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BIT-COTECCO-sketch de sensibilisation contre le travail des enfants dans les mines en RDC



ILO-COTECCO Project

FINAL EVALUATION

COMBATTING CHILD LABOR IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO'S COBALT INDUSTRY (COTECCO)

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADB	African Development Bank
ADDH	Action for the Defense of Human Rights
ASM	Artisanal and Small-scale Mining
BMZ	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development)
CISTEMA	Commission Interministérielle de lutte contre le travail des enfants dans les mines et sites miniers artisanaux (Interministerial Commission to Combat Child Labor in Mines and Artisanal Mining Sites)
CL	Child Labor
CLMS	Child Labor Monitoring System
CLMRS	Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System
CMEP	Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
COTECCO	Combatting Child Labor in Cobalt Supply Chain Project
CSEC	Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CTA	Chief Technical Adviser
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FEC	Federation of Enterprises of Congo
FOA	Funding Opportunity Announcement
IABA	Integrated Area-Based Approach
ILAB	Bureau of International Labor Affairs
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German development organization)
GoDRC	Government of the DRC
GTSP/PSWG	Groupe de Travail du Secteur Privé (Private Sector Working Group)
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
ILAB	USDOL International Labor Affairs Bureau
ILO	International Labour Organization

ILO-Kinshasa	ILO Office for the DRC, Angola, Central African Republic, Congo, Gabon, and Chad
LSM	Large Scale Mining
MoL	Ministry of Labor
M&E	Monitor and Evaluation
OCFT	USDOL Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PACT	People Acting in Community Together
PABEA-Cobalt	Project for the Alternative Welfare of Children and Youth Involved in the Cobalt Supply Chain
SAEMAPE	Service d'Assistance et d'Encadrement de l'Exploitation Minière Artisanale et Petite Échelle (Service for Assistance of Artisanal and Small-scale Mining Sector)
SCREAM	Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (ILO)
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
TPR	Technical Progress Report
TVEST	Technical Vocational and Skills Training
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
WFCL	Worst Forms of Child Labor

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has extraordinary mineral reserves, valued at US\$24 trillion.¹ Large scale mining (LSM) operations – both private and state-run – contribute to exports of copper, cobalt and gold. However, the majority (80%) of minerals are a product of rudimentary tools and manual labor that are the hallmark of the artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) sector.^{2,3} Many workers are still engaged in informal mining, and this is where most of the child labor (CL) is found. Working conditions in the ASM cobalt mines are frequently very poor, with children engaged in very dangerous work especially in informal ASM.

In October 2018, in support of the DRC Government's efforts to combat child labor, the United States Department of Labor's (USDOL) Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking (OCFT) awarded the 'Combatting Child Labor in Cobalt Supply Chain' (COTECCO) project to the International Labour Organization (ILO). The project was originally funded at US\$2,500,000 for three years. COTECCO aims to strengthen the efforts of the Government of the DRC (central and provincial) and other key stakeholders to combat child labor in the cobalt supply chain. In December 2020, USDOL awarded ILO-COTECCO a ten-month cost extension. As part of the cost extension, an additional award of US\$1,000,000 was provided, bringing the project implementation duration to three years and ten months. The currently projected end date of the COTECCO project is September 2022.

KEY EVALUATION RESULTS

RELEVANCE AND COHERENCE

The COTECCO project strategies and resulting activities are highly relevant to the specific needs of project participants, communities, and other stakeholders. Prior to the launching of COTECCO, a lack of coherent and appropriate coordination and limited capacities impeded the achievement of strong results to eliminate child labor in cobalt mining. The COTECCO project was conceived to address these challenges. The project design was suitable overall to contribute to its main goal and reach its objectives. The COTECCO design was, nevertheless, overly ambitious regarding its limited time frame and staff allocation. Increasing the quantity and scope of existing project approaches to reinforce the theory of change and original outcomes would have been useful. The project was not expected to carry out direct actions in communities.

While intended to enable solid results-based management, the project design was not highly conducive to achieving internal coherence. To enable adequate planning, monitoring, and evaluation, the project initiative had been divided into three outcomes with separate sub-outcomes and related outputs. However, the different outcomes are somewhat artificially separated into individual categories. In practice, the project did work to establish linkages

¹ Engineering & Mining Journal. February 2014. Mining in Africa's Copperbelt. Available from: [//gbreports.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/CopperBelt_Mining2014.pdf](http://gbreports.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/CopperBelt_Mining2014.pdf)

² Pact (2010) Promines Study: Artisanal Mining in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Available from <http://www.congominer.org/system/attachments/assets/000/000/349/original/PACT-2010-ProminesStudyArtisanalMiningDRC.pdf?1430928581>

³ KPCJ D'Souza (2007) Artisanal Mining in the DRC (Key Issues, Challenges and Opportunities). Available from <http://www.eisourcebook.org/cms/Feb%202013/DRC%20Artisanal%20Mining.%20Key%20Issues.%20Challenges%20&%20Opportunities.pdf>

between the different components and the various stakeholders. Some interviewees were, however, still highly concentrated on the different outcomes and outputs and had limited understanding of how all the parts fit together to build a child labor elimination system.⁴

The project has initiated and coordinated with other donor-funded projects, private sector initiatives, and other interventions led by national stakeholders. There is still a great deal of scope to expand and continue this coordination further, especially with other donor-funded projects and international agencies.

EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

The COTECCO project is successfully effective in multiple areas due to the quality of its capacity strengthening workshops and the establishment and/or strengthening of working groups among stakeholders. Stakeholders from the government, private sector, civil society, technical project implementers, and other development partners have all been associated. Good quality research has been carried out. These actions have led to some positive results with regard to capacity and institution building. However, integrating the findings of the research to improve the orientation of efforts to eliminate child labor in cobalt mining is still needed.

COTECCO faced various contextual challenges that affected both its effectiveness and its efficiency. These were first and foremost the COVID-19 pandemic, which impeded the highly important direct personal interactions that are essential to developing a project so highly focused on the strengthening of networks. Additionally, turnover of personnel, including in government, affected the advancement of aims such as the establishment of functional, provincial level 'Interministerial Commission to Combat Child Labor in Mines and Artisanal Mining Sites' (CISTEMA), which is still not officially approved. For this reason, it is important to further strengthen advocacy, capacities and empower national-level decision-makers.

The project is initiating very interesting awareness-raising methods, such as catchy songs and lively sketches, and intends to develop further capacities, such as through the ILO 'Supporting Children's Rights through Education, Arts and Media' (SCREAM)⁵ modules. For real change to occur, the evaluation also finds additional focus is needed on real social behavior change using appropriate methods rooted in the local culture.

The development of a Child Labor Monitoring System (CLMS) is in the early stages, so it is difficult for the evaluation to assess its quality. Though training on the development of a CLMS has been provided, the evaluation found that there is still some confusion about the role and functioning of the CLMS among several stakeholders. This may be in part because not all stakeholders have yet been trained. There is a perception that the CLMS is largely comprised of a database on child labor, whereas it is more than that. There is a need to ensure greater clarity on the referral and remediation component of the CLMS and the need to include all stakeholders in its implementation. This can be in part addressed through changing the name of the CLMS to Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System (CLMRS).

Stakeholders identified the lack of decent work opportunities for older children and adults as a main gap that needs to be addressed in future initiatives. The limited alternate employment opportunities means that there are few options for older children and adults to access

⁴ Please note that this system is separate from the CLMS and refers to a larger and more encompassing system to address child labor in the cobalt mining value chain.

⁵ ILO (2022), SCREAM: Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media. Available from <https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/ScREAM/lang-en/index.htm>

financially interesting, decent work opportunities. As a result, they turn to work in the cobalt mines. Available technical vocational and skills training courses are limited and often not innovative enough to attract learners to acquire knowledge and skills to increase their employability in line with the changing labor market.

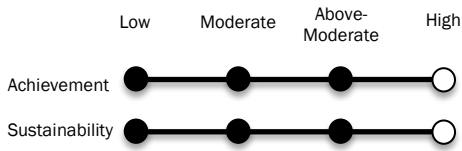
The evaluation interviewees and research documents stress the strong need to consider that there are other forms of child labor in and around mining areas that are not directly in cobalt mining itself.

The evaluation finds that, though the project did include attention to gender issues in its training and research content, specific work to address such issues has still been limited and can be increased further. More attention is also needed to address the specific vulnerability of children with disabilities, who several evaluation interviewees noted are more likely to be exploited if they are physically able to work. Other vulnerable groups include orphans and children in households affected by HIV.

Insufficient project staffing contributed to the project’s challenge to achieve all the project outcomes within the originally expected time frames. With staff time highly consumed by complex administrative processes, financial disbursement, and reporting, there was often too little time to focus on the needed personal follow up and mentoring.

SUSTAINABILITY

Project sustainability is highly dependent on the ability of COTECCO stakeholders to implement the strategies, roadmaps and the CLMRS that is still under development. Evaluation interviewees insisted on the need for financial and logistical support so that they can implement their strategies and roadmaps. While all stakeholders are crucial to ensuring sustainability, it is evident that the government has the most important role. Naturally the role of the private sector, including workers’ and employers’ organizations and national civil society organizations/non-governmental organizations (NGO), remain important for long term sustainability. This will need further study and assessment as it is outside the scope of this evaluation. Development partners, including international NGOs and donors, will also need to provide material, financial and/or technical inputs through at least the medium term.

Performance Summary	Rating
Outcome 1 Increased common understanding of the challenges and opportunities for addressing child labor in the DRC’s cobalt industry	
<p>The project has achieved the best results under this outcome. The project first achieved this target overall in 2020 following the organization of three workshops on child labor issues, one each in Lubumbashi, Likasi, and Kolwezi. In addition, the project has continued carrying out various capacity strengthening initiatives through training workshops, meetings to discuss key issues, and sharing of information with key stakeholders to ensure sustainability.</p> <p>Evaluation interviewees who had attended training uniformly indicated that their understanding of child labor in general as well as the differences between the worst forms of child labor and light work had increased because of COTECCO.</p>	 <p>Low Moderate Above-Moderate High</p> <p>Achievement ● ● ● ○</p> <p>Sustainability ● ● ● ○</p>

Performance Summary	Rating
Outcome 2 Increased capacity of government and other relevant stakeholders to address child labor in the DRC's cobalt industry	
<p>Outcome 2 has several very important and complex components. Of four key areas to address, three have been implemented. These include, at the national level, the support for the review of the national sectorial strategy operational plan and the ministerial decree to create and establish the CISTEMA.</p> <p>At provincial level, support was provided for the development of the decree to create provincial-level CISTEMA. Unfortunately, the decree at provincial level has not yet been officially adopted. The project is undertaking and supporting advocacy efforts for the adoption of the decree and establishment of provincial CISTEMA.</p> <p>The project is continuing to strengthen stakeholder's capacities in the key subject areas related to addressing child labor in the cobalt industry. There is still much room for specific knowledge increases, particularly on the CLMRS and on the roles and integration among different government, private sector, civil society, and media entities and groups.</p> <p>The evaluation considers that, pending the implementation of the CLMRS, sustainability may be above moderate. Without a functional CLMRS, however, the likelihood of sustainability is moderate to low.</p>	<p>A horizontal rating scale with four points: Low, Moderate, Above-Moderate, and High. Two rows are shown: 'Achievement' and 'Sustainability'. For 'Achievement', a black dot is at 'Above-Moderate' and a white dot is at 'Moderate'. For 'Sustainability', a black dot is at 'Moderate' and a white dot is at 'Above-Moderate'.</p>

Performance Summary	Rating
Outcome 3 Improved monitoring and remediation efforts by the private sector of child labor in the cobalt supply chain	
<p>Each group of private sector actors tested 2 initiatives on remediation in the Comply Chain⁶ including 1 for mining cooperatives and 1 for mining companies. As in the case of Outcome 1, unless the supporting services are available and funding is allocated, sustainability is expected to only be moderate. The evaluation was able to confirm that the capacities of the private sector have been strengthened substantially. There is still a continuing need for increased knowledge and skills on specific monitoring and remediation methods as the child labor monitoring and remediation system (CLMRS) is developed.</p>	<p>A horizontal rating scale with four points: Low, Moderate, Above-Moderate, and High. Two rows are shown: 'Achievement' and 'Sustainability'. For 'Achievement', a black dot is at 'Above-Moderate' and a white dot is at 'Moderate'. For 'Sustainability', a black dot is at 'Moderate' and a white dot is at 'Above-Moderate'.</p>

PROMISING PRACTICES

1. The development of the awareness-raising song and sketch (short video) about child labor in cobalt mining using known musicians and actors is a promising practice. It can

⁶ USDOL/ILAB (undated) Comply Chain. <https://www.dol.gov/ilab/complychain/>

be promoted and shared in the media, in communities, and during capacity strengthening workshops and meetings.

2. Conducting a substantial number of well-targeted research studies is useful. Research is often seen as peripheral to projects or serving to measure progress. The COTECCO-supported studies approach the subject of child labor in the cobalt mining value chain from different angles and, when linked together, can inform the ways forward.

LESSONS LEARNED

1. Adequate time should be allocated for any systems building project like COTECCO and planning should include a risk analysis that reflects this. Over the years it has become more and more apparent that project planners underestimated the amount of time that systems building takes. Of course, no amount of risk analysis could predict the COVID-19 pandemic; regardless, even without COVID-19, the time needed for systems building is frequently underestimated.⁷ The systems building has at least two main components: capacity strengthening and the establishment and good functioning of decision-making networks.
2. Project staffing needs to be realistic, as well as adapted and increased if that is found necessary during implementation. In any good management process, attention needs to be paid to process as well as results. Effectiveness and efficiency are improved if staffing levels are adequate. If a systems building project is headquartered outside the capital, a permanent staff member at national level is still needed. However, this does not need to be the Project Director but should be a well-recognized specialist. At least one more technical specialist is needed at the decentralized project office in Lualaba, preferably with a specialization in data systems development, for the CLMRS and to provide additional support for the project data M&E reporting.

CONCLUSION AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the COTECCO project has made good progress towards its goal to “strengthen efforts by the Congolese Government and other relevant stakeholders in addressing CL in the cobalt supply chains in the DRC.” The evaluation recommends the following:

(1) Clearly involve the key stakeholders identified through COTECCO in the design and development of a project extension and a possible future phase of the project, or another project aimed at contributing to the DRC Government’s goal of zero child labor in the cobalt supply chain. Many of the key stakeholders at planning and implementation level have been trained and their capacities have been strengthened through COTECCO. The associated COTECCO stakeholders now expect to contribute to design from its earliest stages. During implementation, cobalt mining communities, including children themselves, should also be associated with determining and implementing the most relevant actions. Add a project Steering Committee that is intended as a monitoring and support body, not as a governing/decision-making committee that adds an additional bureaucratic level. The project should have a Steering Committee, which was not the case for COTECCO up to the period of the evaluation fieldwork. The members of the Steering Committee should be clearly defined as well as associated with the formulation of Phase 2. The Steering Committee is a monitoring, guidance, and support body composed of multiple

⁷ E.g., as the evaluator also noted when evaluating several other systems building-oriented projects, such as the most recently evaluated ARCHIPELAGO program. Zegers, M, Henard, F. & Martins Salla, F.O. (2022) Mid-term Evaluation of the ARCHIPELAGO program: an African-European TVET Initiative Brussels: TIEG. Note: The Archipelago Technical and Vocation Education and Training program is funded by the European Union and is carried through 20 projects in nine African countries using a systems-building approach with European Union partners.

stakeholders and cannot be replaced by the CISTEMA. (Key responsible actors: USDOL, ILO, and other donor agencies)

(2) Increase advocacy with decision-makers for the approval of and the official establishment of provincial CISTEMA. Once established, COTECCO can conduct a capacity needs assessment and provide the needed strengthening inputs. A continuous monitoring and technical mentoring of the provincial CISTEMA would be essential. (Key responsible actors: DRC Government, COTECCO and its stakeholders)

(3) Increase focus on social behavior change communications and go beyond awareness raising. Incorporate and scale up additional direct and culturally rooted social and behavior change communications.⁸ Include strong role and support for journalists to produce media information about child labor in cobalt mining. (Key responsible actors: All participating action implementation actors)

(4) Implement a more overt systems building approach, indicating how all the different institutional and capacity strengthening, CLMRS development and other COTECCO components are integrated. A strong systems approach will contribute to increased sustainability over the long term. Expand and continue coordination further, especially with other donor-funded projects and international agencies. Prepare and use a synthesis report based on all the research developed with the support of COTECCO, with other information and data on situational analysis and service gaps. Include special attention to identify the way for COTECCO to effectively link directly with the BMZ-funded project and the ADB PABEA-Cobalt project. (Key responsible actor: ILO)

(5) Ensure that the functioning of the CLMRS is clarified to include referral systems and all stakeholders in planning, data gathering, remediation and follow up. Include more international support and exchanges for CLMRS development and integration into a functioning child protection system. (Key responsible actors: ILO, COTECCO, DRC Government, and all other stakeholders including working groups)

(6) With input from the private sector, identify decent work labor (self-)employment opportunities in mining areas in future and direct support projects. Support the development of targeted training in the identified areas for older children with government and other vocational education and skills training providers. (Key responsible actors: DRC Government, private sector, ILO, and project partners)

(7) Develop and implement an integrated area-based approach⁹ in the cobalt mining localities. Nearby areas can be defined in agreement with the adjoining communities. Activities to ensure the ending of child labor in these localities could help ensure that child labor in the immediate area is addressed together with the mining sites. Recommendation for future programming. (Key responsible actors: ILO, COTECCO, Government, and other project partners)

(8) Ensure full consideration of gender-related issues (including girls, boys, and women) and those of other vulnerable groups during CLMRS development. Vulnerable groups such as households affected by HIV, children with disabilities, and orphans also need special attention. This would include participation in training, decision-making on issues that affect them, analyzing their specific challenges, and implementing specific actions that reduce those challenges. (Key responsible actors: DRC Government, COTECCO, other projects and stakeholders)

⁸ Center for Social and Behaviour Change Communications. Communication for Change. Available from <https://www.centreforsbcc.org/what-is-sbcc/>

⁹ ILO (2013) Integrated Area-Based Approach as a Strategy for Child Labor Free Zones. Geneva: ILO. Available from http://www.oit.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--ed_mas/--eval/documents/publication/wcms_433047.pdf

(9) Strengthen management structure and streamline administration and finance management. Increase COTECCO staffing and allocate one staff member to an office based in Kinshasa to provide more frequent and intensive support from COTECCO with CISTEMA and provide advocacy support with the ministries. Integrate the development of the Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan into a well-defined “Inception Period” to better manage the expectations of the stakeholders. (Key responsible actors: Decision-makers on COTECCO management and staffing, especially ILO)

1. PROJECT CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION

1.1. PROJECT CONTEXT

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has extraordinary mineral reserves, valued at US\$24 trillion.¹⁰ Large scale mining (LSM) operations – both private and state-run – contribute to exports of copper, cobalt and gold. However, the majority (80%) of minerals are a product of rudimentary tools and manual labor that are the hallmark of the artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) sector.^{11,12} It is within this context that the ‘Combatting Child Labor in Cobalt Supply Chain’ (COTECCO) project was envisaged and is being implemented.

More than 70% of the world’s cobalt comes from the DRC,¹³ and it is estimated that at least 20% is derived from ASM. The government has attempted to formalize the ASM sector through providing support for the development of cooperatives. Formalization is expected to make it easier to control working and environmental conditions. However, many workers are still engaged in informal mining, and this is where most of the child labor is found.

Given the dramatic increase in global demand for cobalt – notably for batteries, electric vehicles, medical equipment, renewable energy and other new technologies – and the precariousness of socio-economic conditions in mining communities, cobalt ASM has become a lucrative livelihood for populations in mining communities and the large number of unemployed youths who lack alternative means of support.



Child labor (CL) occurs across nearly all ASM supply chain operations in the DRC, ranking the country as the fourth worst globally on Maplecroft’s Modern Slavery Index.¹⁴ Working conditions in the DRC’s ASM mines, including the cobalt mines, are frequently very poor. Many children employed in these mines work more than eight hours per day¹⁵ and are involved in dangerous, labor-intensive practices, such as digging (including underground), crushing rocks, washing minerals, and carrying heavy loads of ore, waste, or water. Children also act as petty traders, selling the miners water and food in the surrounding areas. Often, this service introduces children to the practice of hand-picking minerals and facilitates their entry into mining work. When they are not directly involved in ASM activities, children’s engagement in

¹⁰ Engineering & Mining Journal. February 2014. Mining in Africa’s Copperbelt. Available from: [//gbreports.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/CopperBelt_Mining2014.pdf](http://gbreports.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/CopperBelt_Mining2014.pdf)

¹¹ Pact (2010) Promines Study: Artisanal Mining in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Available from <http://www.congominer.org/system/attachments/assets/000/000/349/original/PACT-2010-ProminesStudyArtisanalMiningDRC.pdf?1430928581>

¹² KPCJ D’Souza (2007) Artisanal Mining in the DRC (Key Issues, Challenges and Opportunities). Available from <http://www.eisourcebook.org/cms/Feb%202013/DRC%20Artisanal%20Mining,%20Key%20Issues,%20Challenges%20&%20Opportunities.pdf>

¹³ Statista (2022), Mine production of cobalt in the Democratic Republic of Congo from 2010 to 2021. Available from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/339834/mine-production-of-cobalt-in-dr-congo/>

¹⁴ Verisk Maplecroft. Modern slavery rife in 58% of countries. Available from <https://maplecroft.com/portfolio/new-analysis/2016/08/12/modern-slavery-rife-58-countries-china-india-among-25-economies-posing-extreme-supply-chain-risks-global-index/>

¹⁵ Hahn, Hayes, & Kacapor (2013) Breaking the Chain. Washington, D.C.: Pact.

the provision of indirect services (food, sex, etc.) is considered part of CL or other types of human violations tarnishing the minerals supply chains.

The lack of a government database and reliable monitoring system tracking children's presence and labor in mining sites impairs the acquisition of accurate data on CL in mining. UNICEF estimates that there may be as many as 40,000 children working in copper and cobalt mines in the DRC,¹⁶ with at least 4,000 in Kolwezi alone.¹⁷ These estimates, however, vary widely from one source to another. More recent assessments put that figure at just under 5,000 children working in the Copperbelt,¹⁸ with continuing challenges regarding child labor in cobalt mines.¹⁹

The Government of DRC (GoDRC) does not have reliable tools or mechanisms in place to address CL in an appropriate and practical manner that brings about results. However, the DRC has ratified a number of the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s Conventions on child labor: C-138 on Minimum Age for Employment and C-182 on Worst Forms of Child Labor (WFCL). The National Committee against Worst Forms of Child Labor in the DRC developed a national action plan in 2011 to cover the period from 2012 to 2020, which, however, expired in 2020 without being validated. To tackle the prevalence of child labor in the mining sector, the GoDRC created the 'Interministerial Commission to Combat Child Labor in Mines and Artisanal Mining Sites' in DRC (CISTEMA).²⁰ The Commission published a triennial action plan to monitor child labor in artisanal mining sites (2017-2020) and developed a sectoral strategy to address the issue and improve the blemished sector.

1.2. PROJECT SPECIFIC INFORMATION

In October 2018, in support of DRC Government's efforts to combat CL, the United States Department of Labor's (USDOL) Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking (OCFT) awarded the 'Combatting Child Labor in Cobalt Supply Chain' project to the ILO. The project was originally funded at US\$2,500,000 for three years.

COTECCO aims to strengthen the efforts of the GoDRC (central and provincial) and other key stakeholders to combat child labor in the cobalt supply chain. In December 2020, USDOL awarded ILO-COTECCO a 10-month cost extension. As part of the cost extension an additional award of US\$1,000,000 was provided, bringing the project implementation duration to three years and ten months. The currently projected end date of the COTECCO project is September 2022.

The ILO team, in collaboration with Pact, ILO's sub-grantee, implements the capacity building project in the capital of Kinshasa and the provinces of Lualaba and Haut Katanga. In Lualaba, the project is implemented in the city of Kolwezi and nearby mining sites. In the Haut-Katanga

¹⁶ UNICEF (2012) The State of the World's Children 2012: Children in an Urban World.

¹⁷ Amnesty International (2016) "This is what we die for: Human rights abuses in the Democratic Republic of the Congo power the global trade in cobalt."

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr62/3183/2016/en/>

¹⁸ B. Faber, B. Krause, & R.S. De La Sierra. 2017. Artisanal Mining, Livelihoods, and Child Labor in the Cobalt Supply Chain of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Available from

http://cega.berkeley.edu/assets/cega_research_projects/179/CEGA_Report_v2.pdf

¹⁹ République Démocratique du Congo: Ministère du Plan (2021) Etude sur la situation des enfants dans les zones d'exploitation minière artisanale dans les provinces du Lualaba et du Sud-Kivu. Kinshasa: INS République Démocratique du Congo: Ministère du Plan, UNICEF, GiZ.

²⁰ Commission Interministérielle de lutte contre le travail des enfants dans les mines et sites miniers artisanaux (Interministerial Commission to Combat Child Labor in Mines and Artisanal Mining Sites)

Province, the project is implemented in Likasi (namely in Kambove) and the nearby mining areas, Lubumbashi and Kipushi.

Figure 1 – Project Areas of Intervention



COTECCO’s project-level objective is “to strengthen efforts by the Congolese Government and other relevant stakeholders in addressing CL in the cobalt supply chains in the DRC.”

To achieve this objective, the project has established the following outcomes and sub-outcomes:

Outcome 1: Increased common understanding of the challenges and opportunities for addressing child labor in the DRC’s cobalt industry

Sub-Outcome 1.1: Key actors are informed on gaps and barriers to combat CL

Sub-Outcome 1.2: Increased awareness of stakeholders on opportunities to address child labor

Outcome 2: Increased capacity of government and other relevant stakeholders to address child labor in the DRC’s cobalt industry

Sub-Outcome 2.1: Knowledge of stakeholders to address child labor are improved

Sub-Outcome 2.2: Coordination between key actors is improved

Sub-Outcome 2.3: Child Labor Monitoring System is implemented by the DRC Government

Outcome 3: Improved monitoring and remediation efforts by private sector of child labor in the cobalt supply chain.

Sub-Outcome 3.1: Increased skills of private sector actors on monitoring and remediating child labor

Sub-Outcome 3.2: Private sector coordination in monitoring and remediation is improved

Given that COTECCO is a capacity strengthening project, the beneficiaries are primarily the stakeholders whose activities relate to the prevention, protection, and relief of children in mining sites. They include the government agencies, private sector (including mining companies and cooperatives), civil society organizations, local community-based organizations, workers' and employers' organizations, and traditional authorities. The public in mining areas is addressed through the public awareness raising communications that are part of the project.

The US\$1,000,000 additional funds are primarily intended to expand Outcome 2 with a new Sub-Outcome 2.3 to design and endow the DRC Government and key actors with a tested CL monitoring system in the mining sector. Pact was primarily responsible for Outcome 3 up to the end of the first project period, which was completed on November 15, 2021, and is not part of the activities under the cost extension. Pact did, however, extend its activities to January 31, 2022, under a no-cost extension signed with the grantee (ILO).

2. EVALUATION PURPOSE

The purposes of the final performance evaluation covered under this contract include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Assessing if the project has achieved its objectives and outcomes, identifying the challenges encountered in doing so and analyzing the driving factors for these challenges,
- Assessing the intended and unintended effects of the project,
- Assessing lessons learned and emerging practices from the project (e.g., strategies and models of intervention) and experiences in implementation that can be applied in current or future projects in the focus country(-ies) and in projects designed under similar conditions or target sectors, and
- Assessing which outcomes or outputs can be deemed sustainable.

2.2. INTENDED USERS

The evaluation aims to provide OCFT, the grantee, other project stakeholders, and stakeholders working to combat child labor more broadly an assessment of the project's performance, its effects on project participants, and an understanding of the factors driving the project results. The evaluation results, conclusions and recommendations are expected to inform any project adjustments that may need to be made, and to inform stakeholders in the design and implementation of subsequent phases or future child labor elimination projects as appropriate.

3. EVALUATION RESULTS

3.1. RELEVANCE

3.1.1. EQ 1: WERE THE PROJECT STRATEGIES AND RESULTING ACTIVITIES RELEVANT TO THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF PROJECT PARTICIPANTS, COMMUNITIES, AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS? WHAT ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES COULD HAVE PROVIDED ADDITIONAL REINFORCEMENT OF THE PROJECT THEORY OF CHANGE AND OUTCOMES?

The project is highly relevant and responds to several of the specific needs to address child labor in cobalt mining.

The project document cites the international attention attracted after Amnesty International's 2016 report on poor working conditions in cobalt mines, including the existence of child labor.²¹ Several interviewees during the evaluation, including from the government and the private sector, cited this report as the main reason for the need for the COTECCO project.



Community members in Musonoie included in COTECCO awareness-raising activities. (Mei Zegers)

Actions to address child labor in the cobalt mining sector were already being implemented prior to the launching of the COTECCO project. However, a lack of coherent and appropriate coordination and limited capacities impeded the achievement of strong results to eliminate child labor in cobalt mining. The COTECCO project was conceived to address these challenges.

Many evaluation interviewees²² noted the continued international concern about child labor in the cobalt supply chain and its potential impact on the Congolese economy. Media and research also continue to document decent work challenges in the sector, including regarding child labor.²³ The continued need for a project such as COTECCO was further confirmed throughout the evaluation process. The project thus continues to be relevant.

Whether additional activities could have provided additional reinforcement of the project theory of change (ToC) and outcomes is a complex question. Theoretically, additional activities could always provide an exponential result. However, reinforcing the ToC and original outcomes by increasing the quantity and scope of existing project approaches, rather than adding new approaches, would be more useful.

The project ToC was expressed in narrative form and details the main COTECCO objectives. The fact that the project received a cost extension already indicates that it is recognized that additional activities were needed to fully realize the goals included in the ToC. During implementation it became apparent that there was a need for a Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System (CLMRS) to ensure better planning and actions of the strengthened stakeholders and coordinating groups. The current cost extension was thus added and is primarily focused on the development and initial implementation of the CLMRS. Aside from

²¹ Amnesty International, AfreWatch, (2016), This is What we Die For, Human Rights Abuses in The Democratic Republic of The Congo Power the Global Trade in Cobalt. London: AfreWatch, Amnesty International. ILO (Undated) Part I: Technical Proposal, Combatting Child Labor in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's Cobalt Industry. Proposal submitted by ILO (DUNS 020301941) in response to FOA-ILAB 18-03. Geneva: ILO.

²² From Government, private sector, civil society, and other development partners

²³ The website AfreWatch covers much relevant information (2022) Accueil, Available from <https://afrewatch.org/#0>

the focus on Outcome 3 regarding the private sector role, other activities that were initiated during the early project period are continued during the cost extension.

Further increasing focus on the elaboration and, particularly, the implementation of the CLMRS is expected to contribute to the reinforcement of COTECCO's intended results.

During the evaluation, numerous interviewees stressed the fact that COTECCO should also address other gaps that prevent the elimination of child labor in cobalt mining. There was a recognition that COTECCO's official outcomes, which focus on strengthening capacities and coordination on child labor in cobalt mining, are important. However, as compared to other evaluations that the team leader has carried out, interviewees placed more emphasis on the importance of the additional gaps that need to be addressed.

There were several comments from different stakeholders that they had been insufficiently involved in the design of the original call for bids and the project proposal response. Local government interviewees and some private sector representatives particularly noted this aspect. These stakeholders noted that they felt that projects were being imposed on them without involving and consulting them at the earliest stage, even before the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA).

While stakeholders were included in the design of the Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (CMEP), they felt that by the time of the CMEP design the core of the project structure and aims was already decided. Such persons stated that, if they had been more involved even prior to the call for bids, they would have stressed the need to also address other gaps which COTECCO was not designed to address. In particular, they noted the need for more emphasis on direct actions to withdraw and prevent child labor and the need to engage in poverty reduction actions.

While the interviewees agreed that the COTECCO project addressed important issues, they also noted that its relevance was affected by the minimal attention to addressing these and other gaps.

Evaluation interviewees commonly noted the need for more emphasis on:

- Direct actions to withdraw and prevent child labor in cobalt mining,
- Children in other forms of child labor in and near the cobalt mining locations (e.g., carrying heavy loads in and near markets, commercial sexual exploitation, petty crime),
- Actions to address the root causes of child labor, including poverty reduction actions and improved access to quality general and technical vocational and skills training (TVEST). Available TVEST courses are limited and do not always provide marketable labor skills.

See Annex F for a more detailed list of the gaps cited.

A review of the COTECCO studies and other research on cobalt mining in the area indicates that there are many other factors that also influence the socio-economic and labor situation, either directly or indirectly.²⁴ These include issues as diverse as property rights, the status and

²⁴ The COTECCO studies (e.g., see COTECCO studies PSA 1, PSA 2 and PSA 3 in the reference list) and other such as Umpula, E.; Buxton, A. & Schwartz, B. (2021) *Des Îlots de responsabilité. L'Approvisionnement des entreprises en cobalt artisanal en République Démocratique du Congo. Lubumbashi : AfreWatch, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).*

decent work conditions of women and men,²⁵ environmental destruction, and mine management. All these issues together contribute to poverty and inequality, which in turn exacerbate the potential of households to involve children in cobalt mining.

3.1.2. EQ 2: TO WHAT EXTENT WAS THE PROJECT'S APPROACH APPROPRIATE TO ACHIEVING ITS OBJECTIVES?

The project's approach to achieving its objectives as stated in the narrative theory of change and logical framework is mostly appropriate. The high focus on capacity strengthening and the establishment and/or strengthening of coordination mechanisms is well aligned with the expected project results.

Interviewees commonly cited the usefulness of locating the project headquarters base in the mining area instead of in Kinshasa as a positive part of the project's approach. Nevertheless, there were also suggestions and comments that a continuous project presence in Kinshasa would have been advisable. Having a staff member based in Kinshasa was seen as enabling the project to better strengthen and advocate for actions more directly with national level decision-makers.

Given the COVID-19 situation, the originally planned frequent visits of the Chief Technical Adviser to Kinshasa were limited. However, even in the absence of the COVID-19 restrictions, the complexity and time involved in travel and other logistics required for frequent trips to Kinshasa would have been challenging.

3.2. COHERENCE

In practice, the project's internal coherence was greater than what is apparent from studying the project ToC narrative and its logical framework. To enable adequate planning, monitoring, and evaluation, the project initiative had been divided into three outcomes with separate sub-outcomes and related outputs. However, the different outcomes are somewhat artificially separated into individual categories.

In fact, the project is intended to build a system comprised of key actors from government, private sector, civil society organizations, and other development agencies/projects. Identifying all the key actors, strengthening their capacities, improving coordination mechanisms, and building the CLMRS are really part of the same **systems building** approach.²⁶

The design could thus have more overtly articulated the systems development approach so that there would be more focus on how the linkages all fit together to contribute to the overall goal. Fortunately, the different outcomes and their outputs often overlap in planning and practice which is, in fact, as it should be.

Some interviewees were, however, still highly concentrated on the different outcomes and outputs and had limited understanding of how all the parts fit together to build the system. This point is understandable as reporting, including part of the current evaluation report, focuses on the extent to which all the different parts are achieved instead of how they lead to change as an integrated whole.

²⁵ E.g., poor health of parents due to work-related accidents and illnesses often means households have high health care costs which are not easily covered. The result is that the poor are more likely to join the category of the extreme poor who have heavier reliance on child labor. ILO and UNICEF (2021) Child Labour: Global estimates 2020, trends and the road forward, ILO and UNICEF, New York, 2021. Pp 10, 61, 65.

²⁶ Please note that this system is separate from the Child Labor Monitoring System (CLMS) and refers to a larger and more encompassing system to address child labor in the cobalt mining value chain.

One example of this issue is related to the CLMRS as mentioned under Sub-Outcome 2.3: “Child Labor Monitoring System is implemented by the DRC Government.” The CLMRS actually does include all the actors associated with addressing child labor in the cobalt supply chain. The way the outcome is worded is misleading, as it appears as if it is the sole role of the government to implement the CLMRS. The private sector, civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGO), other projects and development partners all have a role to play in the CLMRS development and implementation. On reviewing the list of participants in the CLMRS planning workshop, it is evident that representatives of the private sector and the other stakeholders were also included. In this regard, COTECCO applies a system building approach.

3.2.1. EQ 3: TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE PROJECT COORDINATED AND ESTABLISHED LINKS WITH OTHER DONOR-FUNDED PROJECTS, PRIVATE SECTOR INITIATIVES, OR OTHER INTERVENTIONS LED BY NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS?

The project coordinated and established links with other donor-funded projects, private sector initiatives, and other interventions led by national stakeholders. At the end of 2020, COTECCO initiated the establishment of the Technical Working Group towards improved coordination of these actors. The group met on a regular bi-monthly basis, which has been increased to monthly meetings since the beginning of 2022.

The linkages between these technical partners are increasing as the project has become more anchored in the provinces and as there is focus on the development of the CLMRS. There is still a great deal of scope to expand and continue this coordination further, especially with other donor-funded projects and international agencies. This expansion is already being planned for in the implementation of further COTECCO activities during the current cost extension and potential additional extension.

There are other initiatives related to child labor, poverty reduction, and socio-economic service provision underway and/or in the planning process by development partners. The project mapping exercises and experience from fieldwork have succeeded in identifying these relevant existing and planned initiatives. They provide further possibilities for the creation of synergies.

As several interviewees pointed out, it is important that COTECCO does not compete with other initiatives, nor should it duplicate the work that others are doing. There were concerns from some evaluation interviewees that the existing direct initiatives of projects, NGOs and the private sector already include the same households. The evaluators did not receive any direct evidence of this, however, so it is difficult to ascertain if this had indeed been the case. Given that the COTECCO project does not (yet) carry out direct activities with child labor cases, this does not in any case apply to the COTECCO. In fact, through the COTECCO-supported mapping exercise, other technical development actors are enabled to better identify others’ relevant respective subject areas and localities.

As part of the CLMRS development, increased linkages with the UNICEF-supported government child protection systems building are being heightened. Collaboration with the Cobalt for Development project is also being increasingly anchored. This project has a focus on formalizing the informal mines where most child labor occurs. Linkages to other initiatives such as those of Bon Pasteur (the Good Shepherd), World Vision, Save the Children, and others are under discussion. It should be stated that for the time being, though, the focus of discussions has been more on ensuring that different actors do not conduct activities in the same places.

The African Development Bank (ADB) has funded a large-scale ‘Project for the Alternative Welfare of Children and Youth Involved in the Cobalt Supply Chain’ (PABEA-Cobalt).²⁷ The PABEA-Cobalt project has several components including a focus on eliminating child labor in the cobalt supply chain.

The project includes a funding loan and a grant to the DRC Government. The PABEA-Cobalt project is being implemented through the Ministry of Social Affairs, though potential partners have not yet been determined.²⁸ This is unfortunate, as experienced actors working on child labor in the cobalt mining areas could share their lessons learned, good practices and coordinate/create synergies with the PABEA project. Given the low level of interaction of the PABEA-Cobalt project with other stakeholders to date, it is not surprising that there is some confusion concerning the progress of this project among evaluation interviewees. This means that the potential to create synergies between PABEA-Cobalt and all the other child labor efforts in the mining provinces is still unclear.

The PABEA-Cobalt project reportedly carried out a study to identify children in the mining localities, but the tools being used are not standardized with the CLMRS under development. It is important to note in this regard that the CLMRS is being developed using the official definitions as recognized and applicable under ILO Conventions 138 on Minimum Age and 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor. In addition, for the CLMRS development, COTECCO is already collaborating with other agencies in the two provinces to ensure that CLMRS content is well adapted and appropriate. For this reason, it is very important that linkages between COTECCO and the PABEA-Cobalt project are established.

A new project on the provision of services to address child labor in cobalt mining, which is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and will be implemented by the ILO, is in the planning stages. Consideration of the relationship and coordination between the COTECCO project and the new project is still under discussion. The COTECCO project is more focused on strengthening the institutional enabling environment and less on downstream direct-action activities. Working with the new project, good impetus for strong results to reach the DRC Government’s policy goal of zero child labor in cobalt mining can be generated. It will thus be fundamental that these two projects are well aligned and integrated to the extent possible as they operate through the same main implementing agency (ILO).

The evaluation team leader understands that it is not possible for contractual reasons to combine the COTECCO and the BMZ-funded project into one.

However, the evaluation does have some concerns in this regard. Given the strong interest of evaluation interviewees in COTECCO conducting direct actions to prevent and withdraw children from child labor, a project that is more focused on providing the relevant services may be seen as “finally undertaking actions” that they expected COTECCO to undertake. If this happens, COTECCO may become an afterthought, despite its importance to contributing to a strong enabling environment. Clearly defining the elements under COTECCO’s purview and those under the BMZ project and identifying their linkages and synergies will be important. These linkages also need to be clear and coordinated with relevant stakeholders and communities.

²⁷ At US\$84 million. Banque Africaine de Développement (2018), Mémorandum : Projet d’Appui au Bien-Être Alternatif des Enfants et Jeunes Impliqués dans la Chaîne d’Approvisionnement du Cobalt (PABEA-Cobalt) Pays : République Démocratique du Congo. Abidjan: BAD.

²⁸ PABEA-Cobalt (2022), Minutes : Cérémonie Officielle de Lancement de l’Identification des Bénéficiaires directs du PABEA-Cobalt. Lualaba. ILO-COTECCO, (2020) Pre-Situational Analysis – PSA 1 on Gaps and Barriers of Existing Stakeholders, Programs, Practices and Regulatory Framework to Address Child Labor in the Cobalt Supply Chain. Kolwezi: ILO-COTECCO.

Some evaluation interviewees indicated that they felt the two projects could operate in different geographic areas. From an organizational development perspective, the lead evaluator does not believe that it is advisable for the BMZ-funded project to operate in a totally different implementation area. The two projects are complementary, rather than replicating the same activities. The common approach to locate and dividing development projects into different geographic areas would thus not be suitable. COTECCO has a different role that cannot just be separated out geographically.

In fact, one option to ensure optimal coordination and synergies is based on a good practice that the lead evaluator saw in Madagascar. The child labor project under evaluation was in the same building as a closely related project. This enabled easy coordination and exchanges. In-person contact, frequent meetings, and dropping into each other’s project offices provided the foundation for a well-integrated approach.

3.3. EFFECTIVENESS

3.3.1. EQ 4: IS THE PROJECT ON TRACK TO MEET ITS TARGETS/OBJECTIVES? WHAT ARE THE FACTORS DRIVING AND/OR HINDERING RESULTS SO FAR?

The data presented in Section 3.3.1 is based on information that COTECCO provided to the evaluation team on April 11, 2022. Technical analysis of the reported results is based on evaluation fieldwork inputs and documentation review. COTECCO’s next Technical Progress Report was presented to USDOL/ILAB in draft form after the evaluation fieldwork. The targets were well aligned with the objectives.

Table 1. Outcome 1 Performance Summary

Performance Summary	Rating
Outcome 1 Increased common understanding of the challenges and opportunities for addressing child labor in the DRC’s cobalt industry	
<p>The project has achieved the best results under this outcome. The project first achieved this target overall in 2020 following the organization of three workshops on child labor issues, one each in Lubumbashi, Likasi and Kolwezi. However, the project has continued to carry out various capacity strengthening initiatives through training workshops, meetings to discuss key issues, and sharing of information with key stakeholders.</p> <p>Evaluation interviewees who had attended training uniformly indicated that their understanding of child labor in general as well as the differences between worst forms of child labor and light work had increased because of COTECCO.</p>	

Note: **green*** targets with one asterisk = achieved; **orange**** with two asterisks = in process, not yet achieved.

Sub-Outcome 1.1*: Key actors are informed on gaps and barriers to combat child labor

The target was set at 20%. Following the Kolwezi workshop held in November 2020, the project assessed stakeholders’ knowledge through a pre- and post-test. The findings showed a 38% increase in stakeholders’ knowledge on the post-test as compared to their pre-test, thus exceeding the target.

It should be stated that increased understanding (knowledge) does not necessarily result in changes to actual attitudes and behavior. Consequently, the extent of Outcome 1's importance to really affect change can only be measured against the more structured change results expected under Outcome 2 and 3.

Output 1.1.1 and 1.1.2*: The targets were met regarding the preparation and distribution of a validated report on the gaps and barriers in existing stakeholders, programs, practices, and regulatory framework for child labor in the cobalt supply chain.

The report provided additional information on the main issues and identified several additional stakeholders than had originally been anticipated.

The project organized an information sharing workshop with 27 stakeholders to obtain stakeholders' feedback on the findings of the report. This number exceeded the target of 20 stakeholders to participate in the workshop.

Sub-Outcome 1.2*: Increased awareness of stakeholders on opportunities to address child labor

The project target of a 40% increase in stakeholders' awareness was exceeded, reaching 64%. This was largely a measure of the increase in awareness among training workshop participants.

The project produced a communication strategy that included the identification of key actors who could be sourced to contribute to awareness raising. Given the COVID-19 situation, the project focused on strengthening the role of journalists who can communicate through the media, since this was less affected by the pandemic than conducting direct awareness raising. The project assessed the participants' knowledge through a pre- and post-test. Journalists met during the evaluation mission indicated their strong interest in continuing to raise awareness and produce media information on the subject of child labor in cobalt mining. They did add that they will need some logistics and other support to scale up their communications.

Output 1.2.1*: Communication strategy document is validated by key stakeholders

The target to develop, validate and disseminate a communications strategy has been met. The project held an information and feedback sharing workshop with CISTEMA members. Feedback was incorporated into the report and submitted to USDOL for approval. The report was disseminated in April 2022.

The quality of the communications strategy is good, though there is room for improvement with the incorporation of more direct and culturally rooted social and behavior change communications.²⁹ Evaluation interviewees cited awareness raising as one of the most common subjects, specifying the positive results but also the need for greater attention to it. The project staff indicated that they intend to provide training on ILO's SCREAM³⁰ modules on child labor. These modules aim to involve children in awareness raising and change in their communities through education, media, and the arts.

²⁹ Center for Social and Behaviour Change Communications. Communication for Change. Available from <https://www.centreforsbcc.org/what-is-sbcc/>

³⁰ILO (2022), SCREAM: Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media. Available from <https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/Scream/lang-en/index.htm>

Output 1.2.2*: Advocacy strategy document is validated by key stakeholders

The advocacy strategy document was validated and appreciated according to evaluation interviewees. CISTEMA members validated the advocacy strategy report and subsequently submitted the updated document to USDOL, which provided approval. The report was disseminated in April 2022.

Output 1.2.3*: Training of trainers' workshops of stakeholders on advocacy strategy are held

The project exceeded its target of conducting two training workshops on advocacy and held three workshops: One each in Kinshasa (March 2021), Kolwezi (April 2021), and in Lubumbashi (March 2022). A total of 94 stakeholders participated, of which 19 were at national level (Kinshasa) and the remainder were at provincial level.

Evaluation interviewees who had participated in these advocacy training sessions were very enthusiastic. Several indicated how they were able to apply what they had learned in the other work that they do (e.g., in the case of NGOs and workers' organizations). The interviewees cited, for example, that they now realize the importance of including other allies who can provide support during advocacy efforts and are now doing so.

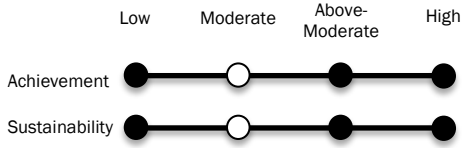
Output 1.2.4*: Advocacy strategy is piloted

In line with the expected target, the project has engaged in two advocacy events. The first was held on 12 June 2021 during the World Day Against Child Labor. The other event is ongoing during the implementation of advocacy pilot activities.

Output 1.2.5:** Communication campaigns are implemented

At the time of the evaluation fieldwork, the project had implemented three of the six expected communication campaigns. The first two campaigns were organized around the installation of different types of billboards. The other is ongoing through social networks to share the produced sensitization skit and song. This activity was accelerating during the evaluation fieldwork. The song and skit were also presented during the preliminary evaluation results workshop, with a positive response from the participants.

Table 2. Outcome 2 Performance Summary

Performance Summary	Rating
<p>Outcome 2 Increased capacity of government and other relevant stakeholders to address child labor in the DRC’s cobalt industry</p>	
<p>Outcome 2 has several very important and complex components. Of four key areas to address, three have been implemented. These include, at the national level, the support for the review of the national sectorial strategy operational plan and the ministerial decree to create and establish the CISTEMA.</p> <p>At provincial level, support was provided for the development of the decree to create provincial-level CISTEMA. Unfortunately, the decree at provincial level had not yet been officially adopted. The project is undertaking and supporting advocacy efforts for the adoption of the decree and establishment of provincial CISTEMA. There was a great deal of interest among evaluation interviewees for the creation of the provincial-level CISTEMA.</p> <p>The project is continuing to strengthen stakeholder’s capacities in the key subject areas related to addressing child labor in the cobalt industry. There is still much room for specific knowledge increases. This includes how to implement the withdrawal and remediation of former child laborers from work in the cobalt supply chain, as well as the roles and integration among different government, private sector, civil society, and media entities and groups.</p> <p>The evaluation considers that, pending the implementation of the CLMRS, sustainability may be above moderate. Without a functional CLMRS, however, the likelihood of sustainability is moderate to low. This is in part due to the many gaps in terms of socio-educational and economic support services among households at risk of or including child laborers. Where the contextual challenges are not addressed, it will be difficult to ensure sustainability.</p>	

Sub-Outcome 2.1:** Knowledge of stakeholders on how to address child labor are improved

The target of a 40% increase in knowledge has not yet been met. While various related trainings have been implemented, more specific focus on the most effective mechanisms of withdrawal and remediation to move children into alternative education or decent work has not yet been achieved. The project staff expect to increase focus in this area during the remaining cost-extension period.

Output 2.1.1*: A validated report on capacity needs assessment of government officials and key stakeholders is distributed

As was stated in Section 3.1 (Relevance), there is overlap between the different project components. The project achieved this result jointly with Output 1.1.1 through an information-sharing workshop and the subsequent sharing of the capacity needs assessment report.

Output 2.1.2*: A compendium related to national and international standards is distributed

The project produced a compendium report and shared its findings with stakeholders to obtain their feedback. The updated document was subsequently submitted to USDOL, which provided approval and the report was disseminated in April 2022.

Output 2.1.3:** Key government (institutions and regulations) and stakeholders are trained on best national and international practices on combating child labor

From a target of 10, four trainings were conducted at the time of the evaluation field visits. The trainings focused child labor definitions, concepts, and best practices. The trainings focused more on the overall legal and regulatory frameworks and best oversight mechanisms as opposed to direct prevention, withdrawal, and remediation of child labor.

The project also carried out three trainings, each linked to advocacy and coordination (Kinshasa, Kolwezi, and Lubumbashi).

Sub-Outcome 2.2:** Coordination between key actors is improved

Out of a target of three for this sub-outcome, one has been implemented regarding the draft of the decree for the creation of the provincial CISTEMA, but this decree has not yet been officially adopted. Remaining coordination actions are expected to arise from the provincial CISTEMA once they are established and functioning.

Output 2.2.1*: Members of public coordination groups are trained on coordination mechanisms

The project largely exceeded the target of 28 stakeholders and was able to train 62.

Output 2.2.2:** Public & private coordination mechanism to combat child labor is functional

This output refers to the provincial CISTEMA and has not yet been achieved due to the lack of the adoption of the decree to create the coordination mechanism.

Output 2.2.3:** Independent observatory recording documents on child labor in the mining sector is functional

This target has not yet been met, though the project has already selected the body that will host this observatory.

Sub-Outcome 2.3:** Child Labor Monitoring System is implemented by the DRC Government

The CLMRS design and implementation is still in its early stages and the target has not yet been met. Progress on the CLMRS is slow but progress is being made.

The DRC Government requested support for the development of a database due to the lack of a government database and reliable monitoring system tracking children's presence and labor in mining sites.

There appears to be some misunderstanding among some stakeholders about the CLMS concept as some evaluation interviewees indicated that they believe it is limited to the establishment of a database. This may be in part due to the name "Child Labor Monitoring System." This phrase does not include the word "remediation" or terms such as "referral system." This can be in part addressed through changing the name of the CLMS to Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System (CLMRS).

The current common understanding of the CLMRS within the ILO includes the tracking of identified children as they are included in actions to address child labor.³¹ Interviewees indicated that the government is very interested in the database aspect; however, COTECCO is also very much focusing on the referral aspect which is expected to be an essential part of the CLMRS system.

The project has started developing the child labor database which, together with the development of the referral system, form the starting point of the CLMRS development. The project stated that they expect the CLMRS database to become operational during the next six months.

The process of recruiting the consultant to develop the database took longer than expected, which has resulted in delays. The project expects to launch the database development in May 2022. Once the database has been developed, the consultant will conduct stakeholder capacity building in Kinshasa, Lubumbashi, and Kolwezi. After these workshops, the project will implement pilot activities to test the CLMRS database.

Important in this regard is the fact that the Sub-Outcome 2.3 is focused on the DRC Government, which is rightly where the CLMRS should be based and coordinated to ensure long-term sustainability. However, the role of all key stakeholders, including importantly the private sector, cannot and has not been ignored. In fact, COTECCO has included representatives from the private sector, NGOs, others from civil society, and international agencies and projects in planning meetings for the CLMRS. For example, in the CLMRS planning meeting held on December 14, 2021, representatives from all these sectors were included.

The linkage and role of the private sector as related to the CLMRS is highlighted in Sub-Outcome 3 on “Improved **monitoring and remediation** efforts by private sector of child labor in the cobalt supply chain.” While the operationalized outputs under Outcome 3 do not specifically mention the CLMRS, it is evident that there is an association between the two. The private sector, including large enterprises, formal and informal cooperatives and informal micro-enterprise miners, are all part of the private sector. Logically they will have responsibilities regarding data gathering, referrals as relevant and communication of information into the national CLMRS. Likewise, other entities working on child labor in the cobalt mines will all be associated with the CLMRS development and implementation.

Output 2.3.1:** The assessment report of existing child labor monitoring mechanisms is approved

The project has held two consultation workshops with key stakeholders to share findings of the baseline study on the CLMRS. The feedback has been provided to the consultant for updating in accordance with comments and will be submitted to USDOL for approval.

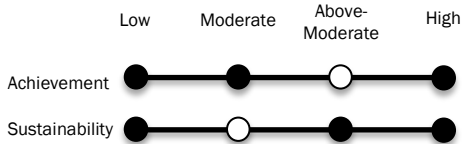
Output 2.3.2, 2.3.3 and 2.3.4:** The CLMS is validated, the capacity of actors to implement the CLMS is built and the CLMS is pilot tested

Given that the CLMRS is still under development, the guidelines and validation are still in the planning stages. The project will conduct capacity strengthening on the CLMRS and its

³¹ “The focus has shifted from monitoring the industry to monitoring the child as s/he is removed from work and provided with social protection services. The attention has also moved from the ‘withdrawal’ of children from work to a coordinated child protection effort involving the identification, referral, verification and tracking that targeted children are provided with satisfactory alternatives.” ILO, Child Labor Monitoring System (CLMS). Available from <https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Action/Childlabourmonitoring/lang-en/index.htm>

implementation as soon as it has been validated. The CLMRS pilot activities will be carried out once the CLMRS database is in place.

Table 3. Outcome 3 Performance Summary

Performance Summary	Rating
<p>Outcome 3 Improved monitoring and remediation efforts by the private sector of child labor in the cobalt supply chain</p>	
<p>Each group of private sector actors tested two initiatives on remediation in the comply chain³² including one for mining cooperatives and one for mining companies.</p> <p>As in the case of Outcome 1, unless the supporting services are available and funding is allocated, sustainability is expected only to be moderate.</p> <p>The evaluation was able to confirm that the capacities of the private sector have been strengthened substantially. There is still a continuing need for increased knowledge and skills on specific monitoring and remediation methods as the CLMRS is developed.</p>	

Sub-Outcome 3.1*: Increased skills of private sector actors on monitoring and remediating child labor

The project has exceeded the target of 23 private sector actors and provided capacity strengthening on monitoring and remediation mechanisms to 27. As with other aspects, the capacity strengthening will need to be and is expected to continue as the CLMRS becomes operational.

Output 3.1.1*: A validated evaluation of existing monitoring and remediation mechanisms is distributed

The project achieved this output jointly with Outputs 1.1.1 and 2.1.1.

Output 3.1.2, 3.1.3:** Private sector actors are trained on the best practices for monitoring and remediating child labor and on the Comply Chain application

So far, five of the six target trainings on the best practices and the Comply Chain application were conducted with 46 private sector actors. As in 3.1.1, more capacity strengthening will be necessary as the CLMRS, including the referral system, is further developed.

Sub-Outcome 3.2*: Private sector coordination in monitoring and remediation is improved

The project target of increasing coordination on monitoring and remediation was exceeded from a target of 10% with an achievement of 27% improvement. Though there were delays, there has been progress. The evaluation found that the establishment and strengthening of the private sector groups and those in which the private sector participates have been firmly established. However, there are concerns regarding funding for the functioning of the meetings and activities of these groups over the long term.

³² USDOL/ILAB (undated) Comply Chain. <https://www.dol.gov/ilab/complychain/>

Output 3.2.1:** Working group with private sector on child labor in the cobalt mines is functional

The project was expected to support the organization of quarterly meetings for the private working group, but so far out of the 12 planned meetings, three have taken place. After developing the terms of reference (ToR) for the private sector working groups, the project was to support the establishment of the working groups. However, to ensure ownership, the private sector actors should first validate the ToR. The project thus carried out several consultations on the ToR to obtain their validation. In fact, though the official meetings of the private sector groups were fewer than planned, there were numerous interactions between the private sector actors. Specifically, this was due to the trainings that private sector actors attended, the road map development, and the consultation meetings.

An interesting aspect is that the private sector working groups met during the evaluation stressed the importance of the new collaboration among the different members of their groups. In all cases they stated that they had unfounded opinions of each other, but they realized during meetings and through attending COTECCO trainings that these were not accurate.

Representatives from the larger private sector and cooperative stated that they had never really exchanged directly with each other before. As a result of the project, they have come to understand that they have common interests, in particular the need to end child labor in the cobalt supply chain. As some said, “aside from the human factor, it is bad for business.” This recognition of better mutual understanding and the need to work together is very positive and was directly attributed to the influence of COTECCO.

Output 3.2.2*: Roadmap for the coordination of private sector interventions is validated

In practice, though there was a target of one road map, three road maps were developed. The project had initially planned to implement one private sector working group for the two provinces. However, due to the specificities and logistics of working with each province and town, three working groups had to be established. That is, one each for Kolwezi, Likasi and Lubumbashi. Consequently, each working group developed its own road map for a total of three.

Output 3.2.3*: Roadmap for the coordination of private sector interventions is implemented

The project has far exceeded the implementation of three planned private sector interventions from their roadmaps. So far, the working groups are implementing 22 out of the 81 actions contained in the three roadmaps. The evaluators found that, though there is strong interest among the private sector groups to implement their roadmaps, there is insufficient financing available. This is, in part, because the private sector groups also include actors from cooperatives whose means are substantially more limited. On studying the private sector group roadmaps, the lead evaluator found that that there is no mention of support for the direct withdrawal of any children that they may identify. This aspect could be included in the private sector roadmaps as the CLMRS continues its development. At the very least, the private sector’s role in referring any children that they may see in their own or other mines should be articulated.

PROJECT RESEARCH STUDIES

The project research studies, which included the mapping of actors, capacity strengthening needs, advocacy and communications strategy, among others, were well developed. Of course, there is always room for improvement, but they are generally clear and well-written. The main

challenge remains regarding how to take all of the information and use it in a practical way to drive the system building process. The studies are separate but their integration into a well-organized approach still needs further attention. A single synthesis report that emphasizes the key issues and that is widely disseminated and actively used would be helpful in this regard.

3.3.2. EQ 5: HOW DID THE PROJECT'S STAKEHOLDERS PERCEIVE THE EFFORTS UNDERTAKEN TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR IN THE COBALT SUPPLY CHAIN? AND WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES TO SOLVING THE PROBLEM?

The project's stakeholders appreciated the efforts undertaken. However, as already discussed in previous sections, there were considerable concerns about gaps that need to be addressed.

There were also comments from a range of interviewees about the need for more frequent interaction with project staff. It is true that some stakeholders were satisfied about the level of interactions, but others were less so. Persons who had participated in training, various stakeholders with potential for the creation of synergies, and some community members shared all their expectation for more intensive and frequent follow-up with project staff. This means more personal interactions as well as Whatsapp and other communications. The positive element in these comments is that there was a desire for more interactions based on the motivation that had been fostered through the initial contacts.

Several training participants noted that they had expected hard copy documents with summaries and guidelines based on the training(s) that they had attended. They thought that such copies would be more useful than digital versions to help them to easily study and remember the key information.

The project staff indicated that the main reason for the limited level of follow up with such stakeholders is the low level of staffing within the project. COTECCO has only three senior technical staff, including the Chief Technical Adviser. There is also an administrative and finance staff member and basic support staff. The COVID-19 pandemic also limited the interactions because not all contacts have regular access to digital communications.

Given that COTECCO is primarily a systems-building project that is based on capacity and institutional networking strengthening, personal interactions are key. The initial design did not consider the depth of the need for continuous interpersonal interactions and the large amount of time that needed to be allocated for progress report writing and project management. This will be further discussed in the Efficiency Section 3.4. It should also be noted that within the local cultural context, direct interpersonal contacts and relationships help foster the goals of COTECCO. While stakeholders appreciated the project staff, the project could have achieved more within a shorter timeframe if there had been the time and possibility for more interactions.

3.3.3. EQ 6: HOW CAN THE PROJECT'S WORK ON CLMS BE STRENGTHENED TO EFFECTIVELY REDUCE CHILD LABOR IN THE COBALT SECTOR AND SET THE FOUNDATION FOR SCALING UP THE CLMS NATIONALLY?

The project's current planning to develop the CLMRS is good, but to be effective long-term technical and material support will be necessary. This is not to say that such support must necessarily only come from outside donors. In other countries where the CLMRS has been

developed, sometimes using different names, the process has been long and complicated.³³ It has required financial and other inputs from government, donors, and the private sector. It is commonly still a work in progress in most countries where it is being implemented. Taking shortcuts to establishing a CLMRS may not bring about good results.

The CLMRS requires several elements, including the development of a strong database, a good referral system, regular and accurate registration of data on child laborers into the database, monitoring and analysis of data, and using the data to inform future legal/regulatory frameworks and actions. The referral system needs to be anchored in traditional and local government structures with specific linkages to government child protection systems. It requires the involvement of the public and all key actors working in cobalt mining and local development. It also requires political will and the establishment of oversight bodies, including provincial-level CISTEMA. As such, developing and well anchoring the CLMRS is thus a complicated process.

The evaluation finds that COTECCO, with its existing networking structure including links to local government, UNICEF (regarding child protection development systems), the private sector, and other agencies working on child labor issues in the two provinces, is well placed to pilot the CLMRS.

The technical expert on child labor within COTECCO has studied existing experiences online. However, additional technical support from ILO headquarters and possible field visit of key DRC partners to a country with solid experience in this subject, such as Côte d'Ivoire, would be highly useful.

The foundations for collaboration with and between local partners have been laid but need to be further strengthened. Time, adequate staffing, and other resources need to be made available.

3.3.4. EQ 7: HOW COULD MONITORING AND REMEDIATION EFFORTS BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS OF CHILD LABOR IN COBALT BE IMPROVED?³⁴

The role of the private sector actors differs greatly depending on which type of enterprise is involved. The cobalt mining sector is comprised of different types of enterprises ranging from the formal large mines to tiny household-based informal economic activities.

The experience and observation of specialists, including from COTECCO, indicate that there is limited or no child labor in the large private sector mines. There are some instances where informal miners trespass into large working mines at night and/or in abandoned private mining areas. Child labor may be found in such cases. Smaller mines and formal cooperatives may have some instances, but they do not make up most sources of child labor. Most child laborers are found in the still informal cooperatives and in tiny economic activities. In the latter case, a tunnel into a mine may even be found immediately under the house where the children live with their relatives.

³³ E.g., Zegers, M.; Ayenor, G. (2021), *Ending Child Labour and Promoting Sustainable Cocoa Production In Côte D'ivoire and Ghana*. Brussels: European Commission, TIEG. This has also been the experience in other countries such as Kenya, Thailand, Bangladesh and Cambodia.

³⁴ The evaluation has added the "other stakeholders" to this EQ as it is difficult to discuss this issue by focusing only on the private sector. As stated in previous sections, all actors are linked and have a role to play in the CLMS development and implementation.

Although their situations differ greatly, all these private sector actors have a role to play in combatting child labor in cobalt mining, depending on their level of financial resources and ability to be directly involved in addressing child labor in their immediate environment.

The accountability of large enterprises needs to go beyond their own due diligence and effective traceability of child labor free cobalt in their value chain. Regardless of the ownership of large mines, responsiveness to national DRC and international demands to eliminate child labor in cobalt (and other mines) should be required.

Larger enterprises' due diligence to fund development actions is covered to some extent through a mining fee comprising 0.3% of annual turnover which is provided to local mining communities. These funds are managed by community committees which determine how the funds will be allocated. Communities may also make direct requests to mining companies for donations through their corporate social responsibility programs.

There should also be financial support to directly address the need to end child labor. It is unlikely for communities to request support for child labor elimination directly from these due diligence mining fee funds. Evaluation interviewees who are familiar with this funding mechanism stated that communities tend to request support for local infrastructure and similar investments. Ideally, financial and material inputs could be made directly toward supporting the CLMRS implementation, including remediation.

The National Committee for the Worst Forms of Child Labor is not perceived as fully functional,³⁵ yet it is supposed to coordinate the fight against child labor in different thematic sectors and with the private sector. CISTEMA, with its focus on mining, is just one of the commissions that falls under the responsibility of this committee.

The involvement of the Assemblée Nationale (National Assembly - Parliament) is also key, as they have a role in decision-making and are already increasing their focus on labor issues.

In the case of other smaller private sector actors, their contribution to the CLMRS process of identifying, referring, and ending child labor could be rewarded. Rewards could take the form of reduced taxes in the case of formal cooperatives, or it could also take the form of public recognition through certificates and prizes for the donation of material and financial contributions to the fight against child labor. This could also be in the form of practical support in local schools (e.g., materials, structures) and participation in direct actions on child labor in communities. There are good practice examples of initiatives around the world that work to end child labor where communities work together to address these issues.³⁶

A "grace period" that allows and motivates households to come forward with cases of child labor to access support and ensure that the child is no longer engaged in labor is another option. Of course, this can only be done if there are available services like schools and economic support.³⁷

As indicated in Section 3.1.1., there were comments from evaluation interviewees about the need to also address non-mining child labor found in and near mining sites. Children near the

³⁵ According to several evaluation interviewees.

³⁶ Examples include the ECLIC project in Côte d'Ivoire (See Zegers, M & Kakou-Agnimou, R. (2020), Final Performance Evaluation: Eliminating Child Labor in Cocoa Growing Communities in Côte d'Ivoire (ECLIC) Project. Washington, DC, IMPAQ). Also, the ILO project in Indonesia on child domestic work, (See Bowen, R.; Zegers, M; Sirait, G. (2017), Independent Final Evaluation of PROMOTE Decent Work for Domestic Workers to End Child Domestic Work. Washington, DC: O'Brien & Associates.

³⁷ Grants, cash transfers for the poorest, support for launching economic activities and savings and credit schemes, assisting parents to diversify their income sources and other approaches.

mines may move from petty trade into mining or other activities such as the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) or the carrying various heavy loads, and vice versa. This has also been noted in several of the COTECCO research documents and in the project document.

Without good educational and decent work alternatives, there were concerns that children may be withdrawn from WFCL in mining and instead engage in other forms of hazardous/WFCL. The implementation of an Integrated Area-Based Approach (IABA)³⁸ may be particularly effective in this regard.

Though IABA has not been intensively applied over the last few years, this is primarily because many projects have been focused on individual types of child labor. In the case of child labor in mining, however, the mining sites tend to be clearly circumscribed, and nearby areas can be defined in agreement with the adjoining communities. Activities to ensure the ending of child labor in these localities could help ensure that child labor in the immediate area, together with the mining sites, is addressed. Of course, it is true that children may still go further away from the mining sites to engage in child labor, but stakeholders stressed the importance of prioritizing the immediate areas in and near the mining sites.

The main challenge will remain the financing of the CLMRS database implementation and the referral schemes. The CISTEMA at national level has recently received some funding from the DRC Government for its operations but this is still too limited to fully implement its operational plan. Normally the CISTEMA should also be monitoring actions in the mining provinces. Given that there is no provincial-level CISTEMA, the national CISTEMA is responsible for provincial support. The evaluation representatives from the national CISTEMA stated to the evaluators that the allocated national-level funding is insufficient to cover the needed monitoring logistics and support in the provinces.

Experience has shown that a functional referral system requires sufficient funding to cover several aspects to be successful:

- Cost of persons to bring the case of a child identified in the mines to the responsible local government office,
- Cost of support to the child and family as applicable to ensure the child does not return to labor (access to education, economic support, etc.), and
- Cost of case management including follow-up by social workers or other assigned persons in the child's community.

The funding for such aspects could normally be covered as part of the government child protection scheme, but this is not yet sufficiently developed in the concerned localities. UNICEF and COTECCO are already coordinating to develop and launch the referral system as part of the child protection system that is also under development, but this is not yet functional. Much more action and funding are needed to ensure that the system can work beyond developing and pilot testing the CLMRS.

If the CISTEMA was financed at provincial level, its operational plan would need to include follow-up with all the relevant service providers, police, labor inspection personnel and others.

A broad discussion of the CLMRS development and implementation is beyond the scope of the current evaluation report, but a few factors can be mentioned. The social and community development workers are essential to any functioning child protection system, but they lack

³⁸ ILO (2013) Integrated Area-Based Approach as a Strategy for Child Labor Free Zones. Geneva: ILO. Available from http://www.oit.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--ed_mas/--eval/documents/publication/wcms_433047.pdf

capacities and logistics financing in the two COTECCO provinces.³⁹ In addition, the role of social workers/community development workers is not well developed at present in the two COTECCO provinces and this will take much investment.

3.3.5. EQ 8: HOW CAN THE PROJECT ASSIST CISTEMA IN OPERATIONALIZING COORDINATION AMONGST THE RELEVANT MINISTRIES AT THE NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL LEVELS?

The main challenge at national level is that COTECCO has no permanent staff based in Kinshasa. It would be very helpful to have more frequent and intensive assistance of COTECCO staff to directly work with the national CISTEMA and provide advocacy support with the ministries.

There is a small budget that has been allocated to the national CISTEMA, but it is still not sufficient to put the entire roadmap into practice. There is also a limited level of dynamism due to low funding levels.

This means that, despite the important and very large workload in the provinces, one or more of the project staff need to travel to Kinshasa on a regular basis to provide technical support to CISTEMA. Adding in the difficult logistics, including a 5-hour drive from Kolwezi to Lubumbashi⁴⁰ to fly to Kinshasa, this is not practical. Given the importance of personal interactions for strengthening coordination as opposed to relying on digital communications, this is a major challenge.

During the evaluation interviews, the option of including a person from COTECCO based in Kinshasa was discussed. Doing so would have financial and practical implications for the ILO country office⁴¹ which need to be addressed. Office space and transport for such a person would need to be covered so that they can carry out their tasks effectively and efficiently.

As provincial stakeholders indicated, there is a need for the national level decision-makers to officially decree the formation and establishment of the provincial CISTEMA. Once the provincial CISTEMA have been established, COTECCO can conduct a capacity needs assessment and provide the needed strengthening inputs. A continuous monitoring and technical mentoring of the provincial CISTEMA would be essential. The main challenge is, however, is that the provincial CISTEMA must be established before this is possible. If the COTECCO project closes before this occurs, it will evidently be quite difficult to provide the needed support. It is thus essential that the provincial CISTEMA are established and functional as soon as possible.

3.3.6. EQ 9: TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE GENDER DIMENSION BEEN CONSIDERED? WHAT SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES CAN BE HIGHLIGHTED?

The project gender dimension has largely been focused on highlighting gender issues during the project capacity strengthening, meetings, and in the conducted research. Since the project is not engaging in direct actions other than the recent awareness raising in public spaces, girls are not directly targeted.

³⁹ According to several evaluation interviewees.

⁴⁰ The direct flight from Kolwezi to Kinshasa is not approved by the United Nations Department for Safety and Security, so staff are not permitted to take this flight.

⁴¹ ILO Country Office for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo and Gabon

COTECCO has covered the issue of gender in several research studies.⁴² The mapping study of stakeholders, programs and regulatory frameworks, for example, included attention to mapping entities that have a focus on gender.⁴³ Another COTECCO-supported study on improved private sector monitoring and remediation efforts noted that girls are introduced to or trafficked into CSEC in and near mining areas.⁴⁴

The COTECCO-supported research as well as other studies on child labor and conditions in mining in the provinces of Haut Katanga and Lualaba further indicate that women and girls are less prevalent in the direct extraction work in the mines, though they can still be found.⁴⁵ This is at least in part because of cultural reasons. Women and girls are involved in other mining activities such as washing the soil to separate the cobalt, carrying mining loads, and other activities in and around the mines.⁴⁶ Women can be found working while pregnant or with babies and toddlers nearby. Aside from safety concerns, women and girls are exposed to a range of other issues affecting their health and well-being. These include social and economic discrimination, exploitation, and abuse.⁴⁷ These aspects have been covered in the various capacity strengthening workshops that COTECCO conducted, but more attention to these issues and how to address them is necessary.

While the advocacy strategy that has been developed with the support of COTECCO is overall well done and appreciated, there is little attention to gender issues. On page 3 of the advocacy report, no specific mention is made of women's and girls' issues in the list of key problem areas.⁴⁸

It should be stated that the participants in capacity strengthening workshops are mostly professionals in government, private sector including cooperatives, civil society, and other development specialists. While the project did consider the participation of women to be

⁴²ILO-COTECCO, (2020) Pre-Situational Analysis – PSA 1 on Gaps and Barriers of Existing Stakeholders, Programs, Practices and Regulatory Framework to Address Child Labor in the Cobalt Supply Chain. Kolwezi: ILO-COTECCO. ILO-COTECCO (2020) Pre-Situational Analysis – PSA 2 On “The capacity needs assessment of government officials and key stakeholders”. Kolwezi: ILO-COTECCO. ILO-COTECCO (2021), Pre-situational analysis – PSA 3 Outcome 3: Improved monitoring and remediation efforts by private sector of child labor in the cobalt supply chain. Evaluation Report of Private Sector Existing Mechanisms of Monitoring and Remediation of Child Labor in Cobalt Supply chain in Lualaba and Haut Katanga. Kolwezi: ILO-COTECCO.

⁴³ ILO-COTECCO, (2020) Pre-Situational Analysis – PSA 1 on Gaps and Barriers of Existing Stakeholders, Programs, Practices and Regulatory Framework to Address Child Labor in the Cobalt Supply Chain. Kolwezi: ILO-COTECCO.

⁴⁴ That is, child prostitution. The ILO-COTECCO report refers to “sex workers” though this term is normally not used when referring to children as it indicates a level of acceptance of this type of exploitation. The term “sex worker” can apply to adults but not children.

⁴⁵ See COTECCO-supported studies and others such as Umpula, E.; Buxton, A. & Schwartz, B. (2021) Des îlots de responsabilité. L'Approvisionnement des entreprises en cobalt artisanal en République Démocratique du Congo. Lubumbashi : AfreWatch, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). Matundu Mbambi, A. ; Kandolo, L. (2016) Enquête sur les violations des Droits Humains subies par les femmes congolaises dans l'exploitation des mines artisanales dans la province du Haut Katanga. République Démocratique du Congo. Genève : Women's International League for Peace & Freedom.

⁴⁶ ILO-COTECCO (2021), Pre-situational analysis. PSA 3 Outcome 3: Improved monitoring and remediation efforts by private sector of child labor in the cobalt supply chain. Evaluation Report of Private Sector Existing Mechanisms of Monitoring and Remediation of Child Labor in Cobalt Supply chain in Lualaba and Haut Katanga. Kolwezi: ILO-COTECCO.

⁴⁷ Matundu Mbambi, A.; Kandolo, L. (2016) Enquête sur les violations des Droits Humains subies par les femmes congolaises dans l'exploitation des mines artisanales dans la province du Haut Katanga. République Démocratique du Congo. Genève: Women's International League for Peace & Freedom.

⁴⁸ ILO-COTECCO (2021) Advocacy Strategy on the Fight Against Child Labor in Artisanal Mines and Artisanal Mining Sites in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Kolwezi: ILO-COTECCO.

important, the staff had little influence over whom the invited agencies/groups would send to training. The number of female participants thus depended on who was deputed to attend. COTECCO did not provide direct training to mining workers in the communities, though some recent awareness activities were conducted. This means that the question of the inclusion of women mining workers in training is not applicable.

During CLMRS development, the specific gender-related issues need to be fully considered. In addition, other vulnerable groups such as households affected by HIV, children with disabilities, and orphans also need special attention. Some of the evaluation interviewees had noted the importance of such groups. Some statements were made about children with disabilities being more likely to be exploited if they are physically able to work despite being affected by deafness, epilepsy, albinism, or other issues.

It is further important not to ignore that boys can also be the victims of sexual exploitation and violence in and around the mines. Children may thus be victims of labor and other forms of exploitation and abuse at the same time. It is for this reason that, going forward, integrating the CLMRS under development with child protection systems building is essential.

Additional attention to vulnerable groups should include their participation in training, decision-making on issues that affect them, analyzing their specific challenges, and implementing specific actions that reduce those challenges.

A well-developed child protection system includes attention to the multiple types of exploitation, abuse and neglect affecting children. Child protection system building includes ensuring that the multiple types of issues that any individual child may face are assessed. Focusing only on child labor results, instead of viewing the child holistically, may ultimately only achieve partial remediation. Children who face multiple challenges need integrated support so that they can become stable and well-functioning adults.

3.4. EFFICIENCY

Stakeholders perceived COTECCO's overall efficiency, in terms of its balance between costs and benefits, as good overall. Some evaluation interviewees noted that time management could have been improved, though they also recognized that the project had too few staff members. Originally the project was expected to rely on the inputs of many consultants. In practice, the number of staff members allocated to COTECCO for a project that requires systems building across multiple complex stakeholders was too limited. While many projects include reliance on high working hours, a project where 16 hour working days and working every weekend are commonly the norm is not reasonable. Staff cannot work to their highest level of efficiency and quality in such a situation.

Project efficiency was also hampered because of COVID-19, which interfered with the ability to conduct training, hold in-person meetings, and conduct actions at national level and at provincial sites. Given that the project is rightly based in the provinces of Haut Katanga and Lualaba, geographic and logistics challenges limited national in-person interactions.

While digital technologies were used to compensate for the difficulties due to COVID-19, staff indicated that these were not always functioning as needed. Some stakeholders did not have access, or only had poor access, to digital technologies. This situation made online capacity strengthening sessions and meetings challenging and less efficient and effective than they could have been.

Project consultants consistently noted that the amount and level of exchanges to finetune research reports, the awareness raising song and sketch were inordinate as compared to their

previous assignments. The cumulation of other/new tasks which had either not been clear from their ToR, or were simply added, led to delays in finalizing reports and awareness-raising materials. Consultants noted that they sometimes felt that they were not seen as capable which led to frustration and irritation. There was also a comment about the lack of personal recognition for the consultant's contribution to their report. It should be added, however, that the consultants were pleased with their final products and that they had learned from their assignment and the guidance provided. The general impression was that the consultants had been ready to provide additional work but also that some of what was asked was seen as unreasonable and beyond the scope of their ToR.

Simultaneously, the COTECCO staff did mention that they must also engage in much follow-up with the consultants to provide them the support that they need. Given the staffs' time constraints, they are not always able to engage with them in a timely manner.

Some consultants also felt that the long processes before reports were approved and are disseminated influenced their usefulness, as the information quickly becomes dated. More specifically, one person indicated for example that there are continuous changes of the actors, projects, and the socio-economic aspects of the mining context. This means that approaches, strategies and mapping need to be regularly updated.

There were also comments from the consultants about delays in receiving payments even after the approval of their reports, noting that "the delays are worse than with other development partners." Consultants who worked with other persons as part of their contract were particularly affected, as their colleagues were continually requesting their payment from the lead consultant.

In fact, slow administrative processing and financial disbursements had an overall impact on project efficiency and COTECCO staffing stress. The need for multiple approval signatures, including from the most senior ILO staff in DRC, and the requirement to fill in many forms contributed to slow processing. As was the case with the consultants, the project staff were sometimes blamed for slow disbursements while they too have little to no control over the speed of the disbursement processes.

Solutions like having adequate amounts of petty cash to cover the costs of the project work and streamlining the approval processes were proposed. Other ideas included allowing greater project-level decision-making on disbursements and conducting financial audits to verify and ensure correct project financial management. This would allow for trust, expected transparency and efficiency.

The ILO Country Office⁴⁹ indicated that the project should have a Steering Committee, which was not the case for COTECCO up to the period of the evaluation fieldwork. The members of the Steering Committee should be clearly defined and associated with the formulation of Phase 2. The Steering Committee is a monitoring, guidance, and support body composed of multiple stakeholders and cannot be replaced by the CISTEMA.

3.4.1. EQ 10: WHAT ARE THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE PROJECT MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM? WHAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE THE WEAKNESSES OF THIS SYSTEM?

The project monitoring system is generally adequate, but its efficiency is not highly evident. COTECCO staff spend an inordinate amount of time gathering information to include in

⁴⁹ ILO Country Office for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo and Gabon

technical progress reports. This includes the details of meetings, workshop participants, and various other actions. The level of focus on reporting and associated stress levels are high for all the staff. The amount of time that all the staff spend on monitoring and evaluation tends to interfere with the ability to implement actual project actions. Increasing staffing levels, reorganizing data gathering so that it is more streamlined throughout the reporting period, and improving the efficiency of digital data systems can help to alleviate some of the stress.

While the content of the CMEP was appreciated, its development was seen as too extensive and interfered with the timely launching of project activities. Evaluation interviewees commented that taking nine months to complete the process and receive permission to start actions was too long. Suggestions were made to develop the CMEP, or its equivalent, before launching the project or as a part of a well-defined project inception period. This would make it easier to manage the expectations of the stakeholders, who expect to see a project engage in concrete actions as soon as possible.

A review of the project indicators and targets does indicate that it is difficult to clearly differentiate results in reporting. As stated in Section 3.2, the outcomes and outputs tend to overlap a great deal, especially for Outcomes 2 and 3 and their associated outputs. Some capacity strengthening workshops may, for example, include stakeholders from different entities even if they would need to be reported separately under these two outcomes. The same issues that affect COTECCO coherence thus also influence its monitoring and evaluation.

Unfortunately, there was also no midterm evaluation, largely due to the COVID-19 situation. This meant that it was difficult to obtain external independent guidance during an earlier project stage. It was also not possible for USDOL-ILAB staff to visit the COTECCO implementation provinces and obtain direct understanding of the successes and challenges.

Some senior government stakeholders noted that the different roles, responsibilities, and requirements of the ILO and USDOL were confusing and that they needed more clarification.

3.5. IMPACT

3.5.1. EQ 11: IS THERE ANY EVIDENCE THAT THE PROJECT'S ACTIONS HAVE SUPPORTED THE GOVERNMENT AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS' EFFORTS IN ADDRESSING CHILD LABOR IN THE COBALT SUPPLY CHAIN TO ENSURE A WIDER AND DEEPER IMPACT BEYOND THE PROJECT ITSELF?

At this stage in the project cycle, it is difficult to clearly indicate the actual impact of COTECCO on addressing child labor in the cobalt supply chain; that is, if impact were to be measured as a reduction in the number of children working in the cobalt supply chain. Nevertheless, there has been much evidence of the strengthened capacities of COTECCO stakeholders, the development of strategies and roadmaps. These are likely to have a broader and deeper impact beyond the project itself.

Persons having benefitted from training, coordination support, interactive meetings, mentoring, and awareness raising easily noted the added benefit, which they expect will have a wider impact.

3.6. SUSTAINABILITY

3.6.1. EQ 12: TO WHAT EXTENT WILL THE EFFORTS UNDER OUTCOMES 2 AND 3 OF THE PROJECT BE SUSTAINED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND/OR OTHER STAKEHOLDERS? IS CLMS SUSTAINABLE? IF SO, WHICH STAKEHOLDERS ARE CRUCIAL TO ENSURING ITS SUSTAINABILITY?

The project sustainability is highly dependent on the ability of COTECCO stakeholders to implement the strategies, roadmaps and the CLMRS. The main challenge that evaluation interviewees insisted on was the need for financial and logistics support to implement their strategies, roadmaps, and develop the CLMRS, including direct actions in cobalt mining communities.

Unfortunately, it is not possible at this time to ascertain whether the CLMRS will be sustainable, because it is still in the early stages of development. The contract with the consultant who has the primary responsibility for the development of the system and its tools was not yet finalized at the time of the evaluation fieldwork.

While all stakeholders are crucial to ensuring sustainability, it is evident that the government has the most important role. With the government holding primary responsibility for its citizens, it is fundamental to achieving long-term results. As the most immediately accountable entities, the ministries related to social affairs and humanitarian action; mining; and employment, labor and social protection will be key in this regard. However, other ministries including planning, education, health, and others will also be key. Participants in the evaluation's preliminary results workshop reiterated the need to increase the government's role and coordination publicly.

Naturally the role of the private sector, including workers' and employers' organizations, and national civil society organizations/NGOs remain important. Development partners, including international NGOs and donors, will also need to provide material, financial and/or technical inputs through at least the medium term.

One key stakeholder also stressed the importance of continued pressure from the international community, the general public in DRC and internationally to eliminate child labor in the cobalt supply chain. They stated that it is only with such advocacy that real change will occur.

Several stakeholders mentioned that they understand very well that the COTECCO project cannot be eternal. They added that substantially more time is needed to arrive at a stage where actions on child labor in cobalt mining elimination are sustainable. In particular, comments were made about the need to have a fully functional CLMRS with the inclusion of agreed-upon remediation processes for children at risk of or engaged in cobalt mining work. While several agencies are already engaged in remediation actions, different approaches are being used that need to feed into a national child protection system.

Interestingly, stakeholders commonly agreed that coordination of the direct actions in the communities is still needed. So, while the organization and/or strengthening of the stakeholders into groups has progressed, the focus has been more on the internal functioning of such groups. The major gap is the perception that the coordination of the actual work in the communities is too limited and still disorganized.

Sustainability is also very dependent on a large range of contextual issues that need to be addressed. This is a point that was commonly mentioned by evaluation interviewees. As already stated in previous sections, major gaps in the enabling environment and in local service provision remain. These need to be addressed for real progress to be made.

In addition, broader issues related to internal and international migration to and from mining sites, lawlessness in certain mining areas, and land management also need consideration.

Without available social and economic services, the sustainability of COTECCO initiatives will just remain in the knowledge and skills that participants have acquired from the capacity strengthening actions, without practical application. As so many evaluation interviewees stressed, these are the major bottlenecks that need to be addressed.

4. LESSONS LEARNED AND PROMISING PRACTICES

4.1. LESSONS LEARNED

1. Adequate time should be allocated for any systems-building project like COTECCO, and planning should include a risk analysis that reflects this. Over the years it has become more and more apparent that project planners underestimate the amount of time that systems building takes. Of course, no amount of risk analysis could predict the COVID-19 pandemic; regardless, even without COVID-19, the time needed for systems building is frequently underestimated.⁵⁰ The systems building has at least two main components: capacity strengthening and the establishment and good functioning of decision-making networks.
2. The systems-building has at least two main components: capacity strengthening and the establishment and good functioning of decision-making networks. While training is one part of capacity strengthening, mentoring and other follow up are essential for effectiveness. More importantly, it is evident that the establishment and/or strengthening of working groups takes time. Working groups are composed of individuals, which means that relationships need to be built. Also, unfortunately, participating entities do not always send their decision-makers to working group meetings, nor do they always send the same person. As a result, time is lost on reintroducing subjects and content during meetings. Without decision-makers present in the meetings, much time is needed for follow up with the participating entities to ensure that decisions are adopted and implemented. Demanding that the right person attends is one solution, but it is often found that such demands cannot be forced. Overall, it is important to consider that adequate time is allocated for systems building in the case of a project similar to COTECCO.
3. Project staffing needs to be realistic, as well as adapted and increased if that is found necessary during implementation. In any good management process, attention needs to be paid to process as well as results. Effectiveness and efficiency are improved if staffing levels are adequate. Staff also have a right to reasonable working hours, even if overtime is sometimes justified and necessary. At least one more technical specialist is needed in the decentralized project office in Lualaba, preferably with a specialization in data systems development for the CLMRS and to provide additional support for the project data M&E reporting.
4. If a systems-building project is headquartered outside the capital, a permanent staff member at national level is still needed. However, this does not need to be the Project Director but should be a well-recognized specialist.

4.2. PROMISING PRACTICES

1. The development of the awareness-raising song and sketch (short video) about child labor in cobalt mining, using known musicians and actors, is a promising practice. It can be promoted and shared in the media, in communities, and during capacity strengthening workshops and meetings. The content and style are culturally very appropriate to the local

⁵⁰ E.g., as the evaluator noted in several other systems building-oriented projects, such as the most recently evaluated ARCHIPELAGO program. Zegers, M, Henard, F. & Martins Salla, F.O. (2022) Mid-term Evaluation of the ARCHIPELAGO program: an African-European TVET Initiative Brussels: TiEG. Note: The Archipelago Technical and Vocation Education and Training program is funded by the European Union and is carried through 20 projects in nine African countries.

context. The catchy song and sketch style can be replicated and scaled up in other settings in the DRC.

2. Conducting a substantial number of well targeted research studies is useful. Research is often seen as peripheral to projects or serving to measure progress. The COTECCO-supported studies approach the subject of child labor in the cobalt mining value chain from different angles and, when linked together, can inform the ways forward. They provide a good basis for understanding the local realities, mapping actors, and developing strategies, suitable advocacy and communications methods. Additional research in related subjects would still be useful, while some research will need to be updated on a regular basis. In particular, this applies in the case of mapping of mining locations and actors working on the elimination of child labor in the cobalt supply chain.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The COTECCO project has overall made good progress towards its goal to “strengthen efforts by the Congolese Government and other relevant stakeholders in addressing CL in the cobalt supply chains in the DRC.” There remains a great deal more to be done to strengthen capacities and networks in order to build an effective, integrated system to contribute to the DRC Government’s goal of zero child labor in the cobalt supply chain.

5.1. RELEVANCE AND COHERENCE

Prior to the launching of COTECCO, a lack of coherent and appropriate coordination and limited capacities impeded the achievement of strong results to eliminate child labor in cobalt mining. The COTECCO project was conceived to address these challenges. The COTECCO project strategies and resulting activities are highly relevant to the specific needs of project participants, communities, and other stakeholders. The project design was suitable overall to contribute to its overall goal and reach its objectives. The COTECCO design was, nevertheless, overly ambitious regarding its limited timeframe and staff allocation. Increasing the quantity and scope of existing project approaches to reinforce the theory of change and original outcomes would have been useful.

There are many gaps that still need to be addressed to eliminate child labor in the cobalt supply chain. However, these were not part of the originally planned project goals and design, which focus on capacity and institution strengthening and coordination. The project was not expected to carry out direct actions in communities. Evaluation interviewees frequently stressed the need to address these broader contextual challenges and said that they should have been more involved in the very first project design.

Commonly stated gaps included:

- Direct actions to withdraw and prevent child labor in cobalt mining,
- The need to include additional focus on children in other forms of child labor in and near the cobalt mining locations,
- Actions to address the root causes of child labor, including poverty reduction actions and improved access to quality general and technical vocational and skills training. Available TVEST courses are limited and often not innovative enough to attract learners to acquire knowledge and skills to increase their employability in line with the changing labor market.

While intended to enable solid results-based management, the project design was not highly conducive to achieving internal coherence. To enable adequate planning, monitoring, and evaluation the project initiative had been divided into three outcomes with separate sub-outcomes and related outputs. However, the different outcomes are somewhat artificially separated into individual categories, instead of showing how they are synergistic to achieve well-integrated results. In practice, the project did work to establish linkages between the different components and the various stakeholders. Some interviewees were, however, still highly concentrated on the different outcomes and outputs and had limited understanding of how all the parts fit together to build a child labor elimination system.⁵¹ An approach to more openly and clearly focus on an integrated methodology to establish a unified system would

⁵¹ Please note that this system is separate from the CLMS and refers to a larger and more encompassing system to address child labor in the cobalt mining value chain.

have been advisable; that is, a system to network across and among all key stakeholders and actions to end child labor in cobalt mining.

The project has initiated and coordinated with other donor-funded projects, private sector initiatives, and other interventions led by national stakeholders. The linkages between these technical partners are increasing as the project has become more anchored in the provinces and as there is focus on the development of the CLMRS. There is still a great deal of scope to expand and continue this coordination further, especially with other donor-funded projects and international agencies. Strong focus is especially needed to ensure linkages and synergies with the ADB-funded PABEA-Cobalt project and the BMZ-funded project on the provision of services to address child labor in cobalt mining.

5.2. EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

The COTECCO project has been successfully effective in multiple areas as a result of quality capacity strengthening workshops and the establishment and/or strengthening of working groups among stakeholders. Stakeholders from government, the private sector, civil society, technical project implementers, and other development partners have all been associated. Good quality research has been carried out. These actions have led to some positive results with regard to capacity and institution building. However, integrating the findings of the research to improve the orientation of efforts to eliminate child labor in cobalt mining is still needed.

COTECCO faced various contextual challenges that affected its effectiveness and efficiency. These included first and foremost the COVID-19 pandemic which impeded the highly important direct personal interactions that are essential to developing a project so highly focused on the strengthening of networks.

Additionally, the turnover of personnel, including within the government, affected the advancement of aims such as the establishment of functional provincial-level CISTEMA. Evaluation interviewees commonly stated that provincial CISTEMA are essential for sustainable actions on child labor in the cobalt mining supply chain. Of course, it is recognized that no development project can be held responsible for the establishment of such government-mandated bodies. Supporting and strengthening provincial CISTEMA were, nevertheless, important project intentions that could not be achieved.

The project is initiating very interesting awareness-raising methods such as catchy songs and lively sketches and intends to develop further capacities such as through the ILO SCREAM⁵² modules. Evaluation interviewees cited awareness raising as one of the most common subjects, specifying the positive results but also the need for greater attention to it. For real change to occur, the evaluation also finds that additional focus is needed on real social behavior change using appropriate methods rooted in the local culture.

The development of the CLMRS is in the early stages, so it is difficult for the evaluation to assess its quality. Though training on the development of a CLMRS has been provided, the evaluation found that there is still some confusion about the role and functioning of the CLMRS among several stakeholders. This may be in part because not all stakeholders have yet been trained. There is a perception that the CLMRS is largely comprised of a database on child labor, whereas it is more than that. There is a need to ensure greater clarity on the referral and

⁵² ILO (2022), SCREAM: Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media. Available from <https://www.ilo.org/ipecc/Campaignandadvocacy/Scream/lang-en/index.htm>

remediation component of the CLMRS and a need to include all stakeholders in its implementation.

Stakeholders identified the lack of decent work opportunities for older children and adults as a main gap that needs to be addressed. Available TVEST courses are limited and often not innovative enough to attract learners to acquire knowledge and skills with employability potential in line with the changing labor market.

The evaluation interviewees and research documents stress the strong need to place greater consideration on the fact that there are other forms of child labor in and around mining areas that are not directly found in cobalt mining itself. While the project staff indicated that COTECCO also covers forms of child labor in and around the mining areas that are not directly in mining, the perception of evaluation interviews was that this is either not the case or only to a limited extent. Children may move from hazardous work in the local area to working in the mines. There is also the possibility that children withdrawn from the mines start engaging in other hazardous work in the area.

The evaluation finds that, though the project did include attention to gender issues in its training and research content, specific work to address such issues has still been limited. Though the project was not expected to engage in direct actions to withdraw children from child labor, as part of planning for future initiatives it will be important to consider such aspects. The situation of girls and boys each have their own context and challenges which require attention, particularly as they may be affected by multiple forms of exploitation, abuse and neglect. This also includes attention to female adults whose situation in and around the mines is often precarious, with particular impact on their children who may be just next to their work site or in the mines.

Another aspect that the evaluation found which requires more attention is the specific vulnerabilities of other categories of children. This includes children with disabilities, who several evaluation interviewees noted are more likely to be exploited if they are physically able to work. Other vulnerable groups are orphans and children in households affected by HIV.

Insufficient project staffing contributed to the project's challenge to achieving all its outcomes within the originally expected timeframe. With staff time highly consumed by complex administrative processes and financial disbursement as well as reporting, there was often too little time to focus on the needed personal follow up and mentoring. Non-project evaluation interviewees commonly cited the need for more personal interactions for strengthening coordination as opposed to relying on digital communications.

5.3. SUSTAINABILITY

Project sustainability is highly dependent on the ability of COTECCO stakeholders to implement the strategies, roadmaps and the CLMRS that is still under development. Evaluation interviewees insisted on the need for financial and logistical support so that they can actually implement their strategies and roadmaps. Likewise, they indicated that they would need financial support to engage in the identification, referral and withdrawal of children from child labor in cobalt mining communities. The evaluation identified a notable dependence on external funding to meet these needs.

While all stakeholders are crucial to ensuring sustainability, it is evident that the government has the most important role. With the government holding primary responsibility for its citizens, it is fundamental to achieving long-term results. Naturally the role of the private sector, including workers' and employers' organizations, and national civil society

organizations/NGOs remain important for long-term sustainability. Development partners, including international NGOs and donors, will also need to provide material, financial and/or technical inputs through at least the medium term. However, resources from actors in government and the private sector will also need to increase allocations and/or target child labor in the cobalt mining value chain directly.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 4. Recommendations and Supporting Evidence

Recommendation	Evidence	Page Numbers	Key Responsible Actors
<p>(1) Clearly involve the key stakeholders identified through COTECCO in the design and development of a project extension, and a possible future phase of the project or another project aimed at achieving the DRC Government’s goal of zero child labor in the cobalt supply chain.</p> <p>Many of the key stakeholders at planning and implementation level have been trained and their capacities have been strengthened through COTECCO. The associated COTECCO stakeholders now expect to contribute to the design from its earliest stages. During implementation, cobalt mining communities, including children themselves, should also be associated with determining and implementing the most relevant actions.</p> <p>Add a project Steering Committee that is intended as a monitoring and support body, not as a governing/decision-making committee that adds an additional bureaucratic level. The members of the Steering Committee should be clearly defined and also associated with the formulation of Phase 2. The Steering Committee is a monitoring, guidance, and support body composed of multiple stakeholders and cannot be replaced by the CISTEMA.</p>	<p>Stakeholders indicated that they had insufficiently been consulted in the original project proposal design. Going forward they insisted that they should be more involved from the earliest conceptual stage.</p>	<p>Section 3.1.1 p. 17</p>	<p>USDOL, ILO, Other donor agencies</p>
<p>(2) Increase advocacy with decision-makers for the approval of and the official establishment of provincial CISTEMA. Once established, COTECCO can conduct a capacity needs assessment and provide the needed strengthening inputs. A continuous monitoring and technical mentoring of the provincial CISTEMA would be essential.</p>	<p>Evaluation interviewees repeatedly mentioned that the establishment of functional provincial-level CISTEMA is essential for sustainable actions to achieve the DRC Government’s goal of zero child labor in cobalt mining.</p>	<p>Section 3.3.5 p. 34</p>	<p>Government, COTECCO and its stakeholders</p>

Recommendation	Evidence	Page Numbers	Key Responsible Actors
<p>(3) Increase focus on social behavior change communications and go beyond awareness raising. Incorporate and scale up additional direct and culturally rooted social and behavior change communications.⁵³ Include a strong role and support for journalists to produce media information about child labor in cobalt mining.</p>	<p>For real change to occur, the evaluation finds that additional focus is needed on real behavior change using appropriate methods.</p>	<p>Section 3.3.1 Output 1.2.1 p. 23</p>	<p>All participating action implementation actors</p>

⁵³ Center for Social and Behaviour Change Communications. Communication for Change. Available from <https://www.centreforsbcc.org/what-is-sbcc/>

Recommendation	Evidence	Page Numbers	Key Responsible Actors
<p>(4) Implement a more overt systems building approach, indicating how all the different institutional and capacity strengthening, CLMRS development and other COTECCO components are integrated. A strong systems approach will contribute to increased sustainability over the long term.</p> <p>(A) Expand and continue coordination further, especially with other donor-funded projects and international agencies. For effective systems functioning, promote the participation of decision-makers in all meetings on capacity strengthening workshops. Where this is not possible, ensure that organizations/groups have a specified method in place to share information with hierarchical decision-makers.</p> <p>(B) Prepare and use a synthesis report based on all COTECCO-supported research with other information and data on situational analysis and service gaps. Use the synthesis to inform the institutional systems-building process towards the achievement of the DRC Government's goal of zero child labor in cobalt mining.</p> <p>(C) Include special attention to identify the way for COTECCO to effectively link directly with the BMZ-funded project. Consider placing the main project office for the two projects in the same building to enable daily close collaboration. Increase focus on coordination and the establishment of synergies with the ADB-funded PABEA-Cobalt project.</p>	<p>Evidence of the need to further integrate COTECCO's project components is derived from the actual project design. COTECCO is oriented towards capacity strengthening, networking and strengthening the implementation of coordination mechanisms.</p> <p>A challenge remains regarding how to take all the information and use it in a practical way to drive the system building process to contribute more effectively toward the DRC Government's goal of zero child labor in cobalt mining. The existing studies are separate but their integration into a well-organized approach still needs further attention.</p>	<p>Section 3.2; Section 3.3.1 Output 3.2.3 p. 19, 29</p> <p>Section 3.2.1; Section 3.3.1 p. 20, 22</p>	<p>ILO</p>

Recommendation	Evidence	Page Numbers	Key Responsible Actors
<p>(5) Ensure that the functioning of the CLMRS is clarified to include referral systems and all stakeholders in planning, data gathering, remediation and follow up. Include more international support and exchanges for CLMRS development and its integration into a functioning child protection system.</p> <p>(A) Ensure focus is centered on the government as the primary responsible entity for sustainability reasons but include strong attention to the role of the private sector, civil society organizations/local NGOs, and international development partners.</p> <p>(B) Discuss with private sector working groups if and how they can include support for the CLMS remediation components as addenda into their roadmaps. Inputs could be made directly into supporting the CLMS implementation, including remediation.</p> <p>(C) Provide material and/or awards of recognition in the case of other private sector actors for their contribution to the CLMS process of identifying, referring, and ending child labor.</p> <p>(D) Increase resource allocation, including the provision of additional technical support from ILO headquarters and possible field visit of key DRC partners to a country with solid experience in this subject.⁵⁴</p>	<p>Despite the training provided, the evaluation found that there is still some confusion about the role and functioning of the CLMS. This includes a need for clarity on the referral and remediation component of the CLMS, as well as the need to include all stakeholders in its implementation.</p>	<p>Section 3.3.1 Sub-Outcome 2.3 p. 26</p> <p>Section 3.2; Section 3.3.1 Output 3.2.3; Section 3.3.3 p. 19, 29, 30</p>	<p>ILO, COTECCO, Government, All other stakeholders including working groups</p>

⁵⁴ E.g., Côte d'Ivoire

Recommendation	Evidence	Page Numbers	Key Responsible Actors
<p>(6) With input from the private sector, identify decent work labor (self-) employment opportunities in mining areas. Support the development of targeted training in the identified areas for older children with government and other vocational education and skills training providers.</p>	<p>Stakeholders identified the lack of decent work opportunities for older children and adults. There is limited choice in marketable technical and vocational training subjects. The limited alternate employment opportunities means that there are few options for older children and adults to access decent work opportunities that provide locally-perceived adequate incomes. As a result, they turn to work in the cobalt mines.</p>	<p>Section 3.1.1, 3.3.3 & 3.4 p. 17, 30, 36</p>	<p>Government, Private sector, ILO, Project partners, Donors, Future direct support to reduce child labor projects</p>
<p>(7) Develop and implement an Integrated Area-Based⁵⁵ approach in the cobalt mining localities. Nearby areas can be defined in agreement with the adjoining communities. Activities to ensure the ending of child labor in these localities could help ensure that child labor in the immediate area is addressed together with the mining sites.</p>	<p>Interviewees and documents stress the need to consider that there are other (non-mining) forms of child labor in and around mining areas. Currently children in such child labor are not addressed though there are risks in such child labor.</p>	<p>Section 3.3.4 p. 31</p>	<p>ILO, COTECCO, Government, Other project partners, Future programming</p>
<p>(8) Ensure full consideration of gender-related issues (including girls, boys, and women) and those of other vulnerable groups during CLMS development. Vulnerable groups, such as households affected by HIV, children with disabilities, and orphans also need special attention. Consider that boys can also be affected and targeted for abuse and particular types of exploitation. Ensure the consideration of the multiple issues (labor and other exploitation, abuse, and neglect) that children may face and address them holistically. Include participation in training, decision-making on issues that affect them, analyzing their specific challenges, and implementing specific actions that reduce those challenges.</p>	<p>Some of the evaluation interviewees had noted the importance of such groups. Note was made of children with disabilities who they said are more likely to be exploited if they are physically able to work despite being affected by deafness, epilepsy, albinism, or other issues.</p>	<p>Section 3.3.6 p. 34</p>	<p>DRC Government, COTECCO, Other projects and stakeholders</p>

⁵⁵ ILO (2013) Integrated Area-Based Approach as a Strategy for Child Labor Free Zones. Geneva: ILO. Available from http://www.oit.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--ed_mas/--eval/documents/publication/wcms_433047.pdf

Recommendation	Evidence	Page Numbers	Key Responsible Actors
<p>(9) Strengthen management structures and streamline administration and finance management.</p> <p>(A) Increase COTECCO staffing and allocate one staff member to an office based in Kinshasa to provide more frequent and intensive support from COTECCO with CISTEMA and provide advocacy support with the ministries, given the importance that the benefits are likely to be substantial. While it is recognized that this has additional financial and logistical implications, the investment is expected to lead to notably better results.</p> <p>At least one more technical specialist is needed at the decentralized project office in Lualaba, preferably with a specialization in data systems development for the CLMRS and to provide additional support for the project data M&E reporting.</p> <p>(B) Integrate the CMEP development into a well-defined “Inception Period” to better manage the expectations of the stakeholders.</p> <p>(C) Streamline slow administrative processing and financial disbursement policies. Solutions may include allocating adequate amounts of petty cash to cover routine project costs and provide allowable project-level disbursements to a reasonable specified amount.</p>	<p>Insufficiency of project staffing to achieve project goals within the timeframes. Interviewees cited the need for personal interactions for strengthening coordination as opposed to relying on digital communications.</p> <p>Country Offices stressed the importance of a Project Steering Committee.</p>	<p>Section 3.3.5 p. 34</p> <p>See Annex I for example of the roles and responsibilities of a Project Steering Committee</p> <p>Section 3.4 p. 36</p>	<p>Decision-makers on COTECCO management and staffing, especially ILO, USDOL</p> <p>ILO management, in consultation with USDOL</p>

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ANNEX B. EVALUATION ITINERARY

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ANNEX C. STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWEE LIST

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ANNEX D. STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP AGENDA AND PRIORITIZED RESULTS FROM SUB-GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Agenda and Preliminary Evaluation Results COTECCO

April 15 2022; Kolwezi-Lualaba Locality: Kampi Ya Boma

Time	Subject	Facilitator/Speaker
08:15-09:00	Arrival and registration of participants	
9:00-9:10	Welcome	Facilitator
9:10-9:20	Introduction	Chief Technical Adviser
9:20-9:30	Brief presentation of the COTECCO project	Chief Technical Adviser and Facilitator
9:30-9:40	Individual practical exercise on the successes and challenges of the COTECCO projet	Participants
9:40-10:40	Presentation of the preliminary évaluation results of the COTECCO project activities	Evaluation Consultants
10:40-12:00	Sub-group working activities	Participants
12:00-12:30	Plenary	Participants
12:30-13:00	Summary, closing remarks	Facilitator, Chief Technical Adviser, International Evaluation Consultant
13:00-14:00	Lunch	Participants

Results from Sub-Group Discussions

Prioritized Results by Sub-Group Discussions Preliminary Evaluation Results Workshop

Group	Main Successes	Main Challenges
Group I Government	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Synergy 2) Communication 3) Significant decrease of the presence of children in the mines 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Insufficient awareness 2) Sustainability of the project 3) Supervision and reintegration of beneficiaries 4) Lack of follow-up of the coordination activities 5) Reinforcement of measures to accompany the laws against child labor
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The project has brought all the stakeholders together 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) More interventions at the institutional level than at the community level

Group	Main Successes	Main Challenges
<p>Group II Civil Society Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2) The stakeholders have understood the project and have learned about the fight against child labor in the mines 3) Awareness is positively evolving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Actions are based on sensitization instead of poverty alleviation actions 3) Project is too overburdened with the implementation of project activities 4) Need to increase visits to the artisanal mining site 5) Restrictions in the coverage of the field of action 6) Each party involved in the project does not share its results with the others (lack of data sharing) 7) Weak government involvement in the project
<p>Group III Private Sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Opportunity to bring together industrialists and artisans around the same table to solve common problems 2) Capacity building through workshops 3) Collective awareness on the issue of children in the mines 4) Due diligence practices 5) Sharing of good practices of the working groups and experiences between different working groups 6) Conflict resolution between stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) No financial support of the actors of implementation 2) Lack of communication in the dissemination of our activities to certain companies and cooperatives 3) Lack of coordination in the implementation of the project 4) Need for identification and census of children working in the mines 5) Need for total involvement of the government (CISTEMA) 6) Lack of school infrastructure and training centers
<p>Group IV Technical Implementation Partners Group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Implementation of the COTECCO project in the province 2) Lualaba and Haut Katanga provinces supported 3) An increased understanding of the issue of child labor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Unavailability of artisanal mining areas for mining cooperatives 2) The fact of not intervening in the support for implementation of operational solutions (community level withdrawal and prevention) 3) No concrete activities on child beneficiaries (Communities) 4) Lack of time to allow project activities to produce sustainable results
<p>Group V COTECCO Staff Group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Good understanding of child labor issues 2) Establishment of Mining Partners Group 3) Training with added value 4) Participation of the Provincial Government in the activities 5) Active and active awareness raising 6) Coordination of Private Sector Groups 7) Growing interest of partners in the fight against child labor 8) Involvement of journalists 9) Inclusiveness of the actors in the struggle including labor unions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Weak availability of care and support services (for children and their families). Lethargy among the state service providers. 2) Weak appropriation by the Government of the partners' contributions 3) Operationalization of the Coordination Units of the Government's fight 4) COVID 19 5) Weak information sharing among partners 6) Need for CISTEMA at provincial level 7) Lack of decision-making power of participants who attended training and meetings. (Persons are deputed

Group	Main Successes	Main Challenges
	10) Identification of capacity building needs	to attend who are not the entity's decision-makers)

ANNEX E. TERMS OF REFERENCE

FINAL EVALUATION

**COMBATTING CHILD LABOR IN THE
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO'S
COBALT INDUSTRY (COTECCO)**

SUBMITTED TO

United States Department of Labor
Bureau of International Labor Affairs
200 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20210
www.dol.gov/ilab

PREPARED BY

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1. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

The Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT) is an office within the Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB), an agency of the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL). ILAB's mission is to promote a fair global playing field for workers in the United States and around the world by enforcing trade commitments, strengthening labor standards, and combating international child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking.

OCFT works to combat child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking around the world through international research, policy engagement, technical cooperation, and awareness-raising. Since OCFT's technical cooperation program began in 1995, the U.S. Congress has appropriated funds annually to USDOL for efforts to combat exploitive child labor internationally. This funding has been used to support technical cooperation projects in more than 90 countries around the world. Technical cooperation projects funded by USDOL support sustained efforts that address child labor and forced labor's underlying causes, including poverty and lack of access to education.

This evaluation approach will be in accordance with USDOL's Evaluation Policy⁵⁶. OCFT is committed to using the most rigorous methods applicable for this qualitative performance evaluation and to learning from the evaluation results. The evaluation will be conducted by an independent third party and in an ethical manner and safeguard the dignity, rights, safety and privacy of participants. The quality standards underlying this evaluation are: Relevance, Coherence (to the extent possible), Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact (to the extent possible), and Sustainability.⁵⁷ In conducting this evaluation, the evaluator will strive to uphold the American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles for Evaluators.⁵⁸ OCFT will make the evaluation report available and accessible on its website.

PROJECT CONTEXT⁵⁹

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has extraordinary mineral reserves, valued at \$24 trillion.⁶⁰ Although large scale mining (LSM) operations - both private and state-run - contribute to exports of copper, cobalt and gold, the majority (80%) of minerals are a product of the rudimentary tools and manual labor that are the hallmark of the ASM sector.^{61,62} More than 60% of the world's cobalt comes from the DRC,⁶³ and it is estimated that at least 20% is

⁵⁶ For more information on DOL's Evaluation Policy, please visit <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/evaluationpolicy.htm>

⁵⁷ From Better Criteria for Better Evaluation: Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use by the Organization for Economic Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) Network on Development Evaluation. DOL determined these criteria are in accordance with the OMB Guidance M-20-12. For more information, please visit: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf>

⁵⁸ For more information on the American Evaluation Association's Guiding Principles, please visit: <https://www.eval.org/p/cm/ld/fid=51>

⁵⁹ Adapted from the COTECCO Revised Project Document and July 2021 CMEP

⁶⁰ Engineering & Mining Journal. February 2014. Mining in Africa's Copperbelt. http://gbreports.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/CopperBelt_Mining2014.pdf

⁶¹ Pact. 2010. Promines Study: Artisanal Mining in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

<http://www.congomines.org/system/attachments/assets/000/000/349/original/PACT-2010-ProminesStudyArtisanalMiningDRC.pdf?1430928581>

⁶² KPCJ D'Souza. 2007. Artisanal Mining in the DRC (Key Issues, Challenges and Opportunities). <http://www.eisourcebook.org/cms/Feb%202013/DRC%20Artisanal%20Mining,%20Key%20Issues,%20Challenges%20&%20Opportunities.pdf>

⁶³ Darton Commodities Ltd. 2017. Cobalt Market Review. <http://www.dartoncommodities.co.uk/cobalt/>

derived from artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM). Given the dramatic increase in global demand for cobalt – notably for batteries, electric vehicles, medical equipment, renewable energy and other new technologies – and the precariousness of socio-economic conditions in mining communities, cobalt ASM has become a lucrative livelihood for mining communities’ populations and the large number of unemployed youth who lack alternative means of support.

Child labor (CL) occurs across nearly all ASM supply chain operations in the DRC, ranking the country fourth on Maplecroft’s Modern Slavery Index.⁶⁴ The lack of a government database and reliable monitoring system tracking children’s presence and labor in mining sites, impairs the acquisition of accurate data on CL in mining. UNICEF estimates that there may be as many as 40,000 children working in copper and cobalt mines in the DRC,⁶⁵ with at least 4,000 in Kolwezi alone.⁶⁶ These estimates, however, vary widely from one source to another. A more recent assessment put that figure at just under 5,000 children working in the Copperbelt.⁶⁷

Working conditions in the DRC’s ASM mines, including the cobalt mines, are frequently very poor. Many children employed in these mines work more than eight hours per day⁶⁸ and are involved in dangerous, labor-intensive practices, such as digging (including underground), crushing rocks, washing minerals, and carrying heavy loads of ore, waste, or water. Children also act as petty traders, selling the miners water and food. Often, this service introduces children to the practice of hand-picking minerals and facilitates their entry into mining work. When they are not directly involved in ASM activities, children’s engagement in the provision of indirect services (food, sex, etc.) is considered part of CL or other types of human violations tarnishing the minerals supply chains.

The Government of DRC (GoDRC) does not have reliable tools or mechanisms in place to provide accurate data on CL in the mining sector, nor does it have a system in place to address CL in an appropriate and practical manners that bring about results. However, the DRC has ratified number of the International Labor Organization (ILO)’s conventions on child labor: C-138 on minimum age for employment and C-182 on Worst Forms of Child Labor. A national action plan was developed in 2011 by the National Committee against worst forms of child labor in the DRC, but hasn’t been validated. In order to tackle the prevalence of child labor in the mining sector, the GoDRC created the Interministerial Commission in charge of monitoring of child labor in artisanal mining sites and mining sites in the DRC. The Commission published a triennial action plan to monitor child labor in artisanal mining sites (2017-2020) and developed a sectoral strategy to address the issue and improve the blemished sector. Despite the efforts by the GoDRC and its partners in eradicating child labor, scourge continues to attract significant attention at the national and international level.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ <https://maplecroft.com/portfolio/new-analysis/2016/08/12/modern-slavery-rife-58-countries-china-india-among-25-economies-posing-extreme-supply-chain-risks-global-index/>

⁶⁵ UNICEF. 2012. The State of the World’s Children 2012: Children in an Urban World.

⁶⁶ Amnesty International. 2016. “This is what we die for: Human rights abuses in the Democratic Republic of the Congo power the global trade in cobalt.” <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr62/3183/2016/en/>

⁶⁷ B. Faber, B. Krause, & R.S. De La Sierra. 2017. Artisanal Mining, Livelihoods, and Child Labor in the Cobalt Supply Chain of the Democratic Republic of Congo. http://cega.berkeley.edu/assets/cega_research_projects/179/CEGA_Report_v2.pdf

⁶⁸ Hahn, Hayes, & Kacapor 2013.

⁶⁹ Amnesty International. 2016. “This is what we die for:” Human rights abuses in the Democratic Republic of the Congo power the global trade in cobalt. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr62/3183/2016/en/>

PROJECT SPECIFIC INFORMATION

On October 2018, in support of DRC Government's efforts in combating CL, the United States Department of Labor's (USDOL) Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking (OCFT) awarded the "Combatting Child Labor in Cobalt Supply Chain" (COTECCO) project to the International Labor Organization (ILO). This US\$2,500,000 project aims at strengthening the efforts of the GoDRC (central and provincial) and other key stakeholders to combat child labor in the cobalt supply chain. This capacity building project is executed in the provinces of Lualaba and Haut Katanga by the ILO team in collaboration with Pact, ILO's sub-grantee, for a period of three years. In the province of Lualaba, the project is implemented in the following areas: the city of Kolwezi. In the Haut-Katanga Province, the project will be circumscribed in Likasi (namely in Kambove) area, including Lubumabshi and Kipushi.

COTECCO's project-level objective is "to strengthen efforts by the Congolese government and other relevant stakeholders in addressing CL in the cobalt supply chains in the DRC." To achieve this objective, the project has established the following outcomes and sub-outcomes:

Outcome 1: Increased common understanding of the challenges and opportunities for addressing child labor in the DRC's cobalt industry

Sub-Outcome 1.1: Key actors are informed on gaps and barriers to combat CL

Sub-Outcome 1.2: Increased awareness of stakeholders on opportunities to address child labor

Outcome 2: Increased capacity of government and other relevant stakeholders to address child labor in the DRC's cobalt industry

Sub-Outcome 2.1: Knowledge of stakeholders to address child labor are improved

Sub-Outcome 2.2: Coordination between key actors is improved

Sub-Outcome 2.3: Child Labor Monitoring System is implemented by the DRC Government

Outcome 3: Improved monitoring and remediation efforts by private sector of child labor in the cobalt supply chain.

Sub-Outcome 3.1: Increased skills of private sector actors on monitoring and remediating Child Labor

Sub-Outcome 3.2: Private sector coordination in monitoring and remediation is improved

In order to ensure effective results and broad coordination among all actors involved in the fight against child labor in mining and avoid duplication, COTECCO is working with stakeholders whose activities relate to the prevention, protection and relief of children in mining sites. They include the government agencies, private sector (including mining companies and cooperatives), civil society organizations, local community-based organizations, mining trade unions, unions, and traditional authorities.

In December 2020, DOL awarded a 10-month cost extension to ILO, bringing the project implementation duration to three year and ten months. The US\$1,000,000 additional funds will expand the outcome 2 with a new sub-outcome 2.3 to design and endow the DRC Government and key actors with a tested CL monitoring system in the mining sector.

2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF EVALUATION

The purpose of final performance evaluations covered under this contract includes, but may not be limited to, the following:

- Assessing if the project has achieved its objectives and outcomes, identifying the challenges encountered in doing so, and analyzing the driving factors for these challenges;
- Assessing the intended and unintended effects of the project;
- Assessing lessons learned and emerging practices from the project (e.g., strategies and models of intervention) and experiences in implementation that can be applied in current or future projects in the focus country(ies) and in projects designed under similar conditions or target sectors; and
- Assessing which outcomes or outputs can be deemed sustainable.

INTENDED USERS

The evaluation will provide OCFT, the grantee, other project stakeholders, and stakeholders working to combat child labor more broadly, an assessment of the project's performance, its effects on project participants, and an understanding of the factors driving the project results. The evaluation results, conclusions and recommendations will serve to inform any project adjustments that may need to be made, and to inform stakeholders in the design and implementation of subsequent phases or future child labor elimination projects as appropriate. The evaluation report will be published on the USDOL website, so the report should be written as a standalone document, providing the necessary background information for readers who are unfamiliar with the details of the project.

3. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Below are specific focus areas that need to be addressed during the evaluation process. These should be discussed with the evaluator and incorporated into questions as needed.

All questions should be organized under the following OECD Evaluation categories:

- Design relevancy and validity,
- Coherence,
- Efficiency,
- Effectiveness,
- Impact
- Sustainability

FINAL EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

RELEVANCE

1. Were the project strategies and resulting activities relevant to the specific needs of project participants, communities, and other stakeholders? What additional activities could have provided additional reinforcement of the project theory of change and outcomes?

2. To what extent was the project's approach appropriate to achieving its objectives?

COHERENCE

3. To what extent has the project coordinated and established links with other donor-funded projects, private sector initiatives, or other interventions led by national stakeholders?

EFFECTIVENESS

4. Is the project on track to meet its targets/objectives? What are the factors driving and/or hindering results so far?
5. How did the project's stakeholders perceive the efforts undertaken to address child labor in the cobalt supply chain? And what are the challenges to solving the problem?
6. How can the project's work on CLMS be strengthened to effectively reduce child labor in the cobalt sector and to set the foundation for scaling the CLMS up nationally?
7. How could monitoring and remediation efforts by the private sector of child labor in cobalt be improved?
8. How can the project assist CISTEMA in operationalizing coordination amongst the relevant Ministries at the national and provincial levels?
9. To what extent have gender and equity dimensions been considered?

EFFICIENCY

10. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the project monitoring and evaluation system? What can be done to improve the weaknesses of this system?

IMPACT

11. Is there any evidence that the project's actions have supported the Government and other stakeholders' efforts in addressing child labor in the cobalt supply chain to ensure a wider and deeper impact beyond the project itself?

SUSTAINABILITY

12. To what extent will the efforts under Outcomes 2 and 3 of the project be sustained by the Government and/or other stakeholders? Is CLMS sustainable? If so, which stakeholders are crucial to ensuring its sustainability?

4. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND TIMEFRAME

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

A. APPROACH

The evaluation approach will be qualitative and participatory in nature, and use project documents including CMEP data to provide quantitative information. Qualitative information will be obtained through field visits, interviews and focus groups as appropriate. Opinions coming from stakeholders and project participants will improve and clarify the use of quantitative analysis. The participatory nature of the evaluation will contribute to the sense of ownership among stakeholders and project participants.

ALL EVALUATIONS SHOULD:

- Identify which interventions are most effective at producing the desired outcomes.
- Identify which outcomes and, where applicable, which outputs have the greatest likelihood of being sustained after donor funding ends.
- Objectively rate the level of achievement of each of the project’s major outcomes on a four-point scale (low, moderate, above-moderate, and high).
- As relevant during final evaluations, should assess whether the results from the RDQA were used by the project to formulate and implement measures to strengthen their data management and reporting system and improve data quality.
- Include evaluator activity to review CMEP data with grantee.

To the extent that it is available, quantitative data will be drawn from the CMEP and project reports and incorporated in the analysis. In particular, project monitoring data shall be triangulated with relevant quantitative or qualitative data collected during fieldwork, in order to objectively rate the level of achievement of each of the project’s major outcomes on a four-point scale (low, moderate, above-moderate, and high).

The evaluation approach will be independent in terms of the membership of the evaluation team. Project staff and implementing partners will generally only be present in meetings with stakeholders, communities, and beneficiaries to provide introductions. The following additional principles will be applied during the evaluation process:

1. Methods of data collection and stakeholder perspectives will be triangulated for as many as possible of the evaluation questions.
2. Efforts will be made to include parents’ and children’s voices and beneficiary participation generally, using child-sensitive approaches to interviewing children following the ILO-IPEC guidelines on research with children on the worst forms of child labor⁷⁰ and UNICEF Principles for Ethical Reporting on Children.⁷¹
3. Gender and cultural sensitivity will be integrated in the evaluation approach.
4. Consultations will incorporate a degree of flexibility to maintain a sense of ownership of the stakeholders and beneficiaries, allowing additional questions to be posed that are not included in the TOR, whilst ensuring that key information requirements are met.
5. As far as possible, a consistent approach will be followed in each project site, with adjustments made for the different actors involved, activities conducted, and the progress of implementation in each locality.

B. EVALUATION TEAM

The evaluation team will consist of:

⁷⁰ <http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=3026>

⁷¹ <https://www.unicef.org/media/reporting-guidelines>

1. The lead evaluator
2. Country-level M&E consultant as determined under ILAB/OCFT contract award
3. As appropriate, an interpreter fluent in necessary languages will travel with the evaluator

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

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

The responsibility of the interpreter in each provincial locality is to ensure that the evaluation team is understood by the stakeholders as far as possible, and that the information gathered is relayed accurately to the evaluator. The interpreter should be impartial and independent from the grantee in order to mitigate potential bias.

C. DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY

1. DOCUMENT REVIEW

- Pre-field visit preparation includes extensive review of relevant documents
- During fieldwork, documentation will be verified and additional documents may be collected
- The evaluator shall also review the Routine Data Quality Assessment (RDQA) form completed by the grantee. The evaluator shall assess whether results from the RDQA were used by the project to formulate and implement measures to strengthen their data management and reporting system and improve data quality. The evaluator's analysis should be included in the evaluation report.
- The evaluator shall also review key CMEP outcome and OCFT Standard Output indicators with the grantee. This will include reviewing the indicator definitions in the CMEP's Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) and the reported values in the Technical Progress Report (TPR) Annex A to ensure the reporting is accurate and complete.
- Documents may include:
 - CMEP documents and data reported in Annex A of the TPR,
 - Routine Data Quality Assessment (RDQA) form as appropriate
 - Baseline and endline survey reports or pre-situational analyses,
 - Project document and revisions,
 - Project budget and revisions,
 - Financial Reports (FFRs)
 - Cooperative Agreement and project modifications,
 - Technical Progress and Status Reports,
 - Project Results Frameworks and Monitoring Plans,

- Original work plan and most current revised work plan,
- Correspondence related to Technical Progress Reports,
- Management Procedures and Guidelines,
- Research or other reports undertaken (KAP studies, etc.), and,
- Project files (including school records) as appropriate.

2. QUESTION MATRIX

Before beginning fieldwork, the evaluator will create a question matrix, which outlines the source of data from where the evaluator plans to collect information for each TOR question. This will help the evaluator make decisions as to how they are going to allocate their time in the field. It will also help the evaluator to ensure that they are exploring all possible avenues for data triangulation and to clearly note where their evaluation results are coming from. The Contractor will share the question matrix with USDOL.

3. INTERVIEWS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Informational interviews will be held with as many project stakeholders as possible. The evaluation team will solicit the opinions of, but not limited to: children, youth, community members in areas where awareness-raising activities occurred, parents of project participants, teachers, government representatives, employers and private-sector actors, legal authorities, union and NGO officials, the action program implementers, and program staff regarding the project's accomplishments, program design, sustainability, and the working relationship between project staff and their partners, where appropriate.

Depending on the circumstances, these meetings will be one-on-one or group interviews. Technically, stakeholders are all those who have an interest in a project, such as implementers, partners, direct and indirect participants, community leaders, donors, and government officials. Thus, it is anticipated that meetings will be held with:

- OCFT staff responsible for this evaluation and project prior to the commencement of the field work
- Implementers at all levels, including child labor monitors involved in assessing whether children have been effectively prevented or withdrawn from child labor situations
- Headquarters, Country Director, Project Managers, and Field Staff of Grantee and Partner Organizations
- Government Ministry Officials and Local Government Officials who have been involved in or are knowledgeable about the project
- Community leaders, members, and volunteers
- School teachers, assistants, school directors, education personnel
- Project participants (parents, youth, artisanal miners, etc.)
- International NGOs and multilateral agencies working in the area
- Other child protection and/or education organizations, committees and experts in the area
- U.S. Embassy staff members

4. FIELD VISITS

The evaluator will visit a selection of project sites. The final selection of field sites to be visited will be made by the evaluator. Every effort should be made to include some sites where the project experienced successes and others that encountered challenges, as well as a good cross section of sites across targeted CL sectors. During the visits, the evaluator will observe the activities and outputs developed by the project. Focus groups with project participants will

be held, and interviews will be conducted with representatives from local governments, NGOs, community leaders and teachers.

5. OUTCOME ACHIEVEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY RATINGS

The evaluator should objectively rate the level of achievement and potential for sustainability of each of the project's outcomes on a four-point scale (low, moderate, above-moderate, and high).

ACHIEVEMENT

"Achievement" measures the extent to which a development intervention or project attains its objectives/outcomes, as described in its performance monitoring plan (PMP).

For assessing the achievement of program or project outcomes, the evaluation team should consider the extent to which the objectives/outcomes were achieved and identify the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives/outcomes. The evaluation team should consider to what extent the project is likely to meet or exceed its targets by project end.

Project achievement ratings should be determined through triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data. The evaluation team should collect qualitative data from key informant interviews and focus group discussions through a structured data collection process, such as a survey or rapid scorecard. Interviews and focus groups can also provide context for the results reflected in the Data Reporting Form submitted with the Technical Progress Report (TPR). The evaluation team should also analyze quantitative data collected by the project on key performance indicators defined in the Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) and reported on in the TPR Data Reporting Form. The evaluation team should consider the reliability and validity of the performance indicators and the completeness and accuracy of the data collected. The assessment of quantitative data should consider the extent to which the project achieved its targets and whether these targets were sufficiently ambitious and achievable within the period evaluated. The evaluation team should assess each of the project's objective(s) and outcome(s) according to the following scale:

- **High:** met or exceeded most targets for the period evaluated, with mostly positive feedback from key stakeholders and participants.
- **Above-moderate:** met or exceeded most targets for the period evaluated, **but** with mostly neutral or negative feedback from key stakeholders and participants.
- **Moderate:** missed most targets for the period evaluated, **but** with mostly positive feedback from key stakeholders and participants.
- **Low:** missed most targets for the period evaluated, with mostly neutral or negative feedback from key stakeholders and participants.

SUSTAINABILITY

"Sustainability" is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. When evaluating the sustainability of a project, it is useful to consider the likelihood that the benefits or effects of a particular output or outcome will continue after donor funding ends. It also important to consider the extent to which the project takes into account the actors, factors, and institutions that are likely to have the strongest influence over, capacity, and willingness to sustain the desired outcomes and impacts. Indicators of sustainability could include agreements/linkages with local partners, stakeholder engagement in project sustainability planning, and successful handover of project activities or key outputs to local partners before project end, among others.

The project's Sustainability Plan (including the associated indicators) and TPRs (including the attachments) are key (but not the only) sources for determining its rating. The evaluation team should assess each of the project's objective(s) and outcome(s) according to the following scale:

- **High:** strong likelihood that the benefits of project activities will continue after donor funding is withdrawn and the necessary resources ⁷² are in place to ensure sustainability;
- **Above-moderate:** above average likelihood that the benefits of project activities will continue after donor funding is withdrawn and the necessary resources are identified but not yet committed;
- **Moderate:** some likelihood that the benefits of project activities will continue after donor funding is withdrawn and some of the necessary resources are identified;
- **Low:** weak likelihood that the benefits of project activities will continue after donor funding is withdrawn and the necessary resources are not identified.

In determining the rating above, the evaluation team should also consider the extent to which sustainability risks were adequately identified and mitigated through the project's risk management and stakeholder engagement activities. The evaluation team should assess the risk environment and its expected effects on the project outcomes after the project exits and the capacity/motivation/resources/linkages of the local actors/stakeholders to sustain the outcomes produced by the project.

D. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

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

E. STAKEHOLDER MEETING

Following the field visits, a stakeholder meeting will be organized by the project and led by the evaluator to bring together a wide range of stakeholders, including the implementing partners and other interested parties to discuss the evaluation results. The list of participants to be invited will be drafted prior to the evaluator's visit and confirmed in consultation with project staff during fieldwork. ILAB staff may participate in the stakeholder meeting virtually if available. ILAB and project staff may coordinate with relevant US Embassy representatives for their participation, as well.

The meeting will present the major *preliminary* results and emerging issues, solicit actionable recommendations, discuss project sustainability and obtain clarification or additional information from stakeholders, including those not interviewed earlier. The agenda of the meeting will be determined by the evaluator in consultation with project staff. Some specific

⁷² Resources can include financial resources (i.e., non-donor replacement resources), as well as organization capacity, institutional linkages, motivation and ownership, and political will, among others.

questions for stakeholders may be prepared to guide the discussion and possibly a brief written feedback form.

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

- Presentation by the evaluator of the preliminary main results
- Feedback and questions from stakeholders on the results
- Opportunity for implementing partners not met to present their views on progress and challenges in their locality
- If appropriate, Possible Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) exercise on the project's performance
- Discussion of recommendations to improve the implementation and ensure sustainability. Consideration will be given to the value of distributing a feedback form for participants to nominate their "action priorities" for the remainder of the project.

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

F. LIMITATIONS

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

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

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

G. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Contractor is responsible for accomplishing the following items:

- Providing all evaluation management and logistical support for evaluation deliverables within the timelines specified in the contract and TOR;
- Providing all logistical support for travel associated with the evaluation;
- Providing quality control over all deliverables submitted to ILAB;
- Ensuring the Evaluation Team conducts the evaluation according to the TOR;

The Evaluation Team will conduct the evaluation according to the TOR. The Evaluation Team is responsible for accomplishing the following items:

- Receiving and responding to or incorporating input from the grantees and ILAB on the initial TOR draft;
- Finalizing and submitting the TOR and sharing concurrently with the grantees and ILAB;
- Reviewing project background documents;

- Reviewing the evaluation questions and refining them as necessary;
- Developing and implementing an evaluation methodology, including document review, KIIs and FGDs, and secondary data analysis, to answer the evaluation questions;
- Conducting planning meetings or calls, including developing a field itinerary, as necessary, with ILAB and grantees;
- Deciding the composition of field visit KII and FGD participants to ensure the objectivity of the evaluation;
- Developing an evaluation question matrix for ILAB;
- Presenting preliminary results verbally to project field staff and other stakeholders as determined in consultation with ILAB and grantees;
- Preparing an initial draft of the evaluation report for ILAB and grantee review;
- Incorporating comments from ILAB and the grantee/other stakeholders into the final report, as appropriate.
- Developing a comment matrix addressing the disposition of all of the comments provided;
- Preparing and submitting the final report;

ILAB is responsible for the following items:

- Launching the contract;
- Reviewing the TOR, providing input to the evaluation team as necessary, and agreeing on final draft;
- Providing project background documents to the evaluation team, in collaboration with the grantees;
- Obtaining country clearance from U.S. Embassy in fieldwork country;
- Briefing grantees on the upcoming field visit and working with them to coordinate and prepare for the visit;
- Reviewing and providing comments on the draft evaluation report;
- Approving the final draft of the evaluation report;
- Participating in the pre- and post-trip debriefing and interviews;
- Including the ILAB evaluation contracting officer's representative on all communication with the evaluation team;

The grantee is responsible for the following items:

- Reviewing the TOR, providing input to the evaluation team as necessary, and agreeing on the final draft;
- Providing project background materials to the evaluation team, in collaboration with ILAB;
- Preparing a list of recommended interviewees with feedback on the draft TOR;
- Participating in planning meetings or calls, including developing a field itinerary, as necessary, with ILAB and evaluator;
- Scheduling meetings during the field visit and coordinating all logistical arrangements;
- Helping the evaluation team to identify and arrange for interpreters as needed to facilitate worker interviews;
- Reviewing and providing comments on the draft evaluation reports;
- Organizing, financing, and participating in the stakeholder debriefing meeting;
- Providing in-country ground transportation to meetings and interviews;
- Including the ILAB program office on all written communication with the evaluation team.

H. TIMETABLE

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

Task	Responsible Party	Date (2022)
Evaluation launch call	DOL/OCFT	Feb 3
Background project documents sent to Contractor	DOL/OCFT	Feb 11
TOR Template submitted to Contractor	DOL/OCFT	Feb 14
Draft TOR sent to DOL/OCFT and Grantee	Contractor	Feb 23
Contractor and Grantee work to develop draft itinerary and stakeholder list	Contractor and Grantee	Feb 28
DOL/OCFT and Grantee provide comments on draft TOR	DOL/OCFT and Grantee	Mar 2
Logistics call - Discuss logistics and field itinerary	Contractor and Grantee (DOL/OCFT as needed)	Mar 4
Contractor sends minutes from logistics call	Contractor	Mar 4
Final TOR submitted to DOL/OCFT for approval	Contractor	Mar 7
Final approval of TOR by DOL/OCFT	DOL/OCFT	Mar 10
Submit finalized TOR to Grantee	Contractor	Mar 10
Cable clearance information submitted to DOL/OCFT	Contractor	Mar 11
Question matrix submitted to DOL/OCFT for review	Contractor	Mar 18
Finalize field itinerary and stakeholder list for workshop	DOL/OCFT, Contractor, and Grantee	Mar 21
Interview call with DOL/OCFT	Contractor	Mar 29
Interview call with Grantee HQ staff	Contractor	Mar 30
Fieldwork	Contractor	Apr 4-15
Stakeholder Workshop	Contractor	Apr 15
Post-fieldwork debrief call	Contractor	Apr 21
2-week review Draft Report submitted to DOL/OCFT and Grantee	Contractor	May 9
DOL/OCFT and Grantee/key stakeholder comments due to contractor after full 2-week review	DOL/OCFT and Grantee	May 23
Revised report in redline submitted to DOL/OCFT and Grantee demonstrating how all comments were addressed either via a comment matrix or other format	Contractor	May 30
DOL/OCFT and Grantee provides concurrence that comments were addressed	DOL/OCFT and Grantee	Jun 6
Final report submitted to DOL/OCFT and Grantee	Contractor	Jun 27
Final approval of report by DOL/OCFT	DOL/OCFT	Jul 5
Draft infographic/brief document submitted to DOL/OCFT	Contractor	Jun 6
DOL/OCFT comments on draft infographic/brief	DOL/OCFT	Jun 13
Editing and 508 compliance by contractor	Contractor	Jun 20
Final infographic/brief submitted to DOL/OCFT (508 compliant)	Contractor	Jun 27
Final approval of infographic/brief by DOL/OCFT (508 compliant)	DOL/OCFT	Jul 5
Final edited approved report and infographic/brief shared with grantee (508 compliant)	Contractor	Jul 6

5. EXPECTED OUTPUTS/DELIVERABLES

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

1. Table of Contents
2. List of Acronyms
3. Executive Summary (no more than **five pages** providing an overview of the evaluation, summary of main results/lessons learned/emerging good practices, and key

- recommendations)
4. Evaluation Objectives
 5. Project Description
 6. Listing of Evaluation Questions
 7. Results
 - a. The results section includes the facts, analysis, and supporting evidence. The results section of the evaluation report should address the evaluation questions. It does not have to be in a question-response format, but should be responsive to each evaluation question.
 8. Conclusions and Recommendations
 - a. Conclusions – interpretation of the facts, including criteria for judgments
 - b. Lessons Learned and Emerging Good Practices⁷³
 - c. Key Recommendations - critical for successfully meeting project objectives and/or judgments on what changes need to be made for sustainability or future programming
 9. Annexes –
 - a. List of documents reviewed;
 - b. Interviews (including list of stakeholder groups; without PII in web version)/meetings/site visits;
 - c. Stakeholder workshop agenda and participants;
 - d. TOR, Evaluation Methodology and Limitations;
 - e. Summary of Recommendations (citing page numbers for evidence in the body of the report, listing out the supporting evidence for each recommendation, and identifying party that the recommendation is directed toward.)

The key recommendations must be **action-oriented and implementable**. The recommendations should be clearly linked to results and directed to a specific party to be implemented. It is preferable for the report to contain no more than 10 recommendations, but other suggestions may be incorporated in the report in other ways.

The total length of the report should be approximately 30 pages for the main report, excluding the executive summary and annexes.

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

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

⁷³ An emerging **good practice** is a process, practice, or system highlighted in the evaluation reports as having improved the performance and efficiency of the program in specific areas. They are activities or systems that are recommended to others for use in similar situations. A *lesson learned* documents the experience gained during a program. They may identify a process, practice, or systems to avoid in specific situations

ANNEX F. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

A. APPROACH

A triangulated mixed-methods approach was used to answer the evaluation questions. Mixed-methods evaluations integrate quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

In addition, a systemic evaluation approach⁷⁴ was used that incorporates systems thinking. This was deemed particularly important in the evaluation of the COTECCO project given that it is a capacity strengthening project with a focus on *organizational systems building*. Systemic evaluation incorporates special attention to understanding inter-relationships, engaging with multiple perspectives to understand the findings, and determining the evaluation boundaries. The definition of the boundaries concerns the aspects to be included in the evaluation. For this evaluation, it was ultimately clear that it was necessary to extend the boundaries beyond the expected project results. Interviewees and participants in the preliminary results workshop placed much emphasis on gaps that had not yet been included in COTECCO but still needed to be addressed to effectively eliminate child labor in cobalt mining in the project areas. As a result, the analysis was adapted to incorporate these unexpected findings.

Rights-based methods, with a particular focus on gender, were applied in all aspects and stages of the investigation and conclusion processes. The evaluation was conducted in line with the norms and standards, ethical guidelines, and code of conduct of the UN Evaluation Group and UNICEF.⁷⁵

The lead evaluator was not able to respond to the ToR expectation regarding a review of the Routine Data Quality Assessment (RDQA). The project had not completed this form at the time of the field work. The evaluator did, instead, review the data collection as presented in the Technical Progress Reports and direct sharing of information with the evaluator.

B. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation assessed the project's performance and achievements in meeting its objectives, the relevance of project services to target groups' and stakeholders' needs, project efficiency and effectiveness, and the potential for sustainability. It captures good practices, lessons learned, and emerging trends. The evaluation team also assessed the effect of COVID-19 on the expected outcomes.

Together with ILAB and the ILO, the evaluation team developed key evaluation questions that are in accordance with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee criteria: design relevancy and validity, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.⁷⁶ The evaluation questions focused on measuring the expected project results taking the national and local context into account. Unexpected results were also considered. Further, in accordance with the OECD criteria, the

⁷⁴ Williams, B.; Hummelbrunner, R. *Systems Concepts in Action*. Stanford: Stanford Business Book, 2010; Williams, B. *Systemic Evaluation Design A Workbook*. 2nd Edition. Available from <https://gum.co/evaldesign> Online Publishing, 2019.

⁷⁵ United Nations Evaluation Group (2016), *Norms and Standards for Evaluation*, New York: United Nations Evaluation Group.

⁷⁶ OECD (2021), *Evaluation Criteria* (version updated in 2020), Available from <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

analysis of the efficiency criteria was extended to cover aspects beyond the efficiency evaluation question that mostly focuses on the M&E system.

RELEVANCE

1. Were the project strategies and resulting activities relevant to the specific needs of project participants, communities, and other stakeholders? What additional activities could have provided additional reinforcement of the project theory of change and outcomes?
2. To what extent was the project's approach appropriate to achieving its objectives?

COHERENCE

3. To what extent has the project coordinated and established links with other donor-funded projects, private sector initiatives, or other interventions led by national stakeholders?

EFFECTIVENESS

4. Is the project on track to meet its targets/objectives? What are the factors driving and/or hindering results so far?
5. How did the project's stakeholders perceive the efforts undertaken to address child labor in the cobalt supply chain? And what are the challenges to solving the problem?
6. How can the project's work on CLMS be strengthened to effectively reduce child labor in the cobalt sector and to set the foundation for scaling the CLMS up nationally?
7. How could monitoring and remediation efforts by the private sector of child labor in cobalt be improved?
8. How can the project assist CISTEMA in operationalizing coordination amongst the relevant Ministries at the national and provincial levels?
9. To what extent has gender dimension been considered? What successes and challenges can be highlighted?

EFFICIENCY

10. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the project monitoring and evaluation system? What can be done to improve the weaknesses of this system?

IMPACT

11. Is there any evidence that the project's actions have supported the Government and other stakeholders' efforts in addressing child labor in the cobalt supply chain to ensure a wider and deeper impact beyond the project itself?

SUSTAINABILITY

12. To what extent will the efforts under Outcomes 2 and 3 of the project be sustained by the Government and/or other stakeholders? Is CLMS sustainable? If so, which stakeholders are crucial to ensuring its sustainability?

C. DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY

To address the performance evaluation objectives in the terms of reference, the SFS team conducted the following data collection activities

1. DOCUMENT REVIEW

- Pre-field preparation includes extensive review of relevant documents/
- During remote fieldwork, additional documents were collected (see list of documents consulted as per annex A). In addition, awareness raising communications materials were also received and reviewed, including song, sketch, and road signs.

- Based on guidance from the evaluator, the COTECCO staff also provided a review of their own estimated levels of success and challenges organized by key categories of stakeholders. This information was used to triangulate with the evaluators' own review of interactions with the key stakeholders.
- Based on guidance from the international evaluator, the COTECCO project provided the most recent results for the key CMEP outcome and OCFT Standard Output indicators. The submitted requested analysis table of the key successes and challenges were also triangulated with the information that the evaluation team had collected directly.

2. EVALUATION QUESTION MATRIX AND RELATED ANALYSIS

An evaluation matrix was developed and is the main framework that was used for the determination of the information needs. Every question is linked to the expected sources that will inform the answer to the evaluation question.

The evaluation matrix further served as the foundation for the organization of the codes that were developed to be used in the qualitative data analysis software Atlasti.⁷⁷ The relevant information collected during the field work was thus captured in Atlasti and systematized by subject using codes identified by the lead evaluator. This system, together with the review of all documents, allows the evaluator to explore all possible avenues for data triangulation and to clearly note where the evaluation results are coming from.

3. INTERVIEWS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

The selection of people to be interviewed and/or included in the meetings and focus groups was carried out using 'snowball' sampling methods.⁷⁸ The international evaluator cross-verified the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders. She was able to confirm that an appropriate cross-section of stakeholders was included. That is, those with higher levels of success and those with more challenges with regard to results from COTECCO project implementation.

Interviews with the 111 stakeholders (see list in annex C) were conducted using an interview guide that was developed and based on the document analysis and ToR. The guide contained a pre-determined set of open questions to prompt discussion. These were structured to start with a question on the involvement of the interviewee(s) with COTECCO. This was followed by questions on successes, challenges, expected sustainability and recommendations.

The interview guide also included a checklist of more specific questions organized into categories for different types of stakeholders. The checklist was used to verify that all the key issues to be discussed with each type of stakeholder were covered before ending each interview. Where the interviewee(s) had not been automatically covered the checklist points follow-up questions were posed.

⁷⁷ See atlasti.com

⁷⁸ A nonprobability sampling technique (which includes purposive sampling) in which a researcher starts with a small population of known individuals and expands the sample by asking these initial participants to identify others who should participate in the study. Greelane.com. (2019), When and how to use snowball sampling in sociological research. Available from <https://www.greelane.com/fr/science-technologie-math%c3%a9matiques/sciences-sociales/snowball-sampling-3026730/>. Website consulted 10/10/2021.

4. FIELD VISITS

For the evaluation itinerary, please consult Annex (B).

The international evaluator started her mission in Kinshasa to meet national level stakeholders. The national evaluator joined her in Kinshasa and throughout the remainder of the field work. Following the meetings in Kinshasa, the evaluators travelled to Lubumbashi, Likasi and Kolwezi to meet with interviewees. Some field visits to communities were also conducted to enable a better understanding of the context and to meet with some local persons who had been trained on child labor and/or included in awareness raising sessions.

Some online interviews were also conducted prior to, during and after the field work. These interviews were conducted online because of the lack of availability of certain interviewees to meet in person and/or the evaluators' field level scheduling constraints.

COVID19 did not substantially affect the field work and stakeholders were available for interviews.

Participants in Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

Stakeholder	KII (participants)	Male	Female
ILO	9	6	3
COTECCO consultants	4	3	1
USDOL STAFF/ USG representatives in DRC	3	2	1
Implementing partner organization (PACT)	1	1	-
National government organizations/authorities	2	2	-
Joint national and provincial government and private sector groups	13	4	9
Provincial and local government officials	16	8	8
Private sector representatives/ employers and workers organizations	39	21	18
Media representatives connected to COTECCO	7	4	3
International organizations	5	2	3
Community representatives / Community Based Organizations (CBOS)	12	5	7
Total	111	58	53

5.- PRELIMINARY RESULTS STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

The evaluators presented the preliminary findings, conducted a question, comment and responses session with the preliminary results workshop participants. These included the government representatives, implementing partners, private sector representatives, community-based organizations, and project staff (See Annex D for list of participants and schedule).

Discussion sub-groups were also organized to discuss and prioritize the key success and challenges. The sub-group work also provided an additional test of the preliminary findings interviews and initial document review. The results of the sub-group work have been triangulated with other data as part of the evaluation report analysis.

Note that workshop participants had individually written down three main successes and three main challenges prior to the evaluators' presentation. This was to help ensure that the

evaluators did not unduly influence the participants. The participants were divided into sub-groups and discussed their priorities following the preliminary results presentation. A plenary discussion was then held to exchange about each group's priorities. The results of the discussion groups are found in Annex D.

The evaluation team also held a debrief with ILAB on April 29, 2022 to review the preliminary findings and recommendations and solicit initial feedback and questions.

D- DATA ANALYSIS

The qualitative data analysis software, Atlas.ti⁷⁹, was used to code and process the qualitative information collected, particularly the notes from the interviews. The categorized quotations of the interviewees were generated by code. Trends were identified based on the generated results and compared to other data.

Given the project focus on capacity strengthening the project generated several studies, strategies, reports, and communications materials which were studied in detail for relevance, accuracy and usefulness.

Quantitative data from the Technical Progress Reports and based on COTECCO's performance monitoring plan was analyzed to assess the level of progress to reach each of the project's outcomes in line with the indicators and targets.

As part of the assessment, a rate with the level of achievement and potential for sustainability of each of the project's outcomes on a four-point scale (low, moderate, above-moderate, and high).

Achievement

- **High:** met or exceeded most targets for the period evaluated, with mostly positive feedback from key stakeholders and participants.
- **Above-moderate:** met or exceeded most targets for the period evaluated, **but** with mostly neutral or negative feedback from key stakeholders and participants.
- **Moderate:** missed most targets for the period evaluated, **but** with mostly positive feedback from key stakeholders and participants.
- **Low:** missed most targets for the period evaluated, with mostly neutral or negative feedback from key stakeholders and participants.

Sustainability

- **High:** strong likelihood that the benefits of project activities will continue after donor funding is withdrawn and the necessary resources⁸⁰ are in place to ensure sustainability;
- **Above-moderate:** above average likelihood that the benefits of project activities will continue after donor funding is withdrawn and the necessary resources are identified but not yet committed;
- **Moderate:** some likelihood that the benefits of project activities will continue after donor funding is withdrawn and some of the necessary resources are identified;

⁷⁹ <https://atlasti.com/>

- **Low:** weak likelihood that that the benefits of project activities will continue after donor funding is withdrawn and the necessary resources are not identified.

E. LIMITATIONS

The ability to meet all the expected stakeholders in Kinshasa was impeded on the first day because of exceptional traffic jams and challenges in finding some of the interviewees. On subsequent days, however, the meetings could be held more fluidly though delays were still common in many cases. The project staff did their utmost to support the team and mitigate the logistical challenges.

Although expected, it became even more increasingly clear during the evaluation field work that an evaluation with a highly formative focus was necessary. The evaluators would have liked to meet more of the stakeholders to enable the implementation of a stronger formative evaluation. However, the number of stakeholders met was still sufficient to identify common trends.

This evaluation relied on secondary performance information in annual reports and in available monitoring databases. Given the duration of the field work, the evaluation team did not have time or resources to fully confirm the validity and reliability of performance data in detail. However, the team was able to determine that the overall reported data from the most recent Technical Progress Report prior to the evaluation field work was likely accurate. The team correlated stakeholder responses with quantitative data to the extent possible to strengthen the accuracy and reliability of the evaluation.

ANNEX G. GAPS AND ADDITIONAL NEEDS THAT STAKEHOLDERS CITED DURING THE EVALUATION

DRC GOVERNMENT

- 1) Increased coverage and development of child protection referral system and case management with integration of CLMS
- 2) Establishment of provincial CISTEMA
- 3) Ensure structures to address child labor are decentralized (provincial CISTEMA)
- 4) Strengthen the role of labor inspectors and police in identifying and tracking child labor
- 5) Application of laws and regulations including on decent work conditions for all workers in the cobalt supply chain. Prosecution of perpetrators with adapted consequences based on the situation (traditional court methods for households).
- 6) Increase availability of access to quality health services
- 7) Sufficient budget allocations of Government to ensure that child labor is addressed.
- 8) Ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities within associated Government offices. (Including within ministries)
- 9) Reduce corruption
- 10) Ensure good and continuous collection of statistics, analyze, and use the statistics (over and beyond only the CLMS)
- 11) Improve identification of mining sites using means such as drone technology.

PRIVATE SECTOR

- 1) Large mining companies accept the presence of cooperatives in their area to follow up with and organize illegal miners who go into the mines.
- 2) Participate in and contribute to the CLMS
- 3) Formalizing of the mines including through cooperatives
- 4) Strengthen role of workers organizations as direct actors in identifying and tracking child labor
- 5) Improve decent work conditions for all in the mining areas.

RELEVANT CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS

- 1) Participate in all planning, development, and implementation of actions on child labor in cobalt mining and in mining localities.
- 2) Increase focus and support for journalists on awareness raising with the public.

TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS

- 1) Provide technical support for all actions, including those listed in this Annex.
- 2) Promote the ILO Integrated Area-Based Approach⁸¹ to cover children in and around the mines even if not working directly in the cobalt supply chain.
- 3) Increase focus on the alignment of the vision of implementing agencies/groups on best means to withdraw children and prevent child labor.
- 4) Develop and add positive parenting training to remediation actions.

EDUCATION AND RIGHT TO PLAY

- 1) Safe, quality and accessible general education, technical and vocational education and skills training (TVEST).
- 2) Building and repairing schools

⁸¹ ILO (2013) Integrated Area-Based Approach as a Strategy for Child Labor Free Zones. Geneva: ILO. Available from http://www.oit.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--ed_mas/--eval/documents/publication/wcms_433047.pdf

- 3) School meals and/or snacks
- 4) School uniforms and materials
- 5) Strengthened teacher training including on child labor issues, use of ILO SCREAM modules
- 6) Appropriately identified training for older youth to obtain employment in line with private sector employment needs (including in new and emerging types of decent work in and around the mines, solar energy installation and repair, intensive and modernized agriculture using approaches like drip irrigation/digital technologies, food processing, repair of mining tools and equipment, organic compost production, catering, simple bookkeeping for cooperatives, etc.)
- 7) Available play areas and opportunities for children to play.

POVERTY REDUCTION

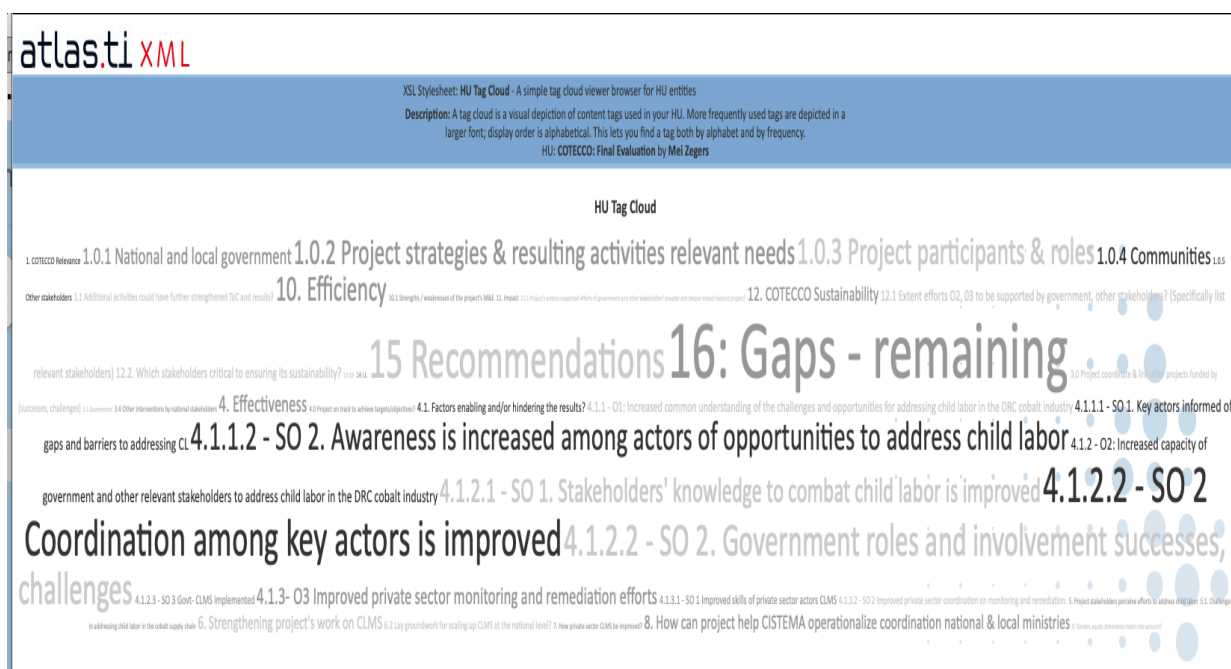
- 1) Promotion of diversification of relevant economic activities around the mines
- 2) Access to formal micro-credit, saving and credit association development
- 3) Access to social protection services
- 4) Health insurance schemes
- 5) Equitable and decent allocation of income to ASM workers

MORE ATTENTION TO VULNERABLE GROUPS

- 1) Address the socio-cultural challenges that women face in the mining areas- including social and economic empowerment of women
- 2) Orphans
- 3) Children who roam in bands without visible care giver support
- 4) Children with disabilities
- 5) Households affected by HIV

ANNEX H. FREQUENCY OF COMMENTS BY CATEGORY OF SUBJECT

The graphic below provides a snapshot of the frequency of interviewees' comments by category of subject. Note that the interviews were semi-structured thus allowing the interviewees to comment as much as they wish on any specific subject. The analysis indicates that there were many comments on remaining gaps that should be addressed to end child labor in cobalt mining. However, there were also many comments on the improvement of coordination among key actors through the COTECCO project. Comments about the importance of the role of Government were frequently detailed. Many comments were made about increased awareness and knowledge about child labor.



ANNEX I. EXAMPLE OF STEERING COMMITTEE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Example from ILO, source: ILO (2016), Meetings of Project Steering Committee on Combatting Unacceptable Forms of Work in the Fishing and Seafood Industry funded by the European Union (EU). Available from http://www.oit.org/asia/events/WCMS_533342/lang--en/index.htm

Project Steering Committee Purpose

- Provides strategic guidance and high-level advice to the project to maximise its impact.
- Reviews and provides inputs to the project's annual work-plan and endorse it.
- Reviews and provides inputs to the Annual Interim Reports of activities conducted and endorse them.
- Reviews and provides guidance on project research and publications.
- Facilitates and monitors project implementation.
- Raises and discusses relevant policy developments at the sectoral and national level to highlight and enhance the project's value to stakeholders in the evolving policy scenario.
- Promotes the project through their respective networks and identifies opportunities for synergies with other initiatives.
- Shares project results, lessons learned and good practices to contribute policy discussions and explores potential for replication and scaling-up.

Modalities

- The Project Steering Committee meeting convenes twice a year to review the annual report and following year's work plan. As and when appropriate, the Project Steering Committee may hold additional meetings to discuss a specific activity or output of the project that is of interest to the various members.
- Wherever possible, the Project Steering Committee operates and establishes its own procedures and makes decisions on the basis of consensus.
- As a matter of principle, the Project Steering Committee must operate in a transparent manner. Official minutes of the meetings and specific decisions

on project matters are kept and circulated for comments and endorsed and made available to members.

- Secretarial support to the Project Steering Committee is provided by the Ministry of Labour and the ILO. The project's Senior Technical Officer and National Project Coordinators are responsible for overall project coordination, and monitoring the implementation of Project Steering Committee decisions. The Ministry of Labour is responsible for notifying the Project Steering Committee members of the meetings, maintaining the Project Steering Committee records, and distributing the Minutes to members.