



**Galvanizing Communities
to End Child Labor**

Dedication

This report is dedicated to the children, families and communities contributing to the elimination of the most hazardous and exploitative forms of child labor around the world. CARE is humbled and honored to be a partner in your efforts.

Galvanizing Communities to End Child Labor





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Framing the Debate

Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
BGE	Basic and Girls’ Education
CDA	Community Development Agents
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CLMS	Child Labor Monitoring System
EFA	Education for All
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ILO	International Labor Organization
ILO–IPEC	International Labor Organizations’ International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour
NDIBE	National Department for Intercultural and Bilingual Education
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
PLA	Participatory Learning Action
PCTFI	Patsy Collins Trust Fund Initiative
PPS	Post Project Support
PWBR	Participatory Well-Being Ranking
SAGUN	Strengthened Actions for Governance in Utilization of Natural Resources
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
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Foreword

CARE's Caution-Children at Work: Galvanizing Communities to End Child Labor focuses on one of our greatest strengths - creating lasting change by empowering communities to take control of their own lives. Caution-Children at Work: Galvanizing Communities to End Child Labor is a giant leap forward for CARE because it clearly illustrates the tools and techniques that are successfully reducing the prevalence of child labor in the communities where we work. I am pleased to share CARE's expertise in child labor with our partners, donors and other practitioners.

Over 218 million children are engaged in some form of economic activity; over half of them are working in some of the most hazardous conditions imaginable. Poverty forces children to pick up tools instead of pencils; in turn, their lack of education and low-paying jobs keep their families, communities and nations economically depressed. This cycle is heartbreaking, but not hopeless.

This report sheds light on a difficult subject that has remained below the surface for too long. It is painful to think of 14 year-old Mario sent off with a machete toiling away endlessly for the coffee we consume. It is disturbing to imagine Akossiwa being separated from her family to work as a domestic servant in a distant city. Most of us can't even conceive of a young boy like Renny working day after day in the hazardous mines of Bolivia. Yet, through their stories we are offered a rare glimpse into the conditions that force them to work and the innovative, community based strategies that are creating lasting solutions.

Caution-Children at Work: Galvanizing Communities to End Child Labor provides practical solutions for effectively addressing the root causes of child labor. We know that by specifically targeting child laborers in rural areas, we can often prevent them from entering into the worst forms of child labor. The evidence shows that women who are educated about the dangers of child labor are more likely to keep their children in school and are more effective at protecting them from the dangers of the workplace. The knowledge, tools and means are in our hands. We must now act to fulfill the promises that have been made to the next generation. As detailed in the report, simple choices about the products we buy, our social commitments in developing countries and where we donate funds, all have the ability to make a real difference for those at risk for or engaged in child labor. Together, we can reinvigorate hope for those on the margins of society.

Helene D. Gayle, MD, MPH
President and CEO

Executive Summary

Child labor is one of the greatest moral issues facing the world. This report provides realistic and concrete examples of how to tackle and eliminate — within our lifetime, we hope — the cancer that is hazardous and exploitative child labor.

Caution — Children at Work calls attention to the institutional commitments and priorities outlined in CARE’s Organizational Policy Regarding Working Children and Hazardous Child Labor, adopted in 2006. The theme of “galvanizing communities to end child labor” resulted from a strategic review of interventions to combat hazardous and exploitative child labor around the world — specifically, the significant contributions made by local communities. CARE believes these experiences can significantly increase the collective understanding of the problem. Child labor and its associated problems cannot be considered in isolation. They must be addressed by holistic interventions that focus on the cross-cutting dimensions of child labor, and that articulate a common vision of success.

This report is divided into three sections. **Section I:** Framing the Debate explores why a practice that has generated universal condemnation is still so prevalent in societies. It examines the global community’s response to child labor, focusing on the development of international labor standards and the role education systems have played. It also explores the idea that poor quality education reinforces a belief among marginalized families that education is not useful or relevant to them. This section highlights the root causes of rural child labor. It stresses the idea that focusing interventions on rural-based forms of child labor, especially agriculture, can directly impact the number of children at risk for, or engaged in, the worst forms of child labor.

Section II: Initiating Action takes a results-oriented approach to examining various community-based strategies to empower change. At the heart of these strategies is the realization that if communities are empowered with the necessary skills, they are their own best resource for addressing the participation of children in the labor market. This section shows that quality education significantly contributes to reducing child labor, especially when education systems are able to evolve to meet the needs of those they aim to serve. Also examined are the dual roles women play in both exacerbating and mitigating rates of child labor, and the added value that youth participation for self-empowerment (YPS) strategies have on combating child labor.

Section III: Empowering Our Futures investigates the ramifications and responsibilities associated with empowering communities. Advocacy for and by empowered communities has a ripple effect once change is set in motion. A set of key findings and recommendations in the final chapter of this report aims to shift attitudes and practices in favor of those that empower individual and collective action. Finally, a challenge is issued for a heightened sense of personal responsibility for actions that directly or indirectly influence rates of child labor.



SECTION

I

Framing the Debate

Section I examines the current policy environment surrounding child labor. It also looks at how poor quality education reinforces the belief that education is not useful or relevant. Particular attention is given to the numerous obstacles that marginalized children, especially girls, have to confront before given the opportunity to go to school. Special attention is called to the plight of children engaged in rural-based labor — specifically, in agriculture. Finally, Section I examines CARE’s overarching principles and priorities in combating child labor.

Chapter 1

Undeniable Truths: Exploitative Child Labor Remains a Reality

Issues at Hand

Child labor is a complex issue. To begin with, not all work involving children should be a cause for concern — i.e., not all work is labor. Developmentally appropriate economic activity can be beneficial to the full development of a child, but at its extreme, work can place a child's life and well being at risk. Work that is exploitative, dangerous and detrimental to the physical, social, moral or spiritual development of children, or inhibits a child's ability to receive a quality, relevant education, is considered hazardous labor and poses a major human rights and socioeconomic challenge. Despite nearly universal agreement on the need to immediately eliminate hazardous and exploitative child labor, it can be found in nearly all corners of the globe. An analysis of the complex causes and effects of child labor helps explain why it has been so difficult to eliminate.

UNDERSTANDING THE TERMINOLOGY

Child work: Light work (e.g., seasonal or part-time employment) in specific activities that are developmentally appropriate and that promote or enhance a child's full development; that do not compromise his or her physical, mental, social, moral or spiritual development; and that do not interfere, impede or restrict a his or her right to a quality education.

Child labor: Any form of work that is detrimental to the physical, mental, social, moral or spiritual development of a child.

Hazardous labor: All forms of economic exploitation, remunerated or

unremunerated, that are detrimental to a child's physical, mental, social, moral or spiritual development, and that exclude or interfere with the possibility of regular school attendance at the normal pace for a child's age and/or development status.

Worst forms of child labor¹

(a) All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom, and forced or compulsory labor, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;

(b) The use, procurement or offering

of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;

(c) The use, procurement or offering of a child for other illicit activities—in particular, for the production and trafficking of drugs, as defined in the relevant international treaties; and

(d) Work which, by its nature, or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

¹ *Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour* [Convention No. 182]. International Labour Organization (1999).

In 2004, there were 218 million children ages 5-17 who were involved in child labor — more than the population of all but four countries (China, India, Indonesia and the United States).² Data suggest that 126 million of these children work in hazardous conditions. Rates of child labor are relatively similar for young girls and boys (ages 5-11); among older children, a significantly higher percentage of boys are engaged in child labor.

CHILD LABOR AND CHILD WORK WORLDWIDE*

Total population of children	1,566 million
Economically active (i.e., working) children	317 million
Total number of child laborers	218 million
Number of children engaged in hazardous labor	126 million

*International Labor Organization, 2006

The highest absolute numbers of economically active children are in Asia and the Pacific (122 million). Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest proportion, with more than a quarter of all children on the continent (49 million) working. In Latin America, this number is estimated at 5.7 million.

The good news is that these figures show a steady decline in child labor over the last four years.³ The decline is most significant for children engaged in hazardous labor. This can be attributed in large part to increased global awareness and availability of research through the efforts of organizations like the International Labor Organization (ILO).

² *The End of Child Labor: Within Reach*. International Labour Organization (2006).

³ Ibid



Child labor has been on the international agenda since the global community began paying closer attention to children's rights and the need for universal schooling. In 1973, the ILO adopted its Convention Concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment (Convention 138), which is the most comprehensive and authoritative international definition of the minimum age for employment or work — i.e., anything that implies "economic activity." For the first time, a minimum age –12– was set for "light work," corresponding to the age when children in many countries complete primary schooling.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), adopted by the U.N. General Assembly in 1989, also specifically addresses the issue of child labor in its articles 32-36. These articles were elaborated on and now form the foundation for identifying the worst forms of child labor as defined by ILO Convention 182.

In the early 1990s, the ILO launched its International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC), the global community's most important endeavor to address child labor at the time; it remains the leading



United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 32:

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.
2. States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular:
 - (a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;
 - (b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;
 - (c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article.

organ of the United Nations system charged with eradicating child labor. ILO's initial strategy was to ban child workers from formal employment in mines and factories. However, this often forced children into unregulated and illegal activities in the informal sector.

The ILO recognized that although eradication of child labor should remain a long-term goal, short-term measures must be taken immediately to protect children in the workplace and to provide appropriate alternatives for those engaged in hazardous work. Consequently, the ILO's Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (Convention 182) and its Worst Forms of Child Labor Recommendation (Recommendation 190) were adopted in 2000. Convention 182 defines the worst forms of child labor as child slavery (including the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and forced recruitment for armed conflict); child prostitution and pornography; the use of children for illicit activities (such as drug trafficking); and any hazardous work likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

Fueling the Flame: Factors Impeding Sustainable Action

There are numerous social, human and environmental factors that influence how families and children view the premature participation of children in the labor market. Child labor and its causes vary from country to country, community to community, and even household to household. Therefore, strategies to combat child labor call for context-specific and solution-oriented interventions that take into account the nuances of local environments.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 34:

States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes, States Parties shall in particular take all appropriate national, bilateral and multi-lateral measures to prevent:

- (a) The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;
- (b) The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;
- (c) The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

Poverty and child labor are inexorably linked; however, poverty can exist even when child labor does not. Different groups can frame poverty in different terms, focusing on, for example: income or consumption poverty, human development and underdevelopment, social exclusion, overall well being, vulnerability or an inability to meet certain basic needs. CARE's operating definition of poverty focuses on a lack of "basic needs." These are defined as: adequate food, health and shelter as well as minimal levels of income, basic education and community participation. Recently, the U.N. General Assembly recognized the disproportionate impact poverty has on children, especially in terms of access to basic healthcare services, shelter, education, community participation and protection. The term "child poverty" must take these basic needs into consideration.

Child labor is strongly associated with income poverty and often reflects the fragility of a country's struggle toward greater economic prosperity.⁴ In low-income countries, child labor historically declines when gross domestic product (GDP) per capita increases.⁵ However, child labor is not only a symptom of poverty, it is a contributing factor. Child labor often consists of simple, unskilled routines that offer little opportunity for progression to better paying, more interesting or safer occupations. Child labor drives down wages and working conditions

for adult workers, resulting in a labor market with little sophistication and an underutilized workforce. In this way, child labor perpetuates the cyclical nature of poverty.

CARE has been working to better understand the root causes of poverty — specifically, those associated with child labor and the factors that prevent its eradication. CARE's Unifying Framework for Poverty Eradication and Social Justice identifies three areas of intervention: enabling environment, human condition and social position.

Child labor can also be viewed as a product of market forces: It is, in large part, a result of a demand for labor in general. Even when countries attempt to regulate the participation of children in the labor market, employers abuse poor accountability systems to circumvent laws. For these relatively powerful few, profit outweighs the negative impact their actions have on the poorest and most powerless members of society. Employers attempt to justify child labor by arguing that children have certain valuable skills, such as nimble fingers for carpet weaving or shoe making. Furthermore, child labor is less troublesome for employers because children are usually more docile as workers, unwilling to speak out or protest their exploitation. Children are among the lowest-paid workers and often work the longest hours. This gives employers a competitive advantage in an increasingly global marketplace, where producing goods as cheaply as possible is more important than preserving the innocence of childhood.

Preserving the underlying human condition — i.e., ensuring that people's basic needs are met and they are able to attain some level of livelihood security — is very important to the overall success of child-labor interventions. At the heart of preserving the human condition is providing viable education opportunities for children. Without these opportunities, parents and caregivers will usually embrace the idea of sending their children to work. The inability of education systems to be more adaptive and relevant to their local environments means that there is often little relation between school

⁴ Here poverty is defined in terms of the amount of goods one can consume relative to one's income.

⁵ Betcherman, G. et al. "Child Labor, Education, and Children's Rights." *Social Protection Discussion Paper Series No. 0412* (July 2004).

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 28:

States Parties recognize the right of the child to education.

Article 33:

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to prevent the use of children in illicit production and trafficking of drugs.

Article 35:

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to prevent the abduction, sale and trafficking of children for any purpose or in any form.

Article 36:

States Parties shall protect against all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare.

Article 39:

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote the physical and psychological recovery and social integration of child victims of any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts.

attendance, academic performance and long-term employment prospects for children. There is also the problem of cost: The price of sending a child to school is often too much for poor families, especially when they have more than one school-age child. It is not unusual for one child to go to school while his or her siblings are kept at home to perform domestic tasks or find outside employment. Prioritizing the education of one child over others is called child specialization.

Examining social position means looking at how people work to take control of their lives and fulfill their rights, responsibilities and aspirations, especially when they must overcome inequality and discrimination. Sustainable efforts to combat child labor are hindered when communities fail to understand its dangers. While they may realize that child labor is a social problem, they can appear unable to deal with it. Community members may be unaware of one another's basic rights, especially children's rights. Even when these rights are realized, communities are not always given a voice in discussions about alternatives to child labor.

A 2006 ILO report concludes that the precise impact of globalization on child labor is difficult to measure for several reasons: methodological challenges, lack of statistics and lack of studies that go beyond analyzing globalization and child labor only in terms of international trade.

The report notes that there are ways in which globalization has positively affected the child-labor situation: As international employees and consumers become more aware of child labor issues, many corporations have enhanced accountability measures for their subsidiaries and suppliers and increased their financial commitment to ensure workplace practices are in line with locally and internationally accepted norms. Both independently and as a result of public pressure, many have adopted voluntary measures such as codes of conduct, child-labor verification systems or social-labeling initiatives. These often stipulate minimum-age requirements and include monitoring systems. Sometimes, such measures include sanctions on business partners

for noncompliance. It is important to remember that any child-labor intervention must address both the short- and long-term needs of children. Measures that, for example, place an outright ban on child labor may be counterproductive, because they fail to address the underlying causes of the problem. These sorts of reactionary decisions can actually exacerbate the situation, driving child laborers into more isolated and frequently more dangerous forms of work.

Almost every country has introduced legislation or regulations prohibiting the employment of children below a certain age as well as specifying the conditions under which minors may work, and in what sectors. Yet the problem is not that more child-labor laws and policies are needed. Rather, existing ones need to be enforced. Many governments see child-labor legislation as an end in and of itself. They do not have the resources to enforce their own laws, especially when it comes to the informal sector, where regulations and standards are rarely monitored.

Another factor contributing to the persistence of child labor is that interventions have had a tendency to focus on visible forms of work, which ignores the vast majority of hazardous labor children perform in other sectors. In rural areas, for example, children work on family farming plots. In many countries, poor girls work as domestic servants. And almost everywhere, children, especially girls, perform unpaid work for their families under hazardous conditions, or conditions that may prevent them from attending school. Hazardous labor performed in the home or in family enterprises is not accurately reflected in many official statistics.

Despite advances in the fight against hazardous and exploitative child labor, considerable effort is still required. Governments and social actors often fail to take a holistic approach to planning development efforts and formulating government policies on child labor. When children's rights are incorporated into national poverty-alleviation action plans, they are often never realized during implementation. Only by embracing the rights of children, and not just simply acknowledging them, will governments and other actors be able to truly address the underlying causes of child labor and respond to the special needs of marginalized children. To gain a true understanding of this problem and develop solution-oriented responses, the experiences of working children themselves must be taken into account.

Spotlighting the Silent Majority

Nearly 70 percent of child laborers are engaged in rural-based economic activity. Agricultural work is the most prevalent form of child labor, and one of the most hazardous.⁶ While interventions by NGOs and other organizations and institutions have targeted the worst forms of exploitative child labor in urban areas,⁷ the vast majority of child laborers continue to toil away in the countryside. It is significant to note that children from rural areas also comprise a significant percentage of the children who eventually end up in the worst and most exploitive forms of urban child labor.

⁶ *The End of Child Labor: Within Reach*. International Labour Organization (2006).

⁷ As identified in ILO Convention 182.



Many child laborers engage in invisible, unacknowledged and unregulated tasks, which can include hazardous work on family farming plots under the direct supervision of parents or caregivers. Local tradition and culture, as well as family solidarity, can make it difficult to acknowledge that these children are being exploited. However, not all work that children perform on family farming plots is hazardous; a closer examination of these activities is necessary. Educating parents and caregivers on activities that are truly hazardous to children will empower them to make informed choices.

In addition to family farming plots, children work on, or accompany their parents or caregivers to, large agricultural plantations. This is common when school is too expensive, or too far from home, or when daycare is not an option. Since children are often seen as extensions of the family unit, they are not paid for their work on the plantations, and employers claim no responsibility for their health or safety. CARE has documented children working on a variety

Education and the Professional Farmer

“We (adults) work on the tobacco and tomato plantations near the community. We get paid 30 cordobas (\$1.60) a day, and we have to bring our own food. We have to get up early, or it gets too hot in the fields. I don't want the children of this community to live the life I lived; they have to study.”

— Priest in Somoto, Nicaragua, participating in CARE's *Primer Aprendo* project

of plantations — where coffee, cocoa, tobacco, melons, flowers, tomatoes and other vegetables are grown — under exploitative and hazardous conditions. Many of these plantations are closed to the outside, thus working conditions are usually not scrutinized. Here, children are more prone to accidents, because they are using farm tools designed for adults. They risk chronic injuries and other lifelong health problems from heavy lifting, repetitive work and exposure to pesticides.

The hazardous conditions children are exposed to vary from farm to farm; they depend on the crops being grown, as well as whether any occupational safety measures exist. In Central America, children are often exposed to numerous hazardous on coffee plantations that are located in high, steep terrain. These areas are often difficult to access by adults. Children are employed to climb hills, pick coffee beans and then carry heavy baskets loaded with those beans back down the hill, day after day. They are vulnerable to sunburn and high temperatures. They also suffer sleep deprivation and are often bitten by insects. Injuries from machetes are not uncommon.

On cocoa plantations in West Africa, children do a variety of work that includes carrying cocoa beans to be dried, transporting foods such as plantains and cassava, and fetching water for drinking and irrigation. Their duties also include hazardous work like weeding with cutlasses, carrying and applying pesticides, and harvesting and splitting cocoa pods with a hook-shaped instrument referred to by locals as a “go to hell.” Children are usually aware of the dangers they face, such as cuts, insect and snake bites, and skin irritation from applying pesticides — dangers they can also face while working on family farming plots — but there is little they can do.

Plantation work is often seasonal; families migrate with the changes in season and crop cycle. As a result, children often miss large parts of the school year, or start school late. It is not uncommon for children enrolled in school to be sent to the fields to work during school hours.

Rural areas often lack quality, relevant education opportunities. This is a major barrier to reducing child labor in agriculture, and it may even exacerbate child labor. The recent Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report indicates that 82 percent of out-of-school children live in rural areas.⁸ Where schools exist, there is often a lack of qualified teachers. And when teachers are available, they are often not motivated to live and work in remote and isolated areas, and therefore they are frequently absent or ill-equipped to deliver quality instruction.

The distance from home to school also determines whether young children, especially girls, will attend; families will fear for their

Hidden Dangers on Coffee Plantations

Mario is 14 years old. He is repeating fourth grade at the Marco Aurelio Soto primary school in Mata Platano, in the department of El Paraiso in southern Honduras. He has hardly attended school in the last few years, because he has had to work. Mario's mother sent him to work on the coffee plantations because she does not earn enough to support him and his four brothers.

Before CARE's Primero Aprendo project, Mario would spend long hours on the coffee plantations, where he suffered serious injuries. Twice, he sustained cuts to his arm. Last year, he severely injured his foot while using a machete. He has yet to fully recover from this injury; wearing shoes remains an uncomfortable ordeal.

When CARE launched Primero Aprendo, Mario was invited to participate. Now he works less and attends school more regularly. He enjoys the chance to learn and to play soccer with his teacher and friends. He is president of the soccer team.

Now Mario's mother is convinced that he should be in school. She recognizes that his ability to supplement the family's income is less important than going to school. With support from his mother and encouragement from his teacher, education is a reality for Mario. He dreams of becoming an agricultural engineer when he finishes his education.

Mario says other children should not work on plantations because they, too, could get hurt. He believes children should play and study, because the plantations are no places for children.

⁸ Newsletter of the Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education for All (March 2007).

children's safety if they have to walk long distances, and this can discourage attendance. Making matters worse, there are far fewer secondary schools than primary schools, and they are, on average, farther away from a child's home; this contributes to high dropout rates among students transitioning from primary to secondary education.

Most children engaged in hazardous labor live in rural areas.⁹ In addition, as several CARE projects reveal, rural child labor often leads children into the worst forms of labor in urban areas. Children, especially girls, that are trafficked from rural to urban areas often end up as victims of sexual or economic exploitation. They can be found working in sweatshops, selling flowers, domestic servants or engaging in other jobs that make them extremely vulnerable to exploitation. Evidence confirms that interventions aggressively focused on the underlining causes of rural child labor can mitigate children's susceptibility to the worst forms of child labor in both rural and urban settings.

In rural areas, the traditional family, community and organizational structures play a critical role in identifying children most at risk as well as deciding how best to address local factors fueling child labor. In a world of finite resources, communities and institutions must work together to find the most cost-effective ways to combat hazardous and exploitative child labor, especially in rural areas. Furthermore, it is evident that the global community must seek to:

- > Examine the factors that contribute to rural children often falling victim to the worst forms of child labor, and the role rural communities can play in preventing this from happening;
- > Address the overwhelming economic, education, health and social inequalities between urban and rural communities; and
- > Measure the causal relationship between approaches that aim to mitigate child labor in rural communities and their direct impact on reducing the worst form of child labor.

⁹ *The End of Child Labor: Within Reach*. International Labour Organization (2006).

Cocoa and Child Labor

This Cargill-sponsored Rural Education Project (2007) found that, in many cases, children enrolled in school are nevertheless sent by their teachers or guardians to work on cocoa plantations during instructional hours. In addition, parents or caregivers send their children, especially girls, to sell goods in the market, when they should be in school. The result is that these enrolled students only attend school for part of the week. In response, CARE is implementing interventions in partnership with Cargill, along with local communities and governments, to ensure that education opportunities evolve to meet the needs of children, including protection from hazards they face on cocoa farms.





Chapter 2

The Shortcomings of Education

Broken Promises

Sadly, in spite of global efforts, quality education is still a myth for most of the world's marginalized children. Access to quality education is a fundamental right for children, and when adequately supported and administered, it effectively contributes to the eradication of hazardous and exploitative child labor. Quality education provides children with important social, cognitive and personal skills that help them break the low-income poverty cycle that perpetuates child labor. Conversely, poor education only reinforces the belief among most marginalized families that education is not useful or relevant to their lives.

Education becomes part of the problem when education infrastructure cannot keep pace with the increase in demand. This results in inadequate facilities and human resources, including a lack of sufficient classrooms, separate latrines, desks, equipment, books and other teaching and learning materials, as well as qualified teachers. Meeting this challenge is often beyond the scope of a single project. It requires actors to take new approaches to system-level responses, in addition to traditional approaches that focus on the delivery of direct services. Shifting the development assistance paradigm away from single issue projects in favor of holistic programming initiatives that empower communities would undoubtedly yield greater and sustainable results.

ECONOMICS 101: WHEN DEMAND EXCEEDS SUPPLY

In Togo, community-mobilization efforts led to a great number of parents enrolling their children in school. However, inadequate school infrastructure and equipment has made coping with the sheer volume of new students impossible.

In Honduras, one community member stated, “[W]e are very happy that we now have audiovisual tools to complement our teaching methods. However, this attracted so many students that our classrooms are overcrowded. And we can not hear the audio very well.”

In Mali, efforts to raise awareness about the vital importance of education led to overwhelming demand on community schools in the project-intervention area. The project had to negotiate with other technical and financial partners to support construction of new education infrastructure.



“*Since my son started studying in the afternoon, he has to get up really early in the morning to get to the coffee plantations on time in order to finish his work on time. Sometimes, he does not want to go to school afterward because he is so tired, but I tell him he has to go.*”

— **A mother in Honduras participating in CARE’s Primero Aprendo project**

The cost of education, which includes paying for uniforms, textbooks and supplies, is out of reach for many poor families. And in the short-term, families that can afford to send their child to school miss out on wages that he or she would have contributed by working; this is commonly referred to as the “opportunity cost of education.” It is also important to realize that many children work in order to attend school. When they are withdrawn from work, or working hours are reduced, they may no longer be able to afford the cost associated with education.

In addition, education strategies that promote daytime study for working children, with the goal of reducing the hours they work, can be counterproductive. In Honduras, for example, some children that were participating in a project promoting daytime study started their workdays earlier in order to combine work and school. As a result, they still worked the same number of hours as before, but shouldered the added responsibility of attending school. In this case working and going to school negatively impacted their ability to learn and clearly did not achieve the objective of reducing their working hours.

Rigid national curricula can impede development of a more inclusive and responsive education system. In many contexts, curriculum is centrally designed, leaving little flexibility for local adaptation or experimentation with new methods and approaches. It can also be

gender-biased. And it often fails to reflect local cultural or socioeconomic realities and thus is ill-equipped to instill the life skills and competencies important to parents and caregivers. In addition, teachers are often poorly prepared, lacking necessary qualifications, experience or training. They may also possess attitudes that foment discrimination and exclusion toward working children, especially girls. As a result, children can lack motivation to go to school, and parents and caregivers can perceive education as irrelevant, leading to higher dropout and repetition rates.

Poor facilities and the inability of schools to meet the needs of local populations can make work a more attractive option than it should be. In many circumstances, national governments have not done enough to guarantee children’s rights to quality education as well as protection from exploitation. Schools must be attractive for children, parents and caregivers alike. Schools that foster an environment conducive to learning and that facilitate children’s active and continued interest help reduce dropout rates and the premature entry of children into the labor market.

On the Fringe: The Most Marginalized and Excluded Children

Children most likely to drop out of school live in the poorest households in rural, peri-urban and remote areas. UNESCO data reveal that 38 percent of children from the poorest 20 percent of households do not attend school, compared to only 12 percent of children from the richest 20 percent of households.¹⁰ Children from minority ethnic and linguistic groups are even more marginalized; the language used in school is often not the same as what they speak at home or in their communities. Schools do not always take into consideration their traditions and customs, and they can be discriminated against by teachers and fellow students. Even when teaching takes place in a local language, teaching materials may not be readily available.

Children orphaned by HIV/AIDS are also disadvantaged. A recent ILO study confirmed that they are more likely to be involved in the worst forms of child labor. In addition, they have even less access to education. The study found that awareness and understanding of HIV/AIDS-induced child labor, as well as issues

related to its prevention, are increased through enhanced communication between families, communities and education institutions.¹¹

In addition, children living in communities where child trafficking or economic migration is commonplace have fewer chances to access quality education alternatives, as do children who are mentally or physically challenged, whose special needs cannot be met by most schools in developing countries; in a perverse twist of fate, these children are often disabled due to hazardous and exploitative labor.

The 'Insurmountable Obstacles' Facing Girls

As discussed earlier, education is one of the best ways to keep children out of hazardous and exploitative child labor. But in 2004, 77 million children were not enrolled in either primary or secondary school; 53 percent were girls.¹² Today there are almost twice as many primary-school-age children who are out of school in rural areas (30%) than in urban areas (18%), and the difference is even greater for secondary-school enrollment.¹³ These figures do not include the large number of children who are enrolled in school but rarely or irregularly attend.

There are many reasons why children do not attend school. For girls, there are a variety of particular cultural barriers — e.g., family expectations, societal norms, stereotypical gender roles and the inability of education systems to address the specific needs of girls — that send the message that their place is at home, not school. Overcoming these



¹⁰ *Global Education Digest*. UNESCO (2005).

¹¹ *The End of Child Labor: Within Reach*. International Labour Organization (2006).

¹² *EFA Global Monitoring Report: Strong Foundations*. UNESCO (2007).

¹³ *Children out of School: Measuring Exclusion from Primary Education*. UNESCO Institute for Statistics/UNICEF (2005).

barriers is crucial to protecting girls from exploitive child labor.

As expressed in Article 10 of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, equality in education forms a foundation for women's empowerment in all spheres: workplace, family and society. Adopted in 1979, this convention reinforces the provisions of existing international instruments designed to combat discrimination against women and girls.

Girls contribute to domestic labor demands more than boys. This negatively impacts their ability to learn, in part because they are often too tired to participate in school, or they are late or absent. As a result, girls lose faith in the education system; they are more likely to suffer academically, or to simply drop out. All these factors help make work a more appealing option, which traps girls from a very early age in the vicious cycle of poverty.

There are several ways to address this problem. Trainings on gender-sensitive and student-centered teaching methodologies improve retention rates for girls. School infrastructure also has to be addressed — specifically, the provision of separate latrines and clean water. In addition, social-mobilization campaigns have to be organized to help communities understand the benefits of educating girls. Evidence has shown that strategies for advancing girls' education are particularly important because of the impact girls can have on future generations; as educated mothers, they will be more likely to keep their own children in school.



Respecting Child Domestic Workers

In Haiti, there is a longstanding and widespread practice of putting children to work as domestic servants. It is based on the cultural premise that children are workers who can contribute to their family's livelihood; this idea is articulated by the Creole proverb "Pitit se riches," which translates as "children represent wealth." The child is called "restavèk," meaning a "stay with," a young domestic worker that lives and works for a family other than his or her own. Poor, rural families send their children into domestic servitude to help pay for basic family needs. A scarcity of rural schools in Haiti means there are few alternatives for these children. There is an implicit understanding that this arrangement should entail a minimal level of well being for the child, who, in return for their work, will be fed, sheltered, clothed and educated. In reality, many of these children face exhausting work, no schooling, and mental and physical abuse.

As part of a strategy to provide psychosocial support to these children, CARE included employers, or "host families," in awareness-raising efforts. As a result, girls increased their participation in education. Employers reduced working hours and workloads, and also allowed their young domestic workers to participate in psychosocial support activities. Employers played a crucial role in ensuring project sustainability by participating in a community network established by the project and by donating modest funds to support it.

In Togo, children that have been trafficked are no longer accepted by their families. With nowhere to go, these children often voluntarily migrate, falling victim to further exploitation. One CARE project was able to formalize a previously informal employment sector by introducing up-front negotiated contracts, wage agreements, avenues for conflict resolution, and a greater respect for both reasonable working hours and the need for children to attend school.

Chapter 3

Taking a Stand

Formalizing CARE's Commitment

CARE has been addressing the impact of child labor through education interventions since its Basic & Girls' Education Unit was formed in 1994. In 2002, CARE Honduras implemented CARE's first concerted action specifically targeting child labor in the agriculture sector. Since that time, CARE's strategic approach to combating child labor has been shaped by on-the-ground experience. CARE's strategy focuses on six overarching objectives:

- > Empowering the meaningful participation of children, especially girls, through child-centered and rights-based approaches;
- > Addressing public policies and policy reform at the local, national, regional and international level;
- > Using advocacy to build public sentiment against the abuses of child labor and the denial of children's basic human rights;
- > Promoting economic alternatives to the worst forms of child labor for families and children;
- > Enhancing the quality and relevancy of formal and non-formal education programs; and
- > Increasing the capacity of CARE's partners at all levels.

CARE's experiences suggest that when activities focus on one primary set of interventions, impact is severely limited and rarely sustained. Interventions focused solely on providing education alternatives do not yield durable results over the long run. The reality is that these efforts rarely bring about system-level changes essential to achieving significant impact for most marginalized child laborers. Such single-oriented responses are unable to ensure that once project-funding ceases, children do not reenter the labor market as fast as they enrolled in school.

CARE uses tailored approaches to meet the unique challenges facing communities. These include: strengthening the capacity of existing community-based organizations by including them in both the development of baseline studies and the design of work plans; creating village savings-and-loan programs that empower mothers; creating vocational training programs for children and their parents or caregivers; launching small-enterprise projects; and creating schools for parents to promote lasting attitude changes and to build a foundation for

“I am not too worried about what happens after the project ends, because what stays in our heads will not go away.”

— Nicaraguan mother participating in CARE's *Primeros Aprendo* project



positive relations between parents, children and teachers.

CARE works to ensure that knowledge and expertise become ingrained in communities, so their benefits remain long after an intervention has run its course. Thus, CARE aims to play more of a facilitating role in coordination with local partners, emphasizing less-visible efforts that promote sustainability. Key to all of CARE's interventions is a focus on change in practices and attitudes, not simply quantitative proxy indicators of success.

Preventing child labor and reintegrating child laborers into society is most effective and sustainable when interventions focus on galvanizing community action for change. CARE tailors individual child-labor interventions to local contexts, while ensuring that the organization's overall strategy to combat child labor prioritizes the needs and opinions of the communities it serves.

In its fight against poverty, CARE addresses the inequalities that manifest themselves in societies around the world. Through evidence-based advocacy, CARE aims to not only be a leading voice in the fight against poverty, articulating the realities facing exploited children and families, but also to actively support global efforts to eradicate the worst forms of child labor. The following tenants are essential to not only addressing the short-term needs of exploited children and families, but also to developing long-term solutions to the scourge of child labor.

- > Children must be removed immediately from the worst forms of child labor, and their participation in hazardous labor mitigated;
- > Quality, relevant education must be recognized as a basic human right by all stakeholders, including children, families, communities, government and nongovernmental officials;



- > Relevant, quality education opportunities, including skills training, must be viewed by the communities in which CARE works as beneficial alternatives to the worst forms of hazardous child labor;
- > Child laborers, those susceptible to child labor, families, communities and society at large must have a greater understanding of the negative consequences associated with the worst forms of child labor;
- > Communities must increase their capacity to target the abuses caused by the worst forms of hazardous child labor;
- > Families and communities must take advantage of opportunities to improve their overall quality of life, especially as it relates to a child's participation in education; and
- > Governments and local partners must increase their capacity to combat the worst forms of hazardous child labor through the development of realistic, enforceable initiatives.

Articulating CARE's Beliefs

CARE's position on child labor was codified in its *2006 Organizational Policy Regarding Working Children and Hazardous Child Labor*.¹⁴ It had become increasingly evident that as an organization focused on empowering the poor, CARE needed to institutionalize its position based on what it had learned from its interventions. CARE needed to translate project information and experiences into a policy that reflected its unparalleled commitment to combating child labor. The evidence pointed to a simple and undeniable realization: Children have always worked, children continue to work today, and children will probably always work.

CARE firmly opposes the worst forms of child labor, as defined by ILO Convention 182 and Recommendation 190, and aims to assist countries that are working to eliminate them. Of course, not all work is detrimental. This includes work that is not overly strenuous or that is only seasonal or part-time; work that is

¹⁴ *Organizational Policy Regarding Working Children and Hazardous Child Labor*. CARE USA (2006).

developmentally appropriate; work that does not compromise the mental, physical, moral or spiritual development of the child, and that does not interfere, impede or restrict a child's right to a quality education.

CARE also understands that children can play an important role in their families' economic welfare, performing chores or earning income to provide basic household necessities. But in its extreme forms, work can place a child's life and well being at risk.

CARE also opposes hazardous child labor. It is not always easy to clearly define what is hazardous and what is not, because excessive amounts of any form of economic activity can be considered hazardous. CARE's position on the various forms of child labor reflects these complex realities, and thus the organization is well-equipped to work in partnership with the vast majority of children, their families, and their communities affected by child labor. Formulating an institutional position on hazardous labor enables CARE to prioritize interventions and ensure a level of accountability.

While governments and international organizations often focus their efforts on what the world should look like, CARE's approach reflects the daily realities facing 218 million child laborers and their families. This approach also acknowledges that real change is a progressive and incremental process, a fact that has been illustrated by a diverse range of interventions implemented by a wide array of actors. International discourse must focus on those realistic approaches that are creating incremental improvements in the lives of child laborers, their families and their communities — not unrealistic expectations grounded in little more than colorful rhetoric.





SECTION

II

Initiating Action

Section II addresses the various strategies and techniques used to galvanize community action for change. Specifically, it examines community-mobilization techniques, the role of quality education as a critical component of an overall child-labor strategy, the distinct role women play in targeting child labor, the added value that youth participation for self-empowerment (YPS) strategies have on a project's ultimate success, and the importance of economic alternatives to child labor for children and families.

Chapter 4

Agents of Change: Empowering Communities to Effectively Combat Child Labor and Child Trafficking

“Community members gain confidence, built trust among one another and subsequently identify problems and needs facing their communities. This results in the development of context-specific action plans that are owned, implemented and monitored by communities. Moreover, communities are then able to recognize and claim the rights afforded to them.”

Characteristics of Success

- > Issues of child labor are contextualized within broader community-development discussions, increasing audience willingness to making visible changes in attitudes and actions.
- > Community-based intervention strategies rely on actors who live in or near communities, who speak the local language and possess intimate knowledge of the local environment.
- > Alliances with local entities such as NGOs, businesses, and religious or other organizations enhance chances for sustainable results.

What Experience Tells Us

A community is a social group whose members share a common locality, traditions and history. Although communities are not always homogenous, an organized and empowered community is more in tune with the hopes and beliefs of its members, and more likely to be able to address their problems. To achieve lasting change, it is essential to focus on the aspirations of local communities and their members, to support their efforts to take control of their own lives through the realization of their rights and responsibilities.

Two of CARE’s overarching objectives, outlined in Chapter 3, focus on increasing the capability of communities to combat the numerous problems associated with child labor:

- > Use advocacy to build public sentiment against the abuses of child labor and the denial of children’s basic human rights;
- > Increase the capacity of CARE’s partners at all levels.

CARE’s child-labor initiatives aim to involve communities in every step of the process: design and implementation, awareness raising, data gathering, education, advocacy, capacity building and empowerment.

CARE’s national staff members play a crucial role in successfully motivating community action for change. However, qualified national staff members are hard to find in many situations, and organizations must be willing to make a long-term investment in strengthening

CARE Staff Making a Difference: Claudine Mensah

the capacity of local staff to achieve some level of sustainability. Just as interventions must be context-specific and take into account local environmental issues, so, too, must those individuals with a vested interest in making change a reality. Residents are keenly aware of their local environment and the situation their communities face. Local staff members play a facilitating role: They speak local languages and thus are more likely to gain the trust of community members and have insight on their needs and concerns. As a result, community members see them as partners in developing solutions to local problems.

The Nuts and Bolts of Solution-Oriented Programming

A successful solution-oriented intervention is consultative, participatory and inclusive from the onset. One of the main strengths of this approach is that interventions are designed around existing community-based organizational structures. On the rare occasions when these do not exist, CARE facilitates the creation of new structures or networks, or the reactivation of dormant ones. In this way, CARE is focusing on the role communities play in cultivating an enabling environment.

In Mali, the government introduced village watch groups to encourage local responsibility for protecting children from trafficking and economic migration. CARE built on this initiative. With the organization's help, community members participated in the design of local action plans, which were incorporated into the official local development plan. They also received capacity-building training and participated in activities designed to address the

Claudine Mensah has been working for CARE in Togo since 1998. Motivated by the love and happiness she felt as a child, Claudine feels that it is her duty to give back to the community. She loves children and is a firm believer in equal rights for every human. Claudine feels responsible for making sure those rights are realized, especially for those who are vulnerable and are unable to speak out for themselves.

Claudine's solid upbringing and education has informed her pursuit of justice for children, their families and their communities. Working with child laborers who produce cheap goods often causes Claudine to reflect on the wisdom of her grandmother, who said, "Anytime you are happy about the good deal you've gotten from a farmer, you should know that deal comes at the price of a farmer's blood." Claudine applies this saying to goods produced by children whose developmental years are sacrificed for cheaper prices.

Claudine enjoys the opportunity CARE offers to learn and innovate. She takes pleasure in being part of the global CARE family, sharing its values and vision, and in knowing that she has a voice in her country office's decision-making processes.

Working with CARE has significantly changed Claudine's understanding of poverty. Before, she did not recognize the significance of duty bearers in ensuring the rights of marginalized groups. Now Claudine assists all levels of society in the fight against poverty.

As a woman, Claudine has faced many challenges, especially when working with community leaders. She is often not taken seriously, especially when she explains the need to consult women (mothers) on the decision to send children to school or to work. Claudine found that most mothers actually disapprove of sending their daughters far from home, but they are not empowered enough to oppose decisions made by men.

Through confidence and conviction, Claudine has been able to work with traditional authorities to create change. Her male colleagues have been supportive, often presenting Claudine as an example of what is possible when girls are allowed to reach their potential.

Claudine believes her efforts have been successful. Child trafficking in Togo has been significantly reduced, thanks in large part to the effort of communities. Claudine believes that there are multiple causes of child trafficking and exploitation, thus solutions need multiple approaches. She is now focused on developing long-term solutions to trafficking as well as the economic insecurity that causes it.



problems at hand. Community members then helped identify and develop interventions to address the reintegration of trafficked children into the community, including the local education system. These efforts have reduced the number of children who migrate after the harvest. In many communities, consultative mechanisms identified as effective components of child-labor monitoring systems (CLMS) are now in place to monitor and control the incidence of child trafficking.

Likewise, in Togo, CARE formed vigilance committees composed of youth, village elders, women's groups and others to play a vital role in combating child trafficking. Members were trained how to identify traffickers as well as alert local authorities to their presence. These groups were linked to school-management committees, which monitor absentee and dropout rates in order to detect children at risk of being trafficked, and then take preemptive action to help them. Communities were provided with bicycles so members could more easily mobilize themselves through house-to-house visits. On a cautious note, more needs to be done to safeguard the security of vigilance-committee members: Many have received threats from traffickers and others involved in trafficking.

In Benin, Honduras and Ecuador, community members were involved in a CARE education project from the beginning and oversaw the development of an initial baseline study. After this experience, village institutions and community members started to play a major role in taking annual censuses, developing school action plans, and monitoring and evaluating academic performance. Communities supported the formulation and implementation of community action plans, which drew on the participation of parents and caregivers, teachers, community leaders and students to facilitate improvements in school management and overall quality, making education an attractive alternative to child labor.

In collaboration with one of CARE's local NGO partners in Ghana, CARE staff and local communities were able to identify education challenges and propose pragmatic solutions. Staff members were trained in Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) for community mobilization. As part of the process, district officials lived in targeted communities for four days, sleeping in the houses of community members, eating their food and spending personal time with them. They gained the trust and confidence of community members and subsequently were able to identify their problems and needs, resulting in the development of actions plans. Currently, 30 communities in Ghana have created action plans, which are revised every three months with supervision and support from CARE field staff.

As these examples illustrate, the strategy of consultation, inclusion and coordination not only helps ensure a successful project, it empowers the personal and collective identities of communities.

The Horrors of Trafficking: Akossiwa's Story

Akossiwa Tomawo is one of six children in a poor family in Togo. When Akossiwa was three years old, her father, Minomekpo, sent her to a distant relative in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. This cousin had convinced Minomekpo that his daughter would have a better life there, that she would learn a trade and be treated like a member of the family. Akossiwa's family saw this as a blessing, because they could barely make ends meet and worried about how they were going to feed, clothe and educate their children. In addition, Minomekpo was suspicious of sending his daughter to school for fear that she would be molested by the teacher. He thought Akossiwa would be better off learning a skill than receiving a formal education.

Akossiwa worked until she was 11. During those eight years, she had no direct contact with her family. The woman whom she worked for often wrote to her family to report that she was well, but offered no details. Today, tears run down Akossiwa's cheeks as she recalls the chores and living conditions: "Up before sunrise to cook and clean. Long days in the market selling produce, evenings spent cooking and cleaning. She promised me education, clothes, shoes and food, but I went to bed hungry every night. I slept on a mat on the cold floor, with no blanket."

One day, the cousin returned Akossiwa to her family. "I was telling her that I wanted to go home," Akossiwa says. "I told her I missed my family and was going to run away if she didn't take me home."

After she returned, a COMBAT project agent asked Akossiwa and her family if she wanted to enroll in the program. Most girls her age and in her situation enroll in some sort of vocational training rather than catching up on their formal education, because they are so much older than the other students in their class, but Akossiwa did not want that. "I wanted to be educated and learn to do more than cook and clean," she says. But it wasn't easy. Because she was so young when she was sent away, Akossiwa is now only in the first grade, a 12-year-old in a classroom full of children half her age. "I love all my subjects," she says. "I get the highest marks in the class, but it's not because I am older, it's because I study the hardest. I am so happy to be in school that I do not care if I am older than all the rest."

Akossiwa says she would like to be seamstress some day. While this might not seem like a lofty aspiration, it is the typical ambition of most girls in the area, because they do not have any professional female role models. Seamstresses are the most successful businesswomen in the area, so girls want to emulate their success. "Part of our goal through the COMBAT project is to expose girls to different career options and get them excited about the possibilities that open up to them through education," says Therese Akakpo, executive director of La Colome, CARE's partner organization in the COMBAT project.

Local agents check in with Akossiwa and her parents every other week to monitor her schoolwork and to offer general support. "After feeling abandoned for so long, it is important for girls like Akossiwa to know that they are important and that people are concerned for their well being," Therese says. "It encourages them and improves their self-esteem." Formal psychological help is not part of the project, but general counseling is, as well as getting children to become more active in their schools and communities. It allows them to set an example for other children who have been through similar ordeals, and it gives project participants an opportunity to know that they are important members of their community.

"Even after the project ends," Therese says, "we will continue to work with Akossiwa to make sure she finishes her education."



Awareness Raising as an Effective Tool for Empowerment

No matter how poor community members are, they have the potential to solve their own problems: This is the focus of CARE's awareness-raising efforts to combat child labor and child trafficking. Through participatory techniques, communities are empowered with knowledge and the will to assert their shared vision for change. This is crucial: If communities do not recognize child labor as a problem, little will be done to effect change, no matter how important the issue is to CARE and other development organizations.

Raising awareness is different from raising expectations, and project participants have expressed their appreciation that CARE makes this distinction. Communities often assume that international agencies and organizations will solve their problems for them through the provision of resources. CARE's approach is to help communities identify for themselves their problems, potential solutions and the resources needed to make those solutions a reality. Evidence reveals that this approach is more successful than simply offering direct, visible short-term solutions, and that it increases the chances that communities will address the underlying causes of their problems.

Awareness-raising strategies must take into consideration the availability of resources, the local socioeconomic and cultural situation and the characteristics of the target audience. To achieve impact, both project content and method have to be carefully designed accordingly.

In terms of content, awareness-raising strategies that focus on the negative consequences of child labor or blame community members for the existence of the problem often fall on deaf ears and do little to impact change. Negative messages about the roles community members play only further exploits the situation. To capture an audience and to positively influence attitudes and behavior, it is more effective to begin by defining success from a community's perspective. Communities are encouraged to explore factors that impede success through a process of self-identification. This methodology is useful because it allows community members to bring up the sensitive topic of child labor on their own, rather than having it presented to them by an outside organization. Focusing on a collective vision of success and identifying the factors that must be addressed to realize that vision is common to appreciative inquiry.

This approach is illustrated in Ghana, where the problem of child labor on cocoa plantations is a very sensitive issue. Instead of child labor, the awareness-raising strategy focused on improving the yields of cocoa farmers. CARE identified an issue of great importance to farmers, producers and the community at large, and thus provided a larger, relevant context for discussing child labor. Contextualizing how education can benefit a child's personal development as well as cocoa production was a positive outcome of the awareness-raising strategy.

Similarly, in Bolivia, a rights-based approach was adopted to raise awareness of child labor. It focused on the right to education for children, women and families, instead of the negative aspects of their participation in mining

activities. With the participation of mining families, CARE designed a social-mobilization strategy that included activities and discussions addressing the factors that prevent children from receiving an education; as a result of this process, participants eventually began to discuss the worst forms of child labor. Subsequently, councils for community mobilization and administration were formed, primarily through the participation of mothers. Parent-teacher associations were also reactivated to improve education, monitor security and address both the importance of education and how it is impacted by child labor.

This strategy successfully mobilized community support. Parents and caregivers began to prioritize their children's education by establishing closer relationships with teachers, and they also learned and accepted the fact that mining negatively affects their children.

Not only must the content of the message be contextualized, the strategy must be utilized. One of CARE's primary awareness-raising strategies has been to hold workshops with parents, caregivers, teachers and children. When all stakeholders are allowed to have a voice, this method has proven successful in changing attitudes and behavior. However, awareness-raising sessions are not effective when there are significant distances between communities, and only limited transport is available — a reality in most areas. As an alternative, local radio and television outlets have been used to reach target stakeholders. In Togo, a project held discussions on local TV and radio stations, giving listeners the opportunity to take part in the debates by phone. Media outlets were similarly used to explain the law on child trafficking, and to discuss topics related to child labor and education, especially girls' education.

Although mass-media campaigns can be successful in reaching a wide audience and increasing the public's understanding of certain issues, it can be difficult to accurately measure the direct

“ In Their Own Words: ”

From the Mines of Bolivia

“My name is Renny, and I am 13 years old. I work in the mines in Potosí. My father died when I was a little boy, so my brothers had to go and work in the mines. I always helped them as much as I could, until I started to work in the mines myself. Then my mother became a guard — she looks after the mines — and eventually we moved closer to the mines.”

“In the beginning, I only helped my brothers, and then I started to take the minerals out myself. Soon I became the assistant of a driller. Now I only help my mom guard the mines. I go to school, but my brothers still work. They got married and have their own families.”

“I have participated in the La Plata center. We have organized education fairs, so other people learn about the situation of the children who work in the mines. With CARE Bolivia, we have done a lot of fun stuff. I really liked the activities.”

“My mother has been part of the project from the beginning. She helped with the construction of the center, participated in training sessions and helped other children in the project a lot. I am still participating because they always help us with our homework.”

“The project staff really listens to us and they are interested in our problems and our education. We also learned that working in the mines can be really bad for us. We want the project to continue not only for us children, but also for our mothers. The project helped us to study and to leave the mines so we can become professionals, and not die in the mines like our fathers and brothers.””



impact these initiatives have on changing attitudes and practices in society as a whole. Interventions designed to combat child labor through awareness raising must target specific audiences and measurable indicators in order to validate their effectiveness.

A prime example of effective, targeted awareness-raising interventions with measurable impacts is the use of local community development agents (CDAs), usually women, who are trained by CARE. In Togo, Ghana and Benin, CDAs speak the local languages and reside in or very near intervention areas. They visit schools on a regular basis, establishing relationships with teachers, students and administrators. Generally, they are responsible for collaborating with local officials, overseeing public awareness and civic-education campaigns, and training and mobilizing local committees and other members of the community — teachers, parents and caregivers, community leaders and administrators. In some cases, they are also

responsible for preparing public-service announcements for local radio stations. In Somoto, Nicaragua, local facilitators operate as a liaison between community leaders, parents and caregivers, teachers, CARE and local NGO project staff. Community members feel comfortable discussing their problems and concerns with the CDAs, which enables project strategies to address issues early on, before issues escalate into greater, communitywide concerns.

Community members see CDAs as partners in developing solution-oriented responses. Although CARE's experiences have so far been positive, it has to be noted that working with locally hired CDAs may create obstacles, if they are perceived to take sides in local debates or to pursue their own agenda.

Emerging Trends: Corporate Engagement

CARE has developed a pragmatic approach of creating alliances with large corporations and others in the private sector. Several CARE country offices have explored public-private partnerships, corporate-NGO partnerships and corporate social responsibility practices as ways to combat child labor. CARE's experience in this field includes one-to-one relationships with strategic partners, such as Cargill, as well as sector initiatives, such as partnerships with coffee producers in Central America.

Corporate engagement is emerging as an important strategy in combating hazardous and exploitative child labor. Corporate engagement — specifically, engagement of corporate sectors that make use of child labor in their supply chain — along with local partnerships enable greater access to children working in certain sectors, including better insight into rates of child labor and working conditions for children. In turn, this access aids the development of strategies to influence the attitudes and practices of families and employers.

Spotlighting a CARE Partner: APAF MUSO DANBE

APAF MUSO DANBE is a local NGO in Mali that aims to protect domestic workers. APAF assists and protects girls who migrate from rural to urban areas to work as domestic servants to build their trousseau, the rough equivalent of a dowry. APAF collaborates closely with their employers and families to identify and monitor their situations.

APAF is the voice of those voiceless domestic workers. In each of its 11 training centers in the capital, Bamako, APAF has developed strategies to empower domestic workers to help themselves as well as other girls in similar situations. At these training centers, girls can attend classes in literacy, vocational training, education and communication. The curriculum focuses on numerous timely topics (e.g., HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, protection/security, household/domestic skills, children's rights, migration and child trafficking, and exploitative labor).

In addition to providing training, APAF has invested enormously in preventing and responding to child abuse. It has succeeded in mobilizing strategic partners (e.g., host families and hometown associations) in the fight against child trafficking and exploitative labor. APAF ensures that girls are in safe working environments, or environments that abide by the legal system. APAF deals with cases of rape and other sexual abuse, physical violence and violations of contracts. APAF is the intermediary between child domestic workers who are victims of abuse and their parents and caregivers, making the reintegration process as smooth as possible.



Corporate Engagement: Yielding Sustainable Results

Corporate-NGO partnerships: Cargill has helped fund a project in Ghana that is successfully working with groups of farmers and extension workers to improve cocoa productivity and also reduce reliance on child labor. The project focuses on enhancing the quality and relevancy of education opportunities for children and families engaged in cocoa production, while contributing to the long-term sustainability of cocoa farming.

Public-Private Partnerships: In Central America, CARE's Primero Aprendo project, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, is making a concerted effort to reach out to the private sector, especially coffee producers. Starbucks, for example, is supporting CARE's efforts to combat hazardous child labor on coffee plantations. Through innovative education practices, CARE is ensuring that a child's right to education is a priority for everyone.

Chapter 5

Making Education Work for Communities

“When empowered to improve local education options, communities learn how to design approaches, interact with local government entities and claim their rights to a quality education — for their children and the betterment of society.”

Defining Success

Empowering communities helps ensure quality and relevant education opportunities, equipping children with the skills they need to succeed.

Key Characteristics of Success

- > A shared responsibility between teachers, parents and caregivers for a child’s education leads to education inside and outside the classroom.
- > Creative education methods and activities prevent children from dropping out of school to enter the labor market.
- > Proactive education organization and management contributes to relevant, quality education.
- > Mixed-method approaches address social inequities, providing a more accurate picture of project success, impact and sustainability.

What Experience Tells Us

Communities and civil societies that are empowered through a rights-based approach (RBA) are more likely to hold governments responsible for the fulfillment of those rights. RBAs increase the decision-making power, involvement and responsibility of parents and caregivers, teachers, women, youth and other marginalized groups, with respect to defining education priorities and interventions. By promoting partnerships between schools and communities, the responsibility for educating children is shared. This relationship is based on mutual respect and acknowledgment of each stakeholder’s assets and expertise.

Over the last five years alone, more than 120,000 child participants in CARE projects have directly benefited from this approach, resulting in their active participation in the education system and a reduction in rates of child labor.¹⁵ However, quantifying the impact of this approach on others involved (e.g., parents and caregivers, teachers, school officials, local authorities) is extremely difficult.

One of the overarching objectives identified in Chapter 3 focuses on enhancing the quality and relevancy of formal and non-formal education programs. Children feel better and more confident in child-friendly learning environments, and better-prepared teachers

¹⁵ Discussing CARE USA’s Private Sector Engagement Strategy. CARE USA (2007).

become more motivated and concerned about their students. In turn, this contributes to an improved learning environment, free from discrimination or indifference toward those marginalized by child labor. In addition, evidence reveals that when parents and caregivers are involved in schools, the quality of education increases, the benefits of education for children are easily discernable, and education begins to take priority over work, enhancing the overall human condition.

The greatest progress in the fight against child labor has been made by recognizing the link between child labor and the goals associated with Education for All (EFA).¹⁶ In 1990, delegates to the World Conference on EFA in Jomtien, Thailand, committed to the goals of universal education and reducing adult illiteracy rates by half by the year 2000. These goals were reaffirmed at the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, where delegates committed to achieving quality, basic education for all girls and boys by no later than 2015.

Education systems — in particular, those that are free and compulsory — that recognize the minimum age for employment, as defined by ILO Convention 138, are considered key to preventing child labor and reaching the EFA goals. But they must address the underlying problems of child labor, which poses a threat to these goals. Children who work fulltime cannot attend school, and those who are forced to divide their time between school and work can suffer academically and end up dropping out in favor of full-time employment.

In accordance with the findings of the 2007 EFA Global Monitoring Report, recent CARE projects in Honduras and Nicaragua suggest that when parents and caregivers enroll their young children in early childhood development programs, they are more likely to attend primary school, more likely to earn good grades, and less likely to drop out in favor of work.

¹⁶ *The End of Child Labor: Within Reach*. International Labour Organization (2006).



Rights-Based Approaches Guiding Education Interventions

- > Empowering communities to define and meet their basic education needs.
- > Ensuring equity in the community and the education system, including the decision-making processes that govern that system.
- > Addressing the quality and relevance of the education that individuals and groups receive.
- > Supporting the development and implementation of a positive policy environment.
- > Raising the awareness of individual duty bearers (parents and caregivers) about their responsibilities.
- > Promoting sustainable relationships between actors, based on accountability, participation and transparency, through the creation and/or strengthening of systems that encourage exchange and behavior change.



Promoting Basic Education for All

Extensive evidence indicates that even incremental increases in the education levels of parents and caregivers, especially mothers and other women, leads to healthier families and greater earning potential. This is only one reason why CARE is dedicated to promoting basic education for all. CARE's projects promote and facilitate discussion between parents and caregivers, teachers and other members of the community on overcoming barriers to education that help keep families mired in poverty. CARE also provides economic incentives to help parents and caregivers cover the cost of keeping their children in school.

Attributes of a Relevant, Quality Education

Relevant, quality education for children has been widely recognized as one of the best ways to prevent, reduce and, in the long-term, eliminate child labor. Quality is pivotal: Schooling or other educational experiences can be detrimental to a child's development if he or she is merely memorizing, instead of learning.

Both the EFA Goals and Millennium Development Goals introduced the concept of quality education as essential to fighting poverty. CARE's approach to education supports these goals, focusing on important issues such as empowerment, equity (particularly for girls and women), quality and social justice. Indicators of this approach are organized under four major outcomes categories:

Attainment, equality, quality and empowerment. In accordance with UNICEF, CARE defines quality education in terms of five key dimensions: student preparedness, environment, content, processes and outcomes.

CARE's efforts to provide quality education involve teachers, students, communities, governments and civil societies. These efforts are designed to:

- > Increase the quantity and quality of resources available to education systems, schools and communities;
- > Enhance the processes that occur within classrooms, communities and education systems as a whole;
- > Improve the content and relevance of curriculum;
- > Address issues of equality and equity, bearing in mind that without equity, there can be no equality; and
- > Increase the sense of ownership among those responsible for providing quality education.

Partnerships: Key Elements to Achieving a Common Vision

CARE's programs are implemented almost exclusively through partnerships with local NGOs, community groups, and local or national governments. CARE uses numerous strategies to improve the quality of education and to reduce child labor. The *Primero Aprendo* child labor and education project (see page 40), for example, is analyzing the impact and replicability of best practices in dozens of target communities throughout Central America.

Validating Education Interventions: Experiences from Central America

The Primero Aprendo project developed 21 interventions that are being implemented in 40 communities in Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Most of the interventions are focused on providing education to children who have either permanently or temporarily left school in favor of work.

Intervention methodologies, modalities and content are varied, depending on location. Schools and classrooms have been created, accelerated curricula have been implemented in primary and secondary schools, and vocational and remedial education have been made available for adolescents. Some interventions are being implemented by teachers, others by promoters or facilitators.

Children also serve as tutors to younger children. It is important to point out that the majority of interventions have already been applied in other contexts by government programs or NGOs, but not with the specific purpose of providing education to child laborers and other at-risk children.

To empower communities, stakeholders receive training on project management and design, financial management, monitoring and evaluation, group and participatory decision-making, and various technical aspects of improving education quality. Evidence has shown that efficient and proactive education organization and management ensures the sustainability of interventions.

Coming Together for Education in Haiti

Key to the education program in Haiti has been the development of school-based groups called ADPEP (Associations of Directors, Teachers, Students and Parents and Caregivers). Initially formed to improve the management of school canteens, ADPEPs

have evolved into fledgling civil-society organizations that tackle broader school issues affecting quality of life (e.g., infrastructure and sanitation) and quality of education. Evidence suggests that participation in ADPEPs was educational for the various stakeholders, especially parents and caregivers. Participants learned to exchange ideas, share differences and seek compromise to achieve progress for the common good. Participation was seen as an active learning process, reinforcing democratic practices. Ultimately, ADPEPs exceeded their original, school-based mandate by contributing to the community at large.

Trained community groups are often in charge of recruiting students, encouraging academic performance and monitoring both student and teacher performance. They are also actively involved in organizing special occasions and encouraging wider community participation in education-related celebrations.

Community Participation: The Benin Experience

In Benin, the PROBASE project sustained many of its interventions thanks to a close working relationship between communities and local actors. A new spirit of engagement and collaboration was cemented between parents, caregivers, children and teachers. Parents and caregivers now view schools as instrumental partners in the development of their communities. More than ever, local institutions rely on women as well as men to respond to village needs. Local organizations have helped mitigate child labor, address forced marriages and early pregnancies, and empower the participation of women.

CARE empowers community groups to identify resources for themselves that can improve the quality of school infrastructure and curriculum. CARE facilitates the development of community-driven proposals and helps communities submit funding requests. This approach allows communities to understand the funding process and the requirements of different institutions, such as municipal and local governments, local branches of the Ministry of Education, and the private sector. Even when funding proposals are unsuccessful, the process benefits community members: teaching them how to design project proposals, how to interact with local government entities and how to claim their right to quality education for their children.

Partnering to Improve Schools in Bolivia

In Bolivia, deteriorating school infrastructure in the country's southern High Plateau region was contributing to high dropout rates. Before responding to demands for school-infrastructure improvement, a CARE project team carried out an appraisal study to identify and determine the physical state of area schools. Parents, caregivers, students and teachers participated in the study as well as in the development of an intervention plan. Simultaneously, talks were held with municipal governments to ensure financial inputs for construction. As a result, the municipal governments in Potosi and Llallagua made a concerted effort to help provide for new infrastructure. In addition, the infrastructure-improvement efforts were paired with support to teachers to improve their performance in the classroom.

A Focus on Parents and Caregivers

It is evident that the involvement of parents and caregivers in the education of their children is vital. CARE has found that it is also beneficial to provide education opportunities for parents and caregivers; many adults who have participated in CARE projects are illiterate, or have received little if any formal education.

“ In Their Own Words: ”

Member of a Parent-Teacher Association in Bolivia

“My name is Julián Ari, and I am 55 years old. I live in the mining district of Potosí, where I used to work. I am married with six children; we are a poor family. I only finished fifth grade. I participated in the courses provided by CARE, and I am also part of the parent-teacher association facilitated by the project. I decided to get involved in one of the committees because my children attend this school, and I want to collaborate.”

“The committee does different things in the school, such as cleaning, improving the infrastructure and participating in community activities. I am the president of the committee in charge of organizing meetings. I think it is important that fathers and mothers get involved in the education of their children, because our children need to study to be professionals. I have also learned a lot since I became involved in the association, mostly from other parents. I learned how to better look out and care for my children. We also benefited because education is important for students, parents and the community as a whole. For my children, it has been great, because they now get breakfast at school and they also receive school supplies.”

School for Parents, one of CARE's most successful interventions in Central America, is being implemented by the Primero Aprendo project. Its main objective is to contribute to student enrollment and retention by improving relations between parents, caregivers, teachers and children. The school teaches parents and caregivers how to help children with homework as well as improve or maintain positive relationships with them. The demand in Nicaragua has been enormous, and changes in both attitudes and practices have been observed among parents, caregivers and teachers. Parents and caregivers have also begun to play a greater role in everyday activities at their children's schools.

Teaching Parents in Nicaragua

Juana Francisca González López is 34 years old and has three teenage children. She is a teacher at the School for Parents in the community of Dantalí. She has been working there for more than seven years, primarily teaching second grade.

Due to the overwhelming interest in the school, participants had to be split into two classrooms. There are some fathers, but most participants are mothers and other teachers; Some mothers bring their little children to class. Juana is very happy to see that fathers also participate in her classes, because she knows that in the rural areas of Nicaragua, fathers normally do not consider education for their children important. They believe children learn more at work.

Juana has noticed many changes in both the parents and children since the School for Parents started. Student violence has decreased, in and out of the classroom, and academic performance has improved. In addition, they are more interested in getting an education than going to work, an achievement Juana attributes to changing attitudes among their parents.

Juana is very happy because she has learned a lot from the training sessions she received through CARE; she even applies her new knowledge to her own children. In the beginning, she thought it would be boring to teach parents, but now she loves it and hopes the school will continue. She already has ideas on how to improve the school, including new topics to teach. She really thinks the School for Parents is important in the fight against child labor and the promotion of the right to education.



The “open classroom” is another education practice CARE has validated in Central America. Under this system, parents and caregivers are invited to attend their children’s classes. Once they know what their children are learning in school and its relevance to their lives, they often become more motivated to send them to school, instead of to work.

In Honduras, parents and caregivers are invited to participate in the Educatos education model, which focuses on educating children that have dropped out of the formal education system. The model promotes both child and parent participation in classes. As a result, children have been encouraged to stay in school, parent and caregiver participation in their children’s education has increased, and greater respect between parents, caregivers and teachers is evident.

Organized groups of parents and caregivers are also involved in school fund-raising and maintenance activities. Mothers are often in charge of running breakfast or lunch programs, or specific vocational courses at schools. In Nicaragua, mothers have been trained to sew uniforms and are in charge of teaching primary schoolchildren unable to participate in traditional education programs.

Children at the Core

The results of CARE's education and child-labor interventions must be measured quantitatively as well as qualitatively — how they have changed children's attitudes and practices.

In Ecuador, children participating in CARE education projects have increased their self-esteem, are more communicative and show a greater interest in their education. Furthermore, their parents and caregivers have started to play a greater role in building relationships with their children's schools. There have also been positive changes in Nicaragua and Honduras: Parents, caregivers and teachers have reported that children are no longer afraid of their teachers, have more respect for fellow students, are less violent and perform better academically.



Alice in Flowerland

"I have one brother and three sisters," says Alice, a young girl in the Chaupi community in Ecuador. "I am the youngest. We live with our parents. They work hard so that we can all go to school."

To make this possible, her father works on community projects, tends his crops and helps with housework. Meanwhile, her mother spends many hours working on the flower plantation. Neither parent finished primary school, but they believe that their children's education will change their lives.

Alice is honoring her parent's hard work. She studies diligently in one of the schools supported by the SOY project. She takes part in workshops on art, music and human rights, and she is the coordinator of the student government.

"Although I don't know what I want to do when I grow up, I do know that I am going to keep studying," Alice says. "The SOY project gives us the opportunity to continue on from primary school to high school, without putting our dreams on hold to go work as child laborers, traveling to Quito to work as construction assistants or maids, or being held hostage by the flower plantations like our parents, who we hardly ever see.

"In the school, the classrooms are nice, the teachers treat us well, and they hug us. Before, they were mean. I like to be with my friends and schoolmates, playing games and sharing stories. We owe a lot to the SOY project, which helps us by training our teachers. They know more now and they treat us better. The project helps us with scholarships and it has convinced our parents to let us keep studying."

Another effective, but often controversial, tool aimed at improving children's academic performance is the use of incentives. In Benin, CARE's PROBASE project gave out awards to students who made the most progress in school; teachers received awards as well. Four times a year, local committees held an awards ceremony that included student skits, plays and dances, culminating in the award presentation. The positive response of community members to this activity exceeded all expectations and proved that, if done right, awards can be a positive force for galvanizing community action for change.

Scholarship programs for vulnerable children can also be a contentious issue in the international development community. If implemented under close scrutiny, this approach can ensure access to school for child laborers. Scholarship programs have to be carefully designed, because these interventions are only sustainable when management is transferred to local committees or authorities, the process for selection of recipients is fair and transparent, and it is implemented in partnership with education centers. Scholarships can breed resentment among community members and negatively impact community perceptions of education. When considering a scholarship program, the benefits of long-term investment in education systems must be carefully weighed against short-term opportunities for students to attend school for one year. In addition, practitioners and policy makers must consider the messages that scholarships send to low-performing students, or to parents who want to send their children to school for the sake of the incentive, not because they have internalized the value of education itself.

The OPTIONS project in Cambodia is an example of how to effectively implement a scholarship initiative. Before transferring management of the initiative to local committees, CARE trained members in beneficiary selection, responding to complaints, interviewing techniques, scholarship disbursement, student monitoring, fund management and reporting.

A Bright Future in Kampong Cham, Cambodia

Him Roty, 19, and Sles Slamy, 20, both come from a Muslim community in the Tbong Khmom district in Cambodia's Kampong Cham province. Both girls completed ninth grade with scholarship support from the OPTIONS project. Most of their friends had dropped out of school before reaching ninth grade, so they were both very grateful for the opportunity. When they finished school, however, there were few job opportunities in their community, and they struggled to provide income for their families.

When the commune chief announced that he was looking for community teachers to work at district primary schools, the girls were very excited and decided to apply. Roty is now teaching third grade; Slamy is teaching first grade. They both found the education training offered by CARE to be very interesting and useful. Roty says she is very proud that she now has a respected job, and Slamy feels that she and Roty are good role models for other girls in their community. They both report that while teaching is exciting, it is also very challenging, and they hope to further develop their teaching skills.

It is important to note that not all approaches outlined in this section are universally appropriate or accepted. They can just as easily have disastrous results, if not carefully developed and implemented. Making sure the right intervention is pursued in partnership with communities is the responsibility of the overall implementing institution.

Strategies Focusing on Teachers

Teachers and school officials are key actors in any education intervention. In many countries, teachers are inadequately compensated, resulting in a lack of motivation. In-service teacher-training approaches must address inputs critical to improving learning outcomes, motivating teacher performance and improving relationships between teachers, children, parents and caregivers.

Interactive, child-centered approaches to education improve relationships between children and teachers. Strategies focusing on gender, culture, equality and child labor, and how these issues affect education, have proven effective. This is especially important in countries with large numbers of indigenous children or other marginalized groups who have been excluded from education by traditional economic, political and cultural biases. To guarantee the inclusion of indigenous children in Ecuador, CARE provided trainings to educators in partnership with the National Department of Intercultural and Bilingual Education (NDIBE). This approach effectively tackled the issue of discrimination — strengthening indigenous languages and knowledge, and improving the participation of indigenous peoples in public-policy decisions. Trainings also focused on innovative pedagogical methods, the use of new teaching materials and the creation of attractive learning environments. These trainings have resulted in improved delivery of quality education, especially by teachers in remote rural areas.

Relevant, locally developed curricula and learning aids have also been important for empowering teachers and improving academic performance. An important achievement in the Potosí area of Bolivia was the introduction of textbooks developed by CARE in conjunction with several target schools. Education authorities approved these textbooks and recommended their dissemination to all school districts in the city of Potosí and in other areas with high rates of

mine-related child labor. By acknowledging the realities facing children in Potosí, CARE was better equipped to improve the quality of local education and, in turn, contribute to higher enrollment, retention and completion rates.

Teaching Teachers

Delina Cayo Bejarano is a teacher at the Villa Colón educational center in the mining district of Potosí, in Bolivia. She has participated in various CARE-sponsored training sessions and in the development of teaching materials. She believes that these activities are very important for both children and teachers at her school. She feels that with every session, she gains more experience and enhances her skills, helping her become a better teacher.

Delina has applied what she learned from these activities to her classroom instruction and, as a result, has seen important changes in her students. Children are now much more aware of the dangers involved in mining, for them as well as for their parents. Students now participate more in school and are eager to learn new things. Teachers are more interested in applying new teaching methods, so children benefit more from their education.

Also effective was the creation of school-based teachers groups as well as mutual assistance and support structures for teachers. In weekly or monthly sessions, teachers exchange ideas on relevant issues, such as their relationships with students or what teaching tools they are using. The aim is to motivate teachers to improve the quality of education. As a result of this strategy teachers have applied a variety of innovative, pedagogical techniques and established better relationships with students. They have also increased their self-esteem and feel more supported by fellow teachers. In Nicaragua, teachers are using the Circles of Study for Teachers approach to provide a space for exchanging concerns, problems and success

An Agent of Change in Bolivia

For four years, Juan Estrada Romano has been director of the Villa Colón education center in Potosí. Juan has participated in many project activities, such as training sessions, organization of education fairs, cleaning days with the entire education community, vocational training (e.g., mechanics, painting on fabric and ceramics) and project-evaluation meetings.

He says CARE's interventions have motivated teachers to change their attitudes and learn how to better address their students' education needs. In addition, parents rarely participated in school activities before CARE's child labor project. Once they got involved, it became easier to organize activities to improve education, especially activities that taught parents how to support their children. Juan also believes that as a result of the project, teachers are contributing to the prevention of child labor in local mines.

stories, and for applying new knowledge and techniques.

While education systems that parallel the formal education structure are rarely sustainable or effective, some communities have found creative solutions when teachers or schools are nonexistent. One strategy calls for communities to create schools themselves. Evidence reveals that local initiatives generally can provide viable learning options for children when no other education opportunities exist. In Cambodia, for instance, community members with at least nine years of schooling were invited to serve as teachers in local primary schools. These community teachers received intensive pre-, post- and in-service training. Similarly, community-hired teachers in Benin were trained with the help of local representatives of the Ministry of Education.

In many cases, these were the first professional development trainings ever offered to area teachers. Teachers also received assistance in student-centered and gender-equitable teaching methods, and school principals subsequently reported positive changes in teacher attitudes and performance. However, community schools in Togo demonstrated that when community-hired teachers are not sufficiently trained or adequately compensated, schools can face a variety of problems.

Moving Ideas to Innovations

Traditional indicators for education projects focus on enrollment, retention and completion as well as other quantitative measures, such as the number of textbooks or pencils per child. This approach leaves gaps in the understanding of underlying causes of poverty, including lack of education opportunities for children, especially girls, and child labor; proxy indicators reveal little or nothing about economic activities that involve children.

Through the Patsy Collins Trust Fund Initiative (PCTFI), CARE has adopted an innovative approach that eschews traditional program indicators in favor of longitudinal research-based design, which seeks to uncover the true nature of program impact and to cultivate evidence to support program hypotheses.

The most effective way to challenge the limitations of traditional quantitative indicators is to provide proof that a mixed-method (quantitative and qualitative) approach to addressing social inequities provides a more accurate picture of success, impact and sustainability. Through the PCTFI, CARE aims to influence the direction and development of future initiatives aimed at meeting the needs of marginalized populations through a program versus a project approach.

Chapter 6

Women at the Crossroads

“Women are on the frontlines of the fight against child labor. An empowered woman that understands the dangers associated with hazardous and exploitative child labor, and the power an education can have on changing the future for her children, can help reduce the number of child laborers and those at risk of becoming child laborers. An investment in women is an investment in combating and ultimately eliminating child labor.”

Defining Success

Women possess the skills and knowledge necessary for galvanizing community action to reduce and eliminate child labor, and improve the quality of community-level education.

Key Characteristics of Success

- > Empowerment of women and women’s groups leads to improvements in education quality and furthers their own personal development.
- > Implementation of savings-and-credit groups for women helps generate leadership opportunities and bring about positive changes in the lives of women and their children.
- > The participation of women in education and child-labor interventions has a direct correlation to increasing the meaningful participation of men and children, resulting in demonstrated changes in attitudes and actions.
- > Strategies that specifically aim to empower women prove more effective than projects with high levels of female participation by default.

What Experience Tells Us

More women than men participate in CARE’s child-labor projects, and, on average, they participate more actively. One reason is that in traditional patriarchal societies, women are charged with raising children and running the household, so men are often reluctant to participate. In addition, men often do not have time to participate because of the demands of their jobs, which may be outside the community.

Women are extremely valuable to the overall cohesiveness of community structures, local organizations and networks. Women are effective in engaging other stakeholders, aspiring to bring about positive change, and, when they are educated, more likely to pass knowledge to their children.

Women stand at the crossroads when it comes to their impact on child labor. Empowered women are keenly aware of the dangers associated with child labor, and have proven vital to the success and sustainability of child-labor efforts. On the other hand, women that are

unaware of the hazards and exploitative conditions children face, and the power of education to mitigate these dangers, can fuel the premature entry of children into the workforce, contributing to lower academic performance and higher dropout rates. A comprehensive analysis of how women can mitigate or exacerbate rates of child labor is urgently needed. In addition, interventions must also clearly examine the impact that education has on increasing women's workloads when children, especially girls, are relieved of their domestic responsibilities. Women bear the brunt of supplementing domestic labor shortages, and interventions aimed at addressing these demands would decrease their burdens.

Enhancing a Sense of Purpose

Women's involvement in education not only contributes to keeping their children in school but also to the overall quality of education as well as their children's personal development. In Bolivia, women's participation in small-business-development training programs allowed them to move beyond traditional gender roles that had placed little value on their personal aspirations. Women gained valuable skills in group dynamics and interpersonal relationships, and they gained new friendships, which helped generate improved confidence and a sense of safety. As a result, a group of women successfully convinced their local municipality to reinstate the school breakfast program they were running. This happened well after the related CARE project ended, demonstrating that empowerment strategies can give women lasting confidence to negotiate on their own.

Members of several local women's associations in the mining area of Potosí participated in CARE capacity-building initiatives. They focused

“ In Their Own Words: ”

A Mother's Struggle in Bolivia

“My name is Maria Choque, and I am 33 years old. I live in the mining district of Potosí in Bolivia. My husband works as a miner, and to help with the family income, I guard the entrance to the mines. I want my children to study and one day to become professionals.”

“I have participated in the CARE project from the beginning. We fought hard for the construction of the Centro La Plata children's center, so that our children could get help. We appreciate CARE Bolivia, because they have never let us down; they have done what they promised.”

“I participated in the training course offered on fabric painting and life skills for family education and planning. We also learned about the negative consequences child labor has on our children. I really liked these activities, because I learned about how I, too, could help better educate my children, how to support them in their personal development, and the importance of a healthy lifestyle. CARE has really helped us, and that is why we asked if the project could continue in Potosí.”

“The majority of mothers involved in the project have been active from the beginning. We helped to organize and implement education activities, such as the construction of classrooms and trainings for fathers. This also really helped us to learn more about ourselves and our capabilities; we keep learning every day. We recently held a planning meeting and agreed on our activities for next year.”

I think it is important that women participate in all kinds of project activities, because it helps us to become more aware and learn how best to raise our children. Before the project, we were limited to working as guards at the mines, and to raising our children and doing household chores. I still work as a guard and participate in project activities. Unfortunately, it seems that as women participate more, the economic situation stays the same. We want better opportunities for our children.”

on enhancing organizational development, including messages associated with the dangers of children working in mines. Once given the space to develop their own agenda and empowered to act, women articulated the need for the creation of the Centro La Plata, a preschool center that would use education to help prevent child labor and reduce school dropout rates. Once the association of parillis (female mine workers) proved its ability to run the center, the group successfully negotiated with the Ministry of Education for funding to pay two teachers.

These experiences point to the fact that when women are given space to develop their own priorities, and they have a vested interest in developing and implementing a project, greater participation rates can be sustained over a project lifecycle. This, in turn, helps CARE plan a seamless exit, which contributes to a project's overall sustainability plan.

Investing in Women

Another successful CARE strategy focuses on empowering women's groups through village saving-and-loan associations. CARE introduced this strategy in Niger in 1991, forming the associations to respond to the needs of poor women. The initiative was successfully replicated in Mali, where it established 93 savings-and-loan groups in 63 villages to reduce the need for wages earned by children. The groups, known as Musow Ka Jigiya, enable women to organize themselves so they can save their money and disperse small loans to one another to finance income-generating activities. Savings-and-loan meetings are coupled with vocational and awareness-raising training, which focuses on child labor and other issues that impact the lives of women and their families. Profits are used to support children's schooling and other family needs, such as financial help in emergency situations. The groups also help to pay the salaries of community school teachers, procure education materials, invest in school bookstores and provide funding for micro-enterprises.

Savings-and-loan groups have had a positive impact on the lives of their members and their children. The women in these groups used to have few support structures and often encouraged their children to seek work instead of going to school. Today, they are well-informed about the dangers of child migration, trafficking and labor, and they are highly motivated to address the underlining causes of these problems. Regarding child labor, they have become keenly aware of their children's physical limitations; they make special efforts to ensure that their daughters are not tasked with too many domestic responsibilities, so they have a chance for active and meaningful participation in school.

A similar effort in Haiti focused on the creation of women's clubs in 12 school cooperatives. Each club was composed of eight poor and marginalized women with out-of-school children, primarily daughters. These groups developed linkages with parent-teacher associations (PTAs) advocating greater participation of girls in school. The women in the clubs received loans to develop small businesses, with the understanding that they would use the profits to send their children, primarily their daughters, to school. Although it is too early to measure the project's overall impact on women and their families, one result has been that 32 children, 25 of them girls, received scholarships to regularly attend school.

The strategy also promoted the involvement of women in the PTAs, which traditionally have been dominated by men. Women are now better represented — approximately 35 percent of PTA members are women. CARE has found that the PTAs are more active and function more smoothly when women occupy some of the decision-making positions. In the community of Bassin Bleu, the local school directors asked the only female director among them to lead the school network, because they recognized her capacity for leadership.

Giving Women a Voice

A group of women from the Coró district of Mali demonstrated that women can be effective agents of change when they play an active role in raising community awareness. The women were able to mainstream social messages through an engaging activity (see the *Empowering Innovation* text box to the right) that created a receptive audience.

This activity improved women's self-esteem and validated the power of their collective action. As discussed in Chapter 5, strategies that weave social messages into economic-empowerment initiatives or, in this case, recreational activities increase the chance that participants will internalize the information and makes positive changes to their attitudes, beliefs and practices.

Women are not the only important partners in combating child labor. CARE's experience also demonstrates that once education and awareness-raising strategies motivate men to participate and internalize the issues, they, too, increase their participation in interventions targeting the problems of child labor. This is particularly relevant in patriarchal societies in countries like Nicaragua and Honduras, where men usually place greater value on work. Once men are fully aware of the negative consequences child labor and, conversely, the benefits of education for children, their sustained participation can become a reality. Women play a critical role in encouraging men to participate as well as getting them to change their attitudes and actions.

Empowering Innovation: Women on the Streets

On September 22, Mali's Independence Day, members of saving-and-credit groups in the Diankabou commune presented a series of sketches to raise awareness of children's rights. More than 1,000 people from 21 villages were on hand to watch the sketches, which focused on four main child-protection themes: the causes and consequences of child migration; the importance of education for children, especially girls; the acknowledgement that parents and caregivers violate their children's rights through female genital mutilation; and the consequences of parents and caregivers forcing their teenage children to marry.

Audience members said the series of sketches was a very good opportunity for them to learn more about children's rights. In addition to the work of the savings-and-loan groups, this effort was successful thanks to the commitment of local authorities, civil-society organizations and community members. The sketches were so successful, in fact, that they were performed again later.



Equally Concerned for Their Children: A Father's Perspective in Nicaragua

"My name is Concepción Hernández Mejía, and I live in the village of Chiripa. My children entered school thanks to CARE, and I am participating in the sessions for parents because I think it is very important. My children used to work, because we are farmers and they worked with me in the fields and in the coffee harvest. During the summer, they helped me to clean corn and beans, but now with this project, and thanks to the help of La Cuculmeca (a local consortium that partnered with CARE's Primero Aprendo project), we parents decided that our children have to study. They are now at school studying. They have been studying for five months in Monterrey, but two months ago they transferred to Chiripa, which is closer to home. Classes are taught in a house, and there are 15 other children in the project. Children have to study first and then work."

Chapter 7

Youth Participation for Self-Empowerment (YPS): A Strategy for Success¹⁷

“*Child-labor interventions that incorporate YPS strategies increase their chances for success, including improving children’s overall sense of self-worth.*”

Defining Success

Children are equipped with the skills they need to make informed, knowledgeable decisions that contribute to the realization of their own potential — to break the cycle of poverty, to become responsible, active citizens and to become the leaders of tomorrow.

Key Characteristics of Success

- > YPS strategies empower youth to become agents of change, verses their traditional roles as merely project beneficiaries.
- > Creative, nontraditional initiatives motivate young people to participate in initiatives and further their own personal development.
- > Community-based interventions enjoy more success and sustainability because of total community involvement: children, young people, adults, and other local actors and authorities.
- > YPS strategies are culturally sensitive, finding creative ways to work within the parameters of traditional patriarchal societies, indigenous communities and the particular expectations associated with rural and urban communities.

What Experience Tells Us

From a very young age, child laborers assume responsibilities inappropriate for their age. They are then rapidly incorporated into the world of adults, having to face all the dangers, hardships and struggles without any of the coping mechanisms that come from education or experience. As a result, child laborers lack opportunities to organize and express their desires, as they are often the most marginalized members of society. At the same time, adults rarely listen to young people’s concerns and are therefore often unaware of their needs and interests.

Child laborers are the best sources of information on their situation and can be instrumental partners in identifying viable alternatives. Youth Participation for Self-Empowerment (YPS) is an effective strategy for integrating child-centered and rights-based approaches into projects aiming to mitigate and eliminate hazardous and exploitative child labor. Empowering the meaningful participation of children, especially girls, is fundamental to CARE’s work in this area.

¹⁷ This chapter could not have been written without the invaluable assistance of CARE Ecuador staff.



Respecting Children's Opinions and Beliefs

CARE's SOY project in Ecuador has demonstrated that YPS strategies can empower young people and generate positive change in society. SOY helps eliminate child labor in the banana and flower industries by promoting the active participation of children and young people in all spheres of life: home, school and the community. Organized groups of children and young people have become social-development agents in their communities, articulating their rights to an education.

SOY has uncovered several common characteristics of YPS strategy implementation. For example, the participation of youth must be institutionalized, and youth must be viewed as partners, not just beneficiaries; they must be included in discussions about how youth-focused efforts can be successful, obstacles impeding success, and how to overcome those obstacles. Moreover, organizations must be committed to the long-term participation of youth, not just their token involvement. Once projects establish trust between staff and youth, space must be provided for youth to discuss and prioritize their own agendas, so they can begin to effect change.

Creative approaches using music, theater and art have proven successful. These strategies motivate youth to participate, help them develop trusting relationships with staff and allow them to enjoy their childhood. Art has proven to be a

particularly effective medium of communication, giving youth a platform to express themselves, especially with regard to their exploitation.

CARE's experience shows that YPS strategies are sustainable only when local actors are involved from the beginning. In the department of Pedro Moncayo in Ecuador, local authorities involved young people from the start in efforts to organize church, community and provincial events. As a result, a local youth commission helped shape public policies, and the municipal youth office coordinated with the project to devise a common agenda of interventions. Young people also played a leading role in creating community watch groups, also known as community human-rights-defense systems. These groups are essential components of any child labor monitoring system (CLMS), since their mandates focus on providing accountability and monitoring for community-based child-labor interventions.

As the SOY project has demonstrated, YPS strategies must take local cultures and environments into consideration. For instance, within the indigenous-community portion of the project, a greater value within society is placed on the collective opinion of the family, not the individual. Therefore, the YPS strategy focused on empowering youth in areas of personal growth that would not negatively impact the collective interest of the community.

There are also differences in how urban and rural youth participate in YPS projects. Urban

youth tend to participate more decisively in the decision-making processes, while youth in rural areas primarily follow the examples set by adults. Below is a list of SOY project results compiled by project youth:

- > Increased school access, enrollment, retention and completion as a result of scholarships.
- > Reintegration of many eighth-, ninth- and tenth-grade students who had dropped out because of lack of resources or interest.
- > Creation of organized youth groups that give youth a place to discuss their problems and participate in fun activities, like playing musical instruments.
- > Parents and caregivers are now more likely to listen to youth and support their aspirations, because youth are better able to articulate their hopes, dreams and aspirations.
- > Participation in workshops on education and personal development, including sexuality and gender.

Enabling Environments for Youth

Several CARE's projects use the child-to-child approach, which provides ways for child laborers and victims of trafficking to share their experiences with one another. Examples include workshops, sports tournaments and youth camps. During these activities, children learn about the importance of confronting their pasts in order to embrace their futures. In some cases, youth develop action plans on how to provide follow-up to one another. Evidence has shown that these activities are important for children and their communities, because apart from providing the obvious psychological support, they can incorporate recreation activities as well as opportunities for young people to develop leadership and organizational skills. Youth learn from working in teams. They are able to build self-confidence and also embrace their roles as positive contributors to community life.

In Mali, youth were largely responsible for organizing and running youth camps. The camps gave youth status and responsibility in their communities that otherwise would not have been offered. Youth camps brought together children who were in and out of school and helped them take responsibility for their lives. Camp activities benefited the personal development of participants, and it also served to raise awareness among adults in the community about issues concerning children. Without an enabling environment that allowed youth to feel as though their opinions mattered, their concerns would never have been publicly debated in a meaningful manner.

After participating in youth camps in Ghana and Mali, children returned to their villages and shared their stories with other children and adults, shedding light on the consequences of trafficking and hazardous labor. Since camp participants have started sharing their experiences, many other children have opted to stay in school, forgoing employment. Parents and caregivers who had been encouraging their children to leave school in favor of work are now aware of the dangers of labor and trafficking.

CARE interventions in Honduras focus on creating enabling environments for the active participation of youth (e.g., through student-government associations) in indigenous areas. This has helped give local youth a sense of purpose. It has also improved their confidence and their ability to clearly articulate their beliefs. Members of the student-government associations are actively involved in decisions about the organization and administration of education centers. This includes activities such as helping child laborers improve their academic performance, raising local awareness of children's rights and training child tutors. Some of the most important results have been increased solidarity among students, improved relations between students and teachers, and development of important leadership skills for youth.



HONDURAS

Leading Today and a Leader of Tomorrow: Cristian David Martínez Alvarado

“My name is Cristian David Martinez Alvarado. I was born in the city of La Paz on February 26, 1992. I am twelve years old. In second grade, I joined PROHACE, a CARE education program. I strengthened my leadership skills as president of my class, and in 2002, I became president of the student government association. This was not an easy task, but I was successful in my endeavor. I was able to help my classmates as liaison between the students and teachers. As president, I helped the teachers better understand students when we were not content with what we were learning.

“As president, I had the privilege to sit in on the National Youth Congress as a deputy for the La Paz department. I also appeared on the television program “Frente a Frente” to discuss the topic of government corruption. That resulted in an invitation to another television program to comment on the success of the National Youth Congress.

“Soon after, the president of the National Youth Congress invited me to participate in the National Dialogue in La Paz. I was able to give my opinions about the reality of life for rural children. In Nicaragua, I was part of discussions on children’s participation in public affairs. I was the youngest participant, so many thought I was too young to be there. However, when the discussion began, I gave the most input. Thanks to CARE, I had this opportunity.

“My biggest dream is to become a mechanical engineer, so I can help my parents and my country. However, I am worried that my dreams will not be realized, because my parents cannot pay for college or graduate school for three children. I want to be like the people at CARE who are responsible, kind and enjoy working with the less fortunate, teaching us that we must be the ones to acknowledge our needs and find solutions.

“I have completed sixth grade, and I will be entering middle school in Guajiquiro. I want PROHACE to work with secondary schools to support the teachers there.”



In Haiti, one CARE project created a youth parliament in the commune of Bassin Bleu. Five schools and 1,607 primary students were involved in this innovative experience, which led to the creation of a parliament composed of 96 elected children; the project followed the parliamentary election process detailed in Haiti's constitution. The young candidates prepared their campaigns, while others worked on the logistics of the electoral process. During this process, children developed critical organizational and leadership skills, and they learned about the importance of democracy as well as fair and transparent election processes. Once elected, youth parliament members focused on helping domestic workers and other child laborers. Their efforts included starting a dialogue with local authorities and submitting a proposal to them on ways to address the child-labor situation.

YPS strategies foster a sense of self-worth, they encourage self-expression, and they allow for the free flow of ideas. Specifically, they empower youth in the fight against hazardous and exploitive child labor. It is important to remember, however, that not all potential youth activities are developmentally appropriate; YPS strategies must not interfere with the education demands of youth. In addition, YPS can easily

be manipulative when it is not voluntary, when it focuses on the token participation of youth or further exploits them, with little regard for ethical protocols. Adults have to support young people as they work to create enabling environments, which allow them to have some responsibility for the course of their own development. YPS does not require adults to relinquish responsibility; rather, it encourages them to take on a more facilitating role, in which they are seen as mentors and advisors.



Girl Power in Haiti: Aurélien Smive Guerdley

“My name is Aurélien Smive Guerdley, and I am 12 years old. My father is the former mayor of Bassin Bleu, Haiti. He now lives in the United States. My mother is a vendor. My father does not work because he has no permit, so my education is paid with my mother’s income.

“I feel honored to be child deputy in Bassin Bleu and to have such an important role in this school. My friends often congratulate me for being leader of such an important initiative. I learned about this project when I met a CARE staff member. To be honest, in the beginning I wasn’t that interested, but when I understood the importance of the initiative, I proposed my candidacy. I thought I would win because I have many friends at school, and I had already represented our school and the student committee in meetings and official ceremonies in the area. I think many people chose me because of this experience.

“I participated because I want to contribute to improved living conditions for local children, especially those who work as domestic servants and cannot go to school. It is also a chance to learn about the Haitian Parliament. In the beginning, I was deputy, but since June 2006, I have been the president of the youth parliament. As a girl, I think it is important that girls participate in the parliament, and also because the majority of students at my school are girls.

“A staff member from CARE held meetings with the school management and student committees to organize the election. I invited my classmates to meetings to convince them to vote for me. I told them I would represent them if they would choose me, and sometimes I gave them candies.

“Thanks to this experience, I understand a bit better the role of Parliament in our country. I learned that because I have been chosen by the students to represent them in the youth parliament, I have to make decisions that benefit them. I and my colleagues submitted a proposal on children’s rights to the deputy representing our area, so that he can submit it to the Haitian Parliament.

“I think it is very important that we have a youth parliament, because this allows a group of students to work together and lobby for other children. Last year, we organized a meeting with local authorities to raise awareness about children who cannot go to school, the violation of the rights of girls and other important issues. This project has allowed students from five schools to better understand the electoral process; now students know how to vote.”

Chapter 8

Economic Alternatives for Families

“*When families have resources, knowledge and opportunities to develop alternative forms of income, parents and caregivers are more likely to withdraw their children from hazardous and exploitative child labor and encourage them to attend and complete school.*”

Defining Success

Adult family members gain knowledge, skills other capabilities that allow them to find alternative employment opportunities, increasing their incomes and eliminating the need for their children to work.

Key Characteristics of Success

- > Skills-training programs for parents and caregivers help increase their incomes and further their personal development.
- > Long-term commitments from families, donors, implementing agencies and local partner NGOs are secured at the outset of a project, and continue even after the project ends.
- > Projects have a market-oriented focus.
- > Vocational training programs provide former child laborers and those at risk with valuable life skills. The programs take into account the needs of the local labor market as well as the opinions and beliefs of youth, parents and caregivers - including mechanisms for holding trainers accountable.
- > Alliances with employers and technical institutions enable education programs to offer training in job-related skills.

What Experience Tells Us

Education strategies implemented in isolation are not enough to bring about lasting results in the fight against child labor. Parents and caregivers will continue prioritizing work over education as long as one of the main obstacles to sending their children to school is not resolved: lack of financial inputs. For families that depend on money earned by children to pay for household necessities, education will not be seen as a viable option, therefore interventions focusing solely on education will not adequately address the concerns of these parents and caregivers. In response, CARE interventions combine economic alternatives to the worst forms of child labor with opportunities for relevant, quality education.

Economic Realities Facing Parents and Caregivers

Donors, community groups, local partners and CARE all agree that projects aimed at reducing or eliminating child labor through education must be complemented by economic alternatives for youth and their parents or caregivers, especially mothers and female caregivers.

It is important to remember that when child-labor projects include economic alternatives, they require a long-term commitment from beneficiaries, donors, implementing agencies and others. Also key is seeking a market-driven approach, so interventions are responsive to consumer demand. Diversification is another key factor to take into account, as many small, poor entrepreneurs tend to start the same simple businesses, thus saturating local markets. Contributing to this problem is the fact that NGO interventions traditionally focus on providing a limited vocational-skill set. This is why private-sector perspectives are so vital. Linking project participants to markets, facilitating relationships with suppliers and fostering connections between communities and financial institutions are characteristic of effective programming.

Success is not often immediate for interventions promoting economic alternatives; results may not be visible or possible to measure within the traditional project lifecycle. Interventions must include support and training for those receiving services; this includes feasibility studies, accounting and administration assistance, and loans to facilitate the development of business plans. It should not be assumed that this represents a tailor-made



solution for everyone; not all families are necessarily interested in developing small businesses or finding alternative employment. In some cases, other solutions, such as supporting improvements in working conditions, may achieve the same outcome.

When small-credit programs are not an option, strengthening the skills and capacities of parents and caregivers is a viable alternative, enabling them to seek out other forms of employment that positively contribute to the household economy. Families routinely need this sort of economic incentive — not just the promise of long-term benefits from education — to make withdrawing children from labor a viable proposition.

One example is CARE's successful vocational and technical training program for the mothers of child mine workers in Bolivia. In coordination with the University and Technical Institute, CARE gave women the chance to learn a variety of skills — e.g., canvas painting, artisan pottery, improved cooking techniques, welding and pastry making — coupled with courses in accounting, entrepreneurship, and sales and management. CARE also helped participants seek out markets for their products. As a result, their



household incomes increased, and their attitudes and practices regarding education and child labor changed.

In Tegucigalpa, the capital of Honduras, CARE has implemented a self-sustaining intervention that focuses on preventing and eliminating child labor in the municipal dump. The project has shown that economic-alternatives projects can be successful when the long-term goals are clearly relevant and realistic. Though financial support for the project ended in 2006, today there are 109 members of the Mixed Cooperative of Trash Separators of Honduras, all of whom have pledged to send their children to school as part of their agreement to join the cooperative. The cooperative's board of directors, which is led by a woman, directly oversees the negotiation of prices with recycling plants, eliminating the need for intermediaries. Members bring their recyclable materials to the cooperative, which pays them and keeps track of member contributions. The cooperative is working independently of CARE and has shown it is capable of mobilizing funds to expand its infrastructure and sustain its momentum.

This project has demonstrated that strengthening the skills and capacities of parents and caregivers helps increase their incomes and contributes to their personal development. When women from the cooperative were asked how the project had impacted their lives, they said the experience had opened their minds and increased their self-esteem and confidence — as well as increasing their income. Results also suggest that empowering the poor through increased economic opportunities can help motivate them to prioritize education over work for their children.

Making Vocation an Education

Vocational training is a realistic way for children to learn relevant life skills that can lead to a productive adulthood. Formal education programs that include skills are very effective, because learning becomes more attractive and relevant for out-of-school children or those at risk of becoming child laborers, as well as their parents or caregivers.

For older working children that have dropped out of school, CARE's strategies focus primarily on providing opportunities to reenter the formal educational system. For those who do not want to follow this path, vocational-skills training is a viable and productive option. Vocational training allows children to focus on enhancing preexisting skills, with fewer hazards. It introduces children to potential employers and facilitates opportunities to gain valuable work experience through internships and apprenticeships.

To be successful, vocational training programs have to be incorporated into school curriculum or implemented in coordination with technical-training institutes. And these programs must address the needs of the private sector.

Gender-Sensitive Teaching in Rural Nicaragua

Education strategies being implemented through CARE's Primero Aprendo project in poor, rural communities in northern Nicaragua include life-skills training in an after-school class. The class is taught by two local mothers who have been trained to teach the children how to knit and embroider. The project provided the mothers with some basic materials, and now they and their students make uniforms for children who cannot afford them. To help change traditional roles, both girls and boys were invited to participate. The result has been amazing: Boys embroider and knit together with the girls, and the girls compete with the boys in soccer matches during class breaks.

It is important that vocational-training initiatives ensure the meaningful participation of their target groups. Children's opinions must be analyzed in conjunction with the needs of the labor market; a market assessment is important to ensuring that training initiatives are based on market needs. Such studies have to include the business community, local leaders and schools in order to identify the most valuable skills training for youth. Courses should accurately respond to local market forces while respecting the rights of children.

Institutions and donors often focus on the completion of training courses as an indicator of achievement, but a more accurate measure is the employability of those trained.

A Domestic Servant in Haiti: Eunide's Story

Eunide Joachim is 16 years old and is in the fifth grade. Her father lives in the town of Pilate, and her mother has passed away. Eunide is a domestic servant; she has lived with a "host family" since she was five years old, just after her mom died. "I have lived difficult times," she says, "but my life has improved thanks to CARE."

She feels her current host family now treats her better than in past years. She has actually worked for several families. When she was five, she lived with a person in the capital, Port-au Prince. Three years later, this person was kidnapped and killed. Eunide was then moved to another family, and later to a host family in Gros-Morne. This is where she still lives and works today.

Eunide has actively participated in a CARE education project in Gros-Morne. "I feel very happy to have had the opportunity to participate in such a project," she says. "It has helped me a lot. I learned nice things in vocational education classes, such as sewing, which can help me in my future life. I have also participated in cultural activities and in summer camp, and I have received psychosocial support. I really liked these activities; for the first time in my life, I had the opportunity to share my thoughts with other young people, to watch television, to go to performances and talk in public."

Eunide had never had the opportunity to be part of a group of young people; being part of one now has really helped her express herself. She has spoken on behalf of the project several times in public — for example, on the Rights of the Child Day and during the closing ceremonies of the project's summer activities.

"I feel that even after the sessions I have participated in, where we discussed children's rights, our opinions are still not taken into consideration 100 percent," Eunide says. "But now when we propose something to our host families, they think about it before they act, which would have been completely impossible before the project. Thanks to sharing with my fellow students, I am valued more by them and my host family, and I also believe that my rights are more respected."



Training institutes have to be accountable for the marketability of the training they provide. Thus, it is important to track the actual number of students that find gainful employment and retain their jobs for at least six months. In Nepal, Helvetas (the Swiss Association for International Cooperation) is piloting this type of accountability system: Training institutions receive final payment after confirmation that trainees have found and maintained jobs. This type of accountability ensures that education is responsive to local markets, and that the promises of education are realized.

The implementation of a comprehensive child-labor monitoring system (CLMS) is crucial to accurately tracking and measuring the viability of interventions over the long term. In addition, children need career guidance to ensure that their choices represent not only their interests but also realistic prospects for gainful employment. Without focus and direction, vocational-skills training can saturate local markets with an overabundance of young workers with limited skills. However, when implemented in a methodical and deliberate manner, vocational training can help reduce rates of exploitive child labor.

Vocational Training for Adolescents in El Paraíso, Honduras

“I work from Monday to Sunday. They used to give me Sundays off, but in order to take the sewing and dressmaking classes on Fridays, now I have to work on Sundays. My interest is to learn more, and that’s why I come here. I begin work at seven in the morning and leave at nine at night. I do everything in the kitchen: sweep the garage, fold clothes and clean. I go to bed very late. I don’t have time to go see my family, even though the woman I work for has told me that if I want to go, I can ask for permission. Sometimes my mother comes to see me, but it is too expensive for me to go see her. I earn 800 lempiras (approximately \$42) a month. I have always liked to work because I want to help my family; this is why I work.

“I like learning sewing and dressmaking, because I know that I will be able to work in a place where they will pay me better. In this place, I feel like I am in a school and I am grateful to the project (Primero Aprendo) for giving us this opportunity to help ourselves — we who work and at the same time want to learn to do something in life.”

— **Oneyda Hernández, 15, Sewing and Dressmaking**

“I work in a house where four people live. I wash, cook and take care of a little boy at night. I work from Monday to Saturday. I start at seven in the morning and leave at eight at night. I earn 600 lempiras (approximately \$32) a month. I give my mother 300, and the rest I keep in case some emergency comes up. Many times I have burned myself cooking, because I do the work of an adult. I have a very difficult work schedule and it doesn’t give me time to study. I would like to go to school, but right now I cannot. I studied up to the sixth grade of primary school.

“The advantage of this job is that it gives me the chance to come to the Center for Culture (to take a sewing and dressmaking course), because from where I live it is too far. Here I have learned many things that are necessary and very nice. I almost know how to make the patterns. The teacher says we will soon be designers! The most difficult thing to do is the pleats on the shirts. That is what we are learning right now. I like to be here, because I have a good time and I feel I have friends.”

— **Dilcia Yolanda Amador, 15, Sewing**

“I began to work when I was 11. I haul firewood, do errands, cut the weeds and grass, and I don’t earn anything because where I work is my own house. Mechanics is good for me, because it wakes up my mind and it’s useful for getting to know a lot of basic things about cars. I think that by learning this, you can be someone in life.”

— **Marlon Antonio Andrade, 14, Automobile Mechanics**



SECTION
III

Empowering Our Futures

Section III examines the impact communities have at the local, national and international level. Enhancing the capacity of local communities through a rights-based approach enables residents to not only fully understand their rights but also hold duty bearers responsible for the realization of those rights. This section includes a review of the key findings outlined in the overall report as well as recommendations for how to help eliminate the most hazardous and exploitative forms of child labor.

Chapter 9

Evidence from Today, Hope for Tomorrow

Making Positive Change a Reality

Any successful, sustainable approach to combating child labor must employ an evidence-based advocacy strategy in order to change public policy at as many levels of government as possible. In many countries, institutions turn a blind eye to children's rights and the problem of child labor. Social sectors often fail to address child labor because they lack the necessary competencies, while economic actors may have little interest in tackling the issue.

Public and private institutions responsible for formulating and implementing education and child-labor policies rarely take into consideration the opinions of the communities in which children work. This does not imply that communities are unaware of child-labor issues or incapable of contributing to the policy-making process. Rather, it means that there is a need for empowered community organizations that can give a voice to poor parents, caregivers and their children, organizations capable of working with local duty bearers to ensure that families' basic rights are recognized and respected.

Knowingly or unknowingly, interventions can accept participation trade-offs. Strategies promoted as "community-based" or "participatory" often mask the institutional priorities of other actors or donors when communities are not consulted, given the space to define their own priorities, or equipped with the fundamental skills to meaningfully engage duty bearers. Child labor is inexorably linked to underlying causes of poverty. To tackle its interrelated causes and provide evidence vital to effective advocacy initiatives, interventions must provide opportunities for participants to improve the human condition — ensuring that they can meet their basic needs, that they can fulfill their rights, responsibilities and aspirations, and that they can create a sound, enabling environment. This approach has created numerous documented successes, which can help illustrate the full spectrum of CARE's work under the Unifying Framework for Poverty Eradication and Social Justice, outlined in Chapter 1.

Communities Creating Local Change

The preceding chapters include numerous examples of how CARE interventions have helped make structural changes to reduce rates of child labor — community groups that have changed their attitudes and practices, for example, or local authorities and education centers that have embraced the education and empowerment of girls. When communities generate effective change, it can fuel the desire for change at the regional or even national level. In Benin, for instance, parent-teacher associations (PTAs) were reconstituted or established in more than a dozen isolated communities; these PTAs were the sole source of local financing for multi-grade, community schools. When the Ministry of



Education threatened to shut their doors, the PTAs lobbied local authorities. With the support of local and regional education authorities, the PTAs successfully convinced the national government to keep the schools open. Subsequently, these community-based efforts yielded even greater results, with the ministry agreeing to pay teachers' salaries. This example illustrates the tangible results that can occur when communities are empowered to make system-level changes through grass-roots movements.

Local municipal authorities can be very helpful in making system-level changes at the state or regional level. In the El Paraíso region of Honduras, for example, a local awareness-raising strategy led to the approval of a new municipal regulation mandating that parents and caregivers send their children to school, instead of to the fields. Local officials went house-to-house educating parents and caregivers about the importance of education. It is difficult to assess if the subsequent increase in local school enrollment was a result of the new regulation, but the experience at least confirmed that system-level changes can be achieved when local duty bearers become champions and are empowered to positively impact outcomes.

Communities Creating National Change

Given the general lack of community access to national and international policy-making processes, development organizations play a critical role in articulating local priorities

at those higher levels. These efforts are most effective when the policy-making institutions are part of national and international networks, so they can build alliances and partnerships with like-minded organizations that possess complimentary approaches. As a result, communities are able to indirectly influence national and international public-policy decisions that impact their lives.

The COMBAT project in Togo demonstrated just how successful communities can be in contributing to national system-level change. CARE represented the concerns of the poor as part of a working group charged with finalizing the country's most recent anti-trafficking law. CARE led a coalition of international NGOs in pressuring the government of Togo to enact legislation focused on this issue. COMBAT organized discussions among communities on the local impact of child trafficking and how new legislation could address their collective concerns. CARE, along with its partners, then lobbied the government on behalf of the communities. Once the law was passed in 2005, CARE began educating community members — including traditional authorities, parents, children and teachers — about the new law and how their collective efforts helped make it a reality.

In South America, CARE has successfully strengthened local and national child-labor policies. One major achievement was an invitation for CARE to explain its position on child labor to the Bolivian Board of Mining Institution Representatives. Previously, the board had been unaware of, or unwilling to acknowledge, the problem of child labor in



the mining sector. In addition, CARE helped organize the National Commission for the Eradication of Child Labor, and then used what it had learned to help the commission prioritize the needs of children involved in mining. In partnership with UNICEF, the ILO and government institutions, CARE also helped develop the Three Year Plan for the Elimination of Child Labor. As a result, communities that once were isolated and unaware of their ability to influence change were able to become an integral part of the country's national social development plan.

Communities Creating International Change

It is often difficult to see how communities can make changes at the international level. However, a closer analysis of the *Primer Aprendo* project implemented in Central America and the Dominican Republic shows evidence of a direct link between community-based initiatives and international system-level changes. Using the results of education interventions aimed at combating child labor, CARE plans to advocate for public and private policy strategies that effectively address the problem. CARE will call on communities to help formulate the agenda. To ensure transparency and validity, child-labor interventions are being implemented in partnership with communities and evaluated independently by outside actors. The results will form the foundation of the evidence-based advocacy strategies being pursued on national and international stages.

A clear example of CARE's commitment to influencing international policy strategies is the recently adopted Regional Reform Agenda by the Education and Child Labor Reform Support Group, a network of representatives of key sectors in Central America. The agenda constitutes a declaration of policy reforms necessary to eradicate child labor and ensure an education for child workers. The agenda is based on the results of a comparative study carried out

in the six countries targeted by the Promotion of Educational Reform in Latin America (PREAL) project. The objective of this study was to analyze existing problems in public policies and recommend concrete actions for reform.

The emerging trend of public-private partnerships is also expected to yield international system-level changes. Though it is too early to measure the impact of these efforts, children, parents, teachers and school administrators, among others, are collectively implementing and participating in locally designed projects that can eventually cause ripple effects in international markets.

Moving Forward

Community priorities are the cornerstone of what CARE does. While sustainable change at all levels of society is fundamental to ending hazardous and exploitative child labor, the meaningful participation of communities in this effort cannot be overemphasized. The impact of CARE's efforts is a testament to experience the organization has gained almost exclusively from community partnerships. CARE's community partners do not only play a role in shaping the agenda of national governments; as a global institution, CARE's positions and priorities are a direct result of their collective priorities.

The success of CARE's education and child-labor interventions not only depends on the participation of communities but also that of local, national and international authorities. For this reason, interventions have to keep in mind that stakeholders often pursue their own interests and agendas, and that their priorities can quickly and significantly change — for example, with the arrival of a new government. To ensure that communities are empowered to bring about system-level changes, strategies must support the efforts of community members to take control of their own lives, and to hold duty bearers accountable for creating an enabling environment.

CARE Staff Making a Difference: Rouzena Zuazo

Rouzena Zuazo has worked for CARE Bolivia as an education manager for five years. Becoming a teacher at a young age, Rouzena gained the knowledge and sensitivities she needed to address the needs and concerns of children. Her background in education and psychosocial development has focused her efforts on the importance of education for development. Over the last 20 years, Rouzena has worked tirelessly to change the lives of working children, indigenous children and other vulnerable youth.

As a woman working in a traditional society permeated with patriarchal machismo, Rouzena has had to face many challenges.

Many of these challenges have arisen when she has had to conduct advocacy meetings on child labor with local and national authorities, or communicate CARE's position on child labor to male miners or male mining experts, none of whom generally want to talk to a woman about social policies. At times, she has felt very uncomfortable and discriminated against; however she has refused to let this poor treatment cloud her vision. Knowing that she is the representative of individuals whose interests would otherwise go unheard, she remains steadfast and confident in these types of situations.

Rouzena views her life and career as great successes. She feels that life has given her a great opportunity to combine knowledge and sensitivity in order to address social inequities. One of Rouzena's greatest achievements was her participation in the development of a national social policy to combat child labor in Bolivia. Serving as chair of the mining sub-commission, Rouzena helped convince representatives of mining and other sectors to endorse the policy.

Rouzena firmly believes that working with CARE has changed her perspective on life. She has discovered her ability to be a leader in conflict-filled situations. Her work as both a teacher and social advocate has taught her that one cannot expect change in the community without first experiencing change in oneself. Every day, Rouzena is motivated by the opportunity to improve children's and women's rights. She enjoys her work immensely, because it allows her to interact with and encourage communities, indigenous peoples, children and women who face a life of poverty.

Through her work with exploited children, Rouzena has come to the realization that if change does not begin with individuals and their families, then individuals cannot change society. She believes that everyone has to contribute to the fight against child labor by saying no to products made with child labor. From her work with CARE, Rouzena has gained a great respect for vulnerable children and their families. She believes she can learn more from community members than she can teach them, and firmly believes they must be considered partners in the fight against child labor.

Chapter 10

I Am Powerful: Key Finding and Recommendations Influencing Change

The Power of Knowledge

The information and experiences CARE is sharing in this report provide realistic and concrete examples of how to tackle and eliminate — within our lifetime, we hope — the cancer that is hazardous and exploitative child labor. The sheer magnitude of the problem cannot be overstated. Those in the developed world are horrified at the thought of children being sexually exploited, carrying loaded machine guns ready for battle, manufacturing narcotics and being bought and sold like common property. In reality, these are only some of the dangers facing the 218 million children around the world who are being exploited in one way or another.

It is important to remember that not all work is harmful or detracts from a child's overall development. CARE focuses its attention on child labor that is hazardous and exploitative — work that, by its very nature, is dangerous and that keeps a child from receiving an education. Simply outlawing children from all forms of labor is not the solution. This could actually make the problem worse: More families would not be able to meet their basic needs and more children would drop out of school, because many children work in order to go to school. The ripple effect within societies around the world could be disastrous.

Great strides have been made in understanding the problem of child labor, including its symptoms and root causes. In particular, the role of education in preventing and combating child labor has been recognized worldwide. Education provides children with an opportunity to break the cycle of poverty and to gain important social, personal and cognitive skills. The report points to two key findings that can further improve our understanding of child labor and how to combat it. These findings require immediate action.

First, galvanizing community action to mitigate rates of rural child labor decreases the chances that children will fall victim to the worst, most exploitive forms of labor. Of course, this rural-based approach will not work for the many children born and raised in urban areas who also fall victim to the worst forms of child labor. Nevertheless, this strategy will help ensure that rural children, who comprise the vast majority of all children exploited by harmful labor, will be less likely to drop out of school, to be enticed to leave their communities in search of better employment in urban areas, to fall victim to trafficking networks, or to become involved in gangs, organized crime and other illicit activities.

Second, women can significantly contribute to reducing rates of child labor in their homes and in their communities. Women who are empowered and keenly aware of the dangers associated with child labor have proven vital to reducing child labor and keeping their children in school. Conversely, women can also fuel child labor when they are unaware of its potential dangers and do not understand the mitigating power of education; this is



illustrated by their implicit or explicit approval of children dropping out of school to pursue fulltime employment. A comprehensive analysis of how women help mitigate or exacerbate rates of child labor is urgently needed.

You Have the Power

Children involved in hazardous and exploitative labor, as well as their families, are some of the most marginalized and vulnerable members of society. Their communities lack many of life's basic necessities — clean water, sufficient food, education, healthcare and sanitation. Yet in spite of seemingly insurmountable obstacles, many of these families have found ways to change that reality, which includes successfully tackling the problems of child labor.

The recommendations outlined below can make a lasting difference for these children and their families — if individuals, communities, businesses and policy makers are willing to confront child labor head-on. Each set of recommendations includes specific guidance on creating positive change. By implementing these recommendations and holding others accountable, people around the world can help eliminate hazardous and exploitative child labor.

Empowering Individuals and the Public

Change starts at home. The public has enormous power to impact the face of child labor, individually or collectively.



Suggestions for individuals

- > **Speak Out.** Only as people get older do they begin to get apathetic and believe there is nothing they can do to effect change. But one person, even a child, can make a difference. In, 1995, for example, 12-year-old Canadian Craig Kilburg saw the horrors of child labor and decided to start the organization Free the Children. Today, it is the largest network of children helping children in the world, with members in more than 45 countries. His efforts to bring about significant change in the lives of those affected by child labor continue today.
- > **Be an informed consumer.** Personal choices directly impact corporate practices.
- > **Consider if the cheapest price is the fairest price.** Bargain merchandise can come at the expense of a child laborer's health or education.
- > **Support the Rugmark Foundation** (www.rugmark.org) and other initiatives that certify products as child-labor-free. Avoid buying cheaper, counterfeit goods (i.e., "fakes" or "knock-offs"). Numerous cases have been documented that show a direct link between child labor and the production of counterfeit goods.
- > **Write or e-mail your elected leaders,** asking them to support initiatives that prioritize the rights of workers over special interests.
- > **Do not support businesses that have violated child-labor laws,** that buy goods from suppliers profiting from

child labor, or that do not support the rights of their workers. Pressure businesses to support not only the communities where they sell goods, but also the communities that make the goods.

- > **Raise awareness and money to help children escape exploitative labor** by challenging friends, family and other members of the community through organized events, like sports tournaments, that include social messaging.
- > **Host a community forum on child labor.** Organize community and religious groups to discuss the topic. Encourage community members to simulate the life of a child laborer and his or her family for a weekend. Reflect on these experiences and initiate action. Write about these community efforts for a local newspaper or other publication.
- > **Do something to empower yourself and your family,** and share this effort with others, including CARE.

Empowering the Corporate Sector

The emerging trend of public-private partnerships in the fight against child labor serves as a model approach for a sector more often cited for its contributions to the problem, rather than the solution. The corporate sector has the greatest means to significantly reduce the number of child labors and to alter public perception on the issue. Corporate responsibility and corporate giving are making a difference; corporations can, should and must continue righting former wrongs and enhancing the quality of life for those negatively impacted by child labor.

Suggestions for corporations

- > **Develop and implement a code of conduct** that specifically states a company's opposition to the use of child labor.

- > **Do not procure raw materials, inputs or services from entities with documented or suspected violations of workers' rights,** especially those employing child laborers.
- > **Institutionalize a commitment to proactive approaches,** versus reactive damage control, to ensuring workers' rights and reducing rates of child labor.
- > **Step away from philanthropy and focus on long-term structural commitments** and partnerships to reduce rates of child labor. It is important to realize that long-term change requires time — time to change perceptions, attitudes and actions. And this, in turn, requires long-term investment.
- > **Invest equally in consumer and producer communities.** Companies can significantly enhance their reputations if they become as concerned about the poor communities where their products are produced as they are about the communities where their products are sold.
- > **Support workforce parity between women and men,** especially in positions of leadership.

Empowering Policy Makers and Governments

The role of policy makers in tackling child labor is obvious. Governments need to focus on living up to their commitments, which include implementing changes that take into consideration the beliefs and opinions of communities most affected.

Suggestions for policy makers

- > **Live up to personal expectations by practicing what you preach.** Hold institutions and individuals accountable for violating labor laws. Lack of action implies lack of consequences for violators of children's rights.

- > **Seek out the opinions of community groups on policies** directly impacting their lives.
- > **Visit affected communities and hold discussions**, but do not use them simply as a platform to discuss your own ideas. Invite community leaders to your office and listen to their concerns.
- > **When formulating policies on education or child labor, listen to children:** They have their own ideas about what is important.
- > **Include children's rights in national agendas** and take assertive action to combat child labor.
- > **Make universal primary, quality education a priority.**
- > **Incorporate into funding strategies the beliefs**, opinions and priorities of children, their families and their communities. Consult with those you aim to impact and share those results.
- > **Support the ability of parents and caregivers**, especially mothers, to meet their children's needs. Empower them to find income-generating opportunities that will help them break the cycle of poverty that encourages child labor.
- > **Finance program lifecycles** that allow sufficient time to achieve structural-level change.
- > **Remember that development is a long-term process**, without a fixed start or end point.

Empowering Donors

Regardless of their rhetoric, donors often seem to focus on the quantitative aspects of the programs they fund, with little regard for qualitative change, which is often hard to measure over the course of a traditional project lifecycle. Investments in societal change are not measured in numbers but in attitudes and actions that help create better environments for children. Emphasizing this qualitative philosophy to donors encourages a fuller understanding of CARE's approach and, in turn, helps ensure continued funding for child-labor initiatives.

Suggestions for donors

- > **Fund programs that address the holistic needs of communities**, instead of traditional projects that often focus on one overarching issue in a vacuum, or through a silo response. Isolated projects yield short-term results that often have little chance for sustainable impact; once funding is gone, so, too, are the results.
- > **Remember that more is not always better.** Focus on changes in attitudes and behaviors — changes that are sustainable over time.

Empowering International Institutions and Influencing the International Discourse

Implementing these and other recommendations will collectively alter the agendas and priorities of international institutions. Chapter 9 clearly shows that individuals and local communities are a powerful force for change, able to alter the direction of the international community. Institutional change at the international-system level will be realized only when transformation is evident at home, in communities, within governments and within the corporate sector.

The Challenge

CARE will spotlight the most creative, exciting and dynamic ways that individuals and their communities — including schools, churches and businesses — are helping child laborers. This is your chance to stand up and be heard, to empower yourself and others, and to share your efforts with the world. We challenge you to make a difference, to contribute to the elimination of the most hazardous and exploitative



forms of child labor around the world. CARE looks forward to learning from you and spotlighting your successes. Please send your stories, comments and ideas to endchildlabor@care.org.

The Time is Now

CARE and others across the world have made great strides toward developing effective, durable approaches to combating child labor. But the sanctity of childhood continues to be threatened. Unless realistic economic alternatives and quality education opportunities for children and their families become available, success will be short-lived. Public awareness

efforts must be strategic — targeting key agents of change while fostering a safer, more enabling environment. Empowering key stakeholders with the overwhelming evidence that education can lift a child out of the shadows of poverty and into the mainstream reinforces the message that school, not work, is where children need to be.

Ending hazardous and exploitative child labor is an attainable goal, and everyone has a part to play. Now, more than ever, sustaining our momentum and collective resolve is a priority.

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Methodology

This report was prepared by an independent consultant under the guidance of CARE's senior technical advisor in child labor and education (Basic & Girls' Education unit).

The methodology in this report combined a detailed literature review with data collected during site visits to CARE projects as well as telephone interviews with key staff, donors and outside consultants. In coordination with the senior technical advisor, all relevant CARE information and documents from the previous five years — from CARE regional management units, country offices and external relations, as well as from educational regional advisory committees — were collected and reviewed.

The literature review included project proposals, work plans, technical progress reports, mid-term and final evaluations, and videos from the various projects. In addition, the consultant analyzed CARE-initiated studies and strategy papers, donor-agency feedback, and statistics and policies impacting child labor, with special emphasis on the role that communities play. The literature review also consulted reports and publications from the ILO, UNICEF, UNESCO and the Education for All Initiative. Based on the literature review, a detailed outline of the report was developed in consultation with key BGE staff members.

On-site data collection was carried out in Nicaragua and Honduras through observation, interviews and focus groups that included both project staff and local project partners — children, teachers, parents, caregivers and community leaders. These efforts were vital to gaining individual perspectives on child labor as well as the true impact of CARE's interventions.

The data gathered throughout this process was processed and analyzed, and based on these results a final document was submitted to the senior technical advisor.

John B. Trew

John B. Trew is CARE's Senior Technical Advisor in Child Labor and Education. John has spent 10 years in the field of child labor. He is chief architect of CARE's Organizational Policy Regarding Working Child and Hazardous Child Labor.

Over the course of his career, John has devoted his energies to working on programs related to hazardous child labor. From 1998 to 2000, he was a Fulbright Scholar in the Philippines, where his research focused on the meaningful participation of youth in the fight against child labor. John has written extensively on issues related to child labor. He has also facilitated international workshops on child labor and has worked with a wide spectrum of public and private entities on a range of related topics, such as labor legislation and human rights.

Noortje Denkers

Noortje Denkers is an expert on children's rights, especially in the areas of child labor and commercial sexual exploitation. Fluent in four languages, Noortje is currently based in Costa Rica, where she is working on various child-labor initiatives. She became keenly interested in this topic during her graduate training at the London School of Economics and has since performed extensive work on issues related to children's rights, especially in Central America.

Noortje serves as an independent consultant to various NGOs, civil-society organizations, academic institutions, U.N. agencies and the U.S. Department of Labor. She also works as a technical advisor on children's rights and is a fund raiser for local grassroots community organizations.

X I D N E P A

Organizational Policy Regarding Working Children and Hazardous Child Labor

As an organization dedicated to eradicating poverty and supporting people's efforts to help themselves, CARE frequently works with children in a meaningful manner. CARE believes it is important to seek out children's voices in matters concerning their futures while upholding their internationally agreed upon rights. CARE USA is guided by the international commitments made by the world on behalf of children. Accordingly, CARE works to ensure that children's rights are respected, that children are consulted regarding their own development, and that children are seen as partners in the fight against global poverty. In doing so, CARE fosters an enabling environment that supports international doctrines including the principles outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, International Labor Organization's Conventions No. 182 and 138, and national legal instruments concerning the welfare of children engaged in economic activity. Building upon these initiatives and CARE's existing Guidelines for Involving Children in Advocacy and Public Relations (ALMIS No. 5817), CARE USA has developed the following Organizational Policy Regarding Working Children and Hazardous Child Labor. CARE deems this policy vital to guide programming that involves children in ethical, humane ways and that guarantees that children's mental, educational, physical and moral development are not jeopardized.

CARE's Position on Child Labor

There are numerous factors, both economic and cultural, that influence the decision families and children make regarding children entering into the labor market. CARE supports the rights of families and working children to be agents of change in the fight against global poverty while respecting the values of all cultures within our work. CARE recognizes that child labor exists along a continuum. Developmentally appropriate economic activity can be beneficial to the full development of the child; but at its extreme, work can place a child's life and well-being at risk. CARE recognizes that child labor must be seen within this context, and has developed our position to reflect such realities.

The Worst Forms of Child Labor

CARE firmly opposes the use of children in the worst forms of child labor as defined by the International Labor Organization Convention No. 182 and Recommendation 190. These include:

- (a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labor, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- (b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
- (c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;
- (d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

Hazardous Child Labor

CARE is opposed to the use of child labor that is considered hazardous in nature. CARE defines hazardous child labor as all forms of economic exploitation, remunerated or unremunerated, that are detrimental to a child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development and exclude or interfere with the possibility of continual school attendance at the normal pace for the child's age and/or development status. Any form of economic activity in excess can be considered hazardous, which often makes defining clear lines of acceptability difficult.

Child Work

CARE supports the positive impact of working children's contributions as members of the family unit through light work, seasonal or part-time employment in specific activities that are developmentally appropriate, that do not compromise the mental, physical, moral or spiritual development of the child and that do not interfere, impede or restrict a child's right to a quality education. CARE recognizes the important role that children play in contributing to their families' economic welfare and the valuable contributions children make to their families' survival. CARE acknowledges that children often engage in economic activity that enables families to meet their basic household needs. Work can be beneficial to the cognitive development of a child and CARE recognizes and supports the role that work plays within a child's development.

Understanding the Unique Situation of the Girl Child:

CARE also makes a commitment to addressing the unique challenges that girls face in the fight against the worst forms and hazardous child labor. CARE's commitment to women and girls serves as a focal point for our programming interventions. CARE recognizes that girls face unique gender-specific obstacles due to economic, cultural and social factors that often place them at greater risk within the labor market.

Child Labor Programming: CARE affirms our commitment to combating the abuses of children engaged in the worst forms and hazardous labor practices through our programming initiatives. CARE will work to build public awareness and enact policy reform, enhance relevant quality educational opportunities, improve the economic alternatives to child labor, and increase the capacity of those we work with to combat the worst forms and hazardous child labor.

Importance of Policy and Social Engagement:

CARE is committed to working at the community, national, regional and international level to ensure these strategic programming focus areas contribute to CARE's overall mission of fighting global poverty. CARE believes that governments must make a concerted effort to enact and enforce all relevant child labor laws. CARE believes that communities around the world must not only hold their governments accountable but also hold their peers, civil societies, development partners, informal and private sectors, and themselves accountable for ensuring children's rights are respected and their opinions are valued and heard.

Strategic Outcomes of CARE's Work

CARE's primary goal is to contribute to and support the global effort to eradicate the worst forms of child labor. To achieve this goal in countries where CARE initiates programs targeting child laborers, CARE will work toward achieving the following results:

- > Immediately remove children from the worst forms of child labor and mitigate children's participation in hazardous child labor;
- > Quality and relevant education is recognized by all stakeholders, including children, families, communities, government and non-governmental officials, as a human right;
- > Relevant quality educational opportunities, including skills training, are viewed by the communities in which we work as beneficial alternatives to the worst forms and hazardous child labor;
- > Child laborers, those at risk of engaging in child labor, families, communities and society at large have a greater understanding of the negative consequences associated with the

worst forms and hazardous child labor;

- > Communities have an increased capacity to target the abuses of the worst forms and hazardous child labor within their local context;
- > Families and communities have the opportunity to improve their economic and cultural well-being in order to improve their overall quality of life, especially as it relates to a child's participation and completion of an educational program; and
- > Governments and local partners have an increased capacity to combat the issues associated with the worst forms and hazardous child labor through the development of realistic enforceable initiatives.

CARE wishes to be a partner of choice among all stakeholders in the fight to eradicate the worst forms of child labor and the abuses of hazardous child labor. CARE is committed to improving the lives of not only those directly engaged in child labor, but also of those families and communities that are deeply affected by this issue.

Accountability

In an effort to operationalize this policy into our programming and act consistently with our core values of being honest and transparent in our work, CARE must be accountable to this policy. We will hold ourselves accountable by carrying out the following:

- > All current and future projects should remain consistent with the ideals set forth within this policy and incorporate this policy and its contents into programming design, implementation and monitoring activities;
- > CARE's programming partners are aware of this policy and support the aims;
- > This policy is specifically referenced within any future Memorandum of Understanding between CARE and any programming partner that works directly or indirectly in the field of child labor;
- > CARE will develop effective communication outlets within all of our future child labor projects. This will enable the communities we serve to address their concerns, approaches and desired outcomes in targeting child labor, and to influence CARE's approach to effectively target the needs of those affected directly and indirectly by child labor;
- > All future economic development projects incorporate this policy into programming frameworks;
- > CARE will strive to incorporate statistics on child labor into monitoring and evaluation standards for economic development programming; and
- > CARE's performance management system will include aspects of this policy in the individual operating plans of relevant staff in an effort to achieve the policy's strategic outcomes.

About CARE

CARE is a leading humanitarian organization fighting global poverty. We place special focus on working alongside poor women because, equipped with the proper resources, women have the power to help whole families and entire communities escape poverty. Women are at the heart of CARE's community-based efforts to improve basic education, prevent the spread of HIV, increase access to clean water and sanitation, expand economic opportunity and protect natural resources. CARE also delivers emergency aid to survivors of war and natural disasters, and helps people rebuild their lives.

Our Mission

Our mission is to serve individuals and families in the poorest communities in the world. Drawing strength from our global diversity, resources and experience, we promote innovative solutions and are advocates for global responsibility. We facilitate lasting change by:

- > Strengthening capacity for self-help
- > Providing economic opportunity
- > Delivering relief in emergencies
- > Influencing policy decisions at all levels
- > Addressing discrimination in all its forms

Guided by the aspirations of local communities, we pursue our mission with both excellence and compassion because the people whom we serve deserve nothing less.



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