Independent Final Evaluation of the Reducing Exploitive Child Labor in Southern Africa (RECLISA) Project: Regional Report

American Institutes for Research
Cooperative Agreement Number: E-9-K-4-0046

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIR	American Institutes for Research
APEC	Action Plan to Eliminate Child Labor
BCC	Botswana Council of Churches
BNYC	Botswana National Youth Council
BTEP	Botswana's Technical Education Program
CLC	Child Labor Committee
COPE	Community-based Orphan Care Protection and Empowerment Project
EFA	Education for All
EI	Child Labor Education Initiative
GTFOSY	Gantsi Task Force on Out of School Youth
ILAB	Bureau of International Labor Affairs
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
LANFE	Lesotho Association of Nonformal Education
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MPG	Management Procedures and Guidelines
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NGOC	Nongovernmental Organizations' Coalition on the Rights of a Child
NFE	Nonformal Education
NOAH	Nurturing Orphans of AIDS for Humanity
OCFT	Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PACC	Project Advisory Committee on Child Labor
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
RAD	Remote Area Dwellers
RECLISA	Reducing Exploitive Child Labor in Southern Africa
REP	Resource Exchange Program
SOS	Save Our Souls children's villages
STS	Student Tracking System
TECL	Towards the Elimination of Child Labor
TOR	Terms of Reference

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
WFCL	Worst Forms of Child Labor
WFP	World Food Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of its initiatives to reduce child labor by providing educational opportunities for working and at-risk children, the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) signed a cooperative agreement worth US$9 million with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) to enable them to implement the project known as RECLISA—Reducing Exploitive Child Labor in Southern Africa. The project aims to reduce exploitive child labor in Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, and Swaziland, and was implemented from 2004 to 2008 in collaboration with national or international organizations based in each of the countries concerned, with the following objectives:

Objective 1: Increased public awareness of the importance of children's education, children's rights, and the worst forms of child labor.

Objective 2: Improved educational opportunities for working and at-risk children.

Objective 3: Improved social services for working children, children at risk, and their families or caregivers.

Objective 4: Strengthened integration of government policies, laws, and regulations to promote the entry of working children into the formal education system and prevent children at risk from dropping out.

This final evaluation report describes RECLISA's activities across Southern Africa, based on five country reports and discussions with AIR. It assesses project design, implementation, impact, and sustainability, and looks at the effectiveness and efficiency of the regional model. The evaluation aims to assess the degree to which USDOL's goals and the project's objectives have been achieved, and to help the organizations concerned to identify areas of good performance and those with potential for improvement. It assesses progress in terms of children's working and educational status, and provides feedback to enable the USDOL's Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT) to learn more about what is or is not working in terms of the overall conceptualization and design of its projects.

RECLISA worked in five of the six countries with the highest prevalence of HIV in the world. Southern Africa is experiencing a catastrophe of immense proportions that overshadows and affects policy and implementation across all sectors, not least education and child labor. The education systems in these countries are at various stages of reform but all bear the legacy of academic, exam-orientated systems designed to produce government employees rather than to meet the needs of the children who populate them. In spite of policies to encourage Education for All, the costs of education and the lost opportunity costs for families where children work mean that many orphans and vulnerable children find it difficult to access education. While the governments of RECLISA countries have all ratified ILO Conventions 138 and 182, thus having an obligation to safeguard their children from child labor—particularly its worst forms, in practice most are struggling to meet a myriad of conflicting demands with limited resources, exacerbated by incomplete policies and legislation, and limited coordination and implementation capacity.

It is within this context that RECLISA set out to enroll and support 10,000 children who were either working or at risk of working with educational provision, and to raise awareness about child labor and the importance of education in the five countries concerned. AIR worked through one or more subcontractors in each country, some of which, in their turn, worked in partnership with other organizations to implement project activities. RECLISA also worked in collaboration with ILO-IPEC's Towards the Elimination of Child Labor (TECL)[1] project, which supported and facilitated the development of national Action Plans to Eliminate Child labor (APEC) in the same countries. AIR's model of subcontracting to implementing partners in each country sought to encourage sustainability (through working with organizations that would continue after RECLISA's conclusion), capacity building (to help each partner develop better administrative and technical capabilities as required), and expertise (combining each partner's local knowledge with AIR's international experience).

RECLISA implemented a range of activities including the development of new nonformal education provisions, a variety of life skills and vocational training opportunities, and material and psychosocial support, so as to enable OVC to attend and stay in school. A series of child labor conferences were organized in different countries to raise public and government awareness, and encourage policy development and implementation. The AIR team managed the project from its office in Pretoria and developed, supported, and facilitated coordination across the region. This included technical assistance, training, quality control, opportunities for shared learning and information exchange, and partner capacity building to ensure effective project implementation, monitoring, and reporting. AIR took primary responsibility for monitoring and fulfilling USDOL reporting and management requirements. Khulisa, a South African nongovernmental organization (NGO), was subcontracted not only to manage RECLISA's activities in South Africa, but also to support monitoring and evaluation in all five countries.

The evaluation was carried out by three evaluators; one visiting Botswana and South Africa, another Swaziland and Namibia, and the third covering Lesotho and regional aspects of the project. After a desk review and other preliminaries, the team worked together and with AIR before carrying out stakeholder interviews and site visits in their respective countries.

The principal findings of the evaluation are outlined below.

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

At the time of the evaluation, RECLISA reported a total of 10,160 direct beneficiaries[2] who have been supported and enabled to access opportunities for education through project activities. Five child labor conferences have complemented effective collaboration with TECL, generating considerable media interest and attracting high-level participants across the region, thus raising levels of awareness of the issues concerned. Subcontractors and other partners have now increased project management, monitoring, and reporting capacity, and some have integrated child labor into their overall activities and will continue to work and advocate for its elimination

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[1] The International Labour Organization's International Programme to Eliminate Child Labour (ILO-IPEC), Towards the Elimination of Child Labor (TECL): A timebound project.

[2] The project's final aggregate performance report shows that of 11,187 beneficiaries, 1,903 completed their educational programs and a further 7,180 were retained at the project's conclusion. Thus, 9,083 children, or 81.6% of the total, stayed in school.

after the end of the project. While sustainability has been challenging, RECLISA has succeeded in contributing to all five USDOL goals, and a number of the project's direct beneficiaries will benefit from ongoing support to attend school. Of particular note is the range of holistic interventions that have enabled marginalized and vulnerable children not only to enroll and remain in education, but also to better understand and come to terms with their lives and prepare to meet their future needs and challenges. Among such interventions are the *Heroes Books* and the suitcase project used in psychosocial support, the COPE clubs and Child Labor Committees; all of which have involved communities in supporting children and the life skills and vocational training that offer potential alternatives for their future.

KEY ISSUES AROUND DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION, AND SUSTAINABILITY

With the exception of Khulisa and Africare, it proved difficult for AIR to find subcontractors with the necessary local knowledge in addition to some experience for implementing a complex regional project such as RECLISA. Thus, considerable capacity building was needed to enable partners to cope with rigorous monitoring and reporting requirements. This, combined with a complex management structure and mid-project changes to USDOL regulations, meant that project administration and related communication remained challenging throughout. RECLISA's attempt at tracking children's work status was not very effective and didn't assist communities in identifying work unsuitable for children. While effective awareness raising concerning child labor took place at national level, at community level, success was limited to a few project sites, though the importance of education was universally understood.

A number of project activities suffered from underfunding and the project as a whole stretched its resources to the limits in order to achieve its numerical targets, arguably to the detriment of the quality and sustainability of some interventions. It is unclear how Lesotho beneficiaries are to be included among the project's direct beneficiaries, in spite of the fact that RECLISA has enabled them to access education and has significantly improved their lifestyle and widened their horizons. Only the 83 herd boys who have transitioned to formal school can technically be said to have been withdrawn from child labor, while the rest continue to work much as before and thus do not fit into either withdrawn or prevented categories. The other significant project-design question concerning a specific country is whether school enrollment in a non-nurturing environment was in the best interests of San children in the north of Botswana, or whether a different design option might have better met their needs.

Sustainability strategies were implemented fairly late in the project, leaving little time to develop fallback plans if something went wrong. Governments did not on the whole show much willingness to build on RECLISA initiatives, with the exception of Swaziland where the Ministry of Education has committed itself to ongoing support for project beneficiaries, and South Africa where the project's child labor curricula will continue to be used by some education departments and for police training. Some partners have been able to find ongoing funding and others are developing new projects in the hope of continuing to work with RECLISA beneficiaries. However, there will be a number of children whose access to education will come to an end without the support of this project.

THE REGIONAL APPROACH

The evaluation paid particular attention to the advantages and disadvantages of RECLISA's regional approach, and on balance came to the conclusion that the greater investment needed to implement national projects is often justified because it facilitates more focused and concentrated interventions that are more likely to be sustainable. However, the usefulness of cross pollination, shared learning, and networking between different partners was widely acknowledged and ultimately each case needs to be judged on its own merits.

In spite of a number of challenges, including the findings of the USDOL audit, RECLISA has been a successful regional project that has enabled a significant number of vulnerable children across five countries to access education and become more aware of children's rights in relation to child labor. The project is characterized by the hard work and commitment of its management team and its family of implementing partners, all of whom have contributed to the lessons learned and good practices that have come out of the project.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation made a number of recommendations at national and regional levels. These can be found in full, respectively, in the national reports and at the end of this regional report. Key regional level evaluations include—

Recommendations to USDOL

- USDOL needs to balance the importance of withdrawing/preventing large numbers of children from child labor over a limited period, and that of offering quality educational opportunities and achieving sustainable project results. Solicitations for Cooperative Agreement Applications should be tailored accordingly. It needs to be recognized that there is a direct relationship between target numbers and sustainability and that all of the USDOL objectives have a financial cost attached.

- USDOL is encouraged to investigate how decisions concerning the implementation of audit findings could be speeded up, to avoid any undesired adverse effects on project implementation.

- USDOL is recommended to consider developing a briefing paper for U.S. auditors working in unfamiliar environments. Such a paper might include such information as that concerning the validity of the ages given by direct beneficiaries in Africa, and other information that might inform their work.[3]

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[3] The evaluator saw a different USDOL audit that said that school toilets in Burkina Faso were lacking a roof, whereas the design in question is standard and appropriate due to the extremely hot and dry climate in Burkina.

- The inclusion of a research and needs-assessment component to inform/test the validity of project design at each site should be part of the funded activities of USDOL grantees. While this would cost money and take time, it would go a long way to ensuring that interventions are likely to achieve their objectives, and effectively meet the needs of the direct beneficiaries.

Recommendations for Future Grantees

- Parallel to the previous recommendation, grantees need to use participatory approaches in the conception phase to ensure that project proposals address local needs and build community and government ownership.

- Project design needs to include realistic strategies for sustainability; direct action coupled with advocacy/support for policy development; and implementation and effective, multi-level capacity building based on plans developed in collaboration with the implementing and community-level partners concerned.

- Projects should design holistic interventions and consider including creative psychosocial support strategies and appropriate vocational training.

- Opportunities for exchange visits between partners and other sharing of experience and practice should be exploited whenever an opportunity arises. Although there are some costs attached, the investment is invariably worth the expenditure.

- Complex project management structures should be avoided unless it is clear that the coordinating organization has the capacity to operate the necessary systems.

- In line with the previous recommendation, institutional assessments of potential subcontracting organizations should always be carried out in order to ascertain that they have the necessary governance mechanisms to ensure accountability and their level of financial, management, and technical capacity.

- Grantees working with several subcontractors should develop a project-specific procedures manual (covering financial, administrative, and monitoring requirements) and should bring partners together at the start of the project to introduce the manual.

The following report describes the evaluation at a regional level in more detail, and provides discussion and analysis of some of the salient themes and issues.

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I   CONTEXT

The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) funds international labor projects through its Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB). The Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT) is the office within ILAB that administers grants and contracts to organizations engaged in efforts to eliminate child labor and raise awareness about child labor issues. Since 1995, Congress has appropriated over US$595 million to USDOL, which has been used to combat child labor in more than 75 countries around the world.

USDOL-funded projects seek to achieve five major goals:

1. Withdrawing or preventing children from involvement in exploitive child labor through the provision of direct educational services.

2. Strengthening policies on child labor and education, the capacity of national institutions to combat child labor, and formal and transitional education systems that encourage children engaged in or at-risk of engaging in exploitive labor to attend school.

3. Raising awareness on the importance of education for all children and mobilizing a wide array of actors to improve and expand education infrastructures.

4. Supporting research and the collection of reliable data on child labor.

5. Ensuring the long-term sustainability of these efforts.

USDOL supports the following two specific programs, in addition to some smaller initiatives:

a. **The International Labour Organization's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC)**

   Since 1995 IPEC has received US$330 million from the U.S. Government, the leading donor to the program. Most IPEC projects include "direct action" components that are interventions to remove or prevent children from involvement in exploitive and hazardous work; one major strategy is to increase children's access to and participation in formal and nonformal education. Most projects also have a capacity-building component to assist in building a sustainable base for long-term elimination of exploitive child labor.

b. **The Child Labor Education Initiative (EI)**

   EI projects are designed to ensure that children in areas with a high incidence of child labor are withdrawn and integrated into educational settings, and that they persist in their education once enrolled. In parallel, the program seeks to avert at-risk children from leaving school and entering child labor. The EI is based on the notion that the elimination of exploitive child labor depends, to a large extent, on improving access to, quality of, and relevance of education. Funds under the EI are competitively bid, and support cooperative agreements with international, nonprofit, for-profit and faith-based entities.

In addition to these two initiatives, in 2007, USDOL allocated US$60 million for other child labor elimination projects and provided US$2.5 million for additional awareness-raising and research activities.

THE REGIONAL CONTEXT: HIV, EDUCATION, AND CHILD LABOR

The countries where RECLISA (Reducing Exploitive Child Labor in Southern Africa) works are characterized by extreme disparities of wealth distribution, and although they are not among the countries with the lowest Human Development Index,[4] significant proportions of their populations are vulnerable as a result of poverty. This is exacerbated by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which finds its most disastrous expression in Southern Africa. RECLISA countries make up five out of the six countries with the highest HIV prevalence in the world, ranging from **Swaziland** at the top of the list (with 38.8%) to **Namibia** in sixth place (with 21.3%).[5] These figures translate to a total of 6.4 million people living with HIV/AIDS across the five countries,[6] resulting in growing numbers of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), families and communities, and governments struggling to cope with the consequences.

Education

Formal education systems focus primarily on academic curricula, with varying initiatives for vocational skills training. There is limited provision for children from disadvantaged social groups, but this is increasing in light of the growing number of orphans and vulnerable children as a result of the HIV pandemic.

Since independence, **Botswana** has held regular free and fair elections, and has graduated from being one of the world's poorest countries to its current middle-income status. However, in 2002 UNDP classified 30% of the population as *very poor*, and 90% of these people live in rural areas. Botswana's literacy rate of 76% is comparatively high for an African nation, and while the National Literacy Program provides access to education for children out of school, these programs are unpopular because of the stigma attached to nonformal education (NFE). Approximately 88% of children attend school and about 30% complete secondary school, girls and boys being equally represented. Attendance and completion rates are lowest in rural areas, where children live far from schools and where it is a cultural norm for them to remain at home and assist their families as cattle tenders, domestic laborers, or child care providers.

Primary education is free and efforts are underway to make it compulsory. Recently introduced school fees for secondary and tertiary education are waived for OVC, and the state provides these students with uniforms and books. In spite of this, due to administrative difficulties and people's reluctance to be classified as destitute, this provision is not fully implemented. Botswana's Technical Education Program (BTEP) offers training through seven technical colleges and supports 41 community vocational schools, referred to as the *Botswana Brigades*. However, since enrollment is dependent on successful completion of seventh grade, vulnerable children have limited access. The education system does little to accommodate traditional

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[4] Available at: http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/
[5] Available at: http://www.photius.com/rankings/population/hiv_aids_adult_prevalence_rate_2008_0.html
[6] Available at: http://www.photius.com/rankings/population/hiv_aids_people_living_with_hiv_aids_2008_0.html

culture, and children from ethnic minorities receive instruction in Setwana or English—at best their second or third languages; at worst, languages they are completely unfamiliar with. The significant challenges experienced by these groups contributes to a disproportionate number of adults being unemployed. Without a mother-tongue instruction policy, certain ethnic groups will always be poorly positioned to access the education system, and their children will remain vulnerable to exploitation.

Lesotho introduced free primary education in the year 2000, and the number of children enrolled has increased from 51% in 1999[7] to 86% in 2006.[8] Uniquely, in sub-Saharan Africa, the country has a higher level of primary enrollment for girls than for boys because many boys traditionally herd livestock prior to migrating to work in the South African mining industry. The Ministry of Education and Training's Education Sector Strategic Plan (2005–2012) acknowledges the challenge of meeting the needs of children from disadvantaged social groups, particularly in rural areas, and the academic nature of the curriculum. At present, the curriculum provides only the minimum of the practical skills needed to access the employment market. Compulsory primary education is about to be introduced, but this will necessitate strategies that enable OVC to benefit, including work with herding communities to develop flexible alternatives for looking after their livestock.

Namibia's Education Sector Policy for OVC is part of its National Plan of Action for OVC (2006–2010). Although education is compulsory from 7 to 16 years of age, children can be excluded from school if they cannot pay for school fees or uniforms. In theory, various grants provide assistance but in practice, these are difficult to access. Curriculum reform has resulted in the introduction of mandatory life-skills classes; these are not a high priority for teachers because they do not contribute to the all-important exam results, by which they are assessed. Child rape and violence in school, as well as "sugar daddy sponsoring" are said to be widespread, and the combined impact of HIV/AIDS, poverty, and the lack of appropriate education provision has led to a situation in which schools are often not safe places for children.

South Africa has an adult literacy rate of around 82.4%, and education is compulsory for children from 7 to 15 years old. Despite this, 10 years after its transition to democracy, approximately 40% of its citizens live in the grip of poverty, with the poorest 15% experiencing a desperate struggle to survive. Implementation of the South African Schools Act of 1996 has emphasized access to education for disadvantaged children and, in theory, the government subsidizes up to 100% of school fees in schools that meet the criteria. Around 500,000 new learners have been introduced into the school system since 1994, putting it under considerable pressure. Although education accounted for 20% of allocated expenditure in 2006–07, resources remain inadequate to service the numbers without an inevitable effect on quality. Poor education outcomes disproportionately affect learners attending township schools and schools in rural areas, where children tend to be disadvantaged by their socioeconomic status and schools are under-resourced. Inability to pay school fees remains the key contributing factor for non school attendance, and only a minority of the learners say that they feel safe in school. Unsurprisingly, the high rates of violence and inequality that characterize South African society as a whole are reflected in its education system.

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[7] Available at: http://www.undp.org.ls/millennium/default.php.
[8] UNESCO Institute for Statistics; available at: http://stats.uis.unesco.org

Swaziland's education system is exams-oriented and focuses on academic subjects. Primary education is designed to run from 6 to 13 years of age, but is characterized by high repetition and dropout rates; thus, it is common to find young adults age 18 and older in primary classrooms. The government provides free textbooks for primary school pupils and bursaries for orphans and vulnerable children, but these children are primary targets for corporal punishment which is widely used, since they may not be able to pay for school fees or uniforms on time and often have less time available for homework. A pilot project covering 40 schools aims to build partnerships with communities, provide psychosocial support, and ensure food security and basic health services in an attempt to recreate schools as "Centers of Care and Support." However, a much deeper reform of the educational system is needed to respond effectively to the magnitude of the HIV/AIDS crisis.

Child Labor

The overall policy and institutional environment in **Botswana** is favorable with regard to meeting children's needs and defending their rights. Botswana has ratified ILO Conventions 138 and 182, and from 1993 to 2003 the National Program of Action for the Children of Botswana ensured that children's rights were incorporated into the country's development planning. The Children's Act regulates child labor and the Ministry of Labor and Home Affairs, supported by local councils, is responsible for enforcing child labor laws and policies. The Ministry of Education has a strategy to mainstream child labor issues into its operations. The Advisory Committee on Child Labor facilitates oversight of child labor issues and includes representatives from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), government agencies, workers' federations, and employers' organizations. However some policy gaps and conflicts still need to be addressed. A common understanding of what constitutes child labor has yet to be agreed upon, there are no policy imperatives to address child work and Worst Forms of Child Labor (WFCL), and the law does not specifically prohibit trafficking in persons. The adoption of the Action Plan to Eliminate Child labor (APEC) and the arrival of TECL 2 (Towards the Elimination of Child Labor, Phase 2) will contribute to the resolution of such issues.

Unpublished results of the government's recent Labor Force Survey suggest that 9% of children age 7 to 17 are engaged in economic activities; the majority is age 7 to 13 and lives in rural villages. Of the 38,375 working children, 66% work in agriculture, 58.7% on family lands or cattle posts, 22% in retail, 4% in private households, and the remainder is involved in the manufacturing, construction, hotels, and restaurants sectors. Of these, 19% of working children and half of the 14 to 17 age group are not attending school.

Lesotho has diverse legal safeguards for the protection of children and the 2005 Child Protection and Welfare Bill will provide more comprehensive legislation. Lesotho ratified ILO conventions 138 and 182 in 2001, and is developing the required list of hazardous labor. In 2005, 28% of children age 5 to 14 were estimated to be working; boys as livestock herders, load bearers, car washers, and taxi fare collectors, and girls as domestic servants and—to some extent—in commercial sex work.[9] Lesotho's comprehensive APEC, developed as part of the ILO-IPEC's TECL Timebound project, is imminently due to be adopted. While government representatives are well aware that worst forms of child labor exist in Lesotho, at the community level there is

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[9] USDOL's 2006 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor.

little concept of work that is appropriate or inappropriate for children. Livestock herding is deeply engrained in the culture and traditions of the Basotho, and is—in many cases—seen as part of the rite of passage in becoming a man. While basic education is highly valued, herding remains an important economic activity. Thus, the two are competing for the time available to the herder, and people are caught in a dilemma of traditional versus modern values. Parents who cannot afford to send their children to school hire them out to earn money or stock, and employment of herding boys is seen as a way of alleviating poverty. This has been exacerbated by the HIV crisis, which is resulting in an increasing number of OVC and child-headed households. While this makes for a challenging environment for the withdrawal and prevention of children from child labor, widespread agreement about the importance of education provides an entry point; particularly when the education under consideration is seen as appropriate and relevant.

As a result of **Namibia's** HIV/AIDS pandemic, the number of children engaged in child labor (including various forms of prostitution) has substantially increased. The current child activity survey will provide much-needed oversight on the national child labor situation. Various surveys have fed into the Program Advisory Committee on Child Labor's policy planning efforts, which have lead to the establishment of a comprehensive (draft) policy framework and an action plan addressing child labor. TECL 2 will support the implementation of the plan. While the 1960 Children's Act refers to child labor, in view of increased numbers of AIDS orphans, the legislation contained is outdated. The 2004 Labor Act regulates child labor and is in the process of being updated, but will not significantly change child labor legislation. The National Policy on Orphans and Vulnerable Children expands children's legislation, though it does not address child labor-related issues. There is no common understanding or definition of the concept of child labor and the regulations are at times contradictory.

South Africa is developing a comprehensive policy framework designed to secure the welfare of children. In 2006 the Children's Act was signed, but an Amendment Bill has yet to be passed and the two pieces of legislation will not take effect until they become a single comprehensive Act. This Act will, among other things, outlaw child trafficking, create children's courts, and establish a child protection register. Children benefit from an extensive social welfare infrastructure and in 2006, nearly 7 million child-support grants were made. In 1999 a Statistics South Africa survey indicated that most children engaged in economic activities work in subsistence or other forms of agriculture, and rural children work almost twice as much as those in urban areas. An estimated 30% of working children were below the legal working age and an estimated 247,900 children were engaged in worst forms of child labor. There is also evidence that children are trafficked into South Africa and within the country, and that trafficked children are exploited as domestic workers or sometimes as sex workers. South Africa has a 30-year history of concern about child labor and ratified ILO Conventions 138 and 182 in the year 2000. Units within the South African Police Service are involved in child protection, offering services to child victims and investigating and raising awareness of crimes against children The South African Department of Labor chairs a national stakeholder group that coordinates anti-child labor activities; conducted by the government, unions, and NGOs, they raise awareness about child labor and the enforcement of child labor laws.

Swaziland ratified ILO Conventions 138 and 182 in 2002. The TECL Program Advisory Committee on Child Labor contributes to raising awareness on the worst forms of child labor at the government level, helps review policies and legislation, has finalized the drafting of the national APEC, and provided technical support in the drafting of a child protection bill. While the 2006 employment bill regulates child labor, the WFCL-related policy work has been hampered by resistance from various government officials, some of whom claim that child labor does not exist in Swaziland since it is not visible in the formal economy. Children working as herd boys, in sugar cane plantations, or doing hard household work remain largely invisible. Thus, RECLISA operated in an unfavorable education and child labor policy environment, mitigated to some extent by new government initiatives such as the National Children's Coordination Unit, which aims to coordinate children's issues across the country. This unit is well aware of RECLISA and has integrated child labor into its mandate.

II   PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In July 2004, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) signed a cooperative agreement worth US$9 million to implement an EI project in Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, and Swaziland, in support of the Education Initiative goals to improve access to quality education as a means of combating exploitive child labor in Southern Africa. To achieve these goals, AIR identified the following objectives:

Objective 1: Increased public awareness of the importance of children's education, children's rights, and the worst forms of child labor.

Objective 2: Improved educational opportunities for working children and children at risk.

Objective 3: Improved social services for working children, children at risk, and their families or caregivers.

Objective 4: Strengthened integration of government policies, laws, and regulations to promote the entry of working children into the formal education system and prevent children at risk from dropping out.

The project document states that RECLISA will withdraw or prevent at least 10,000 children in Southern Africa from involvement in the worst forms of child labor by improving their access to educational opportunities and reaching out to parents, community members, school administrators, and policy makers. RECLISA's regional headquarters is located in Pretoria, South Africa and AIR works in consortium with organizations in each of the five countries concerned to implement project activities as summarized in the following table.

Table 1: Description of Partners, Areas, and Activities for all RECLISA Countries

Botswana: Aimed to prevent 525 rural and 1,100 urban children from child labor

Implementing Partners	Areas	Activities/Responsibilities
Botswana National Youth Council (Air subcontractor)	National	Awareness raising/advocacy. Reporting and supervision of Gantsi Task Force on Out of School Youth (GTFOSY) activities.
Save Our Souls children's villages (AIR subcontractor)	In and around Gaborone	Enrolling children in formal education, providing psychosocial support and access to services to support school attendance.
GTFOSY[a] (subcontracting affiliate of BNYC[b])	Gantsi District in the north	Enrolling children in formal education, providing psychosocial support and access to services to support school attendance.
Permaculture Trust (service providers)	Gantsi	Vocational training as part of GTFOSY project activities.
Gantsi Brigade Development Trust (service providers)	Gantsi	Vocational training as part of GTFOSY project activities.

Implementing Partners	Areas	Activities/Responsibilities
Botswana Council of Churches (withdrawn)	N/A	Initial local implementing partner responsible to BNYC, who withdrew in 2005 due to concerns about their role.

Lesotho: Aimed to enroll 2,000 herd boys and OVC in nonformal education

Implementing Partners	Areas	Activities/Responsibilities
NGOC[c] (initial AIR subcontractor)	N/A	Responsible for national awareness-raising, policy related issues, and reporting/supervision of LANFE's activities until AIR suspended the agreement in 2007 due to financial irregularities.
LANFE[d] (final AIR subcontractor)	Mohales Hoek, Quthing and Mokhotlong Districts	Trained 63 animators and created and supported 58 learning centers providing literacy/vocational skills to 2,247 herd boys/OVC. Took over NGOC's role.
Lesotho Herd Boys Association	Maseru and Mohales Hoek	Received small financial support for diverse activities.

Namibia: Aimed to assist 1,775 OVC

Implementing Partners	Areas	Activities/Responsibilities
Africare (AIR subcontractor)	National level (Windhoek)	National Conference on Child Labor. Participation in TECL/PACC[e] policy initiatives.
Africare (AIR subcontractor)	Regional level (Caprivi)	OVC Forum/Child Labor forum. Awareness raising & coordination about OVC/WFCL.
Africare (AIR subcontractor)	Constituency level	OVC forums in six constituencies. Training about WFCL provided.
Africare (AIR subcontractor)	Community level	COPE[f] Clubs for 30 beneficiaries per school x 60 schools. *Heroes Books.[g]* Resource Exchange Program. Gardens (set up by schools or caregivers). COPE/Caregivers Clubs.

South Africa: Target: 600 girls

Implementing Partners	Areas	Activities/Responsibilities
Khulisa (AIR subcontractor)	National/ Regional	Responsible for RECLISA implementation in South Africa and for supporting the M&E[h] component in all countries.
Media in Education Trust & SA Department of Health	North West Province	Life Skills and NFE for teen mums in 26 schools at three project sites and project management training for principals and educators.

South Africa: Target: 650 OVC and out of school children

Implementing Partners	Areas	Activities/Responsibilities
Thembalethu Home-Based Care	Mpumalanga Province	Life Skills, material needs, and psychosocial support and help to obtain identity documents and project management training for principals and educators.

South Africa: Target: 1,300 vulnerable children

Implementing Partners	Areas	Activities/Responsibilities
NOAH	Gauteng Province: Soweto and Jo'burg	Life Skills training, Peer Support, Leadership workshops, and psychosocial support for residents enrolled in after-school programs, the Suitcase Project.[i]
South African Police Service	Gauteng Province: Soweto and Jo'burg	Adopt-a-Cop program—child labor/trafficking awareness.
Gauteng Department of Education	Gauteng Province: Soweto and Jo'burg	Life Skills, child trafficking awareness, the Suitcase Project, curricula development.

Swaziland: Aimed to support 2,000 school-aged children

Implementing Partners	Areas	Activities/Responsibilities
Save the Children Swaziland (AIR subcontractor)	Lowveld region	Providing school fees/uniforms. Creation of Child Labor Committees to support beneficiaries' welfare and provide psychosocial support. Various awareness-raising activities.

[a]   Gantsi Task Force on Out of School Youth (GTFOSY).
[b]   Botswana National Youth Council (BNYC).
[c]   Nongovernmental Organizations' Coalition on the Rights of a Child (NGOC).
[d]   Lesotho Association of Nonformal Education (LANFE).
[e]   Project Advisory Committee on Child Labor (PACC).
[f]   Community-Based Orphan Care Protection and Empowerment Project (COPE).
[g]   The *Heroes Book* is a psychosocial tool, and assists OVC to create stories depicting themselves as heroes. *Heroes Books* are books that the children create themselves, and are generally organized into 10 chapters: (1) Myself; (2) My hero in my life; (3) My first memory; (4) My family road; (5) My community; (6) My problem; (7) My name; (8) My shining moment; (9) My tricks and tactics; and (10) The hero me.
[h]   Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E).
[i]   The Suitcase Project is an art therapy program.

Thus it can be seen that RECLISA involved a wide range of activities across the five countries where it intervened, touching both rural and urban environments and involving a considerable number of organizations through a total of seven subcontractors which, in some cases, worked through other organizations to implement the project. While many of these organizations are worthy of individual mention, in the regional context Khulisa is the most significant, in that it was responsible for supporting the monitoring and evaluation component of the project in all five RECLISA countries, in addition to its role in South Africa. A further aspect of RECLISA is its effective collaboration with IPEC's project Towards the Elimination of Child Labor, which operated simultaneously in the same countries, working at a policy level to develop national

Action Plans to Eliminate Child Labor. The project also organized a series of child labor conferences, regular regional partner meetings, and training opportunities.

The AIR regional team of five people is made up of the project director, a specialist in education and evaluation, a child labor and education associate, the finance/administration manager, and an administrative assistant.

III   EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

The final evaluation looked at the project as a whole and its overall impact in relation to its stated targets and objectives. The activities carried out during the four years of the Cooperative Agreement are reviewed and assessed with regards to their relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.

This evaluation aims to—

- Help individual organizations identify areas of good performance and areas where project implementation can be improved.

- Assist OCFT to learn more about what is or is not working in terms of the overall conceptualization and design of EI projects within the broad OCFT technical cooperation program framework.

- Assess the degree to which objectives relevant to the country-specific situation they address have been achieved.

- Assess progress in terms of children's working and educational status (i.e., withdrawal and prevention from the worst forms of child labor; enrollment, retention, completion of educational programs).

The evaluation addresses issues of project design and implementation, sustainability and impact, and provides an opportunity for AIR, USDOL, and national stakeholders to identify key achievements, as well as shortfalls and other factors that may have affected project progress. It aims to identify lessons learned, effective strategies, and models of intervention for the future, and assesses the efficiency of project management at both country and regional levels. It also looks at how recommendations from the midterm evaluation were implemented and to what effect.

In sum, the present evaluation is an objective inquiry which can facilitate and encourage the development and future use of successful aspects of the project. Ultimately, the purpose is to ensure that vulnerable children's needs are being met through project interventions and that the best possible use is made of lessons learned and emerging good practice. It is designed to be a learning process.

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IV   EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was carried out by three evaluators, one covering South Africa and Botswana, one for Namibia and Swaziland, and the team leader who covered Lesotho and regional aspects of the project. Each evaluator provided a report for each of the countries they visited, which then served to create a global analysis and synthesis of regional findings.

DESK REVIEW

After an analysis of the purpose and scope of the evaluation and the specific questions in the Terms of Reference (TOR), the evaluators reviewed key project documents including—

- The RECLISA Cooperative Agreement.

- RECLISA Project Document.

- Country Needs Assessments.

- Project Performance Management Plans.

- Various RECLISA Fact Sheets.

- Technical Progress Reports.

- The Midterm Evaluation reports and project responses to recommendations.

- Country specific documents as appropriate.

CONFERENCE CALLS WITH USDOL AND AIR

The evaluators spoke to the USDOL project manager who clarified and explained aspects of the TOR and outlined some expectations concerning the evaluation. They also spoke to AIR personnel in both the United States and South Africa. Due to the difficult experience that the midterm evaluation had been for all concerned, this call was particularly important in beginning to establish a climate of mutual understanding.

AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL

The evaluators travelled to Southern Africa at the beginning of May 2008, and then spent five days in Pretoria working with each other and AIR personnel. This enabled them to develop the evaluation instruments and a common approach, and to gain an understanding of the successes and challenges of RECLISA from the regional perspective. Towards the end of the evaluation the team leader worked with AIR personnel specifically to look at how the regional approach has functioned and its advantages and disadvantages. She was joined by the evaluator for Botswana and South Africa who contributed to some general feedback and discussion with AIR in this regard. Regional-level visits also included TECL, Khulisa, and the U.S. Labor Officer, who has

taken a keen interest in the project since it began. At the end of the evaluation, representatives from subcontracting organizations took part in a final stakeholders meeting in Pretoria, where initial findings across the region were shared and discussed.

AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

The evaluators spent from 4 to 12 days in their respective countries, defined to some extent by logistics and the dates of school holidays. The sites for field visits in each country were selected in consultation with implementing partners, with the aim of covering a cross-section of activities to include those that were both more and less successful, and some of the less accessible project sites. Field visits in each country included—

- **Interviews with subcontractors** to discuss issues concerning project implementation, management, monitoring, and sustainability.

- **Interviews at the national level** including representatives from government and relevant organizations.

- **Community visits** and discussions with children, parents, teachers, and local leaders.

- **Stakeholder meetings or partner debriefs** to share and discuss initial findings.

V   FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This summary report looks at how the project responded to national education and child labor environments, the strategies it developed, the activities it implemented, and how sustainable they are likely to be, under three headings:

- Project Design and Implementation.

- Regional Aspects of Management, Capacity Building, and Awareness Raising.

- Sustainability and Impact.

The findings of the evaluation are organized around the questions posed by USDOL in the TOR, taking the opportunity not only to respond to each question but to expand on the issues concerned as appropriate. Conclusions and recommendations complete the evaluation of the relevant issues. The report aims to summarize the findings of the five country reports, placing emphasis on regional aspects of the project.

5.1   PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

5.1.1   RECLISA Implementation

While overall project design didn't change very much, circumstances on the ground led to a number of variations of implementation plans in order to meet challenges as they arose. Those that were common to several countries are discussed here, alongside regional aspects of project design that contributed to the overall success of project implementation.

Subcontractors and Local Implementing Partners: AIR readily admits that it would have been a good idea to carry out some sort of institutional and capacity assessment before entering into agreements with organizations to implement RECLISA in different countries. NGOC, the initial subcontractor in Lesotho, proved not to have the necessary organizational and financial management skills, resulting in delays to implementation and ultimately to the suspension of their involvement. The withdrawal of Botswana Council of Churches (BCC) as a local implementer in Botswana led to a change in focus, since the project was designed to exploit their expertise in working with street children. Because their replacement, Save Our Souls children's villages (SOS), had different skills and experience, the emphasis was changed to enrolling OVC at risk of child labor into formal education. In both Lesotho and Botswana, AIR started out using a two-tier management system, whereby subcontractors signed further agreements with other local organizations to implement aspects of the project. This proved not only more expensive in terms of administration and support costs, but also more complex to operate, and as a rule is not recommended (at least, not unless the primary subcontractor is a highly competent and developed organization such as Khulisa in South Africa).

Role of Government: In South Africa, Lesotho, and Botswana the anticipated role of government changed somewhat as the project evolved. In South Africa this led to a change in strategy that ultimately proved very positive. Instead of working directly in schools as planned, Khulisa identified NGOs and community-based organizations to implement project activities at each location, with approval from the Department of Education. Engaging civil society organizations as implementers resulted in the evolution of a more varied and holistic approach, improved efficacy, and greater potential for sustainability. In Lesotho it was envisaged that the government would ultimately take over support for the herd boys' learning centers but this did not prove viable, leaving a large hole in the project's strategy for sustainability. In Botswana, public advocacy concerning child labor was somewhat curtailed due to a request from government for time to carry out a Labor Force Survey to establish the extent of child labor. Thought the survey results have not yet been made public, the project concentrated on advocacy at government level and support for TECL through PACC meetings.

Work Status Tracking: RECLISA did not succeed in adequately tracking the work status of children and this seems to be linked to a fundamental difference between AIR's understanding of the child labor aspect of the project and that of USDOL. For USDOL the withdrawal/prevention of children from child labor was or should have been inherent in project design from the start, whereas AIR focused on enrollment in educational opportunities; as the case of Lesotho demonstrates, this is not necessarily the same thing.[10] Measuring withdrawal/prevention clearly implies tracking work status, whereas measuring enrollment does not. While it is true that the USDOL's common indicators at the start of the project were called enrollment, retention, and completion, the definition of enrollment[11] makes it clear that only children who have been removed or prevented from WFCL should be counted, which became more explicit when the name of the indicator was changed to withdrawal/prevention in 2005. USDOL can be excused for thinking that this was understood from the start because the project document states that *"RECLISA will withdraw or prevent at least 10,000 children from involvement in the worst forms of child labor by directly improving their access to educational opportunities and reaching out to parents, community members, school administrators, and policy makers."[12]* Nevertheless, it is difficult to understand why USDOL did not make more of an attempt to ensure that an effective work status tracking system was in place, both before the Regional Child Labor Conference in July 2006, when they raised the issue with RECLISA headquarters staff and representatives of partner agencies, and after the midterm evaluation in responding to the suggestion that additional funds might be needed.[13] As a result of these findings, reinforced by the audit that followed, AIR developed a questionnaire for use in tracking work status, but it was not country specific and partners were not able to apply it on a regular basis; thus, while it did provide a snapshot of working practice, the 'tracking' component was lacking. However, what is important for the future is ensuring that grantees understand that creating effective and locally

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[10] In Lesotho, LANFE enrolled herd boys in NFE classes for two hours a day, outside their normal working hours.

[11] "Children of school age (6–18) who have been removed from or at risk of entering the worst forms of child labor and are matriculated in an educational program supported by an Education Initiative project in a given year" (USDOL's Management Procedures and Guidelines, 2004).

[12] RECLISA project document, pg. 19.

[13] AIR continue to believe that their understanding about work status was reasonable, correct, and documented, and acted in good faith to implement the project in line with this perception. They agree that a robust work-status tracking system would have enhanced RECLISA, they disagree that its absence in any way represents lack of responsiveness to the project requirements and priorities originally agreed upon.

appropriate approaches to tracking children's work status needs to be an integral part of the project for a number of reasons. It helps to better comprehend children's patterns of working behavior, to encourage local understanding and identification of child labor, and last but not least, to give credibility to numbers of reported direct beneficiaries.

Administrative Burden: Project reporting and administration was challenging across the board and was further complicated by changing requirements from USDOL and the implementation of midterm evaluation and audit recommendations. Recording of hours worked on timesheets was a common source of confusion, which had serious repercussions in Swaziland when an audit finding prompted AIR to halt further cash advances until the issue was resolved. In Botswana, GTFOSY said that project-related administration turned their part-time posts into full-time employment, and LANFE in Lesotho expressed similar feelings.

Stretched Resources: In Botswana, while GTFOSY was able to implement all the planned activities, the lack of resources for implementation emerged as a persistent theme during interviews and observations. One of the GTFOSY field workers raised this point by explaining that their remuneration was acceptable for part-time work, but the administrative responsibilities transformed their GTFOSY work into a full-time job. In Lesotho, the number of learning centers was increased from 30 to 58 without any increase in paid LANFE staff to support the work. One project officer was responsible for monitoring and supporting all 58 centers across three districts, including the supervision of five volunteer roving animators. This is extremely physically demanding considering the distances and terrain involved, and made it impossible for her to visit each center on a monthly basis. Until the beginning of 2008, RECLISA covered the salaries of LANFE's director, accountant, driver, and secretary for only eight days a month, while they reported being regularly required to put in many more hours in order to complete project work. While it is normal for organizational staff with multiple responsibilities to be billed part-time to a specific project, it is also normal for the project to cover the proportion of time that is dedicated to project business, and this was certainly not the case for LANFE's driver and is questionable concerning the administrative staff. RECLISA certainly stretched its resources to the limits to reach its targets, at some cost to the individuals involved in implementation. When pay and conditions do not adequately reflect the value of the work being done, staff health and morale tend to suffer, which affects quality of life and, inevitably, the quality of work with children, teachers, and communities.

Challenging Environments: RECLISA was implemented in a range of urban and rural environments, one of the most challenging of which was the mountainous terrain of Lesotho. In the Gantsi district of Botswana contact between project staff and beneficiaries involved regular travel over vast distances on poor roads. However it was not only the physical conditions that were challenging. Cultures where children traditionally work made raising awareness of child labor difficult in all RECLISA countries, particularly in poor communities in remote rural areas. One particular aspect of project design in Botswana is worthy of mention because it is probably the single example of an inappropriate strategy that was not addressed or subsequently changed.[14] The retention of children in formal education is extremely problematic when dealing with Remote Area Dwellers (RAD) because of the marginalization of the San people,

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[14] AIR does not agree that RECLISA' interventions in Gantsi were inappropriate since the project could not take responsibility for the inadequacies of the state education system.

the inappropriate nature of government hostels (a common ratio of 1 caregiver to 200 children), and lack of appropriate curricula offered in a language that the children can understand. None of these issues were recognized or addressed by project design, and hence implementation was unable to address the root causes of the resulting truancy, resulting in a situation described as "mopping the floor while the tap is still running" by the implementing partner.

Successful Regional Aspects of Project Design: These include the synergy and collaboration with the TECL project, which while it may not always have been easy, certainly enhanced the combined impact of both projects. RECLISA's series of child labor conferences were valuable contributions to awareness of child labor across the region, particularly at government levels. The regional design enabled shared learning and exchange of experience between project partners, with practical results such as the wider use of Namibia's *Heroes Books,* in addition to the opportunities for networking and added motivation inherent in being part of a regional initiative.

5.1.2   RECLISA Design

As might be expected, some assumptions made by project design required modification in light of experience. Some assumptions were made concerning the availability of local facilities and personnel without fully investigating the consequences or conditions attached. For example, project-related wear and tear on the GTFOSY vehicle put it out of commission, but by then USDOL considered it too late for a project-purchased replacement, which made implementation more challenging. AIR also underestimated the degree of technical and capacity-building support necessary for enabling the majority of implementing partners to manage data collection and reporting requirements. These are all elements that need to be considered realistically when engaged in project design, but are typical of the sort of issues that are difficult to predict and that any project will normally have to deal with during implementation. There were also a number of assumptions about the role that governments would play, some of which did not prove viable.

There are probably two more serious assumptions, one specific and one general. The specific has already been touched on in the previous response and concerns Gantsi district project activities in Botswana. The specific assumption was that it would be in the best interests of San children to be enrolled into the formal school system; however, the findings of the evaluation in Botswana call this into question. The general assumption was that sufficient resources were allocated to each activity to enable it to be implemented effectively, but the national reports draw attention to a number of instances where activities were underfunded in relation to the target numbers of children.

The basis of any intervention is that it should be in the best interests of the children concerned, which is questionable where Gantsi project activities are concerned. One of the dangers of a regional approach is less in-depth analysis of country-specific situations, and USDOL and other key stakeholders need to be aware of this when developing future regional projects. Grantees also need to tread a delicate path between presenting a project proposal that will win the bid, and ensuring that the suggested activities can realistically meet project objectives and targets and contribute to the five USDOL goals. USDOL needs to make an assessment of ambitious proposals to assess how realistic they are in practice, because underfunded activities are inevitably less effective.

5.1.3 Design's Fit into Existing Efforts

In most RECLISA countries there were few, if any, existing efforts to combat WFCL, apart from the TECL project that ran in parallel. RECLISA contributed to raising levels of government awareness of the issues, and to varying degrees that of the communities where it worked. It served to draw the attention of many of the implementing organizations to issues around child labor, which then influenced their overall approach to working with children.

Project countries are more focused on developing OVC policies to cope with the effects of the HIV pandemic than on child labor; project activities contributed to such policies, in many cases offering more effective and easily accessible services than those provided by under-resourced and poorly coordinated government departments. The majority of project services filled a gap that other interventions were not addressing, ranging from new NFE opportunities to the all important psychosocial and material support that enables vulnerable and traumatized children to attend school. Project design fit very well into government education programs, and often demonstrated how initiatives to combat child labor might be integrated into educational services. Many project activities made positive and lasting contributions to government services, such as sharing the project database of children with local education authorities in Gantsi, through curriculum development, and through police training on child labor/trafficking issues in South Africa.

5.1.4 USDOL Goals

The short answer to whether or not the design adequately supported the five major goals of USDOL-funded technical assistance projects is *yes*. The project met its overall target of enrolling over 10,000 vulnerable children in educational opportunities. The only country where there is any debate of this is in Lesotho, where technically, most project beneficiaries were not withdrawn from exploitive child labor because they continued to work while attending literacy and vocational skills classes; this is discussed in detail in the country report. Children from other countries were mostly reported as prevented from child labor due to their attendance in full-time education.

RECLISA contributed to strengthening policies on child labor by raising awareness through its child labor conferences, its collaboration with TECL, participation in national PACC meetings, and input to the national APECs. The project also built national capacity to combat child labor, particularly in South Africa, through curriculum development and police training; and in Lesotho it developed a new educational provision for children engaged in or at risk of engaging in exploitive labor.

In countries where education is academically orientated, with very limited provision of vocational-skills training or services for disadvantaged groups of children, the project raised awareness of the importance of education for all children through its work; thus, ensuring that marginalized and vulnerable groups had the necessary support to benefit from educational services.

Through training their personnel on how to use a database, RECLISA did a lot to increase the capacity of national NGOs to collect and record data. This leaves the organizations concerned in a stronger position to both provide and exploit reliable data in the future.

The project made concerted efforts to ensure the long-term sustainability of its efforts, with varying degrees of success. In Swaziland, Save the Children has successfully approached the Ministry of Education, which will take over part of the funding of the RECLISA beneficiaries until the end of their schooling; this means that the end of the project will not cause a major disruption in these children's lives. At the other end of the spectrum, in Lesotho there is currently no plan to enable the project's learning centers to continue, other than the commitment of the volunteer facilitators and LANFE. However since RECLISA has facilitated considerable capacity building with a whole range of different groups across its five countries, now communities, schools, and NGOs have more awareness about what kind of support is possible and are hence better placed to look for the resources to provide it.

5.1.5   Direct Educational Interventions

This question provides an opportunity to look at the range of activities offered by RECLISA across the five countries of intervention and offer a qualitative assessment of each intervention. Any analysis of changes in enrollment and dropout rates is covered in the national reports, and while the project brought about improved enrollment and attendance in many of the areas where it worked, changes were rarely statistically significant (if it was possible to measure them at all). This was due to the fact that the project worked with limited numbers of at-risk children in each location. The exception to this was Lesotho, the only country where RECLISA provided completely new education services in districts where nothing similar had existed previously. The table below does not limit itself to direct educational interventions offered by the project, but also covers the important material and/or psychosocial support services that supported these interventions in all countries.

Table 2: Description of Activities and Effectiveness in all RECLISA Countries

Botswana: OVC and Remote Area Dwellers (San children)

Activity	Effectiveness
Enrollment in formal education	In Gaberone, most children stayed in school. In Gantsi, significant truancy was followed up by project staff.
Provision of school uniforms	Extremely important to support attendance and avoid stigmatization.
Vocational skills (Gantsi)	Successful pilots enabled access to state provision in some cases.
Psychosocial support and life skills training (Gaberone)	Limited success/implementation due to organizational constraints.
Weekend and holiday camps	Children enthusiastic and enjoyed the camps.
Art therapy workshops and counseling (Gantsi)	Project staff reported more open dialogue as a result.

Lesotho: Herd boys and other OVC

Activity	Effectiveness
Literacy, numeracy, and life skills	Students learned to read, write, and look after themselves better; communities reported reduced petty crime and greater social skills among learners. A limited number of students transitioned to formal school.

Activity	Effectiveness
Vocational skills	Learners proved to be extremely creative; the skills were seen as relevant and adapted to local life styles, and as offering potential for income generation.
Provision of blankets, gum boots, and seeds for vocational training	Contributed to improving working conditions.

Namibia: OVC

Activity	Effectiveness
The Resource Exchange Program (REP)[a] and exemption of school fees for OVC	Worked well, and schools may continue to waive fees after the agreed period.[b]
COPE clubs—psychosocial support	Successfully helped to alleviate sense of stigma and isolation among OVC.
Gardens	Helped school agriculture classes and distributed seed to caregivers.

South Africa: OVC, teen mums and children out of school

Activity	Effectiveness
Enrollment/retention of vulnerable children in formal education	Most children stayed in school; staff regularly follow up absent students.
Provision of school uniforms, exemption from/payment of school fees, support for food security and accessing social grants	Significant and effective support services to motivate and enable students to enroll and stay in school.
Psychosocial services	An indispensable element of a holistic intervention for OVCs.
Life skills curricula	Well designed, content rich, engaging, employing experiential techniques that enabled children to become better equipped to manage the risks they are exposed to.

Swaziland: OVC

Activity	Effectiveness
Provision of school uniform and/or payment of school fees	Enabled school enrollment for beneficiaries.
Follow-up from Child Labor Committees	More successful for children in primary schools than those in secondary schools.
Skills training for child headed families	Initially took place in two schools but the halt to cash advances prevented further implementation.

[a] REP helps improve the quality of the education provided through provision of school materials, such as gardening or sport equipment, or books, paper, or other materials needed at school. The schools, on their side, exempt OVC from school fees for a period of two years as a 'payment' of this provision of materials.

[b] After the evaluation, RECLISA provided additional resources for all 60 cooperating schools in exchange for commitments to keep all beneficiaries enrolled until graduation—thereby securing this component of the exit strategy.

RECLISA enrolled most of its beneficiaries in formal education and assisted them to remain in school through a range of material and psychosocial services. It also created new NFE centers in Lesotho, where it worked principally with herd boys who were not previously attending any form of educational provision.

5.1.6   Identification of Beneficiaries

In the March 2008 Technical Progress Report, RECLISA reported having withdrawn 2,383 children (2,038 boys and 345 girls) and prevented 7,777 children (3,727 boys and 4,050 girls) from entering child labor and providing them with direct educational services; a total of 10,160 direct beneficiaries. The withdrawn/prevented figures below are those in the March 2008 TPR.

Table 3: Beneficiary Identification for all RECLISA Countries

Country	Beneficiary Identification Process	Child Labor Component
Botswana Withdrawn: 20; Prevented:1,146	**Gaberone:** Teachers working in the SOS school communities identify children and submit their details to SOS, community members also identify children for registration and enrollment.	There are no deliberate mechanisms for identifying children already in child labor
Botswana Withdrawn: 49; Prevented: 438	**Gantsi:** GTFOSY rely on their extensive network in the local community to identify eligible children, enhanced by their local knowledge and language competency.	Children may engage temporarily in labor while living on a farm or cattle station and then return home.
Lesotho Withdrawn: 2,247	Learners are identified by their communities (families or employers) and their eligibility is confirmed by a local leader.	The vast majority of learners were working herd boys, with a small number of other vulnerable out-of-school children, including some girls.
Namibia Prevented: 1,792	Headmasters and COPE patrons identify school children that are orphans and/or in a vulnerable situation (e.g., living in child-headed households) and assess need against established project criteria, including household food security, ability to pay school fees, and the child's psychosocial health.	The project targeted Namibian OVC at risk of child labor. Many OVC from Zimbabwe and Angola cross the border into Caprivi to seek work but were not eligible for project support, because they remain largely outside the school system.
South Africa Withdrawn: 67; Prevented: 2,581	In the **North West**, local clinics were used to identify teen mums.	Teen mothers tend to become susceptible to child labor out of necessity.
	In **Mpumalanga,** beneficiaries were initially identified by local community workers and teachers, a process that was subsequently effectively augmented with trained Peer Support Leaders.	Evidence suggests some child trafficking across the border with Swaziland and the impact of HIV/AIDS has been particularly severe here.

Country	Beneficiary Identification Process	Child Labor Component
	In **Gauteng**, beneficiaries were selected from children known to NOAH*—either orphans in residential care or vulnerable children reached through after school care services.	Interviews conducted with beneficiaries suggest that many are at risk of being engaged in WFCL.
Swaziland Prevented: 1,820	Beneficiaries were identified by project staff, teachers, and/or Child Labor Committees working with traditional leaders. They are orphans and/or particularly vulnerable due to situations such as living in a child-headed households or a household needing food aid.	A large number of project beneficiaries were not enrolled in school at the time of identification. Based on their stories and on the identification processes, they may well have qualified as "withdrawn." Since it was difficult to prove that they had been in abusive work situations, it was agreed with AIR to count them as "prevented."

* Nurturing Orphans of AIDS for Humanity (NOAH).

AIR developed a detailed assessment/qualification form. RECLISA beneficiaries were largely identified because they were vulnerable children (under 18 years of age) at risk of exposure to WFCL due to their circumstances and were, for the most part, correctly counted as prevented. Local communities were usually involved in the identification process, alongside teachers and project staff. The case of Lesotho is a little different and is dealt with in detail in the national report. Suffice it to say that it is only technically correct that the 83 learners who transferred to formal schooling were withdrawn. Due to lack of effective tracking of work status there is no evidence that the vast majority changed their work patterns, although there is no dispute that their quality of life was significantly enhanced by their attendance at the project's learning centers. However, since they clearly do not qualify as prevented either, the challenge is to find a way of counting them among the projects direct beneficiaries, where they clearly belong by any normal understanding of the term.

5.1.7   Awareness-Raising Activities

In most countries, public awareness raising at the national level focused on media campaigns surrounding RECLISA's child labor conferences, which were in themselves valuable tools in sensitizing national leaders to the issues. Collaboration with TECL and the associated participation in PACC meetings also played its part. In Botswana, the project respected its agreement with the government to await the results of its Labor Survey before speaking publicly about child labor, but behind the scenes lobbying had its effect and contributed to the development of the national APEC. While governments were already aware of child labor issues to some extent, the project helped to focus their attention on possible strategies to do something about it, even if concrete action is slow to materialize.

At district levels, effects were more mixed. While local government staff in Gantsi talked of the importance of child labor in their work, teachers did not demonstrate similar awareness.

Within the agricultural union the anti-child labor message was strong, but the complexities of the issue were expressed by one farmer: *"Kids should be at school. But I see a young guy on my*

farm for weeks doing nothing, he is not going to school, so I give him some fencing to do. He earns some money and learns a skill I know I can use later." In district education offices in Lesotho there was little sense that child labor was a pressing concern, but in Namibia, Africare created an effective child labor forum in Caprivi. In South Africa, awareness raising tended to be integrated into the project, as expressed by staff member Mpumalanga: *"Before RECLISA, nobody knew about child labor around here. Now we all know."*

At the local level, awareness raising was challenging in many project environments and the education message was often more easily assimilated than an understanding of child labor, as was certainly the case in Lesotho and Botswana. In the latter, children's increased awareness of their rights puts them in a stronger position to assert themselves in a culture where it is seen as normal for children to contribute to their family's income, and where the distinction between child work and child labor is new. In Namibia, the project succeeded in raising community awareness about the plight of OVC; and in South Africa, while not all communities showed a developed understanding of the issues, teachers in the North West were passionately opposed to child labor. Direct beneficiaries of RECLISA in South Africa were generally clear about what child labor and child trafficking are, and some have identified and reported instances of child exploitation.

It is perhaps Swaziland that provides the most interesting and developed example of community-level awareness raising, which is carried out through Child Labor Committees (CLCs) composed of influential community members, including a member of the traditional leader's Inner Council. At the start of the project, CLC messages were largely rejected, as it was considered inappropriate to talk about child work and child abuse to parents and caregivers. A CLC member explained: *"Parents were angry and said, 'Children need to work to become strong and productive."* However, the message created a real debate in the communities, and (according to the CLCs) most community members began to understand (and accept) the difference between harmful child labor and normal child work, in addition to the importance of education.

RECLISA succeeded in raising awareness about both child labor and education, to varying degrees at different levels and in different countries. National/government-focused activities were the most uniformly successful. As project activities moved closer to community level, awareness raising concerning child labor issues became more challenging; whereas, it was relatively easy to convince people of the importance of education. Attempts at measuring levels of awareness were less successful as the questionnaire developed failed to capture the specificities of the different intervention zones.

5.1.8   Midterm Recommendations

The midterm evaluation made some country-specific recommendations which are dealt with in the national reports, and a total of 18 recommendations at the regional level. At the time of the final evaluation, 4 of the 18 recommendations had been fully implemented, eight were in progress, and there were six for which no action was planned. AIR provided the following details.

Table 4: Completed Responses to Midterm Evaluation Recommendations

Completed Recommendations	Action Taken
Empower partners to provide psychosocial support.	AIR working with partners on best-practice briefing papers to share internally and with external stakeholders. Partners' meetings and site visits also used for this purpose.
Extrapolate and share successes and lessons learned with partners.	Best practices and lessons learned are shared with partners through e-mail and resource CD sent quarterly to all partners. Special session at July 2007 and Jan. 2008 partners' meeting.
Partner more proactively with TECL to provide input and obtain policy support.	RECLISA and TECL held a joint conference in Jan. 2008. RECLISA partners attend PACC meetings and share implementation experiences relevant to influencing the draft APEC. AIR/RECLISA shares TPRs with TECL (portion explicitly dedicated to lessons learned).
Hold strategic planning sessions with all partners.	Sessions held for all countries by mid-February.

Table 5: Ongoing Responses to Midterm Evaluation Recommendations

Ongoing Recommendations	Action Taken
Create greater government awareness of RECLISA goals and activities.	Began planning with partners in early 2007. Government visits began Aug. 2007. Notable progress made in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, and Swaziland, but impeded by the loss of NGOC in Lesotho.
Do not let vocational education fall by the wayside.	Funds added for Gantsi program. Gaborone and Lesotho courses started in late 2007. Micro enterprise training provided; training cascaded to learners in four countries; more in- country training planned.
Provide capacity-building workshops for partners.	Substantially enhanced site support visits (more frequent, more specific objectives). Follow-up capacity building, including close-out procedure, occurred at partners' meeting in Jan. 2008 in Namibia. Centralized technical and financial capacity-building training provided at the Botswana (July 2007) and Namibia (Jan. 2008) partners' meetings.
Budget needed to track work status.	No additional funding received or allocated towards work status tracking (this task integrated into current work plans). Regional office developed tools, collated and analyzed information.
Follow up continuously with conference participants.	Visits to key stakeholders started in August; more are planned. Investigating possibility of a newsletter for conference participants.
Provide consistent follow-up to financial management workshops.	Financial manager has continued her site visits through Jan. 2008. There was a follow-on financial training at the partners' meeting. Ongoing support remains through the regional office. AIR presented financial management workshops at the July 2007 and Jan. 2008 partners' meetings.
Assist partners with exit/handover strategies.	This work began at strategic planning meetings in early 2007. Refined sustainability matrices submitted with Sept. 2007 TPR. Country visits already in process.

Ongoing Recommendations	Action Taken
Develop materials to clarify child work vs. child labor.	The 2007 budget-revision exercise allocated to partners all funds requested for awareness-raising. AIR has worked with partners to begin using the TECL definition and material in the discussion documents on this distinction (generated by the APEC process).

The following were recommendations for which no action was planned, and the reasons given for their not being followed:

Table 6: Recommendations Not Taken from Midterm Evaluation

Recommendation	Reason Why No Action Planned
Inventory service providers for children's basic needs.	Beyond project scope.
Develop closer relations with each government and interested NGO/CBO to develop capacity around child labor.	Beyond project scope as stated (except for sustainability work, addressed in recommendations 2 and 16).
Work with World Food Program (WFP) to feed children daily	Beyond project scope (although Lesotho and Swaziland partners have developed good, informal relations with WFP).
Scan all national and international children's service providers in each country.	Beyond project scope.
USDOL should evaluate cost-effectiveness of regional approach.	For USDOL, not RECLISA. AIR recommends that the broad issue of the regional project design, as opposed to single-country projects, be assessed during the final evaluation.
Develop results-management system as proposed for South Africa.	RECLISA's results management systems already follow all USDOL guidelines and requirements.

The project took the midterm evaluation's recommendations very seriously and worked hard to implement those that they thought were feasible at both country and regional levels, thus significantly contributing to the quality and successes of the latter part of the project.

5.1.9   Local NGOs and Organizations

The principal challenges that RECLISA has faced in working with subcontractors are linked to capacity and organizational issues. With the notable exception of South Africa, where Khulisa has been highly effective in managing the implementation of the most complex of the country interventions through a range of selected partners, the other four countries have all had some degree of difficulty in coping with project administration and monitoring requirements.

Lesotho and Botswana had to contend with a two-tier management system that led to delays in the disbursement of funds and thus in implementation. Two partners proved to be unsuitable for their role: BCC withdrew early on in Botswana and, much later in the project cycle, AIR suspended the relationship with NGOC in Lesotho. Flow of funding and communication through several organizational tiers is subject to numerous potential blockages, and a rule of

thumb for the future might be to keep things as simple as possible and to carry out some kind of assessment of organizational and management capacity before entering into the partnership.

In Namibia, RECLISA was implemented by Africare as the sole subcontractor, and the relationship with AIR ran relatively smoothly without any major issues arising during the course of the project. Save the Children was also the sole implementing organization in Swaziland, but here a generally good relationship with AIR was somewhat strained due to some of the audit findings which proved to be problematic. This resulted in AIR taking the decision to halt further cash advances over an extended period during the last year of the project. A large part of the problem was due to a lack of understanding of and compliance with the project's timesheet requirements, which partners in other countries also found difficult.

The rigorous requirements of USDOL's Management Procedures and Guidelines were challenging not only for AIR but also for the majority of RECLISA's partner organizations. Communication surrounding finance, reporting, and administration caused problems in several countries. However, in view of the complexity of the project overall, the number of subcontractors and local partners, and the different sites of intervention, it is not surprising that some aspects of implementation proved challenging. Many issues were resolved successfully as they arose, thanks to the efforts and commitment of all those concerned.

5.2   REGIONAL ASPECTS OF MANAGEMENT, CAPACITY BUILDING, AND AWARENESS RAISING

5.2.1   RECLISA's Regional Approach

RECLISA's regional approach had two principal components. The first concerned *regional office activities* that facilitated and enabled country project activities and covered reporting to USDOL, partner capacity building, and general project administration, including—

- Support and training for monitoring against project indicators, tracking work/school status, and use of the Student Tracking System (STS). The STS software was provided by USDOL but had a number of operational shortcomings. In South Africa, Khulisa developed and used an alternative database, but time and resources did not permit this to be expanded to include other RECLISA countries. It has subsequently been adapted for used by a USDOL Child Labor project in Tanzania.

- Country/site visits, providing support as appropriate (for example, policy level advocacy).

- Logistical support (for example, with conference arrangements).

- Provision of information and materials such as teaching/learning aids, information CDs, and feedback on reports.

The second component concerned *regional project activities* that enhanced the overall project and provided added value, specifically due to the regional nature of the project, including—

- Collaboration with TECL.

- The child labor conferences.

- The RECLISA website.

- Promoting and organizing exchange visits between different implementing organizations.

- Regional partner training workshops such as the Making Cents Small enterprise training.

- Cross pollination between partners, enabling shared learning and experience.

There were both advantages and disadvantages to RECLISA's regional approach. Among the *advantages* was effective collaboration with TECL through a two-pronged strategy that enabled TECL's policy development to run alongside RECLISA's direct intervention activities in each project country, coordinated by the two project offices in South Africa. Collaboration took place at both national and regional levels, and both projects were involved in awareness raising and advocacy. This made it possible to raise the profile of child labor and influence a number of governments in the same geographic area, as well as conduct child labor conferences complementing national-level work. This provides a good example of ILO and USDOL child labor projects successfully working together. During a number of previous evaluations of USDOL and ILO Child Labor projects, the evaluator has found such cooperation relatively rare, which suggests that the RECLISA experience is worthy of further scrutiny to identify elements that may be replicable in the future. A further important advantage of a regional approach is the opportunities it provides for shared learning and experience through partner networking; RECLISA increasingly exploited this aspect as the project developed, enabling strategies such as the *Heroes Books* and COPE clubs to be shared and disseminated. A regional approach also gives a project a higher profile and provides a regional overview through its reports. In addition, a regional grantee office is less expensive than supporting five national-level offices.

However there is also a downside; some of the *disadvantages* of working across several countries are the administrative and reporting complexities, as well as extensive travel which is expensive in terms of time, financially, and in human resources. This was certainly apparent where RECLISA is concerned, since project administration was challenging across the board and compiling six monthly TPRs from national reports was a lengthy and complex task. A further disadvantage is the possibility that country- or culture-specific needs will be overlooked and instead a generalized approach used, when tailor-made strategies are called for. This may have played a role in Lesotho, where AIR suggested measuring awareness through a written questionnaire in largely non-literate communities, and in the Gantsi District in Botswana, where it is apparent that the project intervention was not ideally adapted to the needs of San children. Furthermore, regional personnel have less possibility of developing relationships that might assist in advocacy and policy work at the national level, and are less available to support implementing partners, build capacity, and trouble shoot if necessary.

It isn't easy to say whether it would have been more effective and efficient to fund separate country programs instead of a single regional project, but some discussion of relevant factors raised and observed in the contexts concerned may prove useful:

In recognition of the challenging physical, cultural, and policy environments, **Lesotho** project initiatives might have benefitted if AIR had been based in the country. This would have avoided a three-tier management structure that didn't work well in practice, and could have enabled greater partner support in initiatives that involved developing entirely new NFE provisions. It might also have enabled more effective national networking to support sustainability strategies, and possibly—given the collaboration with TECL—more leverage within the country since TECL does not have a national level presence (which also applies to other countries). In the other countries, this is probably less evident due to the nature of the various interventions which used existing education provisions and generally had fewer logistical challenges.

In **Botswana,** a national approach could have avoided the three-tier system that complicated management and disbursement of funds and, as previously mentioned, made a more optimal intervention in Gantsi more likely. However, all project partners were positive about cross-pollination and would have liked more frequent and in-depth opportunities to explore and exploit this. Project staff also felt less isolated due to solidarity with colleagues in other countries. In **South Africa**, a national project would have also worked, since project partners demonstrated that they have the capacity to implement activities without sacrificing effectiveness or efficiency. However, the South African partners did mention benefitting from cross-pollination opportunities.

Save the Children in **Swaziland** were generally positive about the regional approach, but thought the project had been too focused on quantitative rather than qualitative results. Communication problems that were the root cause of audit-related issues would have been less likely to arise and more easily resolved had the AIR office been at the country rather than regional level. In **Namibia**, Africare was not so enthusiastic about the regional approach, although they appreciated and recognized the support they received from AIR and the opportunities for shared learning with other project partners. They would ideally have preferred to work directly with USDOL, and found that the regional approach delayed AIR's response time; suggesting that it might have been more effective if one person from AIR had been responsible for each country.

Of course, the approach used by RECLISA is not the only possible regional model. It is feasible to work in fewer countries, possibly covering a smaller geographical area and concentrating on cross-border initiatives, or interventions in areas where the same ethnic groups and cultures span several countries. In this way, a multi-country project has a number of commonalities in addition to the child labor theme. This is similar to RECLISA, in that participating countries are all severely affected by the HIV crisis and the project worked largely with OVC as a result of this. More focused intervention does not have to be limited to one country but needs to avoid working with too many communities experiencing different challenges, because it is difficult to identify and meet a wide range of specific needs within the limited time-span of one project.

Whether USDOL should continue to fund regional child-labor projects in Southern Africa depends on the child labor situation in the specific countries concerned, and any other initiatives in progress. If the funding is available for national as opposed to regional projects, national projects enable faster and more sustainable progress within a limited period of intervention. They more easily achieve the five USDOL objectives because attention and effort are focused on a single policy environment, enabling more comprehensive coverage of existing exposure or risk of exposure to child labor. As already indicated, regional projects provide added value and cover a wider geographical area, but inevitably have a less concentrated approach which risks diluting

the potential effectiveness of interventions. They do, however, enable USDOL to reach a range of countries for a more limited expenditure, in localities where child labor is not recognized and occurrence is not yet fully identified. National projects risk losing the benefits of cross-pollination, which were universally appreciated by RECLISA partners. Though it is possible to build this into a national project; either within the country or through networking with other organizations in neighboring countries, and it is certainly beneficial to do so.

5.2.2   USDOL Technical Assistance

AIR has appreciated USDOL's attention to detail, the level of interest in project implementation, and the support provided. Explanations regarding changes in the Management Procedures and Guidelines (MPG) requiring changes to project administration or implementation have always been forthcoming, but AIR personnel continue to find it difficult to understand how they can be expected to implement changes to the MPG made after they signed a cooperative agreement based on a previous version of the document. It does not seem reasonable to expect grantees to implement new requirements that require additional expenditure without any budgetary revision. An example provided by AIR concerns the new requirement in Section 2 of the November 2007 MPG under *Roles and Responsibilities of USDOL and Grantees,* which states—

> *USDOL supports the provision of healthy learning environments for children. USDOL expects that grantees will seek to ensure that goods, services, and schools (including restroom facilities), sponsored by and/or associated with the grantee, partner, and/or subcontractors are safe and pose no threat to the mental or physical well-being of project beneficiaries.*

This is, of course, an admirable requirement; but within the context of RECLISA working in Southern Africa, it posed a number of challenges that were not possible to rectify within the existing project budget (e.g., lack of toilets). The audit also highlighted other shortcomings relating to school conditions. This put AIR in the uncomfortable position of being in technical contravention of USDOL regulations, which they have worked extremely hard to apply throughout project implementation.

On a more general note, it is far from certain that many schools in the region pose no threat to the mental or physical well-being of project beneficiaries, as many are characterized by unacceptable levels of violence including corporal punishment, sexual abuse, and inadequate provision for marginalized groups. The evaluator wonders whether this requirement will enable future USDOL projects to put greater emphasis on quality-related issues as opposed to focusing on access.

USDOL and AIR have a somewhat different perspective concerning the change of indicator from "enrolled" to "withdrawn/prevented." AIR saw this as a fundamental change, whereas USDOL pointed out that it was more superficial, since the description of the indicator did not change in substance. This difference in understanding was most significant in Lesotho, and is discussed in the national report.

While AIR found USDOL's feedback on technical reports useful and informative, it would have been even more so had it come a bit more quickly, since the project had often moved on by the

time such comments arrived. Overall, communication and technical assistance was adequate and was generally appreciated by AIR, but some issues still remain unresolved.

In light of comments from partners and her own observations, the evaluator would suggest that the degree of importance attributed to GPRA-reporting leads to considerable emphasis being placed on the number of direct beneficiaries served by the project. While this resulted in the project reaching and surpassing its target, its implications need to be understood. USDOL projects have five major goals, only one of which concerns the numbers of children withdrawn/prevented from child labor. If this one goal is given disproportionate importance the others will inevitably suffer. Policy work, raising awareness, data collection, and sustainability are all essential components of the struggle to end child labor. The most significant of these for the communities where projects are implemented is sustainability. If sufficient time, effort, and resources are not allocated to this end, USDOL projects may serve a high number of individual children during a short period in their lives, but interventions will do little for their younger brothers and sisters as overall perceptions of child labor and the environments where it takes place are unlikely to change. To bring child labor to an end, the communities concerned need to participate in the process and to be convinced of the necessity and possibility of alternative lifestyles for their children; this takes both time and focused interventions based on participatory approaches. USDOL's common indicators, measuring the numbers of children withdrawn/prevented from child labor, are used to summarize the impact of its interventions across the world to Congress and other U.S. Government agencies, and are thus the public face of the Child Labor program. It is important to remain vigilant to ensure that the withdrawn/prevented goal is implemented in balance with the other four, and that it does not become the overriding objective.

5.2.3   Capacity Building

The main areas covered by AIR's extensive capacity-building efforts included reporting requirements for finance and contract management, monitoring requirements, the identification of best practices, sustainability strategies, and microenterprise training. Strategies and activities included both formal and informal capacity building, covering regional and national training workshops, partner meetings and exchange visits, regular country visits by a range of AIR and Khulisa personnel, and regular phone calls to discuss and follow up issues with subcontractors, in addition to the provision of information and support documentation.

In **Lesotho,** capacity building helped LANFE to implement the project and gave them some valuable input regarding monitoring procedures and database management. LANFE personnel have new ideas about how to monitor and record the results of their activities, and recognize the usefulness of such data in measuring progress and preparing project proposals. AIR considers that of all project partners, LANFE probably made the most progress in terms of developing their capacity to implement a project such as RECLISA. However, administrative and monitoring requirements have remained challenging to the end and it is difficult to know how to comply with rigorous financial reporting requirements when working in a rural mountain environment where receipts are little known among largely non-literate communities.

In **Botswana**, BNYC adopted the policy tracking matrix for use in their advocacy work. While, as an advocacy organization, sophisticated monitoring wasn't of particular benefit to them, it did help other partners to implement the project more effectively. This was demonstrated by the significantly enhanced monitoring capacity of SOS personnel, who used the data to adjust the management of the project and thus improve their results, and will continue to use these skills in their other outreach programs. GTOFSY found that tracking children helped their enrollment task, as they now have better quality data than the schools, and education officers are using this information in their work. Partners in Botswana concurred that since administration was without exception a burden, technical capacity building had been very important.

Africare personnel in **Namibia** generally felt that they had benefited from the AIR's capacity-building activities. At midterm, the director, the project manager, and the accountant were reassigned; therefore, the new project staff needed a great deal of training and support from AIR. Training in data analysis and accounting was seen as particularly useful because it could be transferred to other projects.

Save the Children **Swaziland** also felt that the organization had benefited from RECLISA's capacity-building activities, and some administrative procedures that initially created difficulties were subsequently adopted as standard practice across the organization. However, Save suggested that in-depth training on project procedures and administration should have taken place before the project began, because they felt the initial instructions and training had been insufficient. They also pointed out that the contract for project implementation was "very complicated" and that the organization would have benefited from help in better understanding project requirements and obligations. Save staff members said they would have liked a more structured training plan and more written communication, as opposed to instructions over the phone. Both Save and AIR commented on a lack of communication from the other partner, and it seems likely that this was at the root of a number of administrative issues which might have been resolved more quickly by better communication on both sides.

Khulisa, as the lead implementing partner in **South Africa**, did not require capacity building and was able to take care of administrative issues arising from any deficit in management capacity among local South African partners. South African partners were selected because they could provide access to beneficiaries and had proven implementation capacity in the activities they were required to fulfill.

Overall AIR, supported by Khulisa, made commendable efforts to provide the necessary capacity building and were to a large extent successful. Particular mention should be made of RECLISA's effective monitoring and evaluation system that resulted in accurate reporting and at the same time built partner capacity; such a system is particularly important in a regional project, where it becomes increasingly complex to justify the data from multiple sources. The RECLISA website served not only to inform those outside the project of its activities, but also served as a tool for sharing information between partners. Various comments and observations during the evaluation suggested possibilities for enhancing future understanding of administrative procedures, and these are covered in the recommendations of this report.

5.2.4   The Audit

This report needs to make some mention of the RECLISA audit that took place in 2007 because apart from the influence it had on RECLISA implementation, which is discussed in some detail in the Swaziland country report, it raises some issues that are of more general significance for USDOL child labor projects.

The first of these concerns the audit finding that a number of young people over the age of 18 were among RECLISA's reported direct beneficiaries, thus contravening USDOL's perfectly reasonable rule that beneficiaries should be under the age of 18 at the time of enrollment. The issue concerns the appropriate action to take should an audit identify over-age beneficiaries, and the weight that should be given to such findings in the African environment. Whereas in the United States a birth certificate (unless it is a forgery) is an infallible document created and authorized at the time of a child's birth, in Africa the situation is very different. The majority of children are born in rural settings far from local government offices where birth certificates are issued. Many parents are extremely poor and a birth certificate is often not a priority for expenditure. Hence, when children wish to enroll in school, many find that they do not have this crucial document. They may succeed in obtaining a certificate through legal proceedings or otherwise, but the date on it is unlikely to reflect their true age; not through any wish to deceive but due to the fact that in largely non-literate communities the exact date of someone's birth is not particularly important and is unlikely to have been recorded or remembered. Many young people do not possess a birth certificate of any kind. Faced with this situation, an audit finding that is then used either to exclude a child from project activities or to penalize the grantee is potentially based on unreliable evidence. The evaluator is not suggesting that the rule needs to change, but simply that the auditors might benefit from some understanding of the African environment that they are working in; and in addition, that the age criteria be applied with some degree of flexibility if it concerns a very small percentage of direct beneficiaries—as was the case in the RECLISA situation.

The second issue concerns the length of time it takes to decide on what action should be taken as a result of audit findings. In the case of RECLISA, where the audit took place in May 2007, no decision has yet been made over a year later as the project draws to a close in July 2008. If a grantee does not know what action USDOL will take as a result of audit findings, it is likely to assume a worst case scenario and take corresponding action, as AIR did concerning Save the Children Swaziland, resulting in suspension of payments over several months. Thus, the slow pace of decisionmaking can have a significant impact on service provision to vulnerable children. However, it is important to point out that it is AIR's responsibility to ensure compliance with the terms of the cooperative agreement, including proper project implementation and oversight of subcontractors. AIR could have continued to work with Save the Children in Swaziland to ensure that project goals were met, pending the resolution of audit findings, and it was their decision to suspend funding.

5.2.5   Child Labor Conferences

National and regional child labor conferences raised wider awareness through media coverage, attracted high-level government representatives, and promoted discussion of the issues. The later conferences were organized in collaboration with TECL, which further enhanced the relationship

between the work being done by the two projects. The conferences helped to improve national coordination and networking because all the actors working on WFCL or related topics became known to each other, and RECLISA partners became linked with child labor issues in the public arena.

A Description of the Regional Child Labor Conference in South Africa

The purpose of the conference was to heighten awareness of issues surrounding child labor in Southern Africa among individuals who have both a vested interest in and a mandate to effect positive change in the area of child labor. More than 270 delegates attended the conference from the countries in the region. Fourteen key speakers, 62 papers, and four streams of activity (advocacy, education, support services, and government) were highlights of the conference. A conference Website was established and updated, media coverage before and after the conference was extensive, conference proceedings were distributed to all participants, and a number of outputs were developed, including: A Conference Declaration, Action Plans shared jointly by Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, and Swaziland, and an Action Plan for South Africa.

—From the National Report

5.3   SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT

5.3.1   Exit Strategy

Whether the project designed and implemented an exit strategy that promotes long-term sustainability needs to be addressed on a country by country basis, due to the range of different activities that make up RECLISA. AIR encouraged partners to complete and use a sustainability matrix to assist their planning and played an advocacy role in negotiating with government in several countries. While all countries attempted to implement an effective exit strategy, the degree of sustainability regarding project achievements is varied. New knowledge about child labor will no doubt remain, but continuation of interventions is based on accessing the necessary funds and the commitment of local and national education authorities—which varies from country to country.

In **Botswana**, both SOS and GTFOSY have exit strategies in place that should ensure sustainability if they succeed in attracting alternative funding. SOS has designed a new project that incorporates a number of the RECLISA interventions (including child labor issues) and introduces some new, more community-orientated elements. GTFOSY have established the Thuto Isagto Development Trust, with RECLISA implementing partners on the board of trustees, and a potential donor is interested in funding the continuation of project interventions. However, the design of the project needs to be adapted to address the root causes of poor school attendance, and to capitalize on the successes of vocational training.

In **Lesotho**, the evaluation found no viable plan for the project's learning centers to continue to operate after the end of the project, since the initial strategy that envisaged the government taking them over had not proved feasible. However, there is the potential to create a plan based on a proposal being developed by LANFE, expressions of interest from UNICEF, and pronounced local interest and commitment at the community level and among some political leaders.

As a result of advocacy from AIR and Africare in **Namibia**, the Ministry of Education may pilot its Education Development Fund in 12 of the 60 RECLISA schools, but with no guarantee of covering the fees of current project beneficiaries. Hence, the exit strategy will at best affect 20% of beneficiaries, and at worst, none or very few of them. While some schools may continue to exempt beneficiaries from fees, there is no obligation for them to do this; it therefore seems likely that some school fees will be claimed, with a subsequent dropout of RECLISA beneficiaries. COPE Clubs, COPE/Caregivers Clubs, and Child Welfare Subcommittees are likely to be short-lived unless some external aid or support is provided. It is very difficult to make these structures sustainable due to the lack of incentives for teachers involved in activities and the exam-focused nature of the education system. Nevertheless, a few schools have committed themselves to try and continue with COPE clubs after the end of the project. While Child Welfare Subcommittees are unlikely to survive, the knowledge about child labor will remain with individual members. Some schools and community members said they hoped to continue the garden work but they would probably need assistance, and it is unclear how this might be provided. Project personnel said that there is a need for continuous food assistance to OVC and caregivers in the area, and that the project-initiated school and community gardens are not sufficient to ensure food security.[15]

In **South Africa** the Khulisa intervention model involved a range of institutions at each intervention site, and all of these are now aware of child labor and child trafficking issues; they have integrated the issues into their areas of focus, significantly increasing the number of organizations dedicated to combating WFCL. In Mpumalanga, Thembalethu has secured alternative funding to continue RECLISA interventions; and in the North West, MIET's partnership with the Department of Education and their implementation of Education and Development Support Centers will ensure sustainability, but no alternative funding has been found to continue NOAH's project interventions. Khulisa's curriculum development is probably the intervention with the best prospects for sustained impact. The distribution of the Life Skills curriculum to schools has been approved and will be part the Life Orientation subject stream in both Gauteng and Mpumalanga. The Adopt-A-Cop training material will continue to include modules on child labor and trafficking.

In **Swaziland** the Ministry of Education has agreed to contribute to the school fees of RECLISA-sponsored children until they finish school, which will avoid a massive dropout of RECLISA beneficiaries when the project ends. RECLISA is committed to ensuring that the full fees are paid for the current school year (2008). Awareness-raising activities are sustainable, since the knowledge and awareness about abusive child labor is unlikely to be dismissed by the communities at the project's end. Many of the Child Labor Committees are likely to be short-lived. The exit strategy consisted of converting these committees into community-based organizations but the necessary training was delayed due to the budget freeze.

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[15] Since the evaluation, Child Welfare Subcommittees established by RECLISA have been absorbed into the six government-sponsored OVC Constituency Fora. This removes one barrier to sustainability by institutionalizing some of the capacity and awareness built by RECLISA.

5.3.2 Impact on Beneficiaries and Organizations

While the details of project impact appear in the national reports, across the region RECLISA has enabled a significant number of children to access either formal or nonformal education, and has helped many OVC to be more resilient through life skills training and psychosocial support. The project has raised the awareness of children and their parents concerning child labor to varying degrees; some of them able to recognize and resist inappropriate child labor while others have no developed understanding of the concept. Overall, the importance of education has been a more readily accepted message, providing an entry point to focus attention on child labor issues in communities where it has never previously been discussed. RECLISA's work with communities— as opposed to with individual children and their schools—has also varied from one intervention to another, and this is an aspect that probably needs more emphasis if long-term sustainable change is to be achieved. Many teachers are certainly better informed about child labor and have more skills in reaching out to marginalized children, both of which will continue to inform their work in the future. Vocational skills have been popular wherever they have been offered and have increased employment opportunities for less academic children, widening the horizons of those who were previously unaware that they might have a choice of income-generating possibilities.

Most of the organizations participating in delivering RECLISA-related services have benefitted from new knowledge concerning child labor; subcontractors have, in addition, gained considerable experience and expertise in project management, reporting, and monitoring.

5.3.3 Advocacy

In Lesotho and Botswana, project communities have as yet little capacity or motivation to advocate against child labor. In Namibia, South Africa, and Swaziland, various community groups and forums received training on child labor and related issues, and the individuals who participated are certainly better informed—even if their ability to actively advocate around the issues is limited. In Namibia, child labor is becoming integrated into the mandate of OVC constituency forums; these focal points are likely to continue advocacy at community level and possibly at the regional level if the regional forum on child labor is sustained. In Swaziland, members of Child Labor Committees will continue their advocacy work; since most members also play prominent roles in their communities, they provide focal points for child labor and child abuse where none existed before.

While RECLISA cannot be said to have resulted in widespread community mobilization, it has raised the issue of child labor for the first time in many of the communities where it worked. A number of prominent individuals and opinion leaders are now better informed, and in a few cases there are some community groups with child labor as part of their mandate, so some progress has been made.

5.3.4 Policy Impact

Although this is principally TECL's area of intervention, RECLISA has complemented and reinforced national policy-level work and has contributed to PACC meetings and the development of national Action Plans to Eliminate Child labor. The project has served to focus attention on child labor issues and highlighted the fact that OVCs are a particularly vulnerable

group, increasingly in need of both legal and practical support and protection if they are to avoid the need for engaging in WFCL. In Lesotho particularly, RECLISA drew attention to the fact that thousands of herd boys do not have access to education and continue to work in harsh and dangerous conditions. While TECL 2 will pick up where TECL 1 left off in some project countries, it is extremely regrettable that no such continuity is planned in Swaziland and Lesotho and it is questionable whether there will be sufficient impetus to implement the national APECs without such assistance.

5.3.5   Sustainability in Government

While RECLISA actively worked to encourage government involvement in continuing a number of project activities, concrete commitment to do so has been difficult to achieve. This has had the most serious effect on project outcomes in Lesotho, where government takeover was the principal strategy for sustainability. Many governments in the region suffer from poor coordination, a high turnover of personnel, endemic bureaucracy, and a general lack of capacity to effectively get things done amid a myriad of challenges competing for attention and resources. While all the governments concerned expressed commitment and willingness to give child labor issues a higher profile, implementing this intention is more problematic and will need ongoing support and encouragement. There are two notable cases where project activities will continue due to government support. In Swaziland, the government has committed itself to continuing to pay part of the school fees for OVC enrolled in school through RECLISA; in South Africa, modules concerning child labor/trafficking will continue to be part of the school curricula in some districts, and will be part of certain police specializations—both of which are real achievements.

5.3.6   Analysis of Interventions

The national reports discuss this question in relation to specific interventions. At the regional level the evaluator can draw a number of general conclusions. Holistic targeted interventions based on local knowledge seem to have been the most effective and hence had the greatest impact on increasing enrollment in educational opportunities. It is important that interventions are perceived as relevant by children and their communities, hence the popularity of life skills and vocational training wherever they were offered by RECLISA. Although there are not many examples of the project involving children as active participants in implementation as well as being beneficiaries, South Africa's use of peer-support leaders was effective and popular. In terms of reducing child labor the evaluator would suggest that RECLISA has operated principally as an education project which has reduced the vulnerability of at risk and marginalized children to entering child labor as an automatic outcome of them being enrolled in school; except for in Lesotho, where herd boys continue to work long hours. This is to say that in spite of important awareness-raising activities and policy level work, RECLISA did not fully exploit its status as a child labor project, particularly at the community level.

5.3.7 Sustainability—Lessons Learned

In Terms of Project Accomplishments

Lesson 1: Psychosocial support helps vulnerable children to understand their lives and gives them strategies for survival and development. At its best it enables them to transform traumatic experiences into strengths, and at its least it provides them with the attention and support that they so often lack.

Lesson 2: Relatively small financial investment to provide items such as school uniforms, birth certificates, teaching and learning materials, transport to and from school, and food play an essential role in enabling vulnerable children to access educational opportunities. However, the caveat is that such access needs to continue until the child reaches the natural conclusion of the educational provision concerned, ideally achieving its objectives (certificate of primary or secondary education, vocational skills qualification, certificate of literacy, etc.). A project needs effective sustainability strategies if it is to effectively meet the educational needs of the children concerned.

Lesson 3: Vocational skills training is often the most useful and viable approach to enabling marginalized groups of older children who have missed out on formal education to have choices about their future and to support themselves and their dependents. Such training is not widely available for these children, and child labor projects can effectively develop related strategies to work towards the withdrawal and prevention of children from child labor.

In Terms of Sustainability

Lesson 4: It is not realistic to base sustainability strategies on government stepping in to take over unless there is a confirmed commitment to do so and a well defined action plan to integrate project services into government provision—at least by the midpoint of the project. This is not to say government take-over should not be encouraged, but it cannot be relied on and a viable fallback strategy is advisable.

Lesson 5: Community groups can play a significant role in the sustainability of project activities, but they need to be actively involved in related decisions and given sufficient time, support, and training to take ownership of the initiative and to understand and develop their role.

Lesson 6: Sustainability is as much a product of partner selection as it is of planning for exit. Choosing an established organization to partner with extends project reach and allows for the possibility of securing alternate funding at close-out. In countries where ideal organizations are not always in evidence, organizational capacity building becomes particularly important; not only for the implementation of the project itself but as a longer term strategy for developing civil society.

5.4   CONCLUSIONS

In spite of a number of challenges that arose during implementation, RECLISA largely succeeded in meeting its objectives and reaching its numeric targets. AIR probably underestimated the complexity of administering a regional project through so many subcontractors and other partners, but worked extremely hard to enable the project to function effectively and succeeded in building partner capacity in the process. While the project as a whole tended to focus on education at the community level, it made a valuable contribution to awareness raising concerning child labor at the national level, and collaborated well with TECL's policy interventions. The project often worked in challenging physical, cultural, and political environments, and was the first-ever child labor initiative in a number of project locations, serving to introduce the issues in communities where child labor was perceived as a cultural norm. In attempting to reach as many beneficiaries as possible, RECLISA's resources were stretched to the limits, which resulted in some activities having insufficient funds to achieve maximum effect. The project's lack of effective tracking of the work status of direct beneficiaries was a missed opportunity to discover more about patterns of child labor and encourage local stakeholders to better understand and analyze child labor in their communities. Although the USDOL audit had an unfortunate effect on project implementation in Swaziland, it may have served to highlight some issues of wider interest to USDOL's child labor program. Khulisa proved to be a very effective subcontractor due to their success in managing the most complex of the national programs, in addition to supporting regional monitoring and evaluation.

There are both advantages and disadvantages to the regional approach used by RECLISA. While every potential project needs to be considered on its own merits, the evaluator considers that on balance, national projects are often likely to be more effective because they can be better tailored to meet specific needs and are less administratively complex. This is no reflection on AIR's performance but a belief that "small is beautiful," and that the simpler project implementation can be kept, the easier it will be to resolve issues quickly and effectively. Although national projects may cost more in that they require a separate grantee office in every country, if this results in more targeted and sustainable interventions it is probably worth the investment.

While the project document talks about strategies for sustainability, these were put into practice quite late in the project; and where they did not work out as planned, viable alternatives had not been developed at the time of the final evaluation. However, in most countries there are indications that some beneficiaries will continue to receive help to attend school at least in the short term, even if specific project services such as psychosocial support and counseling are no longer available. In spite of national awareness raising and policy interventions, governments have generally shown more verbal than practical commitment to working on child labor issues and supporting initiatives when the project ends. Nevertheless, RECLISA has enabled over 10,000 children across the region to access education for varying periods of time, and the evaluators were able to talk to a number of children about the positive impact this has had on their lives—the principal comment being that it was ending too soon. Awareness raising has introduced new concepts to individuals, groups, and organizations across the region and this knowledge will remain after RECLISA is gone. Even if advocacy capacity is limited at community level, a number of RECLISA partners are committed to continuing the struggle to eliminate child labor in their ongoing work.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Since RECLISA is now at an end, recommendations are principally addressed to USDOL and future grantees for the benefit of future child labor projects. Emphasis is placed on project design because this is such a crucial stage, when so many potential difficulties can be avoided.

Concerning Solicitations for Cooperative Agreement Applications

- Quality versus quantity: USDOL needs to balance the importance of withdrawing/ preventing large numbers of children from child labor over a limited period and that of achieving sustainable project results, tailoring its Solicitations for Cooperative Agreement Applications accordingly. It needs to be recognized that there is a direct relationship between target numbers and sustainability, and that all of the USDOL objectives have a financial cost attached.

Concerning Project Design

- The inclusion of a research and needs assessment component to inform/test the validity of project design at each site should be part of the funded activities of USDOL grantees. While this would cost money and take time, it would go a long way to ensuring that interventions are likely to achieve their objectives and effectively meet the needs of direct beneficiaries.

- In parallel to the previous, proposal grantees need to use participatory approaches in the conception phase to ensure that project proposals address local needs and build community and government ownership.

- Projects should design holistic interventions that consider including creative psychosocial support strategies and appropriate vocational training.

- Project design needs to include realistic strategies for sustainability, direct action coupled with advocacy/support for policy development and implementation, and effective, multi-level capacity building based on plans developed in collaboration with the implementing and community-level partners concerned.

- Policy-related activities need to be accompanied by an implementation plan and budget. Policy-making activities should use participatory approaches to avoid top-down policy creation, resulting in a lack of ownership and support for implementation at the grassroots level.

Concerning Implementation

- Opportunities for exchange visits between partners and other sharing of experience and practice should be exploited whenever an opportunity arises. Although there are some costs attached, the investment is invariably worth the expenditure.

Concerning Project Management, Budget, and Audits

- Complex project management structures should be avoided unless it is clear that the coordinating organization has the capacity to operate the necessary systems in order to avoid delays in implementation.

- In line with the previous recommendation, institutional assessments of potential subcontracting organizations should always be carried out in order to ascertain that they have the necessary governance mechanisms to ensure accountability and their level of financial, management, and technical capacity.

- Grantees working with several subcontractors should develop a project-specific procedures' manual (covering financial, administrative, and monitoring requirements) and bring partners together at the start of the project to introduce the manual.

- USDOL is encouraged to investigate how decisions concerning the implementation of audit findings could be speeded up, to avoid any undesired adverse effects on project implementation.

- USDOL is recommended to consider developing a briefing paper for U.S. auditors working in unfamiliar environments. Such a paper might include information such as that concerning the validity of the ages given by direct beneficiaries in Africa, and other information that might inform their work.

- USDOL and grantees are recommended to ensure that project budgets strike a balance between effective administration and sufficient funding, so as to adequately implement project activities.

- Grantees and subcontractors are recommended to put important information in writing rather than relying solely on telephone communication. In addition, grantees are advised to make lines of communication and the roles of all their staff in different offices very clear, ideally as part of a project procedures manual.

Concerning Sustainability

- USDOL should consider renewed project funding in Lesotho to ensure continuing access to education for herd boys, as well as community awareness raising and strategies for withdrawal from WFCL. Extending TECL 2 might be considered, which would also support the implementation of the national APEC.

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VI   GOOD PRACTICES

- The project's design is based on partnership with local organizations because they have the knowledge, experience, and credibility that enables activities to be effectively integrated into local communities.

- The way in which a number of project interventions were aligned with, complemented, supplemented, and in some cases enhanced existing programs was an important contributor to success. This often required a concerted effort to cooperate, collaborate, and partner with government officials at both national and district levels, and contributed to sustainability.

- The primary objective of the technical support visits by the M&E team was not to build capacity but rather to ensure the effective execution of M&E processes. However, capacity building did occur and resulted in enhanced project management skills in country partner offices, as well as reliable reporting data. The latter is difficult to ensure and the model applied here proved very effective.

- Relatively simple initiatives to address stigma and other education barriers, such as the COPE Clubs, were highly cost effective. Similarly, the *Heroes Books* were powerful tools for OVC and caregivers to deal with grief. These two initiatives, the COPE Clubs and the UNICEF/Philippi Trust-supported *Heroes Books* are examples of good practices that could be duplicated elsewhere.

- The overall collaboration between RECLISA and TECL is an example of good practice that is particularly well expressed by their joint organization of the Namibia National Conference on Child Labor. It ensured better coordination between the projects, stronger impact (since it was implemented as part of an ongoing policy process rather than as a stand-alone event), and better sustainability (because it was integrated into a series of activities leading to a policy framework on WFCL).

- Vocational training was popular in both Gantsi (Botswana) and Lesotho. It was seen as a relevant and adapted intervention that provided real education for the future, based on the needs of those who participated.