carried out state that such concentration dates back to no more than 30 years ago. It was not possible to establish the causes, but the installation of the first workshop was quickly praised. Apparently, firework production became an alternative to obtain income without resorting to temporary or permanent migration, in an area of depressed agricultural activity such as this.

Approximately 80% of the population in those municipalities works in this type of industry, even if they do not always engage in it full time or throughout the year. In San Juan Sacatepequez and San Raymundo, preliminary studies determined that some 2.000 children start working at the age of 3 in shops set up in their own homes or in the homes of third parties in their communities, and 200 more work in firework shops. Most of these children were Indians and came from very poor families.

PROGRAM DESIGN

The "Project for the Progressive Eradication of Child Labor in Firework Industries in San Juan and San Raymundo" was designed during a long process in which several interested parties took part, in cooperation with IPEC's technical team. A budget of US\$921,148.00 was allocated, financed by the US Government Labor Department (USDOL). The official starting date was set for April 2000 and the initial duration was 21 months, to end in December 2001.

The project cycle in IPEC includes carrying out a baseline as the starting point for intervention, the implementation of the project itself, follow-up activities, and at least a mid term and a final evaluation.

Since its creation, IPEC has developed numerous projects in various regional, sub-regional, national, sub-national, cultural, religious and political contexts, as well as in various production sectors. This experience gathered constitutes a broad knowledge base, and it has been systematized as a model intervention strategy to slowly eradicate any form of child labor, particularly any of its worst forms.

The strategy takes various forms, but it normally includes a social support component, usually around education and health as the main coordinates, a component for alternative income-generating activities, enough to make the economic contribution of children unnecessary, and an awareness raising and social mobilization component. From the organizational perspective, the key intervention elements are normally contracted with several NGOs, and the general management is assigned to a project coordinator.

⁵ Documents to update the baseline, 2002

The design for this project is a slight modification of the general scheme used and sponsored by IPEC in a large number of sectors. It emphasizes social mobilization and development of capacities in public institutions, both at the local and the national levels, and it incorporates the premise that producers, organized in new ways, will progressively take control of their production and the processes before and after it (supply and storage of raw materials, gathering and marketing of the end products).

It was considered that IPEC's knowledge and previously accumulated experience would allow postulating, hypothetically, some of the factors that could be interacting within a causal network to produce child labor in these new environments, and that modification of those factors would result in the elimination or decrease of child labor.

Some previous research had been carried out to characterize child labor in the country, which was useful to write the project, as well as some supplementary research to characterize the situation of child labor in the firework shops in the municipalities defined as a priority, which in turn established the preliminary baseline. The program design envisioned an initial research component that would detail this baseline.

OBJECTIVES AND PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The Project for Progressive Eradication of Child Labor in the Firework Industries in San Juan and San Raymundo was designed with the general objective to contribute to the eradication of child labor in the firework industries in Guatemala. The end of the program would meet the following three objectives.

The first objective was twofold: on one hand to have prevented child labor in the production of fireworks in Guatemala, for children that at the beginning of the project were not involved in this type of work but were considered to be at risk and, on the other hand, to have withdrawn from child labor in the production of fireworks in Guatemala those children who were involved in this type of activity at the beginning of the project.

The second objective was to have strengthened institutional capacity of the partner agencies, community organizations and local authorities to act against child labor in the firework industry in Guatemala.

The third was to have sensitized and mobilized the communities to act against child labor.

To reach these objectives, practically two paths of action were defined for the project: provide education and other support services and rehabilitation and, on the other hand, training and support for the families of children working in firework production, so they could find alternatives for income generation.

These objectives generated a series of activities, defined by the means of actions included and time period allocated. These tasks to reach the objectives were grouped into action programs, each one corresponding to one or several specific objectives (also called components). Each project was contracted with a non-governmental organization that would manage it with relative autonomy.

The project coordination would foster synergy among the various executing NGOs and would handle coordination among the project components. This was considered the most adequate modality to ensure transparent and efficient development of the project.

The social support tasks, around education and health, were grouped in a component initially called Social Protection. The tasks related to the alternative generation of enough income to make child labor unnecessary were divided into two components initially called Community Production Options and Production Options in the Relocation of the Firework Industry. These denominations are not, however, uniform throughout the documentation of the project.

In order to be consistent and not to confuse the reader, the following respective denominations are used in this report:

- Education and Health (sometimes dealt with separately if necessary);
- Community Alternatives –micro-credit;
- Relocation of Firework Shops,

The last two components are sometimes pulled together as “Income Generation”.

The project design assigned each of these three components a certain number of objectives, already quantified, to be met by the end of the program, as well as a number of means of action. Both are detailed in annex 1, where the reference figures are included.

Awareness raising and mobilization within the communities and municipalities were divided among the components and do not constitute a separate one. At the broadest levels, the general project coordination ended up taking responsibility for them.

MONITORING

The designed included carrying out a baseline that, periodically updated, would support monitoring. It was expected that both monitoring and the systematization of the project experience would in turn contribute not only to management but to refine the intervention model, either confirming it or pointing out gaps or errors or critically revising it.

The design of the project monitoring and evaluation system also followed the model that IPEC generally uses in most programs. It would be done permanently, confronting it with the baseline initially defined, and it would in turn modify that baseline periodically. Following standard procedures agreed between USDOL and IPEC, Monitoring would be based on periodic reports that the program coordination would submit to IPEC, on one hand, and to the donor, on the other hand, and evaluation would be carried out with external support, mainly on two important periods: in the middle and at the end of the implementation of the project.

The monitoring and evaluation system as a whole was conceived as support for managerial decision-making during the implementation of the project, and as a way to help extract and systematize, from the experience with the project, a knowledge base that would be valuable, not only to strengthen this intervention, but also for all interventions by IPEC and other institutions that devote their efforts to the eradication of child labor, in Guatemala and elsewhere.

DEVELOPMENT

Previous to the official initiation of the project, ILO-IPEC supported national institutions and NGOs in activities related to research, awareness raising and vocational training in 12 communities located in what would become the geographical area of the project. The Project for the Progressive Eradication of Child Labor in the Firework Industry in San Juan and San Raymundo started, as previously foreseen, in April 2002.

At the start, the area covered included those same 12 communities of the said municipalities. The first implementing agency of the social protection component, given that the baseline identified fewer working children than those defined as the target population in the project, increased the number of communities to reach a total of 18, a figure that was lowered to half after the midterm evaluation (see below).

The budget of USA\$921,148.00 USA originally allocated as a result of a donation from the Government of the United States of America, through USDOL was handled through the Sub-regional Office of IPEC in San Jose, Costa Rica.

Following its usual procedures, IPEC assigned implementation of each of the main intervention components to a separate NGO, and these acted as implementing agencies. Three organizations were selected:

1. HABITAT (Asociación Guatemalteca para el Desarrollo Sustentable (Guatemalan Association for Sustainable Development)), which should not be confused with the international NGO by the same name, was in charge of the Social Protection Component: Education and Health.

2. ASI (Asociación de Apoyo Integral (Association for Holistic Development)), in charge of the Community Productive Alternatives component
3. CONMIGUAT (Coordinadora Nacional de Microempresarios de Guatemala (National Coordinator of Guatemalan Micro Entrepreneurs)), in charge of the Component of Productive Options in the Relocation of Firework Industries.

MID-TERM EVALUATION

The project had several delays in its initial stages, which explains why the midterm evaluation did not take place until November 2001. This evaluation examined the relevance of the project design, some aspects of which were questioned, the achievement of results up to that point, and how they had contributed to meet the project objectives so far.

The development of the activities from the beginning of the project to that point was analyzed, and they were found to be, in general, relevant. Efficiency was questioned, even though it was found that by then the project had already made great progress in the areas of social mobilization and building of capacities in public institutions, both locally and nationally.

The main obstacles found by the project were analyzed. At the external level, in particular, it was found that the producers' incipient organization had generated some conflict and opposition on the part of the businessmen who had hired them directly before and later under the domiciliary production system.

This situation partially affected the project. It was feared that it could have a negative influence on the effectiveness of the project and the possibility to give sustainability to results, both those that had been reached by then and those that were still expected.

As far as internal circumstances, it was analyzed that until then, many of the obstacles had been managerial difficulties. Keeping in mind the meeting of objectives, and on the basis of its conclusions, the mid-term evaluation recommended several changes in the orientation of some aspects of the project, in relation to objectives and strategies to be applied to finally reach the goals and objectives. IPEC incorporated the essential elements of the changes that were suggested, as followed:

1. Because of operational and, particularly, mobilization reasons, the geographical coverage of the project was reduced. Consequently, the number of communities included in the project was reduced, and a number of potential beneficiaries were excluded, even though the figure for the target population stated in the project design was maintained.
2. To alleviate delay, the duration of the project was extended for 11 months, from the initial 21 to 32 months, thus moving the ending date from December 2001 to

December 2002. An additional extension of 4 months will carry the activities further in time, at least until April 2003.

3. The total amount of the budget was not modified, even though its internal structure was.
4. The number of implementing agencies was reduced. From the three NGOs that began the implementation, two remained after HABITAT was removed. Its sub-project was incorporated by ASI, first only through a sub-contract covered by the budget still managed by HABITAT, and then as an implementing agency, incorporating the budget previously assigned to HABITAT to the budget ASI already managed.

II. RESULTS

RELEVANCE

The general activities of the project were designed to sensitize and mobilize social actors, to increase and improve social support services, particular in the areas of education and health, and to help raise family incomes by two means: productive activities as alternatives to firework production and firework production but in an alternative way. The latter is the most original element of the design.

The causal factors assumed in the project design are also general, not distinguishable from the factors that cause other worst forms or child labor in general. They spring from the general intervention model IPEC has developed throughout its existence, and which is taken as sufficiently evident and proved.

The causes of child labor mentioned by people interviewed for this project include high level of illiteracy, low educational level, lack of marketable labor skills and insufficient access to education for children. Likewise, lack of information on the risks involved in tasks associated with the production of fireworks (low awareness) was also mentioned.

Other factors included as causes are that family income is not enough for subsistence, understood as satisfaction of basic needs, and the fact that families take part in this economic activity as their main activity, due to scarce employment sources.

All these causes may be reduced to deficient social support, particularly in education and health, insufficient awareness and mobilization among the entire range of social actors, and unsatisfactory income levels for the families of children who are working or at risk.

On the other hand, lack of appropriate locations to carry out the production of fireworks (less dangerously) was also mentioned. This is the only specific cause that was mentioned, and this aspect was addressed through the component of model workshops.

In this respect, the survey carried out for this evaluation tends to consider the relevance of the design fairly high, in as much as it stems from the general model usually followed by IPEC, which is a model intervention strategy for eradication, and all parties are convinced about it. A typical statement was: “(the relevance of the strategy) is high because the factors that originated the project are being eliminated.” It is important to highlight the fact that this statement refers to the project and not to child labor in general.

Even though, in principle, the design is open to criticism and modification, no evidence was found to indicate that effective and participatory mechanisms had been defined or used to that effect, neither in the initial design of the project nor during its development.

Thus, the causes mentioned appear to be loose, not integrated in an explanatory plan that envisions the relationships among them. On the contrary, there is evidence of conceptual vicious circles of the type “poverty causes illiteracy and illiteracy causes poverty,” which may be correct in theory but do not result from decision-making nor help to make decisions.

Interpretation of the broad categories of causes seems to have been left to each implementing agency, each component and even to individuals. There was not enough discussion of this issue or it did not take place through the right channels, so a common conceptual framework is not present in the project.

Under these circumstances, planning at the middle and low levels, as reflected in the summary outlines and work programs, is not always conveniently done to achieve the ultimate goal of eradicating or at least meaningfully reducing child labor. The cause-effect between child labor and the short-term objectives assumed is not always evident and the activities frequently seem to have become an end in themselves.

Incongruence was found in dates, such as activities beginning before its logically preceding one or before the component they were part of, or that ended after the component or the activities that logically followed.

The specific adaptation of this specific project to the general model has been insufficient, in our opinion. Several actors in the program criticized the low level of participation of the intended beneficiaries in the design itself, other than as mere providers of information.

No evidence was found that lessons learned from interventions in the same production sector or in similar sectors in other countries were taken advantage of

for the said adaptation. Neither were lessons learned from interventions in other production sectors and in other geographical areas in Guatemala.

The documentation mentions, without any precise bibliographical reference, studies that were previously done about child labor in general in Guatemala, about high-risk sectors including firework production, and about firework production in particular. It was possible to have access to some of them, either the full text or a summary. Some of them list and briefly characterize factors that would supposedly play a key role in the existence of child labor in firework industries, but in general they are general factors, not specific ones.

The study carried out by the Ministry of Labor in the intervention area defined for the project located causal factors and needs, more objective than subjective, that the population has and that are dealt with in very general terms. Few specific aspects were incorporated into the design.

The baseline, the market study and updating of the baseline intervened too late and not all their potential was taken advantage of to refine the causal factors or the new actions that allegedly would have modified those causes within the period of time defined for the duration of the project (two years that were extended to three).

There is no evidence that other possible intervention alternatives were considered, either as theories or as experienced in a different context, and the alternative not to intervene at all does not seem to have been considered. Monitoring comparable firework producing communities where the project would not intervene was not considered, or intervening with only one of the components or with various combinations of them in different comparable villages.

The public institutions, both national and local, which the project has resorted to at one time or another, make a rather long list. The project coordination demonstrates enough clarity with respect to the roles each institution has to play, even though a document indicating them was not submitted.

In reality, not all institutions invited to participate have done so, or at least not always playing all the roles assigned to them by the current legislation, which was the basis for the expectations of the project. In some cases, it is difficult to perceive clear institutional willingness to collaborate with the eradication of child labor or with the specific project.

Institutional capacities do not seem to have been the object of a previous survey. Instead, institutional limitations as far as capacity, previous commitments, excessively long reaction time or high degree of bureaucratic formality were discovered by trial and error, normally at a high price in terms of time and frustration, not only for the project but for its beneficiaries.

For example, INTECAP (Instituto Técnico de Capacitación Profesional (Technical Institute for Vocational Training)), was not able to send instructors to the field; the Ministry of Education has not demonstrated the same promptness to offer high

school education outside the municipal capitals as it has demonstrated in relation to other areas; the Ministry of Defense delayed several processes related to the model workshop too long; the Ministry of Finance, at the time this evaluation was performed, still held in customs samples without any commercial value that would be very useful to try out less dangerous fireworks.

The initial design of the project defined the target population in quantitative terms. In qualitative terms children and adolescents considered as workers were found in the study the Ministry of Labor had done four years before. A formal definition could not be found, nor a list or database or a precise map for this population, which was information several agencies were requested to put together or update several times but the results were never satisfactory.

No distinction was made as to whether those children and adolescents were working permanently or seasonally, full time or part time. Those working in industries were differentiated from those working at home.

The number of working children and adolescents the previous study identified is suspiciously rounded off to represent a survey; it is most probably an approximation. The project incorporated that figure, set at 2,200.

At the time the study was made, 80% of the production was done in factories and, however, only 200 working children and adolescents were identified there. Only the other 20% of the production was done in home shops and, however, ten times more working children and adolescents were found there than in the factories.

At the time the design was made, the production rates in factories and home shops had been inverted, which leads us to the presumption that child labor had also increased. The target number, in turn, did not change.

Children and adolescents at risk were not initially defined, even though they were later limited to those not working in firework production but with siblings who did so. The basic premise, which was not explained nor justified, seems to reasonably establish that the risk is higher (or exclusive) under those circumstances. However, that premise leaves out children and adolescents who were not working but did not have siblings working either, but who are affected by the same causal factors.

No explanation was given as to how the figure for the population of 2500 children at risk was arrived at. It assumes this is 14% higher than that of working children, and that both total 4700. Out of this number, it was decided to provide vocational training to 600 adolescents.

The number of families with children in the intervention area was defined at 1634, with no indication as to how it was done, all of them to be sensitized and mobilized. The families that would receive social support would be the families of working children and adolescents, a total of 1158 (even though it is not explicitly stated, this figure was apparently reached by dividing the total number of children, 4700, by

the national average of children per family, slightly above 4). The educational benefits were later extended to all the families and the health benefits to almost all of them.

After the mid term evaluation, it was decided to provide micro credit services to 600 families out of those 1158, and model factories to the others. This could have placed at a disadvantage (in the field, the term “punished” was used) families that had been successfully kept their children out of child labor in spite of being affected by the same causal factors and that could have found themselves at higher risk by not being included as possible beneficiaries.

The baseline study could only locate figures that were much lower than these, due to the reasons specified in the midterm evaluation. In response to the observation made to this effect, later efforts were tinted by a near obsession to “reach” those figures, and by a certain lack of concern to keep looking, once the figures were reached. No consideration seems to have been given to what it actually meant, in logistic terms, to really reach all that population, considering the relative dispersion found from the very beginning and the limitations in transportation, communication and lodging the field presented.

The midterm evaluation proposed trying to optimize the cost/benefit rate by reducing the coverage of the project in terms of geographical area. This change in the design was really made after the midterm evaluation, and it has the effect of improving the cost-benefit ratio.

The population of the reduced geographical area enabled reaching the goal in quantitative terms; however, difficulties due to access presumably go hand in hand with the more critical conditions, which were not specified but considered to be related to the causes supposed (less education, worse health conditions, lower income). The establishment of internal priority of possible beneficiaries according to these more critical conditions did not take place.

MANAGEMENT

The strengths and weaknesses (administrative, financial and technical) the various implementing agencies demonstrated in carrying out their functions and reach the objectives in the project were examined in this evaluation through document analyses, interviews, questionnaires and observation. On several occasions during the development of the project, instruments such as SWAT and similar ones were used.

Those exercises seem to have had a perverse effect that was not intended, as it often happens. The ideas on weaknesses and strengths tended to become fixed as a complacent self-image (we have our weaknesses but we compensate them with such and such strengths), which in addition has a stigmatized image of the others (they have their strengths that compensates with such and such weaknesses).

No strong evidence was found to affirm that the result of those exercises had had any effect on management of self-criticism, nor that they translated into plans for improvement. There was, on the contrary, a fair degree of immobility, and several clear opportunities to improve the performance of each agency and the project as a whole were not taken advantage of.

HABITAT

Not much evidence was obtained on administrative or financial strengths for HABITAT, the first agency responsible for the component of support in education and health. In our criterion, there was technical strength, at least in its high-level personnel, as far as the epidemiological concept and the handling of concomitant tools (Epiinfo program). Their weakness in this point was inability to communicate them well enough to the other partners, who were never fully convinced by the proposal.

HABITAT also demonstrated technical weakness in their performance in the field, mainly in handling biases and in some tendency to welfare, which did not increase respect by the rest of the team, who had more experience and clarity on the issue. By changing the component into virtually a separate program with external signs and its own denomination (Program of Family Support in the Firework Industries, PAFICOH, in Spanish) that still exists, HABITAT did not contribute to create group identity.

HABITAT's failure to share a true database that has practical use seems more a managerial than a technical weakness, since it obviously had everything needed to create the database. In relation to financial aspects, complaints often indicated leniency about some expenditures, which this evaluation had no means to corroborate.

ASI

Information gathered about ASI and its performance as an implementing agency for the micro-credit component indicates strong administrative management and a firmly established group spirit. Good financial management is reflected in the rates for the revolving credit. ASI's strong technical strengths are not limited to this field but success in this area may be due to its technical strength in field performance and in its rapport with the communities.

ASI's good relations with the communities result more from experience than from training and they do not include skills in the dominant indigenous language (Kakchikel) nor in culture specifics, but they do include an important attitude of respect to both aspects and general awareness of cultural and linguistic differences and their implications in community interventions.

In relation to administrative issues, one of the weaknesses pointed out to ASI and admitted by some of its officers was that its strengths and awareness about them

have led ASI to a type of passive resistance to higher levels of management and to a tendency to “set home apart,” which is often perceived as an attitude of superiority.

The latter makes communication difficult, since they handle specific elements, such as their methods and procedures to work with the beneficiaries as if they were self-evident and they are, therefore, not specified for the rest of the team. ASI shows, maybe at a higher level than others, a tendency that is not theirs exclusively but that it also affects the other components and the project as a whole –lack of systematizing and written records of discussions.

ASI has demonstrated high skills in handling awareness raising and education, even though technical education for teenagers is its weak point. Health has evidently received less attention than education, and relatively later.

CONMIGUAT

A managerial strength pointed out to CONMIGUAT was a certain capacity for high-level institutional dialogue. It was not always possible to distinguish when the consultants hired with funds allocated to CONMIGUAT exercised this capacity and when the agency as such did, but the latter usually gets credit for it. Dialogue was certainly not always easy and it did not always led to the actions needed, or at least not as rapidly as desired, but it would have possibly been more difficult and slow without the ability to talk at the same technical level.

The truth is that such relative negotiation skills were largely based on technical strengths that pertain more to the specific team in charge of the component than to the agency as a whole.

An administrative weakness that needs to be pointed out is that the executive direction of CONMAGUAT showed high personnel flow (four different people were in charge of the position during the time CONMIGUAT was involved in the project), and there was often disagreement, not to say conflict, between the direction and the Board of Directors of the agency, as well as between the latter and the project coordinator.

In relation to financial issues, poor calculation of costs were repeatedly pointed out, as well as late modifications to the budget that were necessary to ensure cash flow; however, this evaluation could prove that such actions were the sole realm and responsibility of the implementing agency.

The endorsement of the mortgage on the properties purchased for the model workshops and on the workshop already built in favor of CONMIGUAT has been the object of much discussion, and in spite of the argument that this is a mere formality, the evaluators are not convinced about the convenience of such procedure, since it places all the risk on the solidarity groups and their legal conditions.

CONMIGUAT's technical strengths in its area of expertise are undeniable, but there exists a technical failure that takes on a different level when strengths are communicated to the other project components, the project coordination and its beneficiaries. The latter usually reproach that the agency did not organize enough of them and in practice seems to have concentrated on only two groups, the one already running a model workshop and the one already committed, may that be said here, for the second factory.

IPEC's sub-regional office carried out the intervention through several NGOs to try to create synergy among them. Mainly in the correspondence related to periodic reports, a rather recurrent and sustained insistence on the overall framework of the project and the integration of its parts is readily noticeable.

There is some evidence to think that such synergy was not fostered enough by the office of the National Coordination in Guatemala or by the director of the action plan in any of the activities. In addition, resistance on the part of agencies is evident, and often openly admitted, in many ways and at different points, to really integrate into a larger whole.

This topic is complex and difficult to address. This evaluation could not shed enough light on it, since each individual actor and organization involved has the very sincere perception of having made the efforts required and having been frustrated by one or more of the other parties.

The prevailing institutional culture, as perceived during this evaluation, is not precisely that of cooperation among equals sharing a common goal, but of competition that sometimes responds to the agenda set by the organizations and even individuals, more than that of the project as a whole.

It was possible to detect practices and modalities implemented that do not seem to have been the most adequate to ensure a transparent and effective implementation. Instead, the prevailing atmosphere is one of mutual vigilance and self-censorship, and circulation of gossip.

Many conflicts arose in relation to the definition of the areas of competence and authority, and in relation to channels and procedures that should be merely administrative but became the source of power struggles. Conflicts were not adequately solved but remained latent and made room for misunderstandings and resentment.

There are no external signs that are clear for the parties involved and the general public and that reaffirm project identity. Each agency continued using its own logos, IDs and signs, and in one case a completely autonomous entity was established, at least during some time, for one of the components, as mentioned above.

No evidence was gathered on mechanisms for institutional relations between HABITAT and other relevant actors and, therefore, neither on their implementation nor on their eventual influence on the project, in case there were any.

ASI, in turn, has established institutional relations with at least five other relevant actors: the Office for Social Affairs --part of the Office of the First Lady-- the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Health; the banking system and INTECAP. These relations include face-to-face contacts or more formal relations with officers and representatives of those institutions, mainly at the local and municipal level, but often at higher and central levels as well.

Contacts with the Ministry of Health have been less successful due to higher personnel flow; non-specific campaigns have been coordinated and a good level of awareness and willingness to cooperate has been achieved, even though it must be said that credit for that is due to the managerial levels in the Ministry itself.

Contact with the banking system, even though it has worked fine, has been limited to introduction of beneficiaries for processes such as opening of bank accounts and handling of payments on credits, in view of the eventual transition to that system.

As for CONMIGUAT, evidence gathered indicates it has established mechanisms for institutional relations with relevant actors such as the Ministry of Labor, the Guatemalan Institute of Social Security, the Ministry of Defense, university departments and the Ministry of Commerce, among others. All of them have worked fine along formal lines, even though they have sometimes taken too long to come up with concrete solutions for concrete situations.

In this context, handling of high-level diplomatic relations with the Government of the Republic, and particular in reference to progress and approval of new legislation must be credited to the project coordinator and the coordinator of IPEC's National Office in Guatemala. Another strong point is the good relations established with the press.

At the beginning of the project, the existing network of organizations was not well known. Due to this, as mentioned above, during the first stages of the project the participation of the local and community organizations was low, according to testimonials.

During implementation itself, there was a first moment of doubt, uncertainty and fear, partly due to the shadow cast by recent bad experiences the communities had had with other action programs by other agencies, and partly to mistakes made by the project itself during its initial approach.

During a second period of some confusion, part of the existing social structure began to participate more in educational activities, in particular the beneficiaries that were then real ones. Another section of the structure, mainly intermediaries,

not only had a very low level of participation but also did everything possible to make the development of activities difficult.

At the end, up to the time of this evaluation, there is a community base organization that, even though incipient, constitutes a challenge to some prevailing traditional power structures. A kind of silent but fragile agreement seems to have been reached, for everyone to stay outside everyone else's domain. Participation by the beneficiaries is more enthusiastic and real.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

A baseline as such, with all the features needed, was never established during the project. Information never became consolidated or complete; it did not have the structure of a usable, multidimensional and dynamic database, and it never included detail geographical location about beneficiaries or any of the key actors.

Documents were examined (previous studies, the so called first baseline, records for each component, the attempt to formalize a single database on compact disk and revision of the first baseline, among others) which are meritorious and include elements for the construction of a baseline. None is complete by itself. All of them cover different items from different perspectives, with different tools and with different data groupings.

All the information sources examined for this evaluation fall into two extremes: they are presented as excessively grouped or constitute only series of raw data, not consolidated and not even ordered. Neither of the two extremes has been or would have been useful for project implementation. The former because it does not allow to identify or to locate precisely those areas the project was aiming to intervene, and the latter because it does not supply holistic perspectives nor intersecting of variables to allow close monitoring of the project as a whole.

The subsequent baselines have not really been useful for the supplementary activities of reporting, monitoring and evaluation. These had to be limited to comparing the level of achievement against a baseline practically restricted to two variables: the number of children withdrawn from child labor and the number of children prevented from entering the activity.

In practice, monitoring was done basically through period reports that the program coordination prepared to report to IPEC and to the donor, following the procedures agreed between USDOL and IPEC, which were based on a chain of reports covering from field monitors and intervention agents to responsible officers in the implementing agencies.

The consolidation of data mentioned has had to be done with different periodicity, for two addressees, in two languages and in two different formats. Formats do not leave much room for assessments of a more qualitative and even subjective –but still valid—type that officers have often wanted to make. This results in a certain

degree of frustration and in the perception that the monitoring and evaluation system is more geared towards the needs and interests of the donor and IPEC than those of the project itself, and that meeting project requirements “takes time” from other managerial questions whose importance and urgency are clearly perceived.

The concept that reports and feedback on them constitute an internal system to support decision-making during project development (in addition to being parts of the monitoring and evaluation system “from outside”) does not seem to have been incorporated well enough into practice by the operative level, as far as this evaluation could assess the issue.

Such insufficiency is partially based on the fact that the type of feedback, in case there has been any, has tended to be formal and take a tone that was often perceived as rather imposing. The reason for requesting supplementary information, documentation or correction is not always expressed or is not clearly perceived.

For someone who must respond to such requests it is not always evident how useful that information may be for the person who requested it, and less so how useful it could have been for himself/herself. Feedback was sometimes extemporaneous and only had value as historical records.

Worth mentioning as positive, however, is the insistence on quantitative indicators and how the internal structure of both forms has provided a common and more precise language for the various components, including the coordination, and has forced very fruitful, if not always cordial, discussion in order to maintain coherence and keep some criteria in mind.

The mid-term evaluation contributed to reinforce project development, but not as much as desired. The intention to improve achievement of objectives and results seems to have been largely frustrated since, as far as the information obtained indicates, the result was not really a quantitative or a qualitative step forward. This happened not so much because of failures pertaining to the evaluation itself but because the implementation of the observations and results was rather low.

Some changes after the mid-term evaluation can be seen, and some of them are important, but the opportunity for inflection it provided was partly diluted in what followed, probably because of the pressure carried from previous stages. It was argued, perhaps correctly, that managerial reaction time has been in general too long, in the sense that some decisions, even though correct, were made late and thus lost much of their impact.

Even though there was abundant previous discussion to agree on indicators to be used, awareness on their meaning and usefulness for decision-making does not seem to be shared by all parties. An attitude of “filling out numbers” is noticeable more than occasionally, and such an attitude may be even counterproductive.

The design of the monitoring and evaluation system and the implementation of the design does not allow, strictly speaking, to discern the effect of the project on the various factors that define the existence of child labor, or it does so at a very low level. The main reason for this is that the factors were not specified beforehand and no indicators were assigned to monitor them.

Neither does the design of the project monitoring and evaluation system nor the implementation of the design allow, strictly speaking, to measure the impact the project has had on the decrease or the prevention of child labor, or it does so at a very low level. The main reason for this is that no data were gathered to compare this intervention with another or with none.

This evaluation did not receive protocols or instructions stating the assignment of responsibilities and procedures to record, analyze and disseminate project information, with the few exceptions of coordination reports and monitoring of children, which, even in those cases, are not truly satisfactory. A noticeable fact is that the training and real skills officers had, were not taken into consideration to assign them (or not) that type of tasks.

There are incomplete records for some types of information, beginning with the cards. In other cases, what is lacking or incomplete is the electronic version of the data. Most information gathered does not indicate who must record it. In relation to analysis, it was not clearly defined who must summarize and systematize the different types of information, what procedures to follow, who it is for, nor what meaning or use consolidation of data would have.

The project team lacked or did not use data analysis capabilities. Efforts to systematize seem to have been made mainly by external contractors and they met the frustrating fact that information exists, but not in a useful format to carry out the analysis it would deserve. What seems to have failed is prevision about some types of information that would have been useful at the end and even during project implementation.

Dissemination of information within the area covered by the program has been widely split among the components. Dissemination to the outside has been correctly centralized in the coordination, which has used it very skillfully, but exclusively following its criteria. Internal communications have been scant; besides, a culture to share information formally and for ends other than mere control has not been developed.

This evaluation found mistakes, limitations and gaps in the information generated by the monitoring system, but this does not invalidate the system as a whole nor its basic assumption. There are indications that feedback on this information and its defects was received more as an illegitimate incursion than as an opportunity to improve management, and that is why feedback was not taken up most advantage of.

Even though actions fairly met what the monitoring system formally requires, its spirit did not take root in the institutional culture of the project. Some incoherence appeared at times due to lack of methodological and instrumental clarity on the part of one of the parties involved.

Little evidence was found for managerial decisions made during the implementation of the project to have been strongly supported by the monitoring and evaluation system used. It was argued that the system in general is too slow to support decisions that need to be made rapidly. However, it was also observed that what is often slow or is not done is the implementation of decisions based on the system. Thus, this final evaluation found situations that had not changed a year after the mid-term evaluation.

CHILD LABOR MONITORING

The strengths of the monitoring system also constitute its weaknesses, since it was based on practically voluntary community monitors who, at the same time, were paid a stipend; therefore, some ambiguity was created or at least there was room for ambiguous interpretation.

1. The monitoring of working children or children at risk who have received the services of the project was done late, in a way that was contradictory, and it caused a high degree of disagreement. The project monitoring system may work independently from child monitoring and in practice it has done so, assigning it a confirmation role. The field monitors, both at school and in the community, showed a high level of awareness and enthusiasm, and positive appreciation of the importance of their task.
2. Child labor monitoring does not seem to have been considered from the start as the important project component it is in all justice, and enough funds could have been assigned to it.
3. The redesign of child labor monitoring in particular partially released some budget lines to cover unforeseen expenditures such as the purchase of the property to build the first model workshop.
4. The reports on child labor monitoring examined are not very precise, since they are both overly and under consolidated (or include global assessments without figures or lists, and raw entry cards); however, it does not seem far fetched to assert that the effect of children withdrawn from child labor or prevented from entering the activity has been observed in a large majority of the population reached by the project.

EFFICIENCY

The project used a combination of human, material and other resources, in addition to financial ones, and did so in considerable amount. Besides the budget assigned

by USDOL, the program included input supplied by IPEC as such, ILO, other United Nations agencies, the executing NGOs, and the officials contracted by several agencies.

Several public institutions, both local and national, answered the invitation, became partners in the project and contributed with their capabilities. Private individuals and institutions have also cooperated. All this adds up to considerable costs. The overall investment was larger than foreseen in the budget that was approved.

The budget approved is considered adequate, but it does not seem to have been broken down with enough detail according to the activities planned. In this sense it would be considered balanced if each of the components had been assigned enough resources to carry out its corresponding activities, instead of assigning the same amount to each component.

For a project so strongly based on sustained and continued presence in the field, the lines for traveling to and within the field seemed to have been underestimated. Even personal vehicles of the officials responsible for the program were used on several occasions. The vehicle assigned was available only too late.

This evaluation did not go into details about budget planning, and it had access to consolidated documents only. In general, the schedules planned have not been met. Not enough information has been gathered to decide whether or not this is somehow due to inadequate time periods initially set, but it is evident that intuition was very slow, as was the time for management to response to the challenges imposed by scheduling.

The changes necessarily made to the original schedule have been, as previously mentioned, those that IPEC authorized and resulting from external circumstances analyzed in the mid-term evaluation and needed to meet program objectives.

On the other hand, project development followed the budgets as planned. The time extension authorized did not imply any budget increase, which means that up to that point expenditures had not reached the level planned. Coverage of some items by the government partially freed some budget lines to cover unforeseen expenditures such as purchase of the property for the first model factory.

That the first implementing agency in charge of the social support component continued handling budget, even after its participation ended and while the budget was handed over to the other implementing agency, seems to be a fact.

EFFECTIVENESS

In the course of the project some results have been achieved, including more awareness against child labor in the various sectors, better education and better access to it, better services in health, community organization around credit

groups, trying alternative sources of income, and better conditions for organized groups in firework production.

Towards the end of the project there is an incipient coming together of official and private actors that have begun to mobilize in the direction intended towards decreasing and eliminating child labor. In the absence of strong evidence that this is due to external factors, it is possible to give the project credit for all these effects.

Achievement of the immediate objectives of the project was uneven and in general did not reach the level expected. This situation is specified later on, and differentiation is made by component. As for higher level and long-term objectives, the project does not seem to have met them, or ways to measure this were not readily available.

Most of the target population established (about 64% if figures are considered correct) has been reached through the awareness components, and also by education in relation to primary school. In relation to health, quantitative results are similar, even if this component still shows qualitative weaknesses and has not offered anything very specific. The micro-credit component reached approximately half the target population. Model factories incorporated about 15% of the intended population, while technical education reached too small a number of people.

The various components of the project –education, health, economic alternatives— all seem to have had some influence on decreasing child labor, but it is not really possible to differentiate the impact that each had on each of the causal factors.

There are children at risk who have not entered the labor market. That can be measured quantitatively. It is not possible to measure how many of them have remained in that condition because of the project and how many due to other causes. Consequently, it does not seem possible to quantitatively measure the impact the project has had on the prevention of child labor.

EDUCATION

This component did not originally intend to reach the preschool population, even though it was mentioned that children below the minimum age to enter school were working in firework production (children 6, 5, 4, 3 and even 2 years old according to various documents and confirmed during fieldwork for this evaluation). Actually, a small but important population was reached and a whole community based program was promoted, supported by the Office of the First Lady. Three fourths of the target of 4100 school aged children were reached, which was perhaps the most important achievement, in summer schools with enrollment higher than that of the regular school year. Opportunities were increased in several schools by opening an evening shift.

The educational component made an undeniable contribution to the withdrawal of children, even if it cannot be measured very precisely.

The Ministry of Education consolidates figures about enrollment, re-entry, and permanence in school, performance and grade passing. In each school, each teacher reports the data and the principal consolidates it. This evaluation had access to the data for the last year (2002), but not to the records for previous years, so comparison was not possible. Most teachers strongly state that the rates have had a very positive change recently and they say it is so as a result of the project.

Most opinions gathered about the preschool centers indicate that they have performed well and are contributing in a very positive way to the children's education. The effect stated is that of induction, as in "little children learn to enjoy school."

The project has worked hard to ensure the Peace Scholarships program and to firmly establish the scheme of community management for them. According to teachers and parents, this has resulted in more resources for the schools in the area, since the grants to cover the needs of children are much more effective when handled this way than when handled individually by each family.

The difference made available, by decision by the boards, has contributed partially to cover needs in infrastructure, materials and equipment in some of the schools. A discussion about this practice was going on lately, since some sectors stated that the corresponding division in the Ministry should meet infrastructure needs.

The project has contributed enormously to changing the educational model traditionally used in the area of the project and moving it towards the Active Rural School model, tried during the additional period in November, which fosters motivation and permanence in school among the children.

The number of girls attending school has undoubtedly increased, even though precise figures were not obtained. The project has made strong efforts in this area and has promoted the idea that girls have as much right to attend school as boys do, and it has firmly acted against the practice of forcing them to leave school after they first fail in school, while boys are given a second and even a third opportunity. However, even though most people support this view, strictly speaking it is impossible to know whether or not the change that has taken place results from such efforts. Several girls have participated in school government bodies, some of them brilliantly.

Testimonials by parents, direct observation and the opinion of teachers and other officials in the sector hold the project responsible for an important effect that parents' participation has had: increased and better school services.

Teachers surveyed through questionnaires and open interviews indicate that their training to address the specific needs of working children and children at risk has improved considerably. The most frequently mentioned factor is how to increase self-esteem among students who were or are still involved in child labor. This was a specific contribution of the project.

HEALTH

The baseline was not specific in relation to the health condition of the target population, and less so in relation to the physical and psychological consequences of child labor, or about the physical and psychological risks inherent in the tasks the population at risk might perform. In general, it could be possible to reconstruct the initial situation on the basis of the records kept by the corresponding Ministry, which makes them public only in a highly consolidated fashion.

Campaigns designed mainly to address the school population in general were carried out, with participation by the Ministries of Health and Education and the corresponding component of the project. These activities were developed in the communities and in the schools, and they aimed mainly to general primary care services such as, for instance, elimination of internal and external parasites, and weight and height control. Health improvement in the target population is expected to have taken place as a result from these campaigns, but this was impossible to verify. The prospect to incorporate specific health programs in the field, such as the one for adolescents, is very high and shows good possibilities.

As far as the evaluators know, there are no figures nor any other information related to physical and psychological consequences of child labor in firework production (some probable ones are listed). Very few initiatives to reduce or prevent those consequences were initiated. Accidents with regrettable results have continued to happen (the last one after the fieldwork for this evaluation). If there have been changes in this area, there are no means to know to what degree they have taken place or if they can be attributed to implementation of the project.

No evidence was found for the local health system to have been strengthened in any way to improve the provision of health services to the target population. The current director in San Juan shows interest and awareness about this issue, which derive only partially from the project, and this official has made efforts to hire a social worker once again.

The project made progress that must be given due credit in the areas of training, communication, awareness raising, and popular education on safety and health conditions in firework production at home. However, improvements caused by the project could not be verified.

MODEL WORKSHOPS

The first model workshop –the only one in operation—centralized the production of 13 families that worked in domiciliary firework production before. At the time this evaluation was made, a high peak in production, labor was being hired in the community itself, the maximum capacity of 40 posts could not be filled, even though income levels offered were more attractive than those offered by the intermediaries.

The Solidarity Group and its association were willing to admit new members, but they still had not defined the compensation mechanisms for members who had participated from the start. They did not think it was fair for those who joined the enterprise once it was in operation to do so with the same conditions held by those who initiated it and faced all the trouble of launching the project.

This evaluation verified the reality of the mechanization processes and of the reduction of hazards in the activity. Since the workshop opened recently, its higher profitability could not be verified, and that beneficiaries may in time do without child labor is merely a reasonable supposition at the moment.

The end product is temporarily being stored in the model workshop itself, but it could not be transported to Guatemala City or Mixco, the two large competing centers for this activity. Centralization of marketing is clearly a key condition but it is not enough; the corresponding plan still had not been drawn in detail in a document by the time this evaluation ended the data gathering process. The transportation issue continues unsolved.

The idea of a model workshop does not seem to have been sufficiently communicated to the beneficiaries nor subjected to their criticism well in advance. Initially, the idea was to have a single workshop and a single product-gathering center, both relatively large. Then the idea changed to shops the size of the one built, but they were conceived as more than the two that can finally be offered (the construction of one is just starting). A very fine cost analysis does not seem to have been made. The number of alleged beneficiaries is clearly exaggerated in the documents, and only a small portion of this number will be reached, even assuming the second model workshop is finally implemented.

There are data on the income of the families associated with the model workshop when they previously worked in firework production, even if the information is on record cards that have relatively minor defects. Those data were not submitted to the evaluators in systematized fashion.

The income projections for the new activity seem too optimistic and it has not been explicitly stated how the figures were arrived at; they are based on mere differential productivity, with the premise that all the merchandise will be sold in the time period expected. At the time of this evaluation, the sale of the production of the first model workshop had not begun, and the construction of the second workshop was in very preliminary stages.

Consideration must be given to the fact that income will only be generated when the produce is sold in the market, and that part of the new income expected must be used to pay for interests and capital of the consolidated debts. Even so, it seems reasonable to foresee increased income that will cover the basic expenses of the families associated to the model workshops without their having to resort to child labor.

Actually, the second group already started paying its debt before the workshop is even built, and it has assigned part of the family income to pay the debt, which means a reduction in income during a period when productions has not increased. This period is expected to be shorter for the second group than it was for the first one, which really had a grace period.

Under the previous circumstances, the entire family worked at home, with great risk for the personal safety of each member and for the patrimonial property all shared. These situations are perceived as disadvantages. Income received was considered, from their perspective, relatively high. The mother could take care of the children and eventually perform tasks that generated some supplementary income, while the father's presence at home gave him some control over the family's daily activities and over family production. These are the advantages perceived.

The shops still have not had any measurable effect on the eradication of the need for child labor in the families covered by the project.

There are no reliable data on the segments of the target population that would be in most critical conditions, with a higher level of poverty, more factors leading to child labor, more children working or at risk.

Practically all members of the shops are males. Men's role has changed from distributor and controller of family work at home to that of member of a group whose work he can control only in relation to the work he himself does. Women's role has changed from being co-helpers in domestic production to concentrating on family tasks of a different type.

The project has really provided technical assistance to solidarity groups and strengthened their efforts, aiming to increase sustainability for the model workshops. There are no data on what the managerial capability was previously nor currently. Practice will tell whether or not technical assistance has contributed to raise it. The evaluation found out that many of the elements they should handle have not been effectively transmitted yet, neither in theory nor in practice, so they still have not reached enough autonomy.

Data obtained on how this technical assistance was planned and how it was provided to the groups were not enough for solid assessment. Apparently, assistance did not coincide with practical needs; it seems to have had a rather formal and academic initial stage, and a too casual and simplified second stage. The reasons that led to that adaptation have not been systematized, but it can be said that the person who was in charge, at least lately, has previous training and experience —the chief production engineer, who was hired as a consultant.

Previous intermediaries provided raw materials to the now beneficiaries of this component, and the latter did not have to be concerned about provision of materials if their relations were good. Of course, the intermediaries set prices. In response to the project framework, the members of the model workshop have said

they do not want to resort to the intermediaries as such to obtain raw materials, and that position is right if the goal is to end dependence from the old model and not just modify it.

The only channels to purchase raw materials that remain open are the legally authorized distributors, in the hands of the army, which does not necessarily exclude intermediaries, some of whom are legal distributors, at least at the local level.

In practice, it was seen how fragile the model workshop could become in this situation, since the permit to haul the potassium chlorate already purchased and paid for was delayed and virtually retained in the corresponding office of the Ministry of Defense. This delayed the initiation of production in the model workshop, to the point that the entire operation was at risk of loss. The situation turned to normal *in extremis*, thanks to mobilization of contacts by the project and its officials. Workshop members probably would not have had access to those contacts otherwise.

Something similar but with a different degree of urgency and importance has happened with the virtual retention in customs of a sample of acacia gum, to be used to change the burning speed in the new type of wick that would be necessary if the change from potassium chlorate to per-chlorate is implemented in the new, improved formula (which will decrease the risk of accidental explosion). These inputs are not available in the country in the quantities needed and importation is not ensured.

At the time this evaluation was performed, none of the channels to market the product of the model workshop were in operation. In this area, there is still dependence on the chief engineer, hired as a consultant. The marketing channels, and in fact the rest of the marketing plan, were not clearly identified in the plan for the model workshop, which is incomplete, weak and little formalized in this aspect. The post mid-term evaluation design foresees that a large number of families – which seems exaggeratedly high—will benefit from taking care of this aspect. However, how they will specifically do it is not clear.

The design assumes that producers are willing to hand marketing over, which is what really adds value to the product, when they have just taken it away from the intermediaries' hands. The Board of the implementing agency that was in charge of this component has made a proposal in this sense, going back to the original idea of a large product-gathering center, an idea that should be examined, but that includes the same defective features to begin with (it is not clear how it will overcome the obstacles to access raw materials, and who its beneficiaries will reach all the target population and not only a small group of organized beneficiaries).

The strategy employed by the model workshop in particular, as generator of enough income to make child labor unnecessary, has not really been tested. It cannot be compared to other alternatives for income-generation as far as results.

It has been slower and more expensive, and it has initially benefited a smaller number of families, but in the long run it could have more potential to reach the necessary level as to make child labor superfluous.

MICROCREDIT

A survey including some design errors was run, and it supplied figures for the income that families associated to the solidarity circles in alternatives to firework production had declared as the income they had received in their previous activities. These figures have not been systematized, and they also include minor defects; however they could give an idea of the initial situation. No continued or periodic records were kept to visualize the level, speed and pace of the change expected. Projections were not made either.

At the time of evaluating this component, another survey on final differential income was in progress, and a somewhat different instrument was used. The data gathered on income really obtained from the new activities, according to the beneficiaries after the first credit cycle, still had not been systematized.

As perceived by the families (almost exclusively women) the income differential in this component is already visible, since the product is sold in the market during short cycles. Most of the interviewees, however, do not feel the difference in income to be too large or they cannot easily quantify it, for money as such “is not seen.”

This is because part of the real income, increased or not, must be used to pay interest and capital on the consolidated debt to reproduce the conditions of the same income alternatives, and another portion must be used to cover daily family needs.

This way, the importance that the beneficiaries attribute to this alternative, as previously stated, is that of a certain degree of autonomy from the husband, since they state they appreciate not having to constantly ask for money to pay for small daily expenditures, and they feel very proud not to have to ask for money to run their own businesses.

It is unknown whether or not increased income would be enough to cover the normal expenses for the families associated to alternatives to firework production, without having to resort to child labor, but it seems unlikely.

No reliable data are available in relation to what segments of the target population would be in a more critical condition, with higher levels of poverty, more cases of factors conducive to child labor, more children working or at risk. Consequently, it is not known how these segments would be distributed among the various options for income generation. There are indications that some families chose the so-called community alternatives because they considered the requirements to join a model workshop too high. In particular, mention was made of self-exclusion based on level of illiteracy or command of spoken Spanish.

Men are relieved from the role of providers when demands to cover household expenses are reduced because women's labor contributes to meet expenses. Her work, although not entirely under the man's control, is done mostly at home, as before. And, it must be said, sometimes it involves child labor as her previous tasks did, and it sometimes involves risks like her previous tasks also did.

There is no information on what management skills members of the Solidarity groups in these income-generating alternatives have. The project has, in fact, provided some technical assistance to strengthen this aspect, based on a first stage of general premises and a second stage of challenges that sprung from practice in the field.

The evaluation found that many of the elements transmitted really focus on credit management, more than on management of micro-enterprises itself. There is at least one group of women that does not limit themselves to having one initiative each but are now gathering in a larger common initiative, but that is still incipient. They have successfully handled credit but feel disoriented as to how to really consolidate as micro-entrepreneurs.

The data obtained on how technical assistance was planned in this component and how it was provided to the groups seem to indicate that an effort was made, mostly intuitively, to adapt assistance to the practical needs of the beneficiaries and their conditions of illiteracy and monolingualism. A first stage, too formal and academic, seems to have been avoided, but perhaps the second stage was indeed too casual and simplified. The officials in charge have sound arguments, but considerations that led to the adaptation have not been systematized.

AWARENESS-RAISING

The project did not characterize well enough the initial behavior of the various actors, representatives from the ministries, local governments, community organizations, etc., in relation to child labor, nor the changes it aimed to make.

According to his/her own statement and (retrospective) perception, some changes have indeed taken place in some of these actors, but this evaluation could only verify, as shown in his/her discourse, contents of awareness, general perceptions and attitudes coherent with the principle of progressive elimination of child labor, in general. These may be necessary antecedents to behavioral changes, which are just beginning to take place in some actors more than in others.

It was possible to verify a disposition towards commitment, created as the first condition for the existence of a local child labor monitoring network. This disposition is easier to believe since it is based on a realistic appreciation of the limited existing capabilities and on the willingness to advocate before the corresponding instances to overcome those limitations without depending on external agents. Several actors have proposed specific actions they could take care of –and would like to—as part of a joint effort.

UNFORESEEN EFFECTS

The project did not make the necessary provisions to characterize from the very beginning the target population that would not be served, nor to monitor eventual changes that have taken place in the population. It focused exclusively on the target population.

Thus the changes verified in the target population after the initial period are conventionally attributed to the implementation of the program, without having really controlled the possibility that other agents may be affecting both populations, or that the program itself is having undesired effects on the population it did not mean to service.

Some informants made loose reference to the fact that domiciliary production could be moving to more distant localities in the municipalities covered by the action program, to municipalities that are not covered, or to neighboring ones. This could not be verified by this evaluation but if true, it would be perhaps a negative effect on the non-target population, which was not foreseen by the project, that is, that part of the population that initially was not even at risk in relation to this type of child labor may have in fact entered this activity.

Something similar about the target population would be the effect of a double labor day stated by very few random informants and verified by this evaluation, even though it could not verify its importance and range. School attendance did not always compete with child labor nor substituted for it as expected (people spoke about “stealing hours from...”), but both were combined, thus constituting a truly double labor day for at least some children.

In several of these cases, according to the testimonials and in accordance with school schedules, make-up hours in firework production concentrated at dawn or late in the afternoon and in the evening; therefore, artificial lightning was necessary, sometimes provided by flames, thus increasing the level of risk for the children.

Another unforeseen negative effect was that some activities to substitute income generation continued to use child labor, sometimes in dangerous activities (for instance cutting, peeling and slicing cane for basket weaving).

At first, the intermediary firework businessmen did not oppose the project and, on the contrary, some of them tried to become intermediaries between the project and the communities they had under their own control, which they called leadership.

Thanks to their leadership, which they did exercise and still keep, or to their contacts with community leaders, they organized meetings for the program, charged those who attended with a fee and made false promises that were of course attributed to the program in order to call them to the meetings.

Towards the end of the project, on the other hand, some denounced that some intermediaries had come up with a project for a model workshop identical to the one the program developed and were trying to obtain external financing for it. They clearly tried to take advantage of the project and appropriate it.

The project was based on the premise of a general empowerment effect on the community as subjects. In this sense, it is clear that the presence and efforts of the program tended to affect, directly and negatively, the objective interests of the intermediaries, not only economically but also in relation to their political power.

It was clearly to be expected, and foreseeable, that opposition would rise from those who previously held power, which at the local level are mainly the intermediaries or people related to them. That their opposition came as a surprise shows an error in the design resulting from excessive naivety, in the best sense of the word.

According to some testimonials, opposition or resistance on the part of the intermediaries even turned into threats to the physical integrity of the beneficiaries and of the project officers, which caused legitimate concern. But the strong economic pressure they did exercise on the manufacturers was the real threat.

Not buying their finished product, or doing it for a lower price, and even not supplying them with raw materials, had a worse effect than the threats on the morals of many beneficiaries. Some intermediaries spread false rumors about the program, partially undermining trust in it, and according to some testimonials, they tried to buy the properties where the model workshops would be built, so it would be impossible to build them.

Firework production is a game where intermediaries are much stronger and have more experience, and very powerful allies, than the producers. However, for the time being, conflict and opposition by intermediary entrepreneurs that used to employ producers seem to have taken more acceptable forms, at least as long as the real results of the model workshop are not seen more clearly, both in relation to income and empowerment.

The most frequently mentioned form of empowerment was self-confidence to deal with the world beyond the limits of the village or the municipality. In particular, they stressed how they were able to deal with mid and high-level government officers, who finally talked to them “even if we were not wearing coats and ties,” and how they had tried to sell their products directly.

SUSTAINABILITY

Several necessary conditions have been developed in various key actors so that the positive results will continue after the project ends. Worth mentioning first are motivation, willingness, real good faith in them, clarity and strong commitment, all of them expressed during the course of this evaluation. These conditions are

shown in the participation of the various actors during the Workshop with Parties Involved and in the resulting document.

However, there still remains some doubt on the level of capability before they are created, or about the probability to overcome some external objective limitations without a previous process. Among the personnel, the beneficiaries and other parties involved, there seems to be enough clarity about the objective limitations, which does not necessarily cause frustration or fatalism, but renews strong commitment to work with whatever is at hand.

As previously stated, the project has definitely made changes in the perception, knowledge, awareness and attitudes of many of the various actors, in relation to child labor. However, these changes just begin to show in the practical behavior of most of them, and it will still be some time before they really have strong presence in the agendas and budgets, not only monetary ones but also those that allocate other kinds of resources.

The situation is uneven for all the components and sub-components, some of which could be assigned a higher possibility of sustainability than others. Transition towards autonomous management is still far from complete for all the aspects of the project.

In Guatemala, institutionalizing the eradicating child labor has progressed in terms of signing and approval of international conventions, writing and passing laws and national policies, signing and implementing inter-institutional agreements, and the establishment of official commissions.

The development of a legal and institutional framework is clearly a necessary condition, or at least a very convenient one, but it is not enough to ensure that positive results already achieved will continue after the project ends, and less so to ensure that attempts will be made to carry them to deeper and broader levels. The immediate future of the critical factors for sustainability of the various objectives of the project is detailed in the following paragraphs.

Public institutions have made efforts, in some cases notable ones, and have begun to develop some strategies, both separately and jointly. On the other hand, new relevant legislation has been developed at different levels. Both factors have influenced project sustainability, since they have given it weight and visibility, while at the same time further committing the actors involved, including the general public that now has better basis for advocacy and lobbying.

It is risky to say that the factors causing child labor in firework production in San Juan and San Raymundo have been eliminated, and it would be even riskier to say that it has been done for good. The program seems to have touched upon some causal factors, and very strongly so.

There has been a certain degree of recession in the so-called symptoms of child labor that were addressed, but it is uncertain that they will not appear again if at

least some of the program activities are concluded. The effects of some actions undertaken will probably be more clearly perceived in the future.

EDUCATION AND HEALTH

Pre-schools have been supplied with facilities and the Office of the First Lady has ensured their equipment; besides, having local people in charge of them brings better perspectives for their permanence than if they had been hired outside. These so-called caring mothers have received some training, but in general they have not completed it. The costs of personnel and other expenses are not autonomous from external cooperation.

The systems for reinsertion to school and permanence in it, for children who work or at risk, depends heavily on the complete implementation of the Active Rural School methodology, which is on the right path and includes ways to organize and empower students, parents and teachers themselves.

The School Boards have been trained along the way and they have received some guidance on fund management, but they are still not completely independent from initial protection. There is clear awareness of the need for infrastructure and of the fact that funds from the scholarship program cannot continued to be used to meet those needs. Petitions are being made to the corresponding department to cover those needs.

The management plan for the Peace for Scholarship program, developed in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, has shown how to greatly maximize funds than differently managed differently did not have any visible impact. These funds, ensured through a specific agreement, constitute a basic condition to continue with the process more extensively.

In relation to health, it has been proposed that, besides continuing non-differentiated services, an epidemiological survey should be made in order to obtain, by the end of the project, a general view of the health conditions of the population in the two municipalities covered, particularly of the children working in firework production or that recently left the activity. By the way, that study could provide some elements to compare the current condition with and previous one as stated in the official records, and somehow infer what the impact of the project may have been. The monitoring system the program established and supports may support the type of epidemiological watch outlined.

MODEL WORKSHOPS

The needs that must still be met in order to reach sustainability of the model workshops are relatively smaller at the technical level, since producers have great experience and are definitely the owners of high-level skills and knowledge in the traditional production of fireworks.

However, community groups at the model workshops still have not solved, at the technical level, the change of formula using potassium per-chlorate and a wick with gum made from acacia or something similar to it.

On the other hand, there is still large resistance to working “in line,” handing one’s work to someone else for the following step, since the previous model was more that of craft work, where each person is responsible for his/her product—or the family’s—from beginning to end, and proud of it. Mechanization, at least the partial type, is still a future consideration, since transformation procedures are still basically the same as before.

In relation to management and administration, there is strong dependency and information transmittal, mainly the know-how of the new modality, has been slower than expected. These two groups include people with lots of aptitude and they have advanced little by little in the knowledge required at this level, but their training has not been completed.

At the financial level, the first results are just appearing right now, for the first model workshop that recently began operations in December 2002, so it will be necessary to analyze how they evolve in the future. This first group and its association at least have not increased expenses while their income levels have remained the same.

The second model workshop is at a very incipient construction stage, but the second groups has not had a grace period; at the time of the evaluation it had already made two monthly payments, while income had not increased. It is true that the second group benefits from the lessons learned by the first one, but that does not constitute a vaccination against difficulties.

Besides, both groups have endorsed their mortgages in favor of the implementing agency.

MICROCREDIT

From now on, the family groups organized in the community alternatives to firework production will take direct responsibility for most of the management and operation of their micro-enterprises.

This component took for granted the potential of the financed alternatives as income generators. There is no evidence of an analysis of the true feasibility to start their operation. For instance, in relation to hydroponics, technical needs were detected in the first trials. The crop had moderate success, just enough for family consumption. However, even if technical needs were met, there would be no guarantee that would be an income-generation alternative, if are not balanced against costs, and if the market has not been truly explored.

Women working as weavers or embroiderers need assistance on marketing channels, since they depended on a single customer with whom relations were

broken once s/he became a mediator and did not perform the corresponding role. The women are increasingly willing to work together and not individually, but they do not feel ready to do so.

Other needs are covered as long as the groups do not decide to expand their production or address other markets. Possible saturation is pointed out, if too many people do the same at the same time, since groups only work as such to get, back up and pay individual credits. Each member handles his/her own micro-project, and group projects are in no way integrated, vertically nor horizontally.

Micro-enterprises are designed for a very small local market and within it, with very few exceptions going to the market to the municipality capitals (vegetables) and even to Mixco (chickens). They are also designed or working as generators of supplementary income more than generators of income, without resorting to child labor, in the context of San Juan and San Raymundo. Opinions gathered for in the course of this evaluation often say that they can really become sustainable and competitive alternatives, but not much sound argumentation is presented.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND APPROPRIATION

Public institutions have initiated efforts and strategies aimed to eradicate child labor, particularly this type. New, relevant legislation has been passed, which is at various stages of discussion, approval, countersigning, and making effective.

The level of local appropriation of the project is uneven; some local actors have appropriated some program components more than others. The child-monitoring component has not been really undertaken by any institution, even though it involves education and health officials, in addition to community members. Appropriation of all aspects of the program by a broad support base has not been ensured.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR IPEC

MAIN RECOMMENDATION

CONTINUATION OF THE PROJECT

In this evaluation an attempt has been made not to raise expectations excessively regarding the possibility of continuing this project, which is why this aspect was not officially discussed. Nevertheless, there is clearly a favorable climate for that initiative, the desirability of which is unquestioned in the reports received.

This evaluation strongly recommends that the project be extended beyond the final date projected for its termination, for a period of at least one more year (preferably more).

This recommendation is based on the reported findings and on the conclusions drawn from them, especially those referring to perspectives of sustainability.

This continuation would have a dual purpose: to strengthen the principal gains of the project whose sustainability is yet to be assured, and to offer the conditions for an income-generating alternative on which a great deal of time, energy, money, and other resources have been spent, to prove its worth, given that it offers very interesting possibilities which have so far barely come to light.

It is clear, based on the criteria of this evaluation, that not all necessary conditions are in place to ensure that the program achievements can be sustained over time independently of the support provided through international cooperation.

Should this recommendation be implemented, it would be necessary to allocate sufficient additional resources, not necessarily from the same donor.

The proposed prolongation must not be undertaken solely in terms of time, which would be an extension, because the resources which remain are unquestionably insufficient for completing even just the main tasks which are still pending.

If it were decided to set an appropriate time period for this prolongation, it would be necessary to realistically revise the objectives that were not met so that only those that are truly feasible be maintained.

MINIMAL CONDITIONS AND TASKS FOR THE MAIN RECOMMENDATION

The minimally required conditions and tasks for eventual prolongation as proposed would be the following:

1. Carry out a process of team integration and training in relevant skills for all project personnel. This process should be done at the very beginning, especially if it involves new personnel or implementing agencies that have not previously participated in action programs of IPEC.
2. Continue fomenting and supporting all matters relating to the Methodology of Active Rural Schools, especially concerning provisions for materials, equipment, and teacher training, as well as for lobbying the Ministry so that this personnel remains stable in the program action area and is not removed or transferred. Ensure corresponding alliances.
3. Systematize policies at the preschool level; the kind of attention which has been given to these small children should cover all of this population included in the project, for which it is necessary to ensure and expand the respective agreement with the Office of the First Lady.
4. Give attention to the problem of minors who do not attend school because of overage, as well as to those adults who have had no scholastic experience at those levels. Likewise, an effort should be made to help those adolescents with

elementary education who have thus far been unable to fulfill their desire to continue at higher levels or in some form of vocational education.

5. Activate alliances with local and departmental levels of the Ministry of Health. The general state of health being fomented so far is unquestionably important, but progress should be made specifically in terms of the health of working children or those at serious risk of so becoming in this particular type of worst form.

6. Avoid neglecting matters of mental and emotional health and of rehabilitation, both emotional and physical.

7. Document the change in income level of the beneficiaries of the micro-credit modality (almost all women).

8. Consider increasing the limits in such a way that by making micro-credit more appealing to men the probability of avoiding gender bias is increased.

9. Foment the solidarity of groups not only in terms of credit, but also in terms of their transformation into true small enterprises.

10. Calculate and continuously update the financial indexes of each group in order to measure their progress

11. Consider increasing interests to facilitate sustainability of a rotating fund in the future. The previous point is important to this end.

12. Complete, in the least amount of time possible, the transmission of capabilities related to mass production, management and commercialization within the model factories.

13. Formalize the commercialization plan in writing, share it and reach a consensus among each and every member. The figures relating to this and other aspects, which were requested in the evaluation, should be completed and committed to paper, not only in optimistic terms, as was done orally, but also taking into consideration a more probable scenario and a pessimistic one. Make decisions concerning the gathering and transportation of products, among other topics.

14. Make an effort to ensure that all stakeholders, especially the beneficiaries, understand the importance of at least achieving, and if possible surpassing, the point of equilibrium (however it may be designated), if the goal is to sustain that level of effort and not merely to increase the level of income.

15. Continue to avoid direct confrontation with intermediaries and to act with due prudence. This should not be an obstacle for finding ways to reach this sector over a longer term and from a strategic perspective.

16. Insist upon the gathering, systematization, and reporting of relevant data at all levels, and provide both closer monitoring and more stringent, helpful feedback, in managerial terms. In this sense, time series, mobile averages, and other instruments are relatively easy to implement without specialized software, and they lend themselves to visual presentation.

OTHER GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Articulate and disseminate, among all stakeholders, documents which explicitly and systematically detail the general project model and the theory of change on which it is based.

2. Really include the stakeholders as true participants in the design, paying special attention to community representatives.

3. Take advantage of the lessons learned from interventions in the same production sector or similar ones in other countries when specifically adapting the general framework to each concrete project.

4. Do likewise with the lessons learned from interventions in other production sectors and in other geographical sectors within the same country.

5. Specify the factors contributing to the worst form of child labor being addressed by each project in its particular context, differentiating them from those of other worst forms and of child labor in general.

6. Integrate the causal factors made evident in a Gantt frame that visualizes the preceding relationships among them.

7. Define and utilize real, participative mechanisms for critiquing and modifying the design, both in the initial formulation and throughout the development of the project.

8. Articulate a predefinition of problems or organized brainstorming by use of a method such as Delphi.

9. Discuss the interpretation of major causal categories amply enough and through the proper channels in such a way that there is a shared conceptual framework.

10. Apply a refined degree of criticism to the activities that form part of the design or strategic plan. They should all be directed toward truly contributing to the objectives rather than appearing there simply because they “look good,” “are obvious” or “have always been done.” The criteria being applied here should be explicit and shared by all participants, as well as applicable to any activity proposal that may arise in the course of implementation.

11. Avoid multiplying and dispersing of activities, both at the moment of planning and while the project is in progress. Each activity should be connected to the

previous one(s), as a necessary consequence, and to the later one(s), as a necessary condition.

12. Consider other possible intervention alternatives, whether merely theoretical or which have been used in another context, as well as the possibility of not intervening at all.

13. Consider monitoring comparable locations where the project would not intervene otherwise, as well as intervention of only one of the components or different combinations of them in different comparable villages. not

14. Budget each of the activities in detail; there are some records and enough experience to be able to at least estimate costs with some degree of accuracy.

15. Keep a record of real costs, to be used in refining estimated costs. These estimates may be differential within each country and among countries of the same sub-region (also, obviously, among the sub-regions of a given region and among regions at the global level, which is of less interest in this context).

16. Integrate the strategic plans of all the action programs within the national context of a single country into a single macro plan in such a way that it ensures and strengthens strategy in common and maximizes the synergy among resources within each program and among programs.

17. If the integration of the plans for all the action programs within a sub-region becomes too difficult, try integrating them by production sectors that have quite similar characteristics among several countries; fireworks could be one of those sectors.

18. Implement specialized software and either train relevant personnel in its use or contract from outside the project.

19. Establish an appropriate baseline before initiating project operations. The characteristics it should have and the form in which it should be presented, in detail, should form part of the contract with the consulting firm in charge. It should be explicit in terms of data bases and mapping, and take into account logistical aspects, either choosing the centers from which to spread out, or on the contrary, deciding to go from the periphery toward the center, depending on each case.

20. As an alternative, begin with a minimal but very secure baseline and expand it as emerging cases of child labor in its worst forms are discerned.

21. Involve at least part of the personnel from the agencies expected to implement different components of the project in the establishment of the baseline. They should be involved both in fieldwork and in office work, both before and during the analysis (they should be involved from the earliest stages of the project design).

22. Specify, in a document, the roles of each of the public institutions, both national and local, which have had something to do with a project at some point.
23. Survey ahead of time actual institutional capacities and limitations, previous commitments, response time and degree of bureaucratic formality.
24. Explicitly articulate the profiles of the implementing agencies ahead of time, including having a continually updated bank of these agencies, not restricted to a single country but within larger contexts.
25. Examine ahead of time the strengths and weaknesses (administrative, financial and technical) of the different implementing agencies in terms of completing their tasks and objectives within the project. The desired synergetic effects should also be specified, not merely articulated as a mission statement, and certain corresponding responsibilities should be assigned.
26. In the contracts with implementing agencies, be explicit about the non-monetary resources which they will be assigned and the intervention dates, and establish criteria ahead of time concerning how it will be determined if each participating entity is fulfilling its duties or not. The consequences of not doing so should also be made explicit.
27. Do likewise with the directive bodies and the people responsible for them.
28. Anticipate as much as possible any conflicts of responsibilities, authority, territoriality, or others which could appear in each project, and also anticipate the form and the means by which they will be resolved.
29. Carry out a team training and integration process in terms of the skills relevant to the personnel of each project. This process should take place very early on, especially if new personnel or implementing agencies that have not previously participated in IPEC action programs are involved.
30. Demonstrate the integration of the different stakeholders through their external signs, in the discourse employed and in their general presentation.
31. Make a preliminary induction in the reporting system, which could possibly be unified in cases where a donor also wishes to be informed and to provide feedback. The latter should be flexible and truly have that nature, both for the one giving information and for those receiving it.
32. Be very explicit at all project levels, both in practice and in theory, in making clear that reports are important input for management and have short-term repercussions in it.
33. Integrate the ethnic, cultural, and linguistic characteristics of the population to whom the project is addressed into the design, and offer personnel basic training in these aspects, when necessary.

34. Anticipate undesirable effects, in the form of worst-case scenarios, taking into account the probable reactions of those who benefit from a situation of child labor in its worst forms, given that the action programs affect their objectives and interests and given that they tend to be groups with a certain degree of power, which is not limited to economics.

FOR THE EDUCATION AND HEALTH COMPONENT

1. Continue to take advantage of the Scholarships for Peace system and the specific manner in which they were implemented for this project and extend them to other action programs planned for Guatemala within this same production sector and others.

2. Renegotiate before expiration or negotiate ahead of time, depending on each case, the commitment of the corresponding Ministry.

3. Finding similar frameworks or propitiating them in other countries, as the case may be, might also contribute significantly toward the eradication of the worst forms of child labor in the long run.

4. Continue fomenting and supporting all matters relating to the methodology of Active Rural Schools, especially concerning provisions for materials, equipment, and teacher training, as well as for lobbying the Ministry so that this personnel remains stable in the program action area and is not removed or transferred. Promote this methodology as much as possible and establish or ensure corresponding alliances in other projects already underway or planned for Guatemala.

5. Systematize policies at the preschool level; the kind of attention which has been given to these small children should cover the entirety of this population included in the project, for which it is necessary to ensure and expand the respective agreement with the Office of the First Lady.

6. Give attention to the problem of minors who do not attend school because of overage, as well as to those adults who have had no scholastic experience at those levels. Likewise, an effort should be made to help those adolescents with elementary education who have been unable to fulfill their desire to continue at higher levels or in some form of vocational education.

(This evaluation is aware of the attempts made and of certain causes that can explain its failure, but this acknowledgement is not enough if one takes into account that this population, even though they will soon depart from the statistics as children who are working or at risk, will also very soon re-enter them as parents of children who may soon find themselves in the same predicament.)

7. Activate alliances with local and departmental levels of the Ministry of Health. The general attention that has been given to health up to this time is unquestionably important, but progress must be made specifically in the health of working children or those at risk of so becoming in this particular type of worst form.

8. Not neglect aspects concerning mental and emotional health, as well as rehabilitation, both mental and physical.

FOR THE STRATEGY TO GENERATE INCOME (BOTH FORMS)

1. Pre-establish the income levels that should result from income alternatives in order for the strategy to work. As indicators and achievement criteria, the new levels should be at least equal to the initial ones in order to be acceptable to the target population, greater so that the families may reach and maintain a basic level of living, and higher still for child labor to become unnecessary for the family economy

2. Continue using Solidarity Groups, which also constitute a great advantage as an initial form of organization, as the case may be. Nevertheless, it should be taken into consideration that upon occasion or at some point, they might not be more than transitional forms that should give way to others.

3. Propose a change in status when necessary according to the development of each group and its activity, in view of the fact that the Solidarity Group, like the present legal status of “non lucrative association”, puts limitations for the commercialization of the finished product.

FOR THE COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVES COMPONENT

1. Document the change in the income level of the beneficiaries of this modality (almost all women).

2. Consider raising the limits in such a way that the micro-credits become more appealing to the men in order to avoid gender bias.

3. Foment the formation of solidarity groups not only for micro credit, but also to transform themselves into real micro-businesses. This is recommendable even without considering gender bias because it increases the probability that the rise in income will reach required levels.

4. Do and maintain figures for the financial indexes foreseen in relevant documents, as soon as the information concerning the progress of each group becomes available.

5. Consider an increase in interests that would make a rotating fund possible in the future. The index figures mentioned in the previous point are also important in order for this to happen.

FOR THE FIREWORKS RELOCATION COMPONENT

1. Avoid neglecting to work with producers who necessarily must continue doing this work at home and probably continue to depend on intermediaries.
2. Continue the campaign in favor of greater safety and avoidance of dangers for those children (and adults) in home production, given that it is not possible to offer all of them the alternative of becoming part of the model workshops, not to mention that not all of them would want to.
3. Insist on substituting potassium chlorate with the corresponding perchlorate, especially now that the new legal bylaws facilitate this. The same should be done with the acacia sap necessary for the wick, for which the search for domestic provision should continue.
4. Make a decision concerning and implement in the near future a new judicial mechanism to facilitate commercialization, the next important step.
5. Complete, as soon as possible, the transmission of capabilities in mass production, administration, and commercialization.
6. Formalize the commercialization plan in writing, share it and reach a consensus among each and every member. The figures relating to this and other aspects, which were requested in the evaluation, should be completed and committed to paper, not only in optimistic terms, as reported orally, but also taking into consideration a more likely scenario and a pessimistic one.
7. Make an effort to ensure that all stakeholders, especially the beneficiaries, understand the importance of at least achieving, and if possible surpassing, the point of equilibrium (however it may be designated), if the goal is to sustain that level of effort and not merely to increase the level of income.
8. Continue to avoid direct confrontation with intermediaries and to act with due prudence. This should not be an obstacle for finding ways to reach this sector over a longer term and from a strategic perspective.

FOR INITIATING OTHER SIMILAR ACTION PROGRAMS

1. In order to initiate other similar action programs in the fireworks sector, whether in Guatemala or the entire Central American region, it is recommended that IPEC take into consideration the lessons learned. (See the corresponding section in this same document.)

FOR MAKING THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM WORK

1. Insist upon the gathering, systematization, and reporting of relevant data at all levels, and provide both closer monitoring and more stringent, helpful feedback, in

managerial terms. In this sense, time series, mobile averages, and other instruments are relatively easy to implement without specialized software, and they lend themselves to visual presentation.

2. Find ways for having all the national, program or component coordination offices take into account the importance of the data received in the reports. In the three years the program has been operating, there have been 23 reports given to management, including this one. Apparently a good part of those have not been taken into account, in terms of managing.

3. Include monitoring of the baseline from the very beginning of project activities. The characteristics of this system and the field monitors seem to have been considerably refined, but the profile of the person in charge of coordination has not been as well defined. It seems clear that s/he should be capable of putting quantitative information into charts and graphs, as well as be able to interpret them.

IV. LESSONS LEARNED

The good practices followed by the project under evaluation appear to be models that could be extrapolated to other action programs. Nevertheless, it must be advised that attention needs to be paid to how changes in context affect the design and results of a given proposal; the simple, mechanical transfer of one experience to another cannot be recommended. It is hoped that the good practices that have been pointed out may be incorporated into the strategic planning processes of IPEC at its national, sub-regional, regional, or global levels.

PEACE SCHOLARSHIPS PROGRAM

Even though the participants are aware of and convinced of the necessity or desirability of children getting an education, at the immediate level education presents itself to the parents as a necessary increase in their expenses due to registration (in theory education is free but a fee is charged), uniforms, school materials, and other related expenses, which family incomes clearly do not cover.

External agents such as the churches, the NGOs, the government, or the very action programs themselves must intervene to subsidize these needs, which bring the problem of autonomy and sustainability into play. The program of Scholarships for Peace was one of the commitments articulated in the agreements which ended the civil war. The usual practice had been to give scholarships individually to each parent on a fixed yearly basis per child. This handling neither contributed to increasing the level of school attendance where it was previously absent, nor to its expansion, coverage, relevance, or strengthening where it already existed.

The implementation employed by the project centralized all the scholarships for each school into a single fund, managed by a board that included staff, community representatives, parents, and the school children themselves. Putting this into

practice required negotiating an agreement at the highest level of the ministry and national office of IPEC, but also the concerted action of field promoters of the program, teachers, and parents.

This framework has had its effect on all the areas mentioned above, and others. Besides its value as a catalyst in community organization and empowerment, it made it possible to encompass those needs already pointed out not only for the children enlisted, but also for the entire school population, and for even more during vacation time (in effect, in the courses offered after the official closing of the school year, registration usually exceeded that of normal class time). The state's contribution has been maximized and expanded to more children than the original target population.

Other needs covered, at least partially, were those of infrastructure, equipment, contracting of auxiliary personnel, and recreational activities. The experience was so successful that the corresponding Ministry has expressed its willingness to extend this model to other fireworks communities within the municipality, and later to more fireworks communities in other municipalities.

SOLIDARITY GROUPS

Solidarity groups are a particularity of Guatemalan legislation in the sense that they are given limited legal status and recognition by municipal authorities. Their driving principle is a collective, fiduciary guarantee that facilitates access to micro-credit for people who generally would not be eligible for it individually. Functional solidarity groups put into practice by the project constitute one of its good practices, since they have proven to work very successfully in the credit aspect, which is no small achievement.

MODEL FACTORIES AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES

The model factories raised great expectations because they were planned on a larger scale than the micro-credits and within the very activity targeted by the project. They demonstrate that no attempt is being made to deprive the target population of an important activity for generating income, but rather all the contrary, to lead them to truly appropriate it. In a context where the alternatives are really limited, the pursuit of this activity outside the home, with only adult labor, with reduced danger and presumably with higher yields, favors support for the reduction of child labor.

Reformulation of the powder and the wick come within this same philosophy of decreasing dangers. In fact, the substitution of perchlorate for potassium chlorate results in a more stable mixture, less subject to accidental explosion from blows and other mishandlings that have contributed to accidents in the homes.

The lesson learned here did not become a good practice, but rather fell victim to the trap of believing that the obstacles to putting this idea into practice would be more readily and quickly overcome than what was possible in reality.

NEW LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT

The project demonstrated, as already stated, a good practice in terms of proposing new legislation or modifying existing legislation that facilitated its work and that of the struggle to decrease child labor in general. Given the conditions of the country, advocacy was in the hands of top management, with specific expert assessment, which has worked well. There is no strong public organization in terms of making proposals or providing citizen support, which is an issue that should possibly be addressed in the future.

Annex 1: SUMMARY OF MAIN DESIGN ELEMENTS

(MODIFICATION OF A TABLE PREPARED BY THE AUTHORS OF THE MID TERM EVALUATION REPORT)			
General objective	Contribute to the Eradication of Child Labor in the Firework Industry in San Juan Sacatepequez and San Raymundo.		
	Social Protection	Community Productive Options	Productive Options in the Relocation of the Firework Industry
	Contribute to the Eradication of Child Labor in the firework industry in other Guatemalan municipalities.		
Means of Action	Incorporate children and adolescents to the formal school system and to vocational training and provide health care to the children and their families.	Improve production practices parents have and introduce new options	Relocate production processes and introduce technology so it will become unnecessary to resort to child labor
Specific Objective 1	Prevent 2500 children from entering firework production and withdraw 2200 already working in it. Incorporate them to the educational system and to technical training. Provide health care to 4700 children and their families	Provide services to 600 parents through revolving credit, through community organization to develop new productive options.	Give services to 558 firework producers organized in business associations. Involve them directly in partially mechanized firework factories and in gathering and marketing the products.
Specific Objective 2	Sensitize and mobilize 9 communities, 1158 parents, 17 owners and administrators of the factories, the workers and local authorities to promote the eradication of child labor.	Develop activities that will enable 600 parents to satisfy the basic family needs so they can do without the income their children generated by working in firework production.	Have 558 families involved in the productive cycle (production, transportation and marketing of the final product, and services generated around these productive activities) definitely withdraw their children from firework production.
Specific Objective 3	Identify and develop actions that will facilitate eradication of child labor in firework production throughout the country.		

Annex 2: MAIN DOCUMENTATION EXAMINED

- National Report on the situation of Child Labor in Guatemala
- National Plan to Prevent and Eradicate Child Labor and Protect Working Adolescents.
- PRODOC (basic project-design document)
- Summary Outlines of the agencies that were involved in the project.
- Terms of Reference
- Baseline Studies
- Technical, financial and progress reports, summary of activities and updated work plan for the project and for the action plans
- Reports to the donor
- Report on the midterm evaluation of the project
- Agreements, mainly the agreement among IPEC, ASI and CONMIGUAT
- Correspondence
- Newspaper clippings
- New “Bylaws for the importation, storage, transportation, use and marketing of chlorate, perchlorate and similar substances”
- Others
 - Paper and electronic archives
 - Libraries and magazine/journal collections
 - Document archives
 - Map archives
 - Internet sites and pages.

Annex 3: MISSION ITINERARY

Wednesday, November 27

Arrival of Mission Head

Meeting of Evaluation Team

Informative meeting of Evaluation Team with IPEC's National Coordinator of IPEC in Guatemala and Project Coordinator.

Thursday, November 28

Office work on documents submitted

Coordination of agendas

Friday, November 29

Fieldwork

Open interview with officer in charge of social support component

Observation in schools (n=8), especially about improvement in infrastructure completed or in progress

Observation of production by summer schools (handicrafts and others)

Observation of closing activities for summer schools

Conversation circles with children

Open interviews with principals and teachers

Open interviews with officers in charge of preschool rooms

Open interviews with school monitors

Open interviews with parents

Open interview with board members of school governments

Observation at a firework industry

Observation of community needs

Observation of community problems

Observation of interaction between teachers and children, among teachers, and between teachers and community

Observation of consequences from accidents children had in firework industries

Overall inspection of the area

Agenda coordination

Office work on information-gathering instruments

Saturday, November 30

Office work on data-gathering instruments and provision of additional instruments for systematizing of data

Sunday, December 1

Fieldwork

Open interview with person in charge of firework relocation component

Open interview with person in charge of model workshop

Open interview with members of Solidarity Group (association) for the model workshop

Observation of home workshop

In-depth interview with head of family of home workshop

Filling out questionnaire with head of family of home workshop

Open interview with adolescent

Observation of model workshop

Office work to systematize information

Monday, December 2

Information meeting of the Evaluation Team with members of the Work Team of the Action Plan (National Coordinator of IPEC in Guatemala and Project Coordinator, Administrative Officer for the National Coordination of IPEC in Guatemala and the Project Coordination, coordinators for both implementing agencies, fieldwork and administrative officials for each component)

Group exercise with the previously mentioned personnel on data systematizing

Individual open interview with each of the officials mentioned (N= 10) and coordination of agendas when needed

Filling out questionnaires by each person mentioned above

Office work to systematize information and adapt data-gathering instruments

Tuesday, December 3

Fieldwork

Open interview with official in charge of component on production alternatives

Observations of project office in San Juan Sacatepéquez

Observation of interaction between personnel of in the production alternatives component and beneficiaries

Observation of behavior of beneficiaries of the production alternatives component in a bank environment

Open interview with fieldwork personnel of the production alternatives component
In-depth interview with official in charge of the social support component
Observation of meeting to evaluate summer schools
Filling out questionnaires by principals and teachers of summer schools (N=20)
Observation of meeting to start a new Solidarity Group in production alternatives
Observation of hope workshop for production alternatives
Open interview with family heads at home workshop for production alternatives
Observation of home workshop for firework production using child labor by children of their own and hiring neighboring children as labor
Open interview with community monitor
Office work to systematize information

Wednesday, December 4

Office work to systematize all the data gathered, with the presentation at the workshop with interested parties in mind
Open interview with person in charge of updating the baseline
Arrival of the person in charge of Design, Monitoring and Evaluation
Information meeting between the Evaluation Team and the official in charge of Design, Monitoring and Evaluation
Preparation of Workshop to present preliminary results and of the initial presentation itself

Thursday, December 5

Workshop to present preliminary results
Presentation of temporary results
Discussion of preliminary results in small groups
Plenary session
Open interviews with representatives from institutions, sectors and communities.
Office work to systematize information and draft joint statement

Friday, December 6

Workshop to present preliminary results
Presentation of synthesis of improved preliminary results
Groups to discuss synthesis of improved preliminary results
Plenary session to discussion and validate synthesis of improved preliminary results

Reception of written proposals on needs for supplementary information

Presentation of draft for joint statement

Plenary session to discuss draft of joint statement

Open group interview with school and community monitors

Office work to systematize information

Saturday, December 7

Free day

Sunday, December 8

Meeting of the Evaluation Team

Meeting of the Evaluation Team with the person in charge of Design, Monitoring and Evaluation y Evaluation

Office work to systematize information

Monday, December 9

Fieldwork

Open interview with coordinator of implementing agency for the components on social support and production alternatives

Office work to systematize information and adjust data-gathering instruments

Tuesday, December 10

Fieldwork

Open interview field personnel in the production alternatives component

Individual open interviews with beneficiaries from the production alternatives component

Open group interviews with beneficiaries from the production alternatives component

Observation of activities by beneficiaries of the production alternatives component

Office work to systematize information

Wednesday, December 11

Fieldwork

In-depth interview with person in charge of the firework relocation component

In-depth interview with person in charge of the model workshop

Group exercise to systematize information with beneficiaries from the firework relocation component, both members of the Solidarity Group (association) for the model workshop in operation (N=6) and of the possible Solidarity Group for the second model workshop

(N=3), and in the presence of officials from the implementing agency for the firework relocation component, who sporadically participated in the exercise.

Observation of performed by beneficiaries from the firework relocation component, at the model workshop

Fill out questionnaires with beneficiaries from the firework relocation component (N=15)

Fill out questionnaires by officials in the firework relocation component (N= 2)

Office work to systematize information

Thursday, December 12

Fieldwork

In-depth interview with person in charge of production alternatives component

Failed attempts to have open interviews with local officials, intermediaries, NGOs and others in San Juan Sacatepequez

Open interview with director of Health Center in San Juan Sacatepequez

Observation of market in San Juan Sacatepequez

Open interview with former director of former implementing agency for the social support component

Open interview with person formerly in charge of social support component

Friday, December 13

Fieldwork

Open interview with department personnel in Ministry of Health programs

Open interview with coordinator of the implementing agency for the firework relocation component

Meeting of Evaluation Team with members of the Board of Directors of the implementing agency for the firework relocation component (at their request)

Office work to systematize information

Saturday, December 14

Free day

December, Sunday 15, Monday 16 and Tuesday 17

Office work to systematize information and prepare evaluation report

Tuesday, December 18

Entrevista abierta con antigua encargada de monitoreo

Regreso del Jefe de Misión

Thursday, December 26 on

Office work to prepare evaluation report

N.B.

Throughout the fieldwork carried out, various instruments to be filled out individually were distributed to several officials that are members of the project team. The instruments were received, sometimes printed and sometimes in electronic format (diskettes or e-mail).

Annex 4: GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASI	Asociación de Apoyo Integral
CONMIGUAT	Coordinadora Nacional de Microempresarios de Guatemala (National Coordination of Guatemalan Micro Entrepreneurs)
EPA	External Payment Authorization
HABITAT	Asociación Guatemalteca para el Desarrollo Sustentable (Guatemalan Association for Sustainable Development)
IGSS	Instituto Guatemalteco del Seguro Social (Guatemalan Social Security Institute)
INE	Instituto Nacional de Estadística (National Statistics Institute)
INTECAP	Instituto Técnico de Capacitación Profesional (Technical Institute for Vocational Training)
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
MINUGUA	Misión de Verificación de las Naciones Unidas en Guatemala (UN Verification Mission in Guatemala)
ILO	International Labour Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UN	United Nations
PAFICOH	Programa de Apoyo a Familias De la Industria Cohetera (Program to Support Families in the Fireworks Industry)
UNDP	UN Development Program
URNG	Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unit)
USDOL	US Department of Labor

Annex 5: METHODOLOGICAL SCOPE

The evaluation took a total of six weeks. The methodology employed in the evaluation included office work and fieldwork. Part of the office work was devoted to preparing the evaluation, part to writing summaries and progress analyses, and part to preparing the first draft of the evaluation report. Fieldwork includes two days devoted to a workshop with the stakeholders and that took place during the two days assigned to it.

OFFICE WORK TO PREPARE THE EVALUATION

The critical analysis of the documentation received was done keeping in mind the main information needs about the aspects to target, which were specified in the Terms of Reference as substantive issues the project or IPEC was interested in. It was also agreed to pay attention to other information needs that came up during careful and critical reading of the said documentation. A partial list of the documents examined was included as Annex 2.

Office work to prepare the final evaluation was done to define and develop the main methodological controls that were considered necessary in order to obtain new pieces of necessary, sufficient and appropriate data for the final evaluation. This are in turn discussed in the following sections.

QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

In practice, all research questions included in the terms of reference were used, and data was obtained to answer them. Some hypotheses were inferred by building a tree of possible responses to the questions.

Interpretation of hypotheses into observable events meant imagining what information would be necessary to decided that each remaining hypothesis would have turned false. As far as this was possible, this included the previous definition of indicators and their thresholds.

DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENTS

In order to gather and analyze the information, mainly qualitative instruments were used. Besides some pragmatic considerations, the needs and limitations of the evaluation made the team consider these instruments as valid and useful ways to gather and analyze information, and not at all lacking vis-à-vis “hard” instruments. Therefore, a decision was made in favor of the data gathering instruments selected.

Secondary information was gathered through the usual procedures, mostly faxes or other types of copies provided by IPEC offices in San Jose, Costa Rica and Guatemala. These copies came from paper and electronic archives, libraries and journal/magazine archives, documentation centers, map archives and Internet sites and pages.

Primary information, which contains both factual data and fairly sound opinions, was gathered using the following instruments listed in order of importance: open interviews, partially structured interviews, questionnaires, focus groups and direct observation.

It was decided to rely mainly on open interviews because the team wished to obtain an initial picture, even if not too formal, of the arrangement, connections, priorities, inclusions and exclusions of each of the key actors of the project. The option to start with a previous arrangement that would have been easier for the researchers would have also increased the risk of gathering information that would conform to the notions held previous to the evaluation.

The information thus gathered was recorded in handwritten notes taken separately and jointly by both evaluators, both of them always present. Notes were discussed later and were recorded in a previously defined format. This procedure helped to partially judge and balance the informant's biases, to reveal gaps and incoherence in the information, which was completed in part with partially structured interviews.

Focus groups were in practice collective partially structured interviews carried out in an environment that fostered interaction among participants, but they were not generally preceded by open interviews.

Direct observation is self-explanatory. It was recorded in handwritten notes.

All precautions were made to avoid the most probably sources of data distortion and to balance pieces of information.

INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA ANALYSIS

Several informal versions of Propositional Analysis and Structural Analysis were used to analyze the information obtained from documents. The data was not quantified, or very little so, since what interested was to capture the reference nodes and the connections among them.

Worth noting is that some information, even if quantitative, does not allow for very sophisticated quantitative analyses because it has defects or gaps, or simple because it had not been usefully systematized.

New quantitative information was obtained, in addition to qualitative information to balance figures.

To analyze information obtained from primary sources, everything that was possibly quantifiable was quantified, but non-quantifiable information was given equal value.

SCALES, SAMPLES AND MEASUREMENTS

A nominal scale was used most of the time, following previous decisions based on the information available.

The decision was made to hold individual and group interviews with a manageable and realistic number of children and adolescents, as well as with adults in Soliday Groups working in community productive alternatives and in fireworks relocation.

The aim was not representative sampling as such but just a selection of informants that would allow the different conditions of the population the opportunity to express themselves at least once.

The information gathered was recorded in a systematization matrix.

FIELDWORK

It was carried out in Guatemala, according to mission schedule included in Annex 3.

WORKSHOP TO PRESENT RESULTS

An agreement-document was written, including considerations that those who attended the workshop considered the stakeholders they represented should keep in mind. This document was not signed during the event, but the participants agreed to take advocate it in their respective centers and obtain a signature from the highest level possible by February 2003.

OFFICE WORK TO PREPARE THE EVALUATION REPORT

The Head of the Mission on the basis of office work, fieldwork, and the workshop wrote the final draft with stakeholders, and the document is his sole responsibility. It was reviewed by the Sub-regional Office of IPEC in San Jose, Costa Rica, and by IPEC Headquarters in Geneva, and improved with suggestions that both parties sent to the evaluation team.

LIMITATIONS OF THE EVALUATION

The main limitations to this evaluation are found in the incoherence, failures and gaps in the process of gathering and systematizing relevant information that should have been carried out throughout the project. Many of the methodological limitations are related to this.

The evaluation also had some operative limitations of its own, which are detailed as follows.

Delays and contingencies fed each other so the evaluation began after the date planned, which in a way conflicted with other schedules and resulted in the impossibility to see all the types of informants the team had planned to see. Particularly, more material coming from children and mainly from teenagers was lacking, as well as information from non-beneficiaries and local authorities. It was not possible to interview intermediaries either.

Due to vacation periods and termination of contracts, some individual interviews with project personnel could not be scheduled as previously planned, but they had to be concentrated during a very tiring single afternoon, after a plenary session that may have introduced some bias.

In order to take advantage of the involuntary waiting period for the various interviews, interviewees were asked to cooperate by entering some information in the recording instrument, which was done electronically from several computers and generated some difficulty because it was not designed as a questionnaire as such. However, it yielded useful data.

This evaluation mission partially coincided with the visit to Guatemala by one of the missions of IPEC headquarters, the attention of which forced IPEC office in Guatemala to reassign some of the resources originally for the evaluation (car, driver, laptop). This visit may have also introduced some bias, in the sense that the personnel in the national office and project personnel seem to feel relieved by their favorable comments and lowered their level of criticism and self-criticism.

Mobilization in the field was excessively dependent upon the activities the personnel were carrying out, since it became necessary to take advantage of transportation previously programmed for specific activities by the various components, not for the evaluation itself. The opportunities for the evaluators to travel to the field and mobilize without any company were practically non-existing.

In spite of all efforts made to draw a picture that included groups that did not receive services or those that had been excluded, as well as moderately successful groups, in practice the evaluation mission had the opportunity to observe successful groups mainly –already formed or in process of formation.

This was discussed with field personnel, who understood clearly the importance of balance the sample, but not much could be done to change the scheduling of visits to groups; however, they arranged interviews with individuals who were not very successful, or not at all, in terms of withdrawing working children from firework production.

These limitations, both operative and methodological, could have the effect of increasing the margin of error in the results of the evaluation, even in qualitative terms. The evaluation team was particularly careful to pay attention to the possible sources of bias when critiquing the data obtained.