

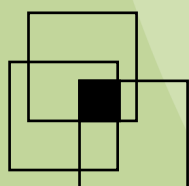


International
Labour
Organization



Republic of Uganda

Action Research on the Integrated Area Based Approach and Child Labour Monitoring Systems in Rakai District, Uganda



Report

November 2011

International
Programme
on the
Elimination
of Child
Labour (IPEC)

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List of Abbreviations

ACDO	Assistant Community Development Officer
ANPPCAN	African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect
CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CCAs	Community Counselling Aides
CCFs	Community Conversation Facilitators
CCLCs	Community Child Labour Committees
CCMs	Community Conversation Meetings
CDO	Community Development Officer
CLFZs	Child Labour Free Zones
CLMS	Child Labour Monitoring System
CLU	Child Labour Unit
CSOs	Civil Society Organisation
DBMR	Direct Beneficiary Monitoring and Reporting
DCDO	District Community Development Officer
DOVCCs	District Orphans and Vulnerable Children Committees
DPWO	District Probation and Welfare Officer
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IABA	Integrated Area Based Approach
IAS	Implementing Agencies
IEC	Information Education and Communication
IGAs	Income Generating Activities
KIN	Kids in Need
KURET	Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia Together
LCs	Local Councils
LEAP	Livelihood, Education and Protection to End Child Labour
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
MVF	Mamidipudi Venkatarangaiya Foundation
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Services
NGOs	Non Governmental Organizations
NSPPI	National Strategic Programme Plan of Intervention
OCBO	Orphans Community Based Organization
ORACLE	Opportunities for Reducing Adolescent Child Labour through Education
OVC	Orphans and other Vulnerable Children
OVC-MIS	Orphans and other Vulnerable Children Management Information Systems
RACA	Rakai Counsellors Association
RANASO	Rakai National AIDS Association

RUDMEC	Rural Development Media Communications
SACCOs	Savings and Credit Cooperatives
SCREAM	Supporting Child Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media
SNAP	Support to the National Action Plan on child labour
SOVCCs	School Orphans and Vulnerable Children Committees
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UYDEL	Uganda Youth Development Link
VSLAs	Village Savings and Loans Associations
WFCL	Worst Forms of Child Labour

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Most importantly, we would like to extend our whole hearted gratitude to all research participants including Mr. Alex Bagarukayo, District Community Development Officer (DCDO) for Rakai district, children, caregivers, community child labour committee (CCLC) members, teachers, artisans, and other district staff for sharing with us their views, experiences and insights.

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Executive Summary

The IPEC Team in Uganda commissioned an action research in Rakai district on the Integrated Area Based Approach (IABA) and Child Labour Monitoring Systems (CLMS). The aim of the research was to enhance stakeholders understanding of the IABA, document the intervention model and identify emerging good practice that the model reflected thus far. The research focused specific attention on the interventions of three organizations, which are implementing SNAP project in Rakai district. These are Rakai Counsellors Association (RACA), African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN) Uganda Chapter, Rakai Branch and Orphans Community Based Organisation (OCBO).

The research established a varied understanding of what constitutes child labour among the key stakeholders. Although there was a clear understanding of what constitutes child labour among some community members, there was a general acceptance of child labour among many stakeholders who viewed child labour as a necessity for children from poor families in the face of livelihood shocks and generalised household vulnerability. There was also a mismatch between awareness about child labour and action taken to combat child labour with some key duty bearers who are supposed to protect children citing resource-constraints while trying to recognise, leverage and mobilise resources to support activities for elimination of child labour. However, the inevitability of child labour for children from poor households was not uniformly accepted and was contested by some in the community.

Despite efforts by IPEC to orient implementing agencies (IAs) in the IABA approach through various meetings and workshops, there was poor conceptualisation of the approach. Thus understanding of IABA was a learning process with IA staff gradually grasping its meaning and applicability even as the research process unfolded. There was evidence of some elements of integrated area based approach at intra and interagency level although in unstructured ways. At district level, child labour has been integrated into the District Development Plan and there are plans to integrate child labour into the District Orphans and other Vulnerable Children (OVC) Strategic Plan. There is also a plan to establish a district child labour desk that will be responsible for coordinating the activities of different stakeholders to eliminate child labour within the district. The district department of education has been collaborating with some IAs and other NGOs such as World Vision in promoting access to and retention of children in school. IPEC's Supporting Child Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (SCREAM)¹ methodology was also introduced in some schools to enable children's active participation in raising awareness about child labour among their peers and community.

The research established informal referral mechanisms where IAs collaborate with other NGOs, vocational training institutes, health centres to provide care and support to children withdrawn from and those at risk of child labour. To ensure increased access to care and support of vulnerable children, a pilot referral tool for orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC) interventions has been developed by the district.

¹ IPEC's SCREAM programme is an educational and mobilization tool that is designed to achieve the meaningful participation of young people in the global campaign against child labour. It aims to empower young people to mobilise their peers to address the dangers and vulnerabilities posed by HIV and child labour.

At sub-county level, some IAs collaborate with sub-county staff such as Assistant Community Development Officers (ACDOs) to provide support to working children or those at risk of child labour while others were not collaborating effectively with ACDO's in project activities. To enhance livelihood security for vulnerable households within the community, some IAs have linked some communities with agricultural extension workers and this has led to increased agricultural productivity and livelihood security thus reducing susceptibility of children to child labour. The research also established existence of community resources including philanthropists, women and youth groups that were providing care and protection of children and thus contributing to the elimination of child labour. This includes, a number of community based organisations such as youth and women groups involved in prevention and withdrawal of children from child labour and supporting vulnerable children to meet their basic needs. Child Labour Monitoring (CLM) is mainly undertaken by Community Child Labour Committees (CCLCs). CCLCs are critical actors in referring children withdrawn and prevented from child labour to service providers at community level.

Despite the array of activities for preventing child labour by different stakeholders, more needs to be done to ensure an integrated and comprehensive operational strategy. Indeed there are several gaps that hinder effective implementation of the IABA and CLMS in Rakai district. For instance, although there are elements of IABA being implemented by different stakeholders, these efforts remain largely fragmented and lack cohesive collaboration. There was a general neglect of local/indigenous knowledge and structures that are critical for child protection. Whereas social norms and attitudes that reject child labour in its totality are a critical component of the success of the IABA, there was limited community mobilisation to engage with these norms and attitudes. Moreover, there was limited mobilisation of critical stakeholders in a child's micro-context including local council officials, sub-county staff and teachers in the efforts to address child labour. The research established a lack of a systematic and documented national or district Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS).² Even though Community Child Labour Committees (CCLCs) which are integrated within existing local structures undertake child labour monitoring, their work is not systematised and is largely undocumented and there were no guidelines for child labour monitoring.

The research also established a range of emerging potential good practice that need to be strengthened to provide critical avenues for effectively combating child labour. At the community level, promising innovative strategies include: Community Conversation Meetings (CCMs) where community members hold dialogue on child labour issues and develop community action for addressing child labour and development of by-laws to eliminate child labour and referral mechanisms for child labour at CCLCs level. At school level, the use of SCREAM methodology was very useful in actively involving children and raising awareness about child labour and HIV/AIDS among children. Two examples of good practice in enhancing livelihoods of vulnerable households were identified including; working with agricultural extension officers to support household income generating activities and strengthening household livelihood security and Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs).

² Child Labour Monitoring (CLM) is important for regularly checking working children in order to protect them from exploitation and hazards at work and linking working children to appropriate services. CLM extends the coverage of limited "beneficiary" focused child labour projects to all forms of child labour in a given area and promotes the institutionalization of a permanent response mechanism to child labour (IPEC: *The CLM National Orientation Workshop Handouts. Training Manual. Workshop 1*. Geneva, ILO 2005).

Overall, the study revealed that understanding of the IABA by the different stakeholders was a gradual process. Importantly, ensuring concerted efforts by the different stakeholders to work in a collaborative manner at district and community level is fundamental for effective implementation of the IABA. An integrated approach to engaging with norms and belief systems that condone child labour and leveraging existing community resources and structures will be key in ensuring the sustainability of the IABA and laying ground for Child Labour Free Zones (CLFZs).

1. Introduction

The Project of Support for the Preparatory Phase of the Uganda National Action Plan for Elimination of Child Labour (SNAP) implemented by the International Labour Organisation's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) is a 44-month programme that aims to assist the Government of Uganda to strengthen its legal, policy, institutional and social foundations for timely, large-scale action against the worst forms of child labour (WFCL). The Project works through an Integrated Area Based Approach (IABA) in three selected districts in Uganda: Wakiso, Rakai and Mbale. The IABA aims to create good-practice models that lay the groundwork for the establishment of child-labour free zones that can be scaled-up throughout the country. Project interventions strengthen community capacity to manage risk and address the needs of its most vulnerable members, enhance local governments' capacity for social service provision and coordination and create an enabling environment at the district level for combating child labour through awareness-raising, training, as well as support for child labour by-laws and their enforcement.

Within the direct action component of the programme, a total of 8,138 children are targeted for withdrawal and prevention from child labour through the provision of educational and non-educational services. Around 1,100 parents/adult caregivers of targeted children are being supported to improve their livelihoods and referred to existing social protection mechanisms in their community to enable them to support their children in school. The implementation of the direct action, carried out by 10 NGOs in the 3 districts started in January 2010 and is running for 2 years. Three additional action programmes started in January 2011 in the 3 districts, carried out by the district authorities focussing on awareness-raising, capacity building, development and implementation of by-laws on child labour. Six more action programmes, mainly with social partners, media and university are running from January to December 2011 as an awareness campaign on the dangers of child labour and the value of education. All action programmes are coming to an end between December 2011 and March 2012 as the project winds up in July 2012.

A midterm evaluation conducted in November/December 2010 by IPEC clearly showed that the IABA was not well understood by some stakeholders. An extensive monitoring undertaken by the IPEC staff in January/February 2011 revealed that some components of the IABA and the community based Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS) were being carried out and implemented by the Community Child Labour Committees (CCLCs) and other structures at parish, sub-county and district level although this was not documented.

Against this backdrop, IPEC commissioned an action research in order to work with stakeholders in understand the IABA, document the intervention model and identify the emerging good practices that the model reflected thus far. The stakeholders were involved from the start in the elaboration of the research questions.

1.1 Purpose of the Research

- To document the intervention model and identify emerging good practices developed that can be tested.

- To implement a participatory action-research process in order to improve the implementation and understanding of the IABA by local stakeholders.
- To document effective monitoring practices in order to integrate them into the district monitoring system (i.e. OVC-MIS).

1.2 Research Methods and Design

This report is a culmination of a series of activities that started in July 2011 ranging from the desk review, consultative workshop with some stakeholders to define the goal and key questions of the action research, participatory data collection and reflections with some key stakeholders involved in the implementation of the IABA. This participatory Action Research employed a range of participatory methods of data collection. Our roles and orientation were those of consultant, collaborator and resource person. The perspective and knowledge of all concerned parties informed problem identification as well as identification of actions to address the specified issues. The action research activity was aimed at action possibilities rather than theoretical prediction. The research ensured active participation of participants and the development of shared knowledge on how to improve the IABA. Researchers constantly made clarifications about IABA and child labour throughout the whole process.

Sample, Sampling Procedure and Scope of the Research

A purposive sampling method was used to identify participants for this action research. Rakai district was purposively chosen as the study site since there are three organizations (ANPPCAN, OCBO and RACA) implementing the IABA and IPEC deemed it the best case for illustrating what was working well and what needed to be improved. Purposive selection of other participants included organizations that had been closely involved in project implementation. For instance, the research team had discussions with staff of Kids in Need (KIN), an implementing agency piloting the Child Labour Free Zones (CLFZs) in Wakiso district under the SNAP project in order to draw lessons that would inform the IAs implementing the IABA under the SNAP project. This was important since the IABA projects in Rakai, Wakiso and Mbale are pilot projects that are supposed to lay a foundation for the creation of CLFZs. The research team also had discussions with key staff of ministries that play a pivotal role in the implementation of the IABA. These include the Child Labour Unit (CLU), an office that coordinates the implementation of the National Child Labour Policy in the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development; OVC Secretariat; Ministry of Education and Sports and Ministry of Local Government.

Desk Review

The action research on child labour commenced with review of existing literature on the IABA, CLMS and CLFZs. The review drew from different documents on child labour within the Ugandan context as well as from other interventions on child labour undertaken by ILO and other international organizations. The desk review illuminated conceptual imperatives of the IABA and CLMS, experiences of IABA as well as critical considerations that provided contextual underpinnings for the action research, the IABA and CLMS in Rakai district. The critical review also highlighted gaps within the literature on IABA and CLFZ which provided a preliminary indication of the direction for re-focusing, re-channelling and re-configuring the IABA as implemented in Uganda.

Stakeholder Consultative Workshop

A one-day consultative workshop of 24 key stakeholders involved in the implementation of the IABA was organized in Rakai district to enable stakeholders to critically reflect on their understanding of IABA, as well as what has worked well within the IABA that needed to be strengthened. The workshop employed a participatory approach where participants actively discussed and reflected on different aspects of the IABA and challenges and proposed practical actions that could be undertaken to address child labour. During the workshop, participants identified problematic areas of IABA that needed to be highlighted by the research, formulated the research goal and research questions and mapped out stakeholders for the research.

The goal of the research as refined during the consultative meeting was; “To enhance stakeholders’ understanding of the IABA and CLMS for elimination of child labour.” The broad research questions for the action research were as follows:

- What are the achievements and good practice that the IABA has registered and how can they be documented and shared?
- How can communities be effectively mobilized and sensitized in order to create awareness and collective action against child labour?
- What strategies can be used to strengthen livelihoods of households to protect children against child labour?
- What strategies can be effective in ensuring access to and retention of children in school?
- How can enforcement of child labour laws be strengthened?
- How can child labour monitoring efforts among stakeholders at community and district levels be systematized and integrated?
- How can interventions on elimination of child labour be sustained at the end of the project?

During the consultative workshop, participants raised issues that were followed through during the action research process for further clarification. The consultative workshop provided a platform where the concept of IABA was clarified and participants offered practical actions for improving the IABA.

Development and Pre-testing of Research Tools

Research tools were developed in line with the research goal and the research questions. The research tools targeted a range of stakeholders that were identified through a mapping exercise by the workshop participants. The tools were pre-tested for two days with staff from one implementing agency, members of a Community Child Labour Committee (CCLC) as well as a sample of children prevented and withdrawn from child labour.

Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interviews were conducted with individuals involved in the implementation of the IABA at policy, programming and implementation levels both with government departments and civil society organizations. These interviews aimed at providing stakeholders' in-depth understanding of the IABA as well as the role they played in its implementation. Stakeholders were also able to identify good practices for the elimination of child labour and opportunities for strengthening the IABA as well as policy and programmatic areas where synergies for the IABA could be built. These discussions also enabled participants to reflect on practical actions in improving the implementation of the IABA. For some key informants, interviews were done more than once to triangulate or clarify issues as they emerged from the field.

The participants were purposively selected because of their extensive knowledge and the critical roles they play in the implementation of the IABA. They included: staff of the Child Labour Unit (CLU), OVC Secretariat, MGLSD, Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Local Government, District Department of Community Development, and District Probation and Welfare Officer. Others included staff of IAs for SNAP project in Rakai, staff of Kids in Need (KIN) in Wakiso district, Assistant Community Development Officers, LC 3 Chairpersons, sub-county Chiefs, agricultural extension workers, staff of collaborating agencies in civil society and the private sector.

Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with groups of stakeholders from different sectors including teachers, caregivers of children withdrawn and protected from child labour, Community Child Labour Committees (CCLCs), community conversation meetings (CCMs), Beach management Committee, Children prevented from child labour, children withdrawn from child labour and undergoing apprenticeship training, the Village Savings and Loans Association of Kyotera town council, and members of Mambo Bado Youth Group.

Focus group discussions targeted stakeholders who were both receiving support from the implementing agencies as well as those involved in mobilization of communities and those facilitating processes of child labour interventions at community level. This enabled the researchers to clarify issues on child labour, CLMS and IABA and also collaborate and triangulate preliminary findings from other study participants. This also helped to generate collective decisions on particular actions that specific groups were going to undertake to address child labour in more collaborative ways. Table 1 presents a summary of the range of stakeholders who participated in the action research.

Video Coverage

Video coverage entailed capturing emerging good practice and the intervention model. This documentary was shared with stakeholders during the feedback workshops and helped in validation of research findings, sharing lessons and emerging good practice. Ethical considerations were adhered to during filming and the research team sought consent from all study participants who were filmed.

Table 1: Summary of Study Participants

Category		Study participants	Male	Female	Total
A.	Interviews				
1	MGLSD	(CLU & OVC NIU)	2	1	3
2	MoES	Child Labour Focal Person	0	1	1
3	MoLG	Child Labour Focal Person	0	1	1
4	IPEC	Staff of IPEC SNAP	2	3	5
5	Implementing Agencies	ANPPCAN	3	0	3
		RACA	5	0	5
		OCBO	4	3	7
		KIN	2	2	4
6	District Staff	DCDO	1	0	1
		DPWO	2	0	2
		Department of Education	2	0	2
7	Sub-county Staff	CDOs (Dwaniro, Nabigasa, Kasasa, Byakabanda)	1	3	4
		LC3 Chairpersons (Dwaniro and Kasasa)	2	0	2
		Parish Chiefs (Kasasa)	1	0	1
		Agricultural Extension Workers (Byakabanda)	2	0	2
8	Collaborating Agencies	Rakai Health Services	1	0	1
		World Vision	1	1	2
		Children of Uganda	0	1	1
		St. Agnes Bikira Vocational institute	1	1	2
9	Teachers	Teachers	7	2	9
10	CCFs	Community Conversation Facilitator, Nabigasa	1	0	1
11	Artisans		3	3	6
12	Philanthropists		1	2	3
13	Consultative Workshop		22	2	24
B.	Focus Group Discussions				
1	Working children		5	4	9
2	Parents of children protected or at risk		12	17	29
3	Children protected from child labour		32	24	56
4	CCLCs		11	7	18
5	Youth and Women Groups		15	6	21
6	VSLA Members		0	9	9
7	Beach management Committee		1	9	10
	Total		140	103	243

Data Analysis

Reflective and qualitative approaches were used to analyze research findings. The data analysis process started with daily reflections of the issues emerging from the field during the process of data collection. Data was qualitatively transcribed into relevant themes in line with the research goal and key research questions. Content analysis was carried out to identify issues most frequently raised and to determine issues where there was most agreement or

disagreement. Findings were grouped according to key themes and patterns that emerged during the research. This allowed triangulation of data and identification of themes from the scope of data collected and ensured drawing of valid and credible inferences.

Validation and Dissemination of Research Findings

The draft research findings were shared with stakeholders for validation and data cleanup. This also involved contacting some stakeholders by telephone to validate the research findings. Dissemination of research findings was conducted with a cross section of stakeholders in Rakai district in a half-day workshop. At the national level, dissemination of the research findings was undertaken at a workshop conducted at the national level including key stakeholders from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, representatives from Rakai, and Wakiso districts, IPEC staff, and representatives from IAs implementing the SNAP project like Federation of Uganda Employers and workers' representatives. The research findings were also disseminated in Wakiso and Mbale districts, to share the findings with IAs implementing the SNAP project, district authorities and CCLC members and also share lessons for strengthening the implementation of the IABA and CLMS. The dissemination workshops enabled stakeholders to discuss ways for strengthening the implementation of the IABA and CLMS projects.

1.3 Reflexivity, Ethical Issues, Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

In qualitative research, a perspective on how ethical issues and issues of reflexivity are dealt with plays a big role in enhancing the rigor of the research. As researchers we tried our best to comply with the ethical issues as pertains the research with children and communities and maintained a reflexive practice to ensure rigor of the data collected for this research. Guillemin and Gillam (2004:275³) assert that adopting a reflexive research practice involves a continuous process of critical scrutiny and interpretation, not only as concerns the research methods and data, but also as concerns the researcher, research participants and the research context. Given the positioning and vulnerability of children, ethical concerns drove the research process and child protection was a key consideration in selection of and engagement with child study participants.

We ensured informed consent in all data collection endeavours. This consent was obtained through the implementing agencies (IAs) but we were also careful to explain to the community and research participants the purpose of the research and obtained their consent to continue with the research. For children, we had to explain the purpose of the research in the presence of their parents/caregivers after which we held separate in-depth discussions.

As researchers we encountered ethical dilemmas and had to be as reflexive as possible. One of the issues we had to grapple with was the perception by the community and the implementing agencies that we were evaluating their project and we had to explain clearly that we were not evaluating the project but were trying to understand how it was being implemented in order to collectively come up with practical ways of improving it. We also had to constantly reflect among ourselves and be clear that we were not evaluators. Due to the initial image as "evaluators", there was sometimes a tendency by the IAs to paint the ideal

³ Guillemin, M. and Gillam, L.: "Ethics, Reflexivity, and "Ethically Important Moments" in Research", in *Qualitative Inquiry*, Volume 10 Number 2, 261-280. SAGE Publications, 2004.

picture of what is 'supposed to be' as opposed to 'what is already happening'. We were conscious of this and to mitigate the effects of this on the data, we noted those areas that needed clarification in different discussion forums with IAs.

The image of evaluators came with the image of donors as formed by both the implementers and the community. For example, one implementing agency noted that they were not able to have most of their staff on the ground since sometimes donors have so many activities at the same time making it difficult for implementing agencies to comply with all donor requirements. This assertion could also have been an indictment and pointer to the need for phasing external activities in future so that IAs do not feel overwhelmed as they participate in different activities.⁴ Sometimes we visited the communities several times to triangulate data and information gathered and at the same time helped clarify issues pertaining to IABA and CLMS. Due to these frequent visits, some community members sometimes wondered why we were having repeated discussions with them and some wondered whether we were planning to give them more funding.

Perhaps due to the generalized economic insecurity in the community, there was a moment when committee members argued that they could not continue working for free in the community and yet the donor had money for specific purposes and that they could not give information freely since the researchers had been paid to do the same. While this could point to heightened expectations on the part of some community members, the researchers had to take time in all the encounters with the community and explain clearly the purpose of the action research.

During one community discussion, we had been informed that the community had earlier refused to be given refreshments by the implementing agency whenever they had meetings arguing that it led to dependency and instead made a request that the money be channelled to other child support programmes within their community. This is one of the best practices we had wanted to document. We were however not able to meet community members because most of the community meetings had been mobilized at the same time in a central place. Sometimes we had to keep some groups waiting since parents could not leave their children behind and vice versa even after we had finished conducting discussions with either group. We therefore felt compelled to give them refreshments during the meetings because some groups had waited for too long.

Action research sometimes requires measures to be taken immediately to correct a particular situation or improve it. As researchers however, we sometimes faced quandaries in making suggestions or "approving" the changes the communities wanted done immediately, this was because we were well aware of the fact that the organizations run on particular plans and sometimes as an outsider, one might not have the ultimate voice in discussions or decisions that needed to be undertaken by the implementing agency. To circumvent these, we ensured that the staff of the implementing agencies noted the issues raised by the community and they promised to take them on or follow them up. While noting that some of these staff members were not the coordinators of the project and thereby not the ultimate decision makers, we encouraged them to hold in-house discussions about the issues that emerged from the field with the rest of the project team to provide feedback and decide a way forward for the organization but also provide feedback on the outcomes to the research team.

⁴ For example, during the research period, in addition to the consultative workshop and the research, there was also training on VSLAs targeting the same people as the action research.

Ethically too, we came across situations when we also faced dilemmas on whether to take immediate action on child protection. For example, in one supported school, we were told about allegations of sexual violence by a particular teacher on schoolgirls and the deputy head teacher said he was yet to take any action. As researchers wanted to act immediately and report this to the social welfare officers but we also wanted to use the right channels. On the other hand, we felt like if this waited for too long, it might 'do harm' to the children involved. The head teacher promised to follow up the issue at the start of third term. The issue was discussed with the implementing agency collaborating with the school and urged to follow-up the matter.

The researchers had also previous extensive collaboration with two of the implementing organizations (ANPPCAN and OCBO) on the role of indigenous knowledge in Early Childhood Care and Development (ECD). While this was a strengthening aspect in that we were able to relate well with them and had prior knowledge of their organizational culture and way of operating, we were however also aware of the potential bias this could introduce in interpretation of data. We were therefore constantly reflexive on how this prior relationship could influence the way information gathered was analyzed or understood to avoid making subjective interpretations.

Confidentiality plays a big role in any research. However, since this was action research aimed at showcasing what is working well and what needs to be improved, we have attributed some data to specific organizations and individuals. In a few other cases, where we felt some level of confidentiality was required, we have not revealed the identity of the organizations or individuals. We however are cognizant of the fact that given the small sample from which we are working, it may not be possible to maintain complete anonymity.

The issue of child labour is multifaceted and context specific. Despite the fact that the organizations involved in the study are from the same district and in close proximity, there still exists some level of peculiarity between and across organizations. The strategies for eradicating child labour are informed by the specific context and circumstances of organizations and also to some extent, the extent to which particular programme directors/coordinators are involved in the projects as well as the organizational culture. These organizational differences might affect or influence the level to which the data can be generalized. However the findings provide insights that can be used to interrogate, understand and inform practices and policies for eradicating child labour within an integrated area based approach and have resonance beyond Rakai district.

Linking Research and Action: Immediate Outcomes

The action research was carried out within an approximate period of one month. This period might not be long enough to talk about outcomes of the action research which is really result oriented. However, indicatively there are some results that can be attributed to the research in the short run. The communities and implementing agencies interacted together with researchers, and posed questions that reflected their own situations and modalities of doing things differently. In this encounter, the community members were able to pose questions to the implementing agencies on why the projects were organized the way they were. The participants also appreciated the level of involvement in production of information and new learning and a frequent comment was "thank you for enabling us to see things from a new perspective about our project."

At district and sub-county level, most staff who participated in the action research appreciated the learning from the action research, pledged to integrate child labour issues in their work and urged IAs to share information with them and work collaboratively on issues of child labour. For instance, the sub-county Chief of Kasasa sub-county requested the support of OCBO in order to finalize a bylaw on child labour. Similarly, IAs acknowledged a need for strengthening collaboration with the District Department of Education and the Community Development Officers in the implementation of the project, and document child labour monitoring activities by CCLCs.

The stakeholder and dissemination workshops brought together the local project implementers, the researchers and the community in a common platform of exchange. This multi stakeholder platform also enabled clarification of policies and practices of the government in protecting children against child labour.

1.4 Conceptual Clarity

In order to develop clarity about the use of concepts in this document, we conceptualize several core terms including integration, child labour, Integrated Area Based Approach for elimination of child labour, child labour monitoring, child labour free zones as well as dialogue.

Child labour

According to the National Child Labour Policy (2006),⁵ child labour is “work that is mentally, physically, socially and/or morally dangerous and harmful to children; work that interferes with children’s school attendance; hazardous work which by its nature or circumstances under which it is performed, jeopardizes the health, safety and morals of children.”

Integration

Integration is a method of networking in order to improve the use of resources, to provide effective services and to reduce costs. The term 'integration' in this document refers to the approach in elimination of child labour where services and programmes are provided in a comprehensive and interwoven manner, with the aim of ensuring prevention, withdrawal and integration of children. Two levels of integration are important in this report: integration within the organization implementing a particular child labour project (internal integration), and integration across different stakeholders and sectors.

Integrated Area Based Approach

Integrated Area Based Approach (IABA) comprises of an integrated set of interventions that simultaneously addresses all the interlinked and systemic issues that perpetuate child labour in a particular area. According to (Thuy, 2010), an Integrated Area Based Approach (IABA) is a departure from other piecemeal approaches of addressing child labour. It is a strategy where eliminating child labour can be approached and managed as a process integrated in the country’s approach to poverty elimination. The approach within IPEC context, is multi-pronged in that it aims at reaching out to all child labourers or those at risk;

⁵ Republic of Uganda: *Child Labour Policy*. Kampala: Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (2006).

empowering local communities and improving families and communities' livelihoods; delivering ILO support services to child labourers and families as "one"; making a well defined geographical or administrative area (zone) "child labour free"; and thereby facilitating replication and scaling up of child labour free zones (CLFZ).

A Child Labour Free Zone

A child labour free zone is an area chosen for development concentration, with the result that after some years of systematic work, all children will be in formal full time education and NONE in child labour (KIN, 2011).⁶ The "zone" refers to a well defined geographical area or administrative area. Within the MV Foundation⁷ context, zones are (geographical) areas where all children are systematically withdrawn from work and (re)integrated into formal, full-time schools. A zone could be a state, or a district or even a village (Thuy, 2010). A Child Labour Free Zone approach entails a sustained engagement with the community to change attitudes toward and norms around child labour and to empower the community to eliminate child labour.

Child Labour Monitoring System

Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS) is a process of ensuring that as a result of regular and repeated direct observation, children are safe from exploitation and hazardous work. It is the active process that ensures that such observation is put in place and is coordinated in an appropriate manner. It is a broad and dynamic concept that covers homes, schools, communities, and workplaces and any environment in which children are likely to be present. CLMS allows organizations to keep track of beneficiaries and to measure the impact of their interventions and make adjustments accordingly. According to IPEC (2001) a child labour monitoring system is the identification, referral, protection, and prevention of exploitive child labour through the development of a coordinated multi-sectoral monitoring and referral process that aims to cover all children living in a given geographical area, not just those that are direct beneficiaries of a project (ibid).

Dialogue

Dialogue is a way of exploring the root causes of a particular problem in the community. It is a method of collectively observing and discussing how values and norms can influence the way people behave. Dialogue as used in this research implies a contextually appropriate and sensitive engagement with local communities on how best to eradicate child labour. Dialogue is a two way learning process which involves listening deeply to find out the truth and suspending judgments on community. It also involves holding discussions with the community in a manner that does not disempower them but one that recognizes that communities have capacity to take care of their children and it is this capacity that should be strengthened. Through dialogue, communities are (re)positioned as gate keepers of their children's development and not the interventions/donors.

This study uses the conceptualization in this section in analysis and discussion of findings and in the action points.

⁶ Kids in Need (KIN): *About Kids in Need: The Governance programme*. Programme Update report. July 2011. KIN. Entebbe (2011).

⁷ MV Foundation in Andrapradesh India implements an Area Based Approach for Labour and is the pioneer of the concept of "child labour free zones".

2. Child Labour: Conceptualization and Causes

The research sought to interrogate participants' conception of what constitutes child labour and perception about its causes. This is because problem conceptualization determines interventions thereof. The following forms of child labour were identified as prevalent in the intervention area: spraying tomatoes, picking scrap metal, vending in town, brick laying, loading bananas on trucks, fishing, child domestic work, working in bars, digging, herding, construction, commercial sex work and smuggling goods across the border.

Overall there was a high level of understanding of what constitutes child labour among the cross section of stakeholders including children. Staff of implementing agencies, key district departments such as community development, Probation and Welfare Office and Education all had a clear understanding of what constitutes child labour, its impact on children and how it can be addressed. One participant noted:

"Child labour is the engagement with labour that affects school attendance and that is hazardous to a child's health; a child's evolving capacity. It is work that is not appropriate for the child's age, ability and health."

(Staff of Implementing Agency)

For parents of children prevented from child labour, their perspective on child labour was varied with some parents conflating or mistaking child labour with work for resilience building and child "responsibilisation"⁸ which remains a critical part of child rearing. One caregiver noted:

"Child labour is work that is not appropriate for the child's age and ability and work that stops a child from going to school. It is work that has negative impacts on the health of the child. For instance a 5-year-old child being made to carry a big jerry can of water."

(Elderly male caregiver, Dwaniro sub-county)

Awareness with Limited Action

Among council staff from local council one to the district level, the understanding of child labour was diverse. Most local council members who participated in the action research at all levels ranging from LC1 to LC3 also exhibited some understanding of what constitutes child labour and how it manifests itself within their communities. However, the rhetoric did not match the practice and this accounted for their limited action against combating child labour. All research participants; including children noted a lack of explicit action on how to combat child labour among most local council leaders within the community. One child withdrawn from child labour said:

⁸ According to Nsamenang and Lo-oh (2009), responsabilization is a way of inculcating responsibility and building resilience of children while enhancing their self-esteem. Indeed Okwany et al (2011) note that both traditionally and contemporaneously, responsabilization is a critical aspect of children's participation in a range of activities as they assist in a range of household chores and child care, as well as mentoring and teaching younger siblings and involvement in community activities in accordance with their evolving capacities. This also promotes horizontal socialization as children learn from each other.

"Local Council leaders in my village do not seem to care about working children. There are several children who are working in the village but the LCs have not helped them at all. The dilemma is that if a Local Council member asked a child to abandon child labour, the child would ask: are you going to help me with food and my education or give me any alternative support? Then the LCs would leave the children to work since they cannot support them if they stopped working."

(16-year-old boy withdrawn from hazardous child labour)

Some key duty bearers attributed the limited or lack of action to address child labour to their inadequate involvement in project activities by IAs and their limited understanding of the roles they could play in the elimination of child labour. This highlights the need for local leaders to mobilize available resources (including local and indigenous resources) as well as advocating for how these resources can be allocated for combating child labour or channelled to supporting vulnerable children.

Teachers and artisan-trainers also portrayed a good understanding of what constitutes child labour but despite this level of awareness, children cited cases where these caregivers still exposed children to exploitative activities that violate their rights. One girl stated of her trainer:

"She brought a gunny bag full of clothes and told us to wash them instead of working in the salon."

(16-year-old-girl undergoing skills training)

During a focus group discussion with caregivers, one parent noted that child labour is 'common sense' in the community and every person with this sense understands what child labour is noting that it would be deplorable for a responsible adult not to see that child labour has negative impacts on children. For instance, a 70-year old male caregiver noted:

"It is very easy to know that a child is involved in child labour and that child labour is hazardous to a child's health. As a responsible adult, can you fail to know that making a young child carry a big jerry can of water will affect his or her health?"

However, despite this *commonsensical conception* of what constitutes child labour and its effects, within the context of vulnerability, some caregivers were not aware or were unwilling or unable to match this awareness with practice.

Child Labour as a Cultural and Economic Necessity

Despite the fact that there was a clear conception of child labour among sub-county council staff especially community development officers, the research reveals justification of child labour on two levels. One view relates to a general perception among some caregivers, local council members and community child labour committees which justifies child work on the basis that some households are poor and lack social protection and/or the fact that many child labourers lacked adequate parental care.

For instance, one sub-county chief had child workers on his farm and cited a neighbouring farmer who had about 10 children, some of them below 14 years, who worked on his farm to earn money for their school fees. He stated that in his view this was not child labour noting that:

“We cannot stop children from engaging in petty trade since we cannot support them. They have to work to get some money to meet their basic needs including school fees.”

This highlights negative norms that underlie not only the acceptance of the necessity of child labour for children from vulnerable households but also shows the invisibility of child labour particularly around the home. This kind of perception of child labour is so ubiquitous, and an “accepted” part of daily life that it is often unremarkable. Indeed because such children are in a home “environment” considered a “safe” space, then their labour is often viewed as benevolent and gentle. This is consistent with what Black (1997)⁹ terms as attitudinal invisibility where even people who are supposed to protect children are ‘blind’ to the practice of child labour in certain contexts seeing it as benign or even beneficial. Thus although such views cannot be generalized, they indicate differences in and the norms underlying conceptions of child labour. They also point to the lack of action to deal with the *necessity* that makes children drop out of school and join the work force, fail to go to school or combine work and school.

The other view relates to a general normalization of child labour as a necessary part of child upbringing where children are viewed as active agents who should contribute to their own basic needs by working to support their families.

An intergenerational action research carried out by Okwany et al (2011:115)¹⁰ in Kenya and Uganda refutes this problematic assertion of the inevitability that children engage in child labour through tradition. They note that culturally, child labour was stigmatized by use of proverbs such as “a child’s farming implement cannot produce enough food for the mother” (A Luhya Proverb of Kenya). The authors also note that traditionally, children’s farming implements and water pots were essentially toys used more as a learning and even play tool and adults did not expect the child to produce enough food for consumption. In their analysis, they further highlight the play and educational aspects of child participation in household activities and also the fact that child labour as economic exploitation of children was not condoned. This therefore points to a need for dialogue with communities on this matter to uncover protective societal customs and beliefs that provide critical pathways in the fight to eliminate child labour.

It is therefore clear that for child labour awareness to effectively match practice, the underlying norms that sustain misperceptions must be challenged and changed while those that are protective and promotive (including those that enhance livelihoods and economic security of vulnerable caregivers) should be upheld and strengthened.

It is important to note that the communities do not uniformly accept the inevitability of child labour. For example, during focus group discussions, some parents/caregivers took the opportunity to sensitize others about what constitutes child labour, including the long and short term hazards of child labour and cautioned on the imperative of eliminating child labour.

The excerpt of the focus group discussion below is an example of such processes occurring in the community as obtained from Nabigasa sub-county.

⁹ Black, M.: “Caged Birds, Silent Song: Children working as Domestic Servants” in *New Internationalist Magazine* (1997).

¹⁰ Okwany, A.; Ngutuku, E. and Muhangi, A.: *The Role of Local Knowledge and Culture in Child Care in Africa: A Sociological Study of Several African Communities*. New York: Edwin Mellen Press (2011).

"I have to involve my children in child labour since they need food and other necessities; they have to fetch water for sale."

(Young Female Caregiver 1)

"Why don't you fetch the water yourself for sale seeing you are young and energetic, why allow your children do it?"

(Elderly female caregiver 2)

"You people have some food and land that's why you don't have any problems, we are landless and we need support from somebody somehow."

(Young caregiver 1)

"Personally I do not have access to land. But I lease land in my village, plant different crops such as maize and beans and pay part of the produce as lease fees. I have stocked four sacks of maize that I will use to look after my three grandchildren, including meeting their education needs. You can also lease land and grow crops to look after your children. You are even younger and more energetic than some of us."

(Elderly caregiver 3)

"We hire out land some of us, for UGX 20,000; you can get some piece of land to till for your children, that's how we get food."

(Female caregiver 4)

"If you do all these things, people will think you are able and will stop supporting you."

(Young caregiver 1)

"These are your children, you have to do something for them and stop depending on outsiders to help you."

(Female caregiver 4)

In all the discussions with views that abet child labour, the researchers facilitated, participated in and noted discussions with stakeholders in which attitudes were challenged and shifted. In one such discussion for instance, some stakeholders who had views that supported child labour acknowledged that it was wrong to involve children in work and the group members cited practical action that they could take to send their children to school after the end of the SNAP project.

"We can form ourselves into savings and credit associations and engage in small business in order to raise money to send our children to school."

(Female caregiver, Beach Management Unit)

These views are indicative of divergent views and important conversations and dialogue that are taking place at the community level and which discredit the commonly held view that communities are unaware of what constitutes child labour or how to deal with it. Importantly, they are critical entry points for conscientizing caregivers about child labour and underscore the potential of working with such caregivers as change agents within the community. This is critical for the implementation and scaling up of IABA.

Child Labour and Work for Resilience-building and Responsibilization

Children below 12 years should be in fulltime schooling and could help with simple household chores as part of normal upbringing. Under the National Child Labour Policy (2006), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention 138 on Minimum Working Age and Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL), children between 12 and 14 years could be engaged in light work under the supervision of an adult whereas children between 15 and 18 years can work in non-hazardous or work not considered worst forms of child labour.

Among some participants, there was a clear separation of child labour and work performed by children for resilience building and imparting basic practical life skills. Such work included household chores such as cooking, cleaning the house, fetching water and child care. Most study participants also cautioned that although light work is necessary for responsabilization, it can easily turn into child labour. Some of the child responsibilities that were considered to constitute child labour which were mentioned by study participants (parents/caregivers and CCLC members) include: a 5 year old child carrying a 10 litre jerry can, sending children to fetch water at night, young girls caring for babies during school time, a child working in the garden for long hours, young boys fishing for long hours during school time and a young girl cooking for a large family.

Child Labour as Strategic Choice by Children

Sometimes children exercise their ability to make choices or agency (Silliman, 1996)^{11 12} and engage in child labour despite availability of basic needs at home. However, it is important to note that this agency to engage in child labour is always constrained by lack of information and the context in which a child lives in. It is important to note that children too can exercise agency and seek their continued stay in school. The researchers came across diverse cases where children had approached other able members of community to support them in their training and education. The story below of a 13-year-old boy withdrawn from labour in Kasasa sub-county and the discussion he had with the researchers is illustrative that children do not just accept to be pushed out of school and engage in child labour and it is this agency that can be leveraged when working with children.

¹¹ Agency as used in this instance means that children are social agents and are assumed to act strategically and intentionally to advance their own interests.

¹² See Blanton, R. et al.: "Agency, ideology and power in archaeological theory" in *Current Anthropology*, 37 (1): 53-55. The University of Chicago Press, 1996; Silliman, S.: "Agency, practical politics and the archaeology of culture contact" in *Journal of social Archaeology*, Vol. 1(2): 190-209, SAGE Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, CA and New Delhi, 2001.

Box 1: A Case History: A 13-year-old boy withdrawn from child labour

I overheard you (researchers) discussing with the Jajas (caregivers) that the project is going to end in the coming year and that it is important to have other alternatives to children's education. I think if nobody comes to my aid, I might just slip back into child labour. I used to sell firewood for upkeep before I was assisted back to school by the project. I could sell a big bundle for only Shs.500 and that was my money for food and upkeep. My mother left me when I was young and I do not know who my father is. I have hopes of joining secondary school next year and become a successful trader one day. This might however remain a dream because my Jaja is very sick now. They told her she has the heart and sugar disease. My Aunt who sometimes assists me has had to leave her job to care for Jaja. Do you know of anybody else who might assist with my education when the project ends? You can come with me to see Jaja, and then you can tell others that I really need help?

This agency can however be constrained especially when young children feel they have to work to supplement their education. For example, majority of the children we talked to still engage in child labour so as to supplement their needs at home and in school. On the other hand, children can be positive agents in preventing their peers from engaging in child labour.

Weak Enforcement of Child Labour Laws

Poor enforcement of child labour laws and the Education Act were cited as major hindrances to the fight against child labour.

"We often withdraw children engaged in child labour but when we take the perpetrators to the police, we find that the police do not have a law for charging the perpetrators. They are just let go."

(LC 1 Chairperson and CCLC member, Kyotera town council)

The Education Act, 2008 (Section 50-52) stipulates that parents should ensure access of all children of school going age to education. Thus parents are mandated to enrol their children in school and failure to enrol children in school is penalized by 2 years of imprisonment or community service. The problem however is that the Local Council officers who are supposed to enforce the law are not sensitized about their roles. It was also reported that local council officials are reluctant to enforce the Act to avoid losing votes of the electorate during election time. Moreover, the Act is considered unenforceable since 2 years of imprisonment is likely to deprive children of parental care. Thus, an approach that emphasizes dialogue is preferred.

Demand and Supply Factors: Poor Quality and Exclusionary Education System

In some communities, child labour was justified as a response to low quality education in schools after elimination of tuition fees with the institution of universal primary education policy. The research revealed that many parents around Lake Kijanibalola in Rakai district consider engagement of children in fishing a viable alternative to education. Indeed staff of one of the implementing agencies noted: *"When you visit the landing sites, some caregivers would say the lake is our university."*

Indeed, during a focus group discussion with the Beach Management Unit, some parents tended to rationalize child labour because of the poor quality of education in public schools. One parent noted thus:

“The main reason children are not going to school is because our universal primary education schools are very bad. Why should a parent send their children to school when they cannot even manage to read an English sentence when they are in Primary five? It is better for them to go fishing and learn a useful skill rather than waste their parent’s money.”

(Member, Beach Management Unit)

Although parents are aware of rampant teacher absenteeism and poor school performance, no collective efforts are taken to engage with the school administration to address these issues. They noted that school general meetings where parents and the school administration attend once each year do not provide a convenient forum for addressing issues such as teacher absenteeism and quality issues. As a result, parents withdraw their children from schools on account of poor quality education. During a focus group meeting with the beach management committee, parents promised to form pressure groups to engage with schools in order to address problems related to teacher absenteeism and quality issues in school.

The limited participation of parents in supporting learning of children within the home environment and holding schools accountable for the education of children are responsible for the poor learning outcomes of children. Parents were castigated for not monitoring the learning of their children and providing necessary support.

“My parents were not educated but they used to take interest in my performance. That used to make me concentrate on my studies. But these days, parents only wait until the end of the term to see which position their child has got. Parents need to start monitoring the daily performance of their children.”

(Education Officer, Rakai district)

Focus group discussions with children, staff of implementing agencies and teachers revealed that other factors within the school also contributed to pushing children out of school. Child abuse at school was cited as one push-out factor which forces some children to drop out of school. The most common types of child abuse at school include corporal punishment, sexual violence, emotional abuse and child labour. Children noted that some teachers often called children abusive names such as “pig, ghost,¹³ etc.” whenever they do not perform well in class. Such emotional abuse makes children hate school. Although corporal punishment was reported to be on the decrease in schools, it is one of the key factors that forces children from school.

During an interview, a teacher of one of the project supported primary schools noted:

“During the first term of this year, 15 children dropped out of Primary 5 before the middle of first term compared to two children who had dropped out in other classes. When we asked teachers why many children had dropped out from class 5, they informed us that the class teacher beats children a lot. The teacher and staff cautioned the class teacher and he stopped beating children. He later left the school. No more children dropped out of school after that.”

Lack of proper sanitary facilities, teacher absenteeism, and sexual violence against girl children by some teachers was also cited as possible reasons that push children out of school.

¹³ Discussions revealed that referring to children as pigs was particularly insulting for Muslim children who do not eat pork. Calling children ghosts was equally bad since many of the children have lost their parents.

Sometimes these girls become pregnant and leave school as a result of such liaisons with teachers.

“Last term as school closed, we told pupils to write for us some of the things they don’t like at school. Several issues came up including lack of good toilets, clean drinking water etc. However, girl children also said one teacher touches them indecently.”

(Deputy Head teacher)

Although schools are supposed to be safe places for children, the research revealed that for many children schools are unsafe and hostile spaces where many children were subjected to child labour including digging in teacher’s gardens for long hours, fetching water and firewood for teachers.

“One thing I do not like about school is working for teachers in their gardens.”

(A 12-year-old girl, Nabigasa sub-county)

“Some teachers take children to work in their gardens which are located long distances from school and it takes almost half a day to get there. Children who refuse to dig in teacher’s gardens are punished. This makes children hate school. Some children wonder why they should not stay home and work in their gardens instead of digging for teacher.”

(CCLC member, Nabigasa sub-county)

This points to the fact that it might not be enough to take the children to school without addressing the school based factors that serve to influence the quality of education that children receive. Indeed a number of studies reveal that a poor education system is implicated in defining child labour. For example contrary to the view that poor parents fail to take their children to school because of a lack of appreciation of the value of education, research done in Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Uganda and Zambia reveal that poor quality of education is one of the reasons that hinder parents from sending their children to school (Boyle et al 2002 in Hunt 2008).¹⁴ A study conducted by MVF in 1997 on factors that motivated children to go to school revealed that children came to school in spite of poverty and that non-economic factors such as an enabling environment in support of the children’s right to education, motivation of parents and good teaching were very important (Mahajan 2008).

¹⁴ Hunt, F.: *Create Pathways to Access*. Research Monograph No 16, University of Sussex. Centre for International Education, Sussex School of Education (2008).

3. Conceptualizing the Integrated Area Based Approach

The above discussions reveal that child labour is a multifaceted and contextually specific issue whose structural causes need to be addressed in an integrated manner. Child labour affects and hinders the realization the right of every child. The discussions have also revealed the potential role different actors could play in enhancing the elimination of child labour in this area. In this chapter, we explore the integrated area based approach and the extent to which it is addressing child labour in Rakai district.

Clarification of the concept of the IABA by the research team took place at two levels: during the consultative workshop and at implementing agency and organizational/stakeholder level. In the consultative workshop, participants worked in three groups with members from different organizations and reflected on their understanding of the integrated area based approach for child labour. This was aimed at establishing their level of understanding of IABA. Reflections from the group activity are presented below:

- *Enkola ekozesa obukiiko bwebyalo, abantu babulijjo okulwanyisa okupakasa kw'abaana.* This translates into: An approach that employs existing structures like local government structures, communities among others to implement child labour interventions.
- It is an approach that employs different community dialogue processes to enable elimination of child labour through working with parents, teachers, local councils, police, religious and opinion leaders among others.
- It is an approach that involves working with stakeholders such as NGOs and community leaders to eliminate child labour.

During the consultative workshop, participants noted that initially, the concept of IABA was not clearly understood. This was ascribed to inadequate orientation of the implementing agencies by IPEC into the fundamental elements of the IABA for child labour before the inception of the IABA projects. Despite participation of IAs staff in different workshops organized by IPEC on IABA for child labour, the understanding of the IABA and how it should be effectively implemented remained limited.

"The main challenge was that there was no sensitization about the IABA before the implementation of the project. The concept came wrapped in child labour jargon. Although we read about it when IPEC sent us the concept paper, during the consultative meeting, proposal writing and subsequent workshops after the project was implemented, the concept was not very clear. But eventually we noticed that it meant working with existing stakeholders to address child labour."

(Interview with OCBO staff)

The quotations below show IA staff understanding of the IABA:

"IABA is the process of working with different stakeholders including children and employers to address all forms of child labour in a concerted manner by tackling the different factors that push children to work since child labour has many dimensions and many causes including push and pull factors."

(ANPPCAN Staff)

The IABA means working with existing local structures and stakeholders, such as the local councils, the SOVCCS/DOVCCs and utilizing available resources and potential opportunities to address child labour. It involves sharing information regularly on development initiatives, available resources between us and other stakeholders.”

(RACA Staff)

The research also drew from the experiences of the MV Foundation in India to explain the concept of area based approach and how it can be achieved. MVF has successfully implemented the area-based approach for child labour and the CLFZ concept. The approach of MV Foundation has the twin responsibility of organizing community for public action and pressure on the system to deliver services and engages with schools to prepare them to take on education of children. MVF does not set up parallel institutions to the schools but works within existing government programmes and institutions to address the needs of children. It applies community pressure to ensure that schools and local leaders are responsive to the education needs of children. The organization works with youth groups and community volunteers as peer educators and social mobilisers. Much of the replicability of MVF’s programme is due to the clear set of principles, ‘the non-negotiables’, that it has evolved and a simple message that ‘no child must work and every child attends school’.

During the consultative workshop and interviews with staff of implementing agencies, the concept of IABA was clarified by the facilitators and participants acknowledged that they were further enlightened about the approach and that the new learning was going to enable them to improve on their programmes and undertake more collaborative work.

Discussions during the consultative workshop and meetings with IAs and other stakeholders enabled their appreciation of the fact that they were actually implementing elements of an Integrated Area Based Approach. There was also an affirmation and validation among stakeholders that the Integrated Area Based Approach was not ‘something’ totally new to them since some IAs had applied it in their previous and ongoing projects.

“We are actually implementing the Integrated Area Based Approach. For instance, the district works with local councils, the IAs and other NGOs to identify and remove children engaged in child labour and refer them for services to other service providers.”

(CDO, Rakai district, Consultative Workshop)

“We thought it was a complicated approach but we eventually noticed that what we were actually doing was an integrated approach. The experience of MV Foundation helped us to understand the IABA better. What MV Foundation is doing is achievable.”

(OCBO staff)

3.1 Perspectives on an Integrated Approach

The term “integration” is used to describe the process of creating a network of services that work together. Integration is a means of improving the effectiveness of services while at the same time reducing public costs (OECD cited in Haddad 2001).¹⁵ A useful operative approach that helped stakeholders to understand the concept of integration was the utilization of the two-level approach to integration. The first level integrates activities at organizational level while the second level is the inter-stakeholder/intersectoral integration of programmes for the elimination of child labour at the district and local levels.

Internal integration relates to leveraging resources from different programmes and projects implemented by the organization to address child labour. It would also involve ensuring an inter-programme understanding of what constitutes an integrated approach to child protection which would eventually have repercussions in elimination for child labour. At another level, within the organization internal integration would mean the extent to which the different components of the SNAP project are seen to be integrated towards ensuring elimination of child labour. We would also add another level of integration at the community level which implies the extent to which the community have a shared (integrated) understanding with the IA about how different activities of the projects lead to elimination of child labour.

At the programme/organizational level, there was evidence of leveraging resources from other child support projects for elimination of child labour by all IAs. For instance, RACA leverages resources from the OVC project funded by the Civil Society Fund to provide extra support to children under the SNAP project. Additionally, RACA’s existing local structures of Community Counselling Aides (CCAs) were integrated with community child labour committees for child labour monitoring. About 341 counsellors at community level were used as an entry point into the communities. The CCAs are also members of the CCLCs to ensure cross fertilization of ideas and to avoid creation of parallel structures at community level. Within RACA still, the donors have been made aware of the importance of IABA for elimination of child labour and are slowly beginning to understand that elimination of child labour is a core aspect of child protection.

“When we started working on the issues of child labour, our main donor in child protection did not understand why we were doing it and how it connected with our work. We have been explaining and the results are evident that child labour is part of child protection.”

(Interview with RACA staff)

In addition, ANPPCAN is using its child protection structures to provide additional support to children protected and withdrawn from child labour. ANPPCAN has a free legal desk and child helpline that benefit children under the SNAP project and where cases of child labour are sometimes reported.

On the second level of integration, IAs have made efforts to integrate their programmes with the activities of a range of stakeholders from community to district level,

¹⁵ Haddad, L.: *An integrated Approach to Early Childhood Education and Care. A preliminary Study.* Contribution to the workshop: Toward a systemic and integrated approach to policy development and implementation. International Conference on Early Childhood Education and Care: International Policy Issues. June 13-15, Stockholm (2001).

albeit in an unstructured and unsystematic manner. By their project design, IAs are supposed to collaborate with households, local council officials, community child labour committees, the sub-county staff, other CBOs and CSOs, the private sector, the Police and district staff in the implementation of their programmes.

However, here were cases of lack of integration within project activities. For example, there was a tendency to implement some project activities as stand-alone without linking them to the overall goal of the project. For instance, the support provided to households to start IGAs has not been clearly linked with the aim of protecting the supported children from child labour through utilizing the benefits accrued from IGAs to support the continued education of children. For instance, although ANPPCAN had initiated a Village Savings and Loans Associations at the time of research, it was reported that the proceeds from VSLAs had not been linked to protection of children from child labour.

“...we have not mobilized them to discuss issues of how the increased income as a result of the participation in VSLAs can enable them take better care of their children, including preventing their children from child labour. It has been purely business, but this is a learning point, we will work towards that.”

(Interview with ANPPCAN staff)

At a higher level, where as there are some evidence of inter agency and inter-stakeholder collaboration for child labour, substantive efforts had not been undertaken to implement a fully integrated area based approach for child labour. For instance, at the time of the action research, some IAs were not working closely with the District Department of Education and agricultural extension workers in their education and IGAs components.

3.2 Awareness of Stakeholders about IABA

The different stakeholders involved in the implementation of the IABA showed varied understanding of the IABA. For instance, the District Community Development Officer and Probation and Welfare Officer showed enhanced level of understanding of the IABA. However, sub-county staff such as assistant community development officers (ACDOs), Agricultural extension workers, Parish Chiefs and LC three chairpersons will need more sensitization about the IABA. At community level, although the child labour committees are central in the implementation of the project, there was limited awareness about integrating their work in the activities of a wide range of stakeholders at community level and seemed to only refer the cases of children in child labour or at risk to the implementing organization.

In a nutshell, understanding of stakeholders of the IABA was a learning curve that was strengthened more during the action research. There is however still a need for the IAs to continue reflecting within their organizations about their understanding and by extension the implementation of activities in an integrated manner. There is also need for IAs to engage with other stakeholders from different sectors and at different levels that did not participate in the action research to further clarify the IAB approach and enlist their support for synergy.

3.3 IABA and CLMS at the National Level

At the national level, the Child Labour Unit (CLU) under the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) is responsible for the coordination and implementation of the National Child Labour Policy (2006) and the National Action Plan on Child Labour (2011). The CLU is the secretariat for the multi-sectoral and inter-ministerial National Steering Committee on Child Labour (NSCCL). This provides opportunities for the IABA at national level. In 2010, MGLSD developed guidelines for labour inspectors on the identification of hazardous child labour. MGLSD has integrated child labour issues into the National Social Strategic Programme Plan of Intervention for Orphans and other Vulnerable Children (NSSPI-2 2011/12-2015-16) and also included child labour indicators into the OVC Management Information System (OVC-MIS). Thus, child labour information will be collected through the OVC-MIS from village to district level. MGLSD has been lobbying the OVC Secretariat to include child labour as one of the vulnerability criteria for selecting beneficiaries for the Social Assistance Grant for Economic Empowerment (SAGE), a social protection programme that is being piloted by MGLSD. Additionally, MGLSD is developing decent work indicators that will also include indicators for child labour. In collaboration with the IPEC, MGLSD is planning to undertake a labour audit with the aim of addressing the human resource capacity for labour inspection and child labour monitoring, including recruitment of more district labour officers. All these initiatives will strengthen child labour monitoring at national and district level.

Collaboration between MGLSD and Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) and Ministry of local Government (MoLG) in the elimination of child labour is emerging. MoES has previously collaborated with International Rescue Committee (IRC) in the implementation of two education projects - Livelihood, Education and Protection to End Child Labour (LEAP) and Opportunities for Reducing Adolescent Child Labour through Education (ORACLE). Additionally, MoES has integrated child labour issues in the curricula of universal primary education and Primary Teacher's Colleges.

However, efforts for ensuring an integrated approach to the interventions for addressing child labour by different ministries remain very weak. For instance, the NSCCL has not been effective in ensuring inter-ministerial initiatives for child labour since it was not sitting regularly. Limited documentation of various interventions undertaken at national level to address child labour, limited efforts to integrate child labour into National Orphans and other Vulnerable Children (OVC) programmes under the OVC Secretariat in the MGLSD and limited funding all hinder integration of child labour intervention at national level. Lack of a national child labour monitoring system is a major hindrance to child labour monitoring. In 2006, efforts were made by the Child Labour Unit, during the Capacity Building Project for child labour funded by IPEC to develop a database and child labour monitoring system dubbed "Kadogo" but this did not take off after the pilot phase. Although tools for collecting child labour data were developed and pre-tested with a few implementing agencies, no follow up was made to utilise lessons and experiences from the pilot phase in developing an operation child labour monitoring system.

In order to lay a firm ground for the IABA at the national level, it is imperative that the CLU and NSCCL in the MGLSD ensure an integrated approach to child labour among key ministries and sectors. Importantly, the development of a functional national child labour monitoring system will ensure effective implementation and sustainability of the IABA.

3.4 Dimensions of IABA at District Level

A review of the projects of the three IAs in Rakai reveals a deliberate intention to implement their projects in an integrated and collaborative manner. IAs planned to leverage their internal resources during the implementation of the project. In cognizance of the limited capacity of IAs to provide a comprehensive package of services to all beneficiaries, implementing agencies proposed to collaborate with other service providers in the government, civil society, and private sector to provide complementary and specialized services to beneficiaries as discussed below.

Integrating Child Labour Issues in District Plans

Working with district authorities to integrate child labour issues into district programmes is a key aim of the IABA. With the support of the IPEC District Programme Assistant for Rakai and the Acting District Labour Officer, child labour issues were integrated into the District Development Plan of 2011/2012. With the support from the SNAP project, the Acting District Labour Officer is spearheading the integration of child labour issues into the District OVC Strategic Plan. Although child labour has been integrated into the District Development Plan, the limited budgetary allocation for child related activities remains a major gap that needs to be addressed.

“We are supposed to ensure and enforce child protection within the district but we don’t have any budget for child related activities, we have been surviving from project to project. There are however signs that things might change since this year we got a very small budge.”

(Interview with DCDO and District Probation and Welfare Officer)

Besides funding at district level, there are local government funds that are devolved to parish level for community development every financial year (about Shs.7.2M) which can be leveraged for child protection activities including child labour. However, this still remains inadequate to cater to the enormous needs of children.

A key barrier to integration of child labour issues in the district activities is limited awareness of district councillors about child labour. The research established that most district councillors lacked awareness about child labour and the role they could play in its elimination. The researchers were also informed that since the district has a new council which had been elected into office in early 2011, the DCDO’s office was planning to hold a sensitization meeting for the new council staff to orient them on issues of child labour in September, 2011. The aim of this sensitization was to raise awareness among district councillors to enable them mainstream child labour issues within district programmes.

Furthermore, the district has an OVC Coordination Committee (DOVCC) where RACA and OCBO are members. This provides potential for integration of child labour issues into the district OVC Strategic Plan and the district OVC MIS. With the support from the SNAP project, Rakai district is in advanced stage of integrating child labour issues into the district OVC Strategic Plan. However, the research team established that the DOVCC has not been very effective due to funding challenges but DOVCCs activities will be boosted by funding for the NSPPI-2 from the SUNRISE and Civil Society Fund projects that are expected in the last quarter of 2011.

The district is planning to have a child labour desk to handle issues of child labour. This is expected to ensure increased collaboration among the different stakeholders implementing child labour activities and also ensure integration of child labour issues in district programmes and activities of other stakeholders.

Strengthening Labour Administration

Labour administration is an integral component of the integrated area based approach for child labour. However, Rakai district does not have a substantive District Labour Officer since it could not recruit a labour officer after the previous one left in 2010. This was due to the fact that the district had already reached its ceiling for public service recruitment. This is a serious human resource gap that hinders effective coordination and implementation of child labour related activities and enforcement of labour laws. In order to fill this gap, IPEC has strengthened the capacity of the District Community Development Officer, the Ag. District Labour Officer to coordinate the implementation of labour related activities. The district has also supported the training of two ACDOs in diploma in Law to strengthen law enforcement and child protection at lower levels. However, since the Employment Act (2006) only mandates substantive labour officers to enforce the labour laws including undertaking labour inspections. This hinders other actors such as community development officers to undertake labour inspection and enforce child labour laws. This necessitates the district to seek advice from the Directorate of Labour and Child Labour Unit in the MGLSD to mandate ACDOs to implement labour laws, undertake inspections. However, this will require strengthening the capacity of ACDOs in labour laws and labour inspection.

A District Referral Mechanism for Vulnerable Children

A well functioning referral network is essential for child labour monitoring. In July 2010, a district level OVC referral system was developed in line with the national OVC referral guidelines. The aim of the referral mechanism is to ensure a sustainable network of CSOs and public sector institutions to efficiently and effectively respond to the needs of OVC and their caregivers. Members of the referral network include; RACA, ANPPCAN, OCBO, the Department of Probation and Social Welfare and Police. The district referral mechanism is going to be implemented on a pilot basis for a period of one year and then be expanded to include other stakeholders that provide care and support to vulnerable children in the civil society and private sector. The referral mechanism so envisaged by the district has not taken off officially but several meetings have been held to discuss the modus operandi. This referral mechanism has the potential to make referral seamless if applied to all the child protection organizations within Rakai.

Besides the referral mechanism being developed by the district, another referral mechanism was being developed by ANPPCAN. A multi-stakeholder committee had been set up to develop a directory of service providers by October 2011. Although the referral mechanism that was being developed by ANPPCAN was anticipated to be more comprehensive with a wide range of actors from the civil society and private sector that are not covered by the district OVC referral mechanism, there were concerns from the district that this was creating a parallel structure that will duplicate efforts and resources and thus undermine an integrated referral mechanism at the district level. To ensure a coordinated referral mechanism among all stakeholders providing care and support services to vulnerable children, there is need to harmonize the two referral mechanisms for sustainability.

Any proper referral mechanism across organizations requires some level of trust and mutual understanding. The Action research learned that two of the implementing organizations were plagued with mistrust for each other and also sabotaged each other's activities. This is despite stating in their APSO's that they would collaborate and network. Such mistrust is antithetical to working in an integrated geographical focus since efforts will not be pulled together. This is one of the weakest links in the system. There is therefore a need to address the above mistrust and also if this research has to have resonance beyond Rakai. For IABA to avail evidence of how organizations are networking together, trust should be a key area of focus in selecting partners to work with. Since ability to network is not a given, building the capacity of organizations to network should be given emphasis in the implementation of the IABA.

Despite the fact the district referral mechanism has not been operationalised, there is evidence of informal referral activities between IAs and a few service providers. For instance, ANPPCAN refers children to Rakai Health Services for health services (see box 1 below), Kiterede Vocational Training Institute for vocational skills training and the Police for child abuse and law enforcement cases; RACA works with World Vision for child sponsorship, provision of voluntary counselling and testing, water and sanitation and skills training; while OCBO collaborates with Children of Uganda for residential care and education support of vulnerable children and Sanje Polytechnic for skills training to vulnerable children at concessional rates. Implementing agencies also collaborate with local artisans to provide vocational skills training to children near their localities. However, there is limited evidence of interagency collaboration and referral among the three implementing agencies.

Box 2: Rakai Health Services

ANPPCAN collaborates with Rakai Health Services, a private hospital to provide medical treatment to vulnerable children. The health centre established a charitable grant that supports treatment of vulnerable children who have been referred to the centre by ANPPCAN and those who are brought by their elderly caregivers or community development workers. Most children referred to the centre suffer from severe malnutrition, malaria and other childhood illnesses and some have been abandoned by their parents at their grandparents home, or children staying with elderly caregivers. Rakai Health Services provides timely and free medical check-up for children who have been raped to enable them get timely justice since procedures for medical check-up for raped children in government health centres take a very long time resulting in children being denied justice. The health centre has secured funding to start a nutrition project to support mothers to grow nutritious foods for themselves and their children at home. It will be a sustainable avenue of helping malnourished children. Most vulnerable children will benefit from this project. The centre provides free medical care to about 5 vulnerable children with severe health needs per month. The reason the doctor provides free medical care to children is because vulnerable children are not able to receive immediate and emergency care from government health centres and due to rampant stock outs in government health facilities. It is however important to note that the vulnerable children have to be referred by the project and also proper background checks done.

Public-private Dialogue for Child Labour

The existence of a "one" public-private dialogue forum to build alliances for consultation and collaboration among social partners, government and non government agencies and coordinating their various interventions is a necessary precondition for the integrated area based approach (Thuy 2010). There is a lack of a comprehensive and integrated public-private dialogue forum for child labour at the district level. Although there is a district OVC Committee, this only brings together actors implementing OVC projects under the NSPPI

mainly funded by Civil Society Fund and SUNRISE projects. Moreover, the 3 IAs do not have a forum for information and experience sharing, joint learning and advocacy. Although the District Programme Assistant, IPEC had initiated a quarterly collaboration among the IAs for experience sharing and collective action, it died after a few meetings with some partners citing mistrust among two implementing agencies noted above.

Emerging District Level Support

The research established an emerging district level support for efforts to eliminate child labour. For instance, the newly elected district political leader, the LCV Chairperson pledged commitment to support interventions for eliminating child labour. He noted that the district is developing a plan for strengthening vocational skills training for children who complete primary education. This has potential for addressing child labour among older children and sustainability of project activities. The Resident District Commissioner is an outspoken activist on child labour issues and he has been very active in the World Day Against Child Labour events. However, there is need for IAs to build on this good will to bring onboard key district staff and local council members in order to build formidable support against child labour and advocate for the integration of child labour in key district programmes.

Awareness raising and advocacy campaigns for child labour at district and community is important in maintaining the momentum against child labour. The main event used for awareness raising and advocacy by IAs is the commemoration of the World Day against Child Labour. However, there was a feeling that advocacy at district level needed to be strengthened. For instance, the current newly elected district council lacked adequate knowledge about child labour thus hindering integration of child labour issues in district level activities and their active participation in efforts to eliminate child labour.

3.5 Dimensions of IABA at Community Level

At community level, activities for elimination of child labour were loosely integrated with no systematic linkages across sectors. Areas where some dimensions of IABA were evident include: social mobilization and awareness raising, community engagement and participation, working with local structures, and integration of child labour in school activities.

Social Mobilization and Awareness-Raising

Community mobilization and raising awareness about child labour are fundamental in creating norms that reject child labour and eventual creation of child labour free zones. Communities also need to be aware of the benefits of education and the role it plays in the elimination of child labour. Awareness-raising is a two-way process, fostering communication and information exchange in order to improve mutual understanding and mobilizing communities and wider society to bring about the necessary change in attitudes and behaviour.

A number of awareness raising approaches have been used to sensitize community members and other stakeholders about the causes and impacts of child labour. These range from dissemination of IEC materials on child labour and stakeholder meetings at sub-county level involving sub-county LCIII chairpersons, sub-county chiefs, ACDOs, agricultural extension workers, and teachers. However, the action research learnt that awareness raising activities are limited since they were allocated limited funds in the project budgets. We however aver that not all forms of awareness-raising require funds and awareness-raising can be done within the

communities without any extra cost. Thus, community members and key stakeholders have been inadequately sensitized against child labour. For example, besides the mobilization meetings with parents during the stakeholder mapping exercises, most parents who participated in the research had not received any more information about child labour and how they could participate in its elimination. At the time of the research, Rural Development Media Communication (RUDMEC) had started conducting community awareness campaigns against child labour through Community Theatre.

Given the limited knowledge about what constitutes child labour and existence of norms that condone child labour, it is imperative to step up and strengthen social mobilization and awareness-raising efforts for child labour. Awareness-raising activities should address a range of factors that cause and perpetuate child labour including: what constitutes child labour and hazardous work, norms and attitudes that abet child labour, and the roles parents, LCs and other stakeholders can play in efforts to eradicate child labour.

Besides children who participate in drama for SCREAM, most supported children in the community were not involved in creating awareness about child labour and many of them especially the ones prevented from child labour were not even aware of the connection between the support they were receiving and child labour. Discussions with children during the research revealed that they were aware of the existence of child labour in their communities but were not doing much to create awareness apart from a few who were members of school clubs. The experience of Kaugmaon Child Labour project (Winrock 2008)¹⁶ in Philippines is indicative of the important role children can play in creating awareness about child labour. In this project, after mapping of vulnerable children, some core groups of children were trained in leadership and life skills and these children created awareness in communities through different media.

The research also identified potential change agents among parents who can engage with fellow parents and community members in their localities to raise awareness and create civic action that can create norms that reject child labour in the community. These were parents/caregivers of children at risk of child labour, who despite living in a state of economic vulnerability were striving to send and retain their children in schools and also change the attitudes of their peers about child labour. However, these positive deviants¹⁷ need to be nurtured by strengthening their knowledge on child labour and link them to CCLCs and other stakeholders.

Discussions with IAs and CCLCs indicated that dialoguing with parents in smaller groups was more effective in changing attitudes of parents toward child labour. It is important to note that attitude change takes a long time and thus requires continuous discussions about child labour by IA staff and CCLCs. School enrolment drives undertaken by teachers in communities provide an important platform for influencing parents to enrol their children in schools. However, social workers and CCLC members will need to be trained to mobilize and hold discussions with community members in more meaningful ways. There is thus need to move away from traditional methods of awareness raising that utilize top-down approaches to more dialogical approaches where community members play an active role in the elimination of

¹⁶ Winrock International: *Best Practices in Preventing and Eliminating Child Labor through Education Drawn from Global Circle Project*. Empowerment and Civic Engagement Unit, Arlington, Virginia (2008).

¹⁷ Positive deviants are at-risk individuals who follow uncommon, beneficial practices and consequently experience better outcomes than their neighbours who share similar risks (Marsh et al (2004).

child labour. The community conversation meetings that were initiated by ANPPCAN provide great potential for social mobilization and attitude change. Community Theatre facilitated by RUDMEC and school child labour clubs was also reported to be an effective means for raising awareness and dialoguing on child labour.

Community Engagement and Participation in Programme Activities

The approach used by development agencies to engage with community members determines the outcomes of community development programmes. While the criteria used to select project beneficiaries was deemed to be participatory, interviews with caregivers indicated that they did not understand the criteria that was used to select project beneficiaries and as such there are expectations of more support from the IAs. For instance, some caregivers the research team talked to wondered why they had not received support for IGAs while others thought that the research team had come to register more children for support. This could be an indication that IAs had not explained to beneficiary households the aim of the project and the roles they were expected to play, or since the assertion was countered by the IA staff, it could be due to the fact that vulnerable communities have raised expectations about the support they ought to receive from the implementing agencies.

Additionally, in all communities, most caregivers were not aware of the time the project was supposed to end. Whereas the IA staff said that at the inception of the project, they had informed the caregivers the time the project was going to end, caregivers had either forgotten or not taken note highlighting the need to have constant hold discussions with caregivers on the role they were supposed to play to prevent children from labour. This can also be explained by the deep vulnerability that some of the caregivers find themselves in to the extent that without alternatives, they would be worse off than they were at the beginning of the project if there are no discussions on viable options parents can undertake to prevent child labour. It is therefore important to note that project exit strategy should not only about telling the beneficiaries that support will cease but more about creating structures and opportunities for the project to be self-sustaining.

On the other hand, children as primary beneficiaries of the project were not provided with enough information about why they were receiving some particular support especially the ones that were being protected from labour. When given an opportunity to share with the researchers how they experienced the support, they said they were happy that they were able to go to school. Because of the failure to receive adequate information, some children were however categorical that the project was exacerbating symbolic exclusion.

“We meet together when the project calls for meetings like today; we discover our friends are benefiting from lunch. For example, in our school nobody gets lunch. Others are benefiting from goats while we don’t have. Why are they discriminating against some of us and yet we are all vulnerable?”

(FGD with children)

The above statement highlights the need to inform children and their caregivers about the type of support they are entitled to and why they are being supported. It is also important to create a forum where children give feedback to IAs in order to ensure that the programme meets their needs. Failure to listen to children’s views is a violation of their rights and is against the principle of child participation of ‘do no harm’.

Grounding Project Activities in Existing Local Structures

One of the strongest aspects of the IABA projects in Rakai is the integration of child labour in the existing local structures. This ensures utilization of existing government systems and prevents creation of parallel structures. Child labour committees are responsible for mobilization of community members, child labour monitoring and referral. CCLCs supported by OCBO comprise of members from Local Council One (LC1), particularly vice chairpersons who are responsible for children's affairs on the Local Councils. ANPPCAN works with both LC1 members and community volunteers. On the other hand, RACA integrated CCLCs its community structures created during the HIV/AIDS project comprising Community Counselling Aides (CCAs) and LC 1 members for synergy. The integration of project activities in existing community structures is essential for ensuring community ownership and sustainability of interventions.

Linkages with Agricultural Extension Workers

At the sub-county level, implementing agencies collaborate with sub-county staff including the ACDOs, NAADS coordinators, agricultural extension workers, sub-county chiefs and LC3 chairpersons in project implementation. For example, RACA has been working very closely with the Sub-County Extension Workers to provide agricultural extension services such as improved farming methods, harvesting and improved storage practices, care for animals and farming advice to households supported by the project and other community members. Agricultural extension workers set-up demonstration gardens in one of the beneficiaries' home and pay regular visits to farmers to provide advice on better farming practices. An interview with Agricultural extension workers in Byakabanda sub-county revealed that linking households to agricultural extension services has greatly improved household agricultural productivity and household income.

However, focus group discussions with CCLC members and caregivers in Nabigasa sub-county supported by ANPPCAN showed that some households had not been linked to agricultural extension services. Discussions with OCBO staff indicated that they have not closely worked with agricultural extension workers. Implementing agencies thus need to link farmers to agricultural extension workers and available agricultural marketing opportunities.

Collaboration with Community Development Officers

At sub-county level, CDOs are mandated to ensure protection of children including children engaged in child labour. CDOs monitor and follow up child abuse cases including liaising with LCs to identify and withdraw working children. However, some CDOs expressed concern that some IAs were not sharing with them information and reports about project activities, thus hindering an integrated approach to child labour at sub-county level. Although CDOs play a central role in child protection at sub-county level, the research team noticed a tendency to emphasize a legalistic approach to child labour as compared to dialogue. For instance, members of one CCLC also cited a case where a man who was receiving project support but was still engaging his children in child labour was taken to the sub-county court and 'interrogated' for one day. The man reportedly reintegrated his children in school and vowed never to engage his children in child labour. We assert that it is important to emphasize dialogue with parents in order to engage with the norms and attitudes that make parents engage their children in child labour since it is difficult to legislate away attitudes and norms. Creation of child labour free zones is also predicated on creation of norms that eventually reject child labour.

Bylaws for Addressing Child Labour

One of the key outcomes of the SNAP project is the development of bylaws and norms that reject child labour. The research established that some bylaws to protect children from child labour had been developed by some sub counties and communities. For instance, Dwaniro sub-county has a draft school enrolment and retention bylaw while Kasasa is developing a child labour bylaw. In Kasasa sub-county, the sub-county chief noted that they needed the technical support of OCBO in order to finalize the bylaw. At the fishing site in Byakabanda sub-county, the Beach Management Unit developed a child labour bylaw banning children from fishing during school days. However, the bylaw has serious gaps since children are allowed to work during evening hours, weekends and holidays. While developing bylaws, it is imperative to ensure that they are practical and generate dialogue on child labour issues.

Education and Child Labour

Education plays a critical role in the efforts for the elimination of child labour. The project has worked with the district department of education to train some teachers in child labour issues and Supporting Child Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (SCREAM)¹⁸ methodology. The project facilitated the training of Department of Education staff including district inspectors of schools and district education officers in SCREAM methodology. Some IAs have worked with the education department to train teachers in SCREAM as a strategy of preventing child labour. Although some implementing agencies have collaborated with the District Education Department during the training of teachers in SCREAM, there is need for all IAs to work closely with centre coordinating tutors and school inspectors in child labour monitoring. The education department has a wealth of experience and knowledge that would immensely benefit the successful implementation of the IABA if leveraged by IAs. For instance, the department coordinates school inspections and undertakes awareness raising campaigns on school enrolment and retention targeting parents and community members that are critical for promoting access and retention of children in schools. These are very important aspects of child labour prevention and monitoring. Involving the education department provides great potential for sustainability of project interventions.

However, there was limited collaboration between the education department and IAs. For instance, some IAs started working with schools without consulting the education department, centre coordinating tutors and school inspectors. The education department also complained about limited sharing of information and reports by implementing agencies. On the other hand, some IAs mentioned limited cooperation from the department staff in project related activities. Thus, there is need to promote mutual collaboration and creation of synergies between the department of education and CSOs.

At the school level, SCREAM methodology is a key approach that is being used to raise awareness about child labour and HIV/AIDS in schools. SCREAM has been very successful in some schools. Teachers in collaborating schools underwent training in SCREAM methodology and each school has a focal point teacher in charge of SCREAM. Each school was facilitated to establish drama clubs and supported with drama equipment such as drums, balls, badges and T-shirts. Schools established drama groups and children have developed creative messages,

¹⁸ SCREAM is an educational and mobilization tool that is designed to achieve the meaningful participation of young people in the global campaign against child labour. It aims to empower young people to mobilise their peers to address the dangers and vulnerabilities posed by HIV and child labour.

skits, music, plays and drama with specific information on child labour. SCREAM was reported to have improved the learning environment at school since children are able to communicate to the school administration about their education needs. This has contributed to increased school enrolment in some schools as a result of child friendly school environment.

However, it was reported that most messages are suited to parents in the communities underlining the need to extend SCREAM to communities. Additionally, SCREAM has not taken off in some collaborating schools due to challenges related to lack of drama kits such as drums, T-shirts and costumes. IAs also noted that the support provided by IPEC for SCREAM is very minimal. Lack of initiative by teachers to mainstream SCREAM in school activities was cited as a key hindrance to SCREAM. SCREAM was seen as an add-on activity that required a specific time and programme instead of integrating it in different school activities including teaching. For instance, some teachers said that SCREAM is only performed in third term during music festivals and on speech day which is organized once a year. Conversely, some school teachers have been very innovative and integrated SCREAM within the weekly, monthly or terminal programmes. A case of Lwenkakala Primary School is illustrative.

"In Lwenkakala primary school, SCREAM has been scheduled for every Tuesday and Thursday between 3:30pm – 5:00pm every week. Drama focuses on issues that affect the community such as dropout rates, early pregnancy, domestic violence and child labour. We have several groups at school for example Scripture Union group and Child Labour Clubs. Child labour is addressed as a cross cutting issue. We have organized drama shows outside the school over the weekend and the community contributes money to the groups. We collect between Shs.20,000 to 30,000 per show. As a result, we have started a garden and the produce from the garden is sold to buy scholastic materials for very vulnerable children. For instance, we are supporting 15 children with scholastic materials such as books, pens and pencils. This enables children to stay in school."

(Teacher, Lwenkakala primary school)

During a focus group discussion with teachers from Byakabanda sub county, two teachers acknowledged that they were inspired by the initiative taken by teachers in Lwenkakala primary School and noted that they were going to replicate it in their schools since it does not require money but individual initiative and creativity.

"We are going to replicate what Lwenkakala primary school is doing next term. Luckily, RACA provided us with drums and T-shirts with messages on child labour; that is going to be a starting point."

(Teacher, Katelelo Primary school)

While organizing community drama shows, caution should be taken to ensure that drama does not become exploitative or interfere with children's schooling. Discussions with teachers further indicated that SCREAM in schools needs to be strengthened. Some teachers need to be mentored on how to mainstream SCREAM in schools. IAs also need to monitor the application of SCREAM in schools.

The research learnt that there were a number of child rights clubs in schools but most of them did not have themes on child labour. It is important for IAs to work with schools to integrate themes on labour in the various children's clubs. Additionally, there are various education activities at district level that present opportunities for mainstreaming SCREAM. For instance, the catholic diocese organizes an annual education week that includes school music and drama festivals from the parish, deanery to diocese level where child labour themes could be mainstreamed.

Schools and Child Labour Monitoring

Teachers play a big role in monitoring child attendance in school. Since teachers are usually among the most knowledgeable about children's whereabouts and the conditions of their families, they (teachers) play a crucial role of ensuring that children value education, schools are child friendly and children stay in school. Thus teachers play a valuable role of monitoring children and community monitors (IPEC 2001). For instance, IPEC (2008) shows that teachers are often among the first to know when a child is at risk or engaging in child labour but they do not always understand the role they can play to help children to stay in school. Teachers play a critical role in monitoring children's attendance through daily school attendance registers and tracking those who drop out of school. Also the teachers have daily interactions with the children and have a lot of information that can strengthen their role to detect child labour. However, the research established that some head teachers and teachers do not fill in the enrolment and daily attendance registers as required by the Ministry of Education and Sports.

Some teachers noted that school attendance is very low during the planting and harvesting seasons. For instance, one teacher noted:

"At the beginning of the term during the planting season, I always start with about 5 pupils for a class of 60 pupils since most children go to dig the whole day. The number of pupils increases to about 30 in the second week. One time I went to the community to track the children and most of them were involved in child labour. One of the parents said that he had stopped children from going to school so that they can assist him in digging before resuming school."

However, the research established that some teachers were not aware that some children who dropped out of school were likely to be engaged in child labour and did not know the role they were supposed to play to address the problem. This underscores the need by IAs to work closely with teachers as key stakeholders in the elimination of child labour. During a focus group discussion with teachers in Byakabanda sub-county, one of the teachers noted:

"The church gives us an opportunity every Sunday to talk to parents about education of their children once every month. We make reports on the education status of children, including child labour and present them to parents and other community members."

Beyond SCREAM: Child Labour Elimination in Schools as Instrumental

Beyond activities of SCREAM, the engagement with schools was reported to be instrumental. Although IAs reported to have good working relationships with schools, some teachers complained that IAs staff does not hold discussions with them when they come to meet the students at school in order to address factors that affect children's schooling. One deputy head teacher of a primary school said:

"They come and ask us to call 'their children' from class, they meet them from outside the class and do not give us any feedback, and I don't know what they discuss and how I can be useful to the project."

Failure by IAs to discuss issues concerning pupils with teachers therefore creates a distance between the IAs and teachers and leads to labelling of children as "children of implementing agencies", leading to further exclusion. The research established that in each of

the collaborating schools, there is a focal teacher who is responsible for monitoring the children who are supported by NGO projects. However, efforts have not been made to work beyond the supported children and these teachers were not even coordinating with focal teachers of other NGOs.

“Each school has a focal teacher and you could have different focal teachers working with different organizations, the mandate is to monitor some particular children working with a particular organization sometimes without sharing notes.”

(Teacher in Kasasa sub county)

“We try our best to monitor all children so that they don’t slip into child labour but the IA told us to focus more on the supported children since the donor is putting a lot of money in supporting them. I however think we should work with all children in the school.”

(Teachers in Kasasa sub-county)

The above quotes are a condemnation to the instrumental nature of the collaboration with schools which should be reviewed for sustainability purposes. The different focal teachers should work together to leverage support from different NGOs for protection of children. Head teachers as key decision-makers and as people who can sustain the momentum of project activities should be actively involved in monitoring the supported children in school and in elimination of child labour in a particular school catchment area.

Vocational Skills Training and the Potential for Elimination of Child Labour

Collaboration of implementing agencies with vocational skills training institutions and local artisans is a key approach for skills training aimed at equipping older children with practical skills for decent employment. Implementing agencies collaborate with vocational training institutions and local artisans to provide a range of vocational and skills training programmes to children 14-17 years. For instance, ANPPCAN collaborates with Kiteredde Vocational Institute while OCBO collaborates with Sanje polytechnic to provide vocational skills training to children outside the project arrangement. Implementing agencies negotiated with some local artisans to provide skills training to older children withdrawn from child labour at concessional rates. For instance, in Kyotera town council, ANPPCAN linked two children withdrawn from child labour to attend vocational skills training at Kiteredde vocational institute on a bursary scheme by the institute.

Additionally, an artisan in motor-cycle mechanics was providing skills training to 10 boys supported by ANPPCAN at a concessional fee of Shs.250,000 per year instead of Shs.400,000 charged on other trainees. Another artisan in hair dressing in Kyotera town council provides skills training in hairdressing to 6 girls at Shs. 200,000 per year instead of Shs. 450,000 charged on other trainees. Such collaboration between IAs and vocational skills providers in the private sector are essential components of the IABA.

There are a number of gaps that need to be addressed in order to improve delivery of vocational skills training. Most study participants complained about the lack of vocational skills training instructors within their localities and yet there are many children who need skills training. The research established that there were local artisans in communities who would be willing to provide skills training to children withdrawn from child labour. For example, a 16 year old boy undergoing motor-cycle mechanics training noted, *“I know a mason in my village who is*

training two boys who used to be involved in child labour.” Such local artisans need to be identified and approached to provide skills training to children withdrawn from child labour.

Some artisans complained of inadequate tools for training. Although vocational training at government vocational skills training institutes like Sanje is free, trainees are required to buy their training kits. This hinders access of many children to vocational skills training opportunities. During a focus group discussion with Mambo Bado Youth Group in Kasasa sub-county, the chairman said:

“We withdrew three children from child labour and referred them to Sanje Polytechnic but two of them dropped out due to lack of training kits.”

There are also other indirect costs of training like lunch and transport that affect children’s attendance. Some trainees complained about being exploited by artisans. For example, during an interview with hair dressing trainees, one of the girls noted:

“Another day she took us to dig in her farm, another day she brought a gunny bag full of clothes for us to wash, these are the only cases but somebody should tell her that we don’t like it that way.”

Another issue noted during the dissemination workshop was the fact that most of the training offered in the vocational training schools was not providing the learners with skills required in the labour market. For example it was noted they were the traditional skills like hair dressing, motor vehicle mechanics, tailoring and carpentry whose market is already saturated. Emerging marketable skills like laying tiles which are in high demand should be taught to the children.

3.6 Community Resources for the Elimination of Child Labour

The action research identified a wealth of resources within the community that can be utilized in the elimination of child labour. These range from individual philanthropists,¹⁹ youth groups and women’s groups. There are a number of community philanthropists who have withdrawn children from child labour and reintegrated them into school and continue to support them to meet their basic needs such as shelter, food and clothing. For example, in Kyotera Town Council Mr. and Ms. Samula Sauda withdrew Juma, 16 years old from grasshopper trapping, a hazardous form of child labour in the trading centre. Ms. Samula decided to support Juma by taking him into their household. Juma’s 9 year old brother, Lubega who was staying with his elderly grandmother in the village and at risk of child labour was also taken in by Samula’s family. Juma was referred to ANPPCAN and enrolled into motor cycle mechanics training while Lubega was enrolled into primary two in a primary school within the town council. ANPPCAN has linked Juma to Rakai Health Services to get treatment for his eyes. Another community philanthropist, an elderly man in Kyotera town council took in a homeless grandmother with her three grand children and provided them with a room and supports them with basic needs. The children were withdrawn from child labour and referred to ANPPCAN which reintegrated them in primary school.

¹⁹ Philanthropists in the study communities were people who donated or mobilised resources such as land, houses, food, goods, and time, even under adverse conditions, to improve the wellbeing of vulnerable households including children.

In Kasasa sub county, Mambo Bado youth group, an informal community based organization that was established in 2008 has been mobilizing resources to support the education of vulnerable children and referral of children involved in child labour and those at risk of child labour for vocational skills training to Sanje polytechnic. Currently the group has 75 members. In 2010, Mambo Bado Youth group started a savings and credit initiative where members save Shs. 2,000 per month. The group has so far mobilized Shs. 2.3 million in savings. The group charges 5% interest for four months on all loans given to members. Some proceeds from interest paid by members are used to buy scholastic materials for vulnerable children in the community. In 2010, the group supported 10 vulnerable children who were at risk of child labour with scholastic materials. This year, the group increased the number to 18 children. Group members also mobilize used shoes and clothes from the community and give them to vulnerable children attending school. The group has also withdrawn some children from child labour and referred them to Sanje Polytechnic Institute for vocational skills training.

In addition, the group also undertakes “Bulungi Bwansi” meaning the collective work for the good of the community that includes repair of community roads and paths leading to schools, cleaning and protecting water sources, construction of pit latrines for orphan households especially child headed households and also raises awareness about HIV/AIDS among youth. All this work directly contributes to the improved wellbeing of vulnerable children including school attendance. A critical aspect about Mambo Bado Youth Group is that the initiative to support the education of vulnerable children was initiated by a CCLC member, who is also a member of the youth group. This linkage underlines the important role community resources can play in eliminating child labour if integrated in ongoing project interventions.

In Dwaniro sub-county, most CCLC members that the research team met belong to community based groups that mobilize resources and provide care and support to vulnerable children within their community. For instance, Bigando Golokoka Yaka Women’s Group started a piggery project with the aim of supporting vulnerable children to attend school, however, most of the piglets died due to lack of access to veterinary services. Tusimukye Women’s Group grows food for vulnerable children, especially child headed households. The group supports vulnerable children with water containers, clothes and blankets, and builds toilets for vulnerable children staying with elderly caregivers. The women construct pit latrines without the support of men.

These informal social protection mechanisms provide great opportunities for strengthening community based initiatives for the elimination of child labour, mobilizing communities and eventually the creation of child labour free zones. Linking these collective efforts for supporting children will strengthen child labour monitoring and prevention and withdrawal of children from child labour. These community resources provide entry points for community mobilization and awareness-raising about child labour. Members of these formal groups expressed the need to be strengthened through sensitization about child labour, training in IGAs and VSLAs in order to enhance the ongoing initiatives. This will strengthen and rejuvenate the communal and collective spirit for supporting vulnerable children.

Leveraging employers and workers in the fight against child labour

Employers’ and workers’ organizations are critical in efforts for elimination of child labour. At Mutukula border post, immigration staff was influential in identifying and removing children involved in cross-border trade. Some teachers were also active in identifying and

following up children involved in child labour. Some employers in the private sector, especially businessmen were involved in reporting children working in markets and shops. However, there was lack of a coordinated approach by employers to combat child labour in a collaborative manner. The absence of a forum that brings employers together in the district undermines efforts to combat child labour in an organized and coordinated manner. For instance, Federation of Uganda Employers (FUE) does not have offices in Rakai district. Limited access to child labour information and inadequate knowledge about child labour laws were cited as the main reasons for limited action by employers and workers in efforts for elimination of child labour. Raising awareness among workers and employers and organizing them into workers and employers associations provides enormous potential for a coherent approach for a coordinated and integrated approach for eliminating child labour.

4. Child Labour Monitoring System

4.1 Child Labour Monitoring System in Rakai

A child labour monitoring system is an integral component of the IABA since it aims at identification, referral, and prevention of exploitive child labour through a coordinated multi-sectoral monitoring and referral process. Child labour monitoring is mainly undertaken at village and parish²⁰ level by the Community Child Labour Committees (CCLCs). Each committee comprises between 5-7 members selected from the community with each member covering between 2-3 villages. In total, there are 36 CCLCs with 212 members. Table 2 below shows the distribution of CCLCs in Rakai district.

Table 2: Distribution of Community Child Labour Committees in Rakai

	Implementing Agency	Number of Parishes	Number of CCLCs	Number of CCLC members
1	OCBO	15	15	105
2	RACA	15	15	75
3	ANPPCAN	06	06	32
	Total	36	36	212

Each CCLC comprises community leaders and community facilitators drawn from existing community structures in order to avoid creation of parallel structures in the community. These include Local Council One (LC-1) members, particularly the Vice Chairperson who is also the Secretary for Children's Affairs, and community volunteers. Committee members meet monthly or bi-monthly to share experiences. Similarly, CCLCs meet IAs on a quarterly basis to review their work. Committees work closely with IA staff, local council members, and teachers in identifying, and providing referrals to working children identified in the community. Committee members pledged to continue undertaking child labour monitoring after the closure of the project.

Whereas CCLCs play a central role in CLM, it is imperative to note that they do not have clear guidelines for CLM, their work is ad hoc, and largely undocumented. The research team therefore relied on focus group discussions and interviews to understand the scope of work undertaken by CCLCs. Although the activities undertaken by CCLC vary from committee to committee, the range of activities undertaken by the different committees includes the following:

- Sensitizing parents of working children and children at risk of child labour.
- Dialoguing with parents on working children to reintegrate them into formal schooling.
- Identifying working children and withdrawing them from child labour.
- Referral of children involved in child labour to available service providers.

²⁰ A parish is the second lowest Local Government administrative and planning unit in Uganda comprising of several villages.

- Following-up of children in schools and homes to ensure that they are receiving the support from IAs, establishing the challenges they face, and providing counselling children.

Community child labour committees play a pivotal role in mobilizing and sensitizing communities about child labour. For instance in Nabigasa sub county, community conversation meetings (*Enkiiko ze byaalo*) have been conducted by members of CCLCs to discuss child labour issues and take collective actions that enable parents to withdraw children from child labour and send children back to school.

“In cases where communities fail to address child labour issues, the CCLC members refer the cases to the implementing agency or ACDO for support. Most child labour cases are handled at community level. It is only cases that necessitate referral to other service providers that are referred to ANPPCAN since sometimes the community members require money to transport children or the caregivers to other service providers.”

(Coordinator, ANPPCAN, Rakai)

The research established that some CCLCs have been able to hold discussions with parents of children at risk of and those involved in child labour and some parents have been able to return the children to school without any external support. In Byakabanda sub-county one CCLC has withdrawn a number of children and reintegrated them in school.

“We had discussions with one single parent and reintegrated her three children back into school. We approached the headmaster of a school and accepted to take on one of the girls on a school scholarship as a school dependant. We also withdrew five children from child labour and helped them to be reintegrated in school. The children live in child headed household. We approached Kamengo polytechnic and got scholarships for two older children. For the three girls, we approached the director of Kibale community primary school, a white missionary and sought scholarships for the children. He agreed to pay 75% of the girls’ fees. We have also referred 16 children formerly engaged in and at risk of child labour to Kibale Community School. Nine were integrated into primary and seven into secondary.”

(Vice Chairperson, Kyalulungira CCLC)

In Kyalulungila sub-county, community child labour committee members also mentioned that they hold discussions with parents and encourage them to reintegrate their children into different public primary and secondary schools. The research further established that CCLCs also identify cases of early marriage and report them to police. Early marriage was mentioned as one of the key barriers to girl education in Rakai district. One CCLC member noted:

“We have been following up a case of early marriage where a 15 year old girl supported by RACA got married. We referred the case to police but when we met the girl with the police, she said that she wants to get married. The policeman said that there is nothing he could do if a girl decided to get married. We just stopped pursuing the case.”

It is important for IAs to sensitize police to enable them enforce the Children’s Act that outlaws early marriage and to work in collaboration with CCLCs, local councils and schools in addressing the problem of early marriage. Tackling norms that encourage early marriage is also important. Members of CCLCs visit schools to monitor children’s school attendance and discuss with teachers factors that affect children’s schooling and work with teachers to provide

appropriate care to children and track children who drop out of school. A member of CCLC in Kasasa sub-county noted:

“We visit schools during school parades and talk to children about health and sanitation issues and discuss with children the problems they face at home and school. We also sensitize parents and teachers about the need to enrol and retain them in school. This is done during the school annual general meetings. We send a committee member who represents us in the meetings.”

However, few CCLCs undertake child labour monitoring in schools due to limited cooperation from school ‘gatekeepers’. Implementing agencies have not enabled collaboration between CCLCs and schools outside the SNAP project thus limiting the work of CCLCs. Indeed, one of the CCLC members in Nabigasa sub-county noted:

“We are sometimes denied access to schools by school authorities to see how children supported by the project are performing. They ask us who we are and also ask us to show identity cards. ANPPCAN should inform those schools about us.”

The research established that CCLCs that had teachers as representatives were likely to find it easier to monitor children’s school attendance and follow up cases of child labour more than committees that did not have teachers. Since teachers are part of the school system, they can easily monitor children’s attendance and track those who drop out of school. This underlines the need for IAs to sensitize head teachers about child labour and enlist their support in child labour monitoring. A key informant interview with staff of KIN in Wakiso district showed that having a school representative on the Child Labour Free Zone Committee (CLFZC) is effective in tracking children who drop out of school in their homes, getting feedback from teachers about the progress of former child labourers in school.

4.2 Child Labour Monitoring Indicators

Although there are no documented child labour monitoring guidelines or indicators used by CCLCs, a number of considerations were used in child labour monitoring to identify children at risk or those involved in child labour. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) developed a list of hazardous work in 2010 to enable different stakeholders in identifying, preventing and withdrawing children hazardous work, these lists however have not been widely disseminated to the district and lower levels and thus IAs were not using them in child labour monitoring. From discussions with different CCLCs, the research team compiled a list of indicators that were used by CCLC members to undertake child labour monitoring. These are outlined in table 3.

Collection and documentation of child labour related data is essential for social planning in interventions for elimination of child labour. Implementing agencies use the Direct Beneficiary Monitoring and Reporting System (DBMR) developed by IPEC to monitor, track and report on project beneficiaries. Although the DBMR enables coherent monitoring, accountability, quality assurance and evaluation, this information is not shared with CCLCs and does not allow for social planning for child labour at community level.

Table 3: Child Labour Monitoring Indicators used by CCLCs

Indicators for identifying children at risk of child labour	
Indicators at home	Indicators at school
• Children from child headed households. • Children with sick parents. • Loss of parental care and inability to afford basic needs. • Children staying with step parents. • Lack of adequate food at home (having one meal a day). • Children with poor health and hygiene such as malaria, jiggers, etc. • Child neglect by parents. • Parents who mistreat or abuse children – physically, sexually and psychologically. • Girl children assigned a lot of responsibilities such as fetching water, firewood and cooking for a big family. • Children from homes where there is domestic violence. • Children whose parents have a bar. • Children with working peers.	• Children who don't pay for lunch at school or don't pack lunch from home. • Children who are not dressed smartly at school – dirty uniform or torn uniform. • Children with no uniform and scholastic materials. • Children subjected to corporal punishment. • Children who come report late to school at the beginning of the term and every morning. • Absenteeism from school. • Children who fail to pay exam fees. • Girls who get pregnant. • Children doing household chores for teachers and digging in teacher's gardens. • Children combining work and schooling. • Children who perform poorly in class. • Children exposed to abuse by teachers.
Indicators for identifying working children	
• Children who are assigned a lot of housework that generates income to the household. • Spending long hours digging for over 3 hours a day. • Children not attending school. • Children engaged in any work for pay. • Work that prevents a child from school such as selling mangoes during school days. • A child undertaking work that is too heavy for his or her ability for instance an 8 year old carrying a 20-litre jerry can of water, loading sacks of Irish potatoes onto a lorry, etc. • Children who are in early marriages.	

A key challenge of child labour monitoring is lack of documentation of the work undertaken by CCLCs which makes it difficult to evaluate the scope and impact of their work. Some CCLCs expressed the need to have guidelines from IAs for identifying working children and those at risk, and a list of stakeholders they can refer working children for support. This highlights the need to systematize child labour monitoring by CCLCs and link it with other stakeholders such as schools, ACDOs, youth and women groups that undertake child labour monitoring. It is hoped that the district referral mechanism will enable effective referral of children for services at community level. Various participants in the action research suggested the need to agree on clear guidelines for child labour monitoring, training of CCLC in CLM and regular mentoring by IAs on how to address child labour issues and referral of children in order to enhance their effectiveness.

Whereas CCLCs were very useful during the mapping exercise and mobilizing project beneficiaries for project administrative related activities such as monitoring meetings, some of the CCLCs mostly function as conduits for information from the IAs and thus work as administrative tools for IAs. Most of the work done by CCLCs seemed to be sometimes limited to children supported by the project and little emphasis was put on other children outside the project scope who might be working or at risk of child labour. Furthermore, although some CCLCs were very active, others were less active due to lack of personal initiative by committee members, limited motivation and lack of adequate knowledge and skills in child labour

monitoring. Indeed, some IAs acknowledged that CCLCs have not been strengthened to effectively address child labour issues. For instance, staff from one IA noted:

“CCLCs engage in basic sensitization, identification and withdrawal of children from child labour. They have not gone an extra mile to engage in networking at the local level. We need to train them on how they can network with other stakeholders to eliminate child labour.”

Limited capacity of CCLC members was attributed to inadequate training that was given to CCLCs by IAs at the inception of IABA projects. The research learnt however that the training provided to IAs at the inception of the project was inadequate compared to the roles they are expected to play.

“The training most CCLCs underwent was inadequate. You cannot even call it a training since it was for less than 4 hours. It was just awareness-raising. The work CCLCs do needed like three days of training since they are supposed to mentor other community members in mobilizing communities and raising awareness about child labour.”

(Key Informant Interview)

Therefore, we assert that strengthening the capacity of CCLCs will ultimately enable them to effectively perform their roles in a sustainable manner.

Additionally, CCLC members complained of being overburdened by project work since they cover a large area. For instance in communities where ANPPCAN is operating, there is a CCLCs at parish level where each village is represented by one committee member and sometimes one committee member covers two villages. In communities where OCBO is operating, there is a committee at parish level and each committee member covers one village while in communities where RACA is operating, committee members cover two or more villages. Most committee members said that it was difficult for them to cover more than one village without transport facilitation.

In order to mitigate challenges of wide area of coverage by community child labour committee members, committee members suggested recruitment of more committee members in order to ensure that each village is covered by one or more members. These could be local council members, community volunteers, community mobilizers or change agents or existing women or youth groups. Committee members argued that they would work comfortably in their own village since they understand their village members better as each village has its distinct norms and dynamics.

Although most committee members demonstrated a commitment to continue working as volunteers after the end of the project, there was a strong sense of expectation of rewards by some CCLC members from the IAs for the work they do on child labour. IAs ascribed this to the monetization of community participation by big international NGOs reflected in big allowances given to community volunteers as noted by an IA staff:

“We give Shs.10,000 as transport refund to community mobilizers while another international organization that works in the same community gives Shs.25,000 to community members every time they come for meetings. This has created a strong sense of expectations from community volunteers and has killed a sense of voluntarism and communal spirit. Community members think that we are holding back ‘their’ money.”

RACA has made efforts to harmonize rates of allowances given to community volunteers through the umbrella bodies such as Rakai National AIDS Association (RANASO) but no consensus had been reached. IAs noted the need to work with District Community Development Office in order to harmonize the rates. Examples from other child protection projects elsewhere indicate that where community volunteers are involved in income generating projects run by the project, they are more motivated and their work in the community gives them more motivation.²¹ The CCLCs should therefore be linked to the VSLA's.

While community members may not require allowances to undertake child labour monitoring within their communities, costs incurred such as transport, airtime and lunch while undertaking project related work need to be paid by implementing agencies. However, IAs need to motivate community volunteers in ways that do not monetize their work and jeopardize their voluntary spirit. It should also be noted that IAs are to some extent guilty for creation of a sense of expectation among community members. For instance, some CCLC members were not aware about the aim of the project and limited discussions were made to enable community members see the project as their own and thus the need to play an active role in its implementation and sustainability.

The research established that some CCLCs did not seem to be conversant with the criteria for selecting project beneficiaries. One CCLC member noted thus: *"When parents ask us why their children were not supported, we tell them to wait for their turn in future"*. Such false assurances create a sense of expectation and learned helplessness among the community members.

In some sub counties, there was limited collaboration between CDOs and CCLCs. For instance, in Kasasa sub-county, the CDO had not heard about CCLC's. The latter usually do not share the information on child labour but only give it to the IA's yet ACDOs are the government staff responsible for implementation and monitoring of community development and child protection programmes at sub-county and community level. This is a major hindrance to the integration of child labour in sub-county activities. Fostering collaboration between CCLCs and CDOs will ensure integration of child labour issues in sub-county activities and ensure sustainability of interventions.

4.3 Integrating Child Labour Monitoring System with the OVC-MIS

A well functioning child labour monitoring system is an integral component of efforts for elimination of child labour. Most organizations and communities did not have clear systems for identifying, referring and addressing child labour cases due to lack of a national child labour monitoring system to guide the district and IAs in child labour monitoring.

Currently, there are no clear linkages between CCLCs, and local government administrative structures at the district and sub-county level, including other government programmes such as OVC committees. This was attributed to lack of an institutional framework for coordinating the work of CCLCs at district and sub-county level and the fact that OVC committees are not operational in some Sub Counties. Figure 1 below, shows the linkages between the CCLCs, IAs and other local government administrative structures. The bold lines

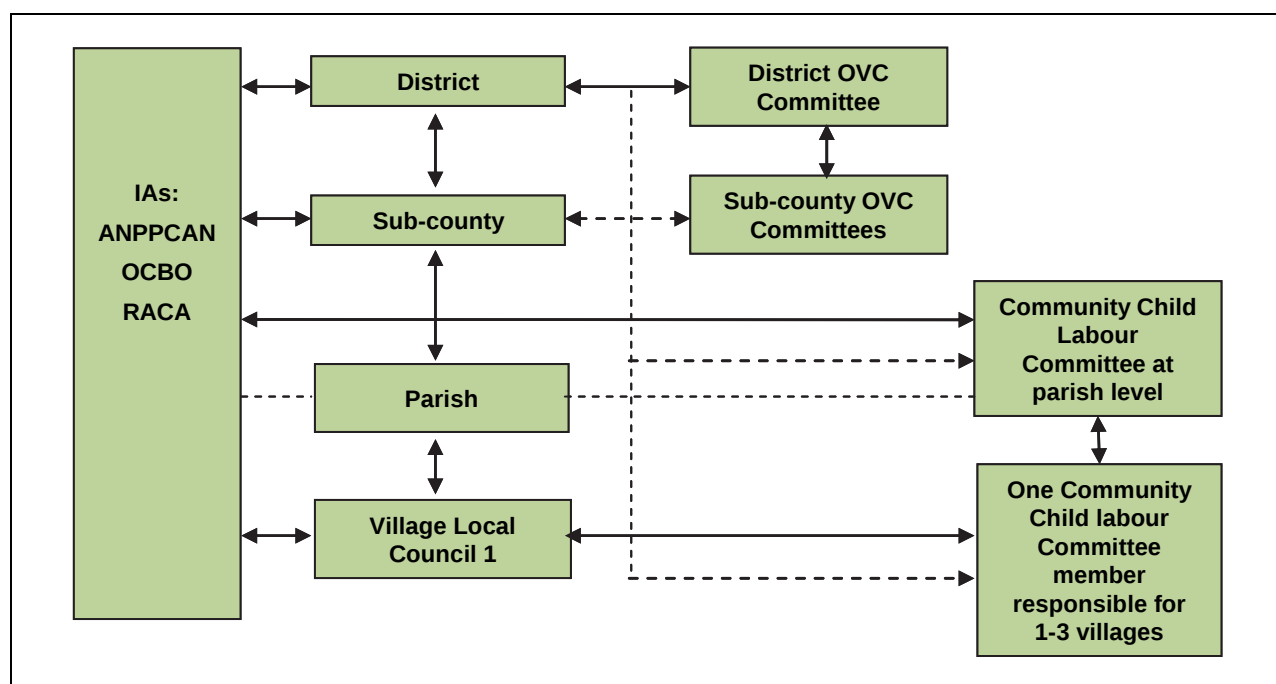
²¹For example, in Lower Ambira Community Child Development project in Kenya, the community paralegal s and other community leaders are members of village saving schemes and SACCOs and as such they benefit from income support.

indicate existing linkages while dotted lines indicate absence of linkages between CCLCs and local government administrative structures where they ought to exist.

In Rakai district, community child labour committees have informal systems for identifying, referring and addressing child labour however these need to be documented, systematized and strengthened.

At the national level, efforts have been undertaken by MGLSD to integrate child labour issues into the National Strategic Programme Plan of Intervention (NSPPI-2) (2011/12-2015-16) for OVCs. Accordingly, four out of the ten core programme areas of the NSPPI-2 directly address child labour. Since the OVC-MIS²² will establish structures for identification and reporting of vulnerable children, including child labour, from village to district level, the integration of child labour into OVC-MIS provides a great opportunity for sustainability of child labour monitoring. Importantly, M&E framework for the NSPPI-2 has indicators on child labour thus providing opportunities for creating linkages between child labour monitoring and OVC-MIS.

Figure 1: Linkages between CCLCs and district administrative structures in Rakai



Therefore, CCLC members are envisaged to play an important role in linking child labour activities with the OVC-MIS since they are embedded within community structures. However, the OVC-MIS as currently implemented mainly focuses on collection of data on OVCs by different service providers and the range of services provided to OVCs has a limited focus on provision of referral services. The integration of CLMS with the OVC-MIS should involve creation of linkages between CCLCs and the sub-county and district administration structures one hand and the sub-county and District OVC Committees on the other. Integration of CLMS into the OVC-MIS should also ensure utilization of OVC-MIS to facilitate identification of children at risk or those child labour and linking them to referral services at community, sub-county and district level in. In this regard, MGLSD should collaborate with the Orphans and Vulnerable Children National Implementation Unit (OVC-NIU), the District Labour Officer and the District OVC

²² Currently, the OVC-MIS has structures at district and sub county level.

Committee to ensure that OVC-MIS is used for strengthening child labour monitoring at sub-county and community level. It is thus imperative to ensure an iterative feedback mechanism for sharing child labour information from the OVC-MIS with stakeholders at district, sub-county and community level for social planning and action. Caution should however be taken to avoid burdening CCLCs with collecting OVC-MIS data since the primary role played by CCLCs in CLMS should be monitoring child labour and facilitating coordinated referral linkages to children at risk and those engaged in child labour. Indeed, stakeholders cautioned against burdensome data collection processes that mainly serve donor reporting purposes.

Therefore, in a bid to strengthen child labour monitoring, CCLCs should be provided with child labour monitoring guidelines, and supported to document and share their work and any emerging good practice with other stakeholders in relevant and contextually appropriate ways.

4.4 Child Labour Monitoring, Norms against Child Labour and Potential Child Labour Free Zones

Norms against child labour play an important role in elimination of child labour. Calva argues that norms like social stigma impose a set of social equilibrium against those who send their children to work. The internalization of such norms becomes a self enforcement mechanism without a need for outside interference. Norms prevail through feelings of embarrassment, guilt, and anxiety when one involves children in labour (Calva, 2002:3).²³ Eventually child labour becomes “something that should not be done.” The research was interested in finding out if there is evidence of existence of social norms that make child labour unacceptable and the norms that children should be in school. The experience of MV Foundation reveals that norms that children should be in school play a larger role in creation of child labour free zones. Norms against child labour and importance of schooling are brought about mainly through dialogue with community members. Creation of child labour free zones is predicated on creation of norms that eventually reject child labour and these norms have to be created through community dialogue.

While legislation and enforcement could play an important role on eliminating child labour, this is at best incomplete and we assert that it is important to emphasize dialogue with parents in order to engage with the norms and attitudes that make some parents condone child labour. In the case of MVF, negotiation and dialogue were the preferred and the most effective tactics and recourse to the law was the last resort. Since working children, parents and the employers belonged to the same community, a policy of negotiation rather than confrontation was deemed desirable (Mahajan 2008).²⁴

The feeling that fear and prosecution without dialogue would deter people from engaging in child labour was stereotyped in the staff of IAs, ACDOs and the community and this stereotype need to be unlearned in attaining child labour free zones. This mentality is partly fuelled by attitudes that equate poor parents with poor parenting practices and ‘ignorance’. Indeed one ACDO noted that the CCLC’s supported by the IA’s are not as successful as other child protection committees supported by other NGOs because the latter lack capacity to ‘act’,

²³ Basu, et al.: *International Labour Standards, Issues, Theories, and Policy Options*. Oxford University press (2002).

²⁴ Mahajan, S.: *Education for Social Change: MVF and Child Labour*. Delhi, Pushpak Press (2008).

implying failure to refer perpetrators of child labour to relevant authorities for prosecution. Other IA's shared with the researchers how communities were afraid of engaging their children in labour or abusing them for fear of the repercussions by the IAs. One ACDO noted:

"They know we can report them to the police, if you are seen coming to our office, somebody asks you, are you going to report your husband."

A staff of an implementing agency also said:

"The communities know us and how we protect children, whenever they see our car {colour mentioned}, they know things are bad and cannot continue abusing children."

As a result of this confrontational attitude, some teachers reported cases where caregivers were not willing to listen to them about withdrawing their children from labour.

One day I followed up one child who had been absent from my class for over one week to his home to find out what had happened to him. When I asked his father why the boy had not attended school for a week, he said that his son has to work for his fees and book and then warned me not to interfere in his child's life. He then chased me from his home."

(Teacher from Byakabanda sub-county)

Taking the experience of MV Foundation as an example, it is important to note that those poor parents still want the best out of their children and require respect more than being condemned. They want their children to have a better life than theirs. They accept their own destiny but know instinctively that access to education can improve the quality of their children's future (MVF: 3).²⁵ MV Foundation works with creating a norm of sending children to school which can withstand any pressures, internal or external. It works on convincing those parties concerned on the importance of education since doing otherwise is "like building a house of cards which will eventually crumble."

A study done by Raising Voices in 2006 on violence against children in Uganda revealed that children did not want their abusive parents or teachers to be prosecuted but to be led into a discussion on how they can best care for them.

"Children cautioned against depicting their parents or teachers as one dimensional perpetrators of violence. The same adults were also providers and educators and a source of love and protection That's why they {the children} were not looking for punitive interventions ... and simply asked for a credible agency to broker dialogue."

(Naker 2011:60)²⁶

In this action research, dialogue with the employers was also emphasized as one of the best strategies for dealing with child labour. For instance, during an IPEC funded project on Child Domestic Workers implemented by ANPPCAN in Rakai in 2004/06 the use of enforcement of labour laws to address child domestic work was not effective since most people who were

²⁵ M. Venkatarangaiya Foundation (MVF): "Child Labor Eradication Programs in Andhra Pradesh" in Institute of Developing Economies (IDE-JETRO): *Agricultural Production, Household Behavior, and Child Labor in Andhra Pradesh*, Joint Research Program Series No. 135. Tokyo, 2005.

²⁶ Naker, D.: *Creating violence free childhoods, what will it take?* Early Child Matters, June 2011, The Hague, Bernard van Leer Foundation (2011).

employing children as domestic workers were the middle class and sometimes the most influential individuals in the area such as teachers, bank managers, and public servants whom law enforcement officers were reluctant to approach. Dialogue with employers of children as domestic workers proved more effective than law enforcement.

“When we held discussions with individuals employing children, they told us that their children needed child care services and yet there were no available day care centres. With our assistance, we approached some private providers who established day care centres and eventually young girls who were used as domestic workers were released to go to school. Since then, the practice of using child domestic workers has reduced.”

(Coordinator, ANPPCAN Rakai Branch)

It is imperative to understand that creation of norms takes time, since people need time to comprehend the desired norms before they can incorporate what they understand into their daily lives to make it part of them. Discussions with key IA staff indicated that the pilot phase of the current IABA projects in Rakai was too short to lay a solid ground for the eventual creation of child labour free zones. Most IA staff noted that there is need for more time to create adequate awareness among community members and key government staff at district, sub-county and LC1 level in order to nurture attitudes and norms that will lead to the total rejection of child labour. IA staff said that attitude change takes a long time and thus the projects needed about 4 to 5 years to be able to change attitudes that lead to the total rejection of child labour.

“We need more time to be able to lay a firm foundation for the creation of a child labour free zone. We have not created adequate awareness about child labour. Many people in the community do not even know what child labour is and there are strong attitudes and norms that condone child labour in the community.”

(OCBO staff)

“The project pilot phase is too short to lead to the creation of child labour free zones. We needed more time about four or five years to be able to create good practice that can be scaled and create a child labour free zone.”

(RACA staff)

Although there was generally limited evidence of community bylaws on child labour, one CCLC had developed a bylaw banning children from selling mangoes and working in markets during school days. The chairperson of the CCLC Kasasa sub-county noted:

“Last year, we developed a bylaw that there is no child that should be allowed sell mangoes or work in markets during school days. This has reduced the number of children selling mangoes along the high way during school days. We also monitor markets and work with market authorities to ensure that children do not work during school days.”

This is a good initiative that has potential for developing norms and attitudes that reject child labour and ensure full time schooling of children. OCBO should work with the CCLCs to make sure that the bylaw ensures total abolition of child labour all the time including holidays.

5. Emerging Good Practices

According to IPEC, “A good practice is defined as anything that works in some way in combating child labour, whether fully or in part, and that may have implications for practice at any level elsewhere (IPEC p.1).²⁷ IPEC sees a good practice as any practice small or large that fulfils part or all of the following criteria: sustainability, ethical application, relevance, efficiency and implementation, potential usefulness, has been tried and seen to work and is overall *useful in* stimulating new ideas or providing guidance on how one can be more effective in some aspect related to child labour. According to the context of CIRCLE project, good practice is an aspect of project that has been effective in preventing or reducing child labour and is an inspiration to others (Winrock International, 2008).²⁸

The research was therefore concerned with unearthing any practices that had the potential for inspiring others or bringing about change in the situation of child labour. The practices we profile below range from awareness creation, networking, policy, livelihood support, and support to the children at risk or those withdrawn from child labour among other themes.

5.1 Community Conversation Meetings for Addressing Child Labour

Background

Community Conversation Meetings (CCMs) is an innovative strategy of enhancing dialogue around the issue of child labour and child protection in general. Community conversation meetings were initiated by ANPPCAN in Nabigasa sub-county and so far, over 20 CCMs have been conducted. They are a strategy for raising awareness about child labour among community members. These draw from the indigenous knowledge practice of village meetings “*enkiiko ze byaalo*”, to discuss different issues affecting the community including child labour. Community conversation meetings are facilitated by Community Conversation Facilitators (CCFs). Each parish in communities where ANPPCAN is working has a community conversation facilitator who is a member of a Community Child Labour Committee.

A community conversation facilitator works with existing structures including religious leaders, police and CBOs in mobilizing community members for meetings. Community conversation facilitators including CCLC members were trained in child labour issues, child rights, counselling, life management skills, community mobilization, child protection, SCREAM methodology, VSLA, case management, reporting and follow up.

The Action

During community conversation meetings, the community discusses a number of issues affecting the community including child labour. Community members choose a topic for discussion depending on the key issues affecting the community. The topic for discussion in the

²⁷ IPEC: *Guidelines on Good Practices; Identification, Review, Structuring, Dissemination and Application* (TBP MAP Paper IV-14). (Geneva, ILO, 2003). Available at: www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=3042.

²⁸ Winrock International: *Best Practices in Preventing and Eliminating Child Labor through Education Drawn from Global Circle Project*. Empowerment and Civic Engagement Unit, Arlington, Virginia (2008).

subsequent meeting is decided collectively during the meeting, community members choose the days for the CCMs. Normally, meetings are conducted once a month on Sundays between 3.00pm-5.00pm. On average, about 45 community members attend a community conversation meeting. CCMs are organized in a rotational manner per village. So far about 20 community conversation meetings have been conducted.

During CCMs, people share ideas on issues affecting the community and collective resolutions are made on certain issues that need to be addressed. Some of the methods used to enforce community resolutions are the use of community pressure such as withdrawing community reciprocity from members of the community who may refuse to respect community resolutions like boycotting to provide support during times of distress such as burials etc. community holds dialogue on key issues affecting them and make community resolutions. In the initial meetings, emphasis was put on child labour. Eventually, community members suggested discussing issues that lead to child labour. Some of the issues that have been discussed include children's rights, food security, child abuse and neglect, poverty.

Achievements

Community conversation meetings have registered some achievements in changing norms of community members about community engagement and child labour. For instance, community members resolved to reject handouts for refreshments from the implementing agency (ANPPCAN) that were given during community meetings. These were seen to create division and a sense of undue expectation among community members. Community members instead suggested that money meant for refreshments during community conversation meetings should be pooled and channelled toward the construction of community borehole. This underlines the power of civic power in changing practice to benefit community members.

Additionally, community conversation meetings are critical entry points for community mobilization for child labour. Community conversation meetings have been effective raising awareness among community members on child labour issues and galvanize community support for child labour issues since awareness raising is community led as opposed to 'expert' led awareness raising meetings that are sometimes out of touch with local realities. Importantly, these dialogue meetings are also less threatening and are bound to be embraced by the community more. Community members that participate in community conversation meetings have started embracing issues of child labour and started having discussion on how community members can actively address child labour in a collective manner.

Concrete achievements of community conversation meetings can be observed in reducing incidences of child labour in the community. Indeed, a community conversation facilitator of Nabigasa sub-county noted:

"We have started seeing a reduction in the cases of child labour as a result of community conversation meetings. Community members are now more aware about child labour and they often have discussions with parents to send working children to school."

Community conversation meetings have revived the communal spirit since community members are able to discuss a number of issues and share ideas on how problems affecting the community can be addressed. A community conversation facilitator noted that:

“People within the community, including the ‘rich’ people have started coming out to give testimonies on how they have managed to address certain problems and give advice on how issues affecting the community can be addressed. There is a sense of community that is emerging. People now understand each other better, share problems, and seek advice. Most people know where to report cases of child labour and child abuse.”

Sustainability

A fundamental aspect of community conversation meetings is that they are facilitated by community members. Although community conversation facilitators are members of child labour committees, most of the CCFs are also members of Local Council 1 committees, local administrative structures. Additionally, community conversation facilitators work in collaboration with existing structures including religious leaders, police and CBOs in mobilizing community members for meetings.

The diversity of issues discussed by the community such as poverty, child protection, education, food security and health directly address the multi-dimensional causes of child labour and have a direct bearing on interventions for its elimination.

Since community conversation meetings have started gaining momentum and community support, it is envisaged that these discussions will continue even after the end of the project. Importantly, community conversation meetings are integrated in village meetings that are often organized by local council leaders as a when need arises.

Necessary conditions

Existence of community volunteers who are dedicated to the cause for elimination of child labour is essential in mobilizing communities to discuss and build consensus of community action for child labour. Indeed, CCFs are selected from members of community child labour committees.

Participation of different stakeholders in the community including local council leaders, teachers, religious leaders, employers, CBOs and parents is important in creating community cohesion and creates opportunities for generating a wide range of strategies for addressing child labour.

Training of CCFs in child labour issues, social protection and community mobilization skills is important in strengthening their capacity to raise awareness about child labour.

5.2 SCREAM: Mobilizing Children against Child Labour

Background

Supporting Children’s Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media is one of the strategies by the three projects to raise awareness about child labour in schools and communities. SCREAM methodology focuses on themes on child labour, HIV/AIDS and life skills for children as a preventive strategy.

The Action

The introduction of SCREAM methodology began with the training of staff of the District Education Department including school inspectors and centre coordinating tutors, the District Community Development Officer and IAs staff in SCREAM methodology by IPEC. Training workshops for teachers from collaborating schools were organized by implementing agencies where teachers were oriented in SCREAM modules to enable them apply them in their respective schools with children. Each school identified a focal point teacher that is responsible for training children in SCREAM modules and establishing drama clubs that apply the modules. Each school was supported with drama kits including drums, balls, badges, and T-shirts.

Teachers work with students to raise awareness about child labour and HIV/AIDS through drama, debates, music, and talking compounds. Students have conducted drama shows in schools and surrounding communities to raise awareness about child labour. SCREAM was reported to be enjoyable method of creating awareness about child labour among children, teachers and community members.

Achievements

SCREAM has enabled children to actively engage in campaigns to create awareness for the elimination of child labour. By enhancing their awareness about child labour, children have been empowered to relay messages on child labour to their own peers, families and communities. This has strengthened child participation in the efforts to eliminate child labour.

SCREAM was reported to have improved the learning environment at school and consequently contributed to increased school enrolment in some schools as a result of child friendly school environment. A Teacher, of Lwenkakala Primary School noted:

“Drama has motivated many children to come to school. For instance, when we organized drama outreaches last year in the fishing community in (2010) in term one and term three, the enrolment rates increased from about 400 to over 524 pupils. I am now seeking support to conduct SCREAM drama outside Kyalulangira sub-county to sensitize the communities about child labour.”

Sustainability

Since the methodology has been integrated into schools and involves teachers, it creates prospects for sustaining SCREAM in school activities. Furthermore, since staff of the district education department including school inspectors, centre coordinating tutors and teachers was involved in the training of SCREAM, there are high chances that the methodology will remain high on the education agenda in the district.

Lessons learned

Involving the department of education staff including education officers, school inspectors and centre coordinating tutors in training, and implementation of SCREAM methodology in schools is a sustainability factor. Additionally, children can effectively use SCREAM to raise awareness about child labour in communities since some information is targeted at parents.

Necessary conditions

SCREAM should be linked to the activities of the district department of education in order to integrate it in its activities. Regular monitoring of schools by implementing agencies to ensure that the methodology is integrated into school activities on a regular basis is very key. Some teachers noted that they experienced challenges integrating the methodology within the school calendar.

5.3 Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs)

Background

Accessing income in times of vulnerability is positively correlated with retention in school and elimination of child labour. Research by Ersado (2005) in Hunt (2008)²⁹ on patterns of child labour and schooling decisions, showed that in rural Nepal and Zimbabwe access to a commercial bank had a positive effect on child schooling and a negative impact on child labour. VSLAs are a strategy for enhancing the financial assets of vulnerable households and are key in reducing child labour. It was introduced by ANPPCAN in April 2011 after undertaking an exchange visit to IAs in Mbale that have been implementing VSLAs. The aim of the VSLAs is to strengthen the economic capacity of households in order to adequately care and protect their children from child labour. Two VSLAs are being piloted in Kyotera town council and Nabigasa parish. Experience from the two VSLAs after one year will provide lessons for scaling up VSLAs in other parishes where ANPPCAN is operating.

The Action

ANPPCAN mobilized household members benefiting from the SNAP project and sensitized them about VSLAs as a viable approach to improving household income and prevention of child labour. Household members were organized into two groups based on trust in urban and rural areas. Both VSLAs comprise of female members. ANPPCAN trained the groups in VSLA methodology, basic book keeping and business skills. Since ANPPCAN was not going to give groups start-up capital, members mobilized their own savings from which they started lending to members. So far, ten VSLAs have been established since June 2011. There are two in Kyotera town council, and eight in Nabigasa sub-county. Members range between 15 and 30.

In Kyotera town council, each member saves between Shs. 1,000 to 5,000 per week while in Nabigasa sub-county, each group member saves Shs. 2,500 per week. On average, each VSLA has mobilized about Shs. 1,000,000 within a period of three months. Members borrow small loans ranging from Shs. 20,000 to 100,000 with a loan payment period of 3 weeks since their savings portfolio was still small. Members plan to increase the repayment rate to one month once their savings portfolio has grown. Groups charge 10% interest on all loans. However, most members have not started borrowing due to the limited capital base.

Since groups are composed of members from the same community, there is a high level of group cohesion and trust. Thus, groups use solidarity as security for loans taken by members. In a focus group discussion with a Women's group in Kyotera town council, the

²⁹ Hunt, F.: *Create Pathways to Access*. Research Monograph No 16, University of Sussex. Centre for International Education, Sussex School of Education (2008).

chairperson noted; *“we are a small group and we know each other well. You cannot default on the loan since members know where everybody stays.”* This highlights the high level of trust among members.

Achievements

Although the VSLAs are still new, some achievements have been registered. VSLAs provide a platform where members meet and discuss various issues including child labour and factors that affect their children’s schooling. They are not intimidating to members without financial literacy and women and members feel a sense of ownership.

In addition, VSLAs have enabled household members to mobilize savings on a weekly basis thus cultivating a savings culture. Additionally, group members have been trained in business management skills and book keeping. In Kyotera town council, some have borrowed from the VSLAs to strengthen their micro enterprises while in rural areas some group members have used loans to engage in income generating activities. One group member in Kyotera town council noted; *“I always borrow from the group to restock my vegetable business in the central market.”*

Some group members have borrowed money to pay school fees of their children, buy uniform and scholastic materials, thus underlining the potential of VSLAs in preventing child labour.

Sustainability

The fundamental aspect of VSLAs is the ability to mobilize savings from members from which they can borrow. As long as members keep saving and paying interest on loans, groups will have adequate equity for lending to members thus making them sustainable without any external support.

VSLA members were trained in savings mobilization, loan management, and business skills. This will enable members to mobilize savings on a regular basis, manage the loans properly and invest in micro enterprises. Importantly, the VSLA methodology is simple and participatory.

Lessons learned

- It is important to sensitize VSLA members about the linkage between VSLAs and efforts to eliminate child labour. This will enable households to use their savings or proceeds from their micro enterprises to invest in their children’s education thus preventing them from child labour. This will help community members to monitor how the strategy helps in reducing or eliminating child labour.
- VSLAs need constant mentoring and monitoring in order to strengthen their capacity to manage member’s savings safely.

Necessary conditions

- Since VSLAs are built on mutual trust, members from the same community should be mobilized to form a VSLA. Membership to VSLAs should thus be a voluntary undertaking.

- Supporting organizations should mentor VSLAs in savings mobilization, book keeping, enterprise selection and management and risk management in order to reduce incidences of misappropriating members' savings.
- The community should be supported to develop their structures for managing the funds without interference of the implementing agency to enhance sustainability.

5.4 Linking Children to Services: Child Labour Monitoring by CCLCs

Background

Child labour monitoring within the interventions is mainly undertaken by community child labour committees (CCLCs). Each committee comprises between 5-7 members selected from the community and each member covers between 2-3 villages. All implementing agencies embedded CCLCs within existing local council structures in order to avoid duplication of roles and for sustainability. Committees work closely with IA staff, local council members in identifying working children or children at risk of child labour and withdrawal of children from work.

The Action

Community child labour committees were very instrumental in the mapping exercise that identified working children and children at risk of child labour for support by the project. However, CCLCs continue to play an important role in child labour monitoring within their communities. Activities undertaken by CCLCs include sensitizing parents of working children and children at risk of child labour, dialoguing with parents of working children to reintegrate them into formal schooling, identifying working children and withdrawing them from child labour, referral of vulnerable children to service providers, following-up of children in schools and homes to ensure that they are receiving the support from IAs, and counselling children.

Achievements

A number of achievements have been registered by CCLCs. For instance, some CCLCs have been able to hold discussions with parents of children at risk and those involved in child labour and some parents have been able to return the kids to school without any external support. In Byakabanda sub-county one CCLC has withdrawn a number of children and reintegrated them in school.

Members of CCLCs visit schools to monitor children's school attendance and discuss with teachers factors that affect children's schooling and work with teachers to provide appropriate care to children and track children who drop out of school.

Sustainability

Since CCLCs have been embedded within existing local council structures, it makes child labour monitoring at community level possible. Additionally, the good relationship that has been developed between some CCLCs and schools in providing education support to children prevented and withdrawn from child labour forms a basis for continued support.

Lessons Learned

Integration of teachers in community child labour committees enhances child labour monitoring since teachers are usually among the first people to know when children drop out of school. Additionally, CCLCs play a fundamental role in linking children at risk or involved in child labour to available services within the community.

Necessary conditions

Strengthening the capacity of CCLC members through enhancing their knowledge base in child labour, community dialogue and networking is essential for effective child labour monitoring. Involving teachers in child labour monitoring both at community and school level ensures synergy and sustainability of child labour monitoring. It is also paramount to document the work undertaken by CCLCs including good practices in order to share experiences.

5.5 Creating Linkages between Households and Agricultural Extension Workers

Background

Linking vulnerable household members to agricultural extension services at sub-county level plays a crucial role in improving household agricultural productivity and enhances household livelihood security. RACA collaborates with sub-county Extension Workers to provide agricultural extension services such as improved farming methods, harvesting and improved storage practices, care for animals and farming advice to households supported by the project and other community members. Agricultural extension workers set-up demonstration gardens in one of the beneficiaries' home and pay regular visits to farmers to provide advice on better farming practices.

Achievements and lesson learned

Provision of routine agricultural extension services has contributed to improved household livelihood security as a result of improved farming methods. As a result of technical advice from agricultural extension workers, household members have acquired better farming skills thus enabling them to improve their agricultural yields.

Sustainability

Since agricultural extension workers are government staff based at the sub county, provision of agricultural extension services to households is guaranteed.

Necessary Conditions

In order to sustain the work undertaken by agricultural extension workers, government needs to provide extension workers with adequate fuel for motorcycles. Lack of fuel was mentioned as a key hindrance to provision of agricultural advisory services. It is also important that the proceeds from increased agricultural production be used to eliminate child labour at household level by meeting the education needs of children.

5.6 Development of Community Bylaws on Child Labour

Background

Community bylaws were developed by Dwaniro sub-county, The Beach management Unit in Byakabanda sub-county and the CCLC in Kasasa sub-county. Kasasa sub-county had initiated the enactment of a child labour bylaw. These by laws are aimed at ensuring enrolment of children in full time schooling and prevention from child labour and hazardous work. Enactment of bylaws was initiated by different stakeholders. For instance in Dwaniro Sub county, the school enrolment bylaw was initiated by the ACDO; in Kasasa sub county, the bylaw was initiated by the sub-county chief while at landing site in Byakabanda, it was initiated by the Beach Management Unit. A CCLC in Kasasa sub-county developed a community bylaw in order to curb the increasing incidences of child labour during the mango season.

Achievements

Bylaws that have been developed by the Beach Management Unit and a CCLC in Kasasa sub-county have been instrumental in reducing the number of children engaged in fishing and mango trade during school days. Although the school enrolment bylaw in Dwaniro had just been enacted, it is hoped to contribute to significant reductions in the number of child labour incidences in the sub-county once enforced. Importantly, the community bylaws have stimulated dialogue among communities on the need to eliminate child labour.

Sustainability

Bylaws have been developed by local community structures (CCLCs and Beach Management Unit) and sub counties which provide a firm base for their sustainable implementation.

Necessary Conditions

- The enactment of bylaws should be undertaken in consultation with the key stakeholders within the community including parents/caregivers to enable them understand the purpose of the bylaws.
- The enforcement of community bylaws should be accompanied by dialogue with community members to engage with norms and attitudes that condone child labour since it is difficult to legislate away attitudes and norms.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

The research established that conceptualizing and operationalizing the IABA by the different stakeholders was a gradual process. A number of interventions such as the integration of child labour issues in the district development plans, the use of SCREAM methodology in school, the use of community conversation meetings in community mobilization and awareness raising, linking agricultural extension services to vulnerable households for improving livelihood security and the enactment of bylaws aimed at eliminating child labour provide potential for strengthening the IABA. However, these need to be integrated across the different actors and sectors. Under the IABA, all stakeholders are supposed to work in concert to collectively contribute toward eradication of child labour and promotion of child rights.

In order to ensure successful implementation of IABA, there is need to strengthen community mobilization that creates norms that ensure total abolition of child labour. Establishment of a public-private dialogue forum that leverages the support of different stakeholders to ensure integration of child labour activities across different sectors is essential for the success of the IABA. Additionally, child labour monitoring undertaken by CCLCs needs to be systematized, documented and its scope widened to ensure participation of all stakeholders at community level.

6.2 Recommendations

This section presents key actions that are deemed important for strengthening the implementation of the IABA and CLMS in Rakai district.

Integrating child labour issues in district and sub-county plans

To ensure sustained momentum for the IABA and CLMS, current SNAP activities need to be integrated in district activities. This includes the integration of child labour issues within the district development plan, the OVC strategic plan, education activities and the district OVC-MIS. There is also need to support the completion and rollout of the district OVC referral mechanism in order to bring on board other actors providing care and support services to vulnerable children within the civil society, public and private sector. IAs should collaborate with sub-county staff to ensure integration of child labour issues in district activities.

Establishing a public-private dialogue forum for child labour

A public-private dialogue forum for child labour is essential for successful implementation of IABA at district level. Establishment of a public-private dialogue forum among the civil society, government agencies and the private sector to coordinate child labour related activities will ensure momentum of child labour issues and sustained integration of child labour in activities of various stakeholders at the district level through information and experience sharing and joint learning. Revival of the joint dialogue forum among the three IAs provides potential for establishment of the public-private dialogue forum for child labour.

Strengthening community mobilization and creation of norms that reject child labour

Community mobilization and creating norms that completely reject child labour form the thrust of the integrated area based approach and the creation of child labour free zones. Therefore, IPEC should support IAs to undertake community mobilization activities and awareness raising that engages with the norms and attitudes that condone child labour among key duty bearers including councillors, teachers and parents. IAs should also discuss with the key stakeholders the roles they should play in the elimination of child labour. IAs should also identify and sensitize community change agents to raise community awareness about child labour and facilitate civic action against child labour. These could be for example parent/caregiver support groups which could reach out to other caregivers within the community.

Additionally, IAs should collaborate with the sub-county staff and CCLCs to develop bylaws that totally reject child labour. However, bylaws should be able to stimulate dialogue if they are to be practical. For instance, the creation of child labour free zones by MV Foundation in India was predicated on formation of non-negotiable principles that created norms that ensured that every child should be in school and that no child should work. Dialoguing with parents will enable them to identify possible options for strengthening their capacities to be able to meet the education needs of children and also play an active role in raising awareness about child labour among their peers and within their social networks.

Promoting education as a tool for eliminating child labour

Strengthening the linkage between child labour and education is essential for successful elimination of child labour. Thus, IAs should work collaboratively with the district education department, centre coordinating tutors, school inspectors in implementation and monitoring education activities. This should include sensitizing the department staff on child labour issues to enable them to integrate child labour monitoring into routine school monitoring activities. Sensitizing teachers and actively involving them in child labour monitoring will ensure identification, prevention and withdrawal of children from child labour and hazardous work since teachers are always the first to know when a child has not attended school. IAs should also promote the use of SCREAM in schools since it greatly contributes to enrolment and retention of children in school.

Harnessing community resources for elimination of child labour

Working with existing community based resources in the elimination of child labour presents a great potential for sustaining IABA interventions. Community based groups and philanthropists provide strong entry points for community mobilization and changing norms that reject child labour. For instance in India, MV Foundation worked with youth groups as community mobilizers and change agents in sensitizing parents to withdraw their children from labour and reintegrate them in school in the creation of child labour free zones. In Wakiso district, KIN works with youth and women groups to raise awareness about child labour. Integrating these community based resources in existing interventions such as linking women and youth groups to VSLA training will strengthen their capacity to address child labour at community level.

Strengthening community child labour committees

Community-based structures such as CCLCs are the thrust for sustaining child labour interventions at community level. However, the research revealed that CCLCs were overstretched due to the large areas each member covers and due to logistical challenges. Moreover, CCLCs had gaps in critical knowledge for effective elimination of child labour. Integrating community volunteers, teachers, youth and women groups in the work of CCLCs will reduce on the burden of CCLCs and has enormous potential for synergy and sustainability. Conscientizing CCLCs to strengthen their capacity to perform their roles effectively.

Strengthening child labour monitoring

The research established that CCLCs undertake child labour monitoring although this was not systematized and documented. The first step in streamlining child labour monitoring is to share child labour monitoring guidelines with CCLCs and other key stakeholders involved. Guidelines for labour inspectors on the identification of hazardous child labour developed by the MGLSD in 2010 are an important tool in identifying children involved in hazardous work. Supporting CCLCs to document their work and share information with other stakeholders at sub-county level and supporting the rollout of the district referral mechanism will strengthen efforts for elimination of child labour. It is imperative to bring together the different stakeholders involved in child labour monitoring in order to clarify the roles that each stakeholder is supposed to play and engender a collective approach to child labour monitoring. Integrating the work of CCLCs in the district OVC-MIS is envisaged to strengthen child labour monitoring.

Working with leaders in raising their awareness on child labour

Working with leaders will enable them to raise awareness about the issues and also assist in channelling resources for elimination of child labour. During this awareness-raising, a clear distinction should be made between light work for imparting basic life skills and resilience building and hazardous work.

Working with parents and caregivers as agents of mobilization within the community

Caregivers and parents can form support groups, for encouraging each other to continue supporting their children's education and promoting child protective norms (including elimination of child labour) but would also be useful in reaching out to the other caregivers in the community. Winrock's experience of mothers' support groups reveals that these groups are acting as social change agents within the community, alerting other parents to the dangers of child labour and instilling in them a greater commitment to their children's education.³⁰ In Philippines Laura Vicuña Foundation started parent effectiveness training sessions where parents were taught how to make the right choices for their children and how to continue in their role as the first nurturers' of children and to reach out to others. This acted to ensure a high school retention rate for children supported by the project (LVF 2005).³¹

³⁰ The Community-based Innovations to Stop Child Labour through Education (CIRCLE) has been working since 2002 to reduce and prevent child labour by promoting education and awareness-raising. Visit: <http://circle.winrock.org>.

³¹ Winrock International: "Laura Vicuña Foundation (LVF) in Philippines: Parenting for the Protection of working children", 2005, news on web page available at <http://circle.winrock.org/news/ph-LVF002.cfm>.

6.3 Moving Forward: Strengthening IABA and CLMS

During the research, stakeholders identified a number of practical actions that should be undertaken to improve the implementation of the IABA and CLMs in Rakai district. Table below presents specific actions that should be undertaken by different stakeholders.

Table 4: Action points for improving IABA and CLMS in Rakai

Action Point	Stakeholder
Building a national level foundation for IABA	
a) Ensure an integrated approach to tackle child labour among key ministries and stakeholders at national level.	NSCCL, CLU, MGLSD
b) Develop a national child labour monitoring system and operationalize it.	CLU, MGLSD
c) Disseminate the abridged Child Labour Policy and Guidelines for Labour Inspectors on the Identification of Hazardous Child Labour to districts and IAs.	CLU, MGLSD
d) Lobby for the integration of child labour issues in national OVC programmes.	MGLSD
e) Recruit a District Labour Officer for Rakai District and other districts.	MGLSD
f) Support the Ag. DLO to collect CLM information and share it with the CLU.	MGLSD
Strengthening IABA at the district level	
a) Train district counsellors in child labour issues including the role they should play in the elimination of child labour.	IPEC
b) Expedite the integration of child labour issues into the district OVC Strategic Plan.	DPWO, IAs, DLO, DCDO
c) Link children engaged in or at risk of child labour to the district vocational skills training programme.	DPWO, IAs
d) Support and follow up on the establishment of the district child labour desk to ensure coordination of child labour activities.	IPEC
e) Train CDOs and ACDOs in labour laws and labour inspection.	IPEC, CLU
f) Expedite the completion of the referral tool and share it with different stakeholders including the district.	ANPPCAN
g) Complete and rollout of the district OVC referral mechanism and bring on board other actors providing care and support services to vulnerable children within the civil society, public and private sector.	DCDO
h) Harmonize the district referral mechanisms and that developed by ANPPCAN.	ANPPCAN, DCDO
i) Support the revival of the joint dialogue forum among the IAs for information and experience sharing and joint learning.	IPEC
j) Support the establishment of a public-private dialogue forum among the civil society, government agencies and the private sector to coordinate child labour related activities.	IPEC, IAs DCDO
k) Sensitize workers and employers about child labour in order to curb child labour at the work places, both in the formal and informal sector.	FUE NOTU, COFTU
l) Widely disseminate the National Child Labour Policy and National List of Hazardous Activities to workers.	NOTU & COFTU
m) Organize employers into a forum to coordinate efforts for fighting child labour at the work place.	FUE
Integrating child labour activities in sub-county activities	
a) Closely work with sub counties to develop and implement by laws on child labour that are practical and stimulate dialogue.	IAs
b) Work with the Beach Management Unit to revise the by law on child labour to ensure total abolition of children from fishing.	RACA
c) Liaise with Kasasa sub-county ACDO and sub-county chief to provide input toward the finalization of the child labour bylaw.	OCBO

Action Point	Stakeholder
d) Collaborate with sub-county chiefs, CDOs NAADS coordinators, and agricultural extension workers to provide extension services to vulnerable households.	IAs
e) Work with sub-county staff to ensure integration of child labour issues in sub-county activities and share information about project activities.	IAs
Social Mobilization and awareness-raising	
a) Organize a sensitization meeting for newly elected local councillors to orient them in issues of child labour and the role they should play in the efforts to eliminate it.	IPEC, DCDO
b) Support the development of a district child labour advocacy strategy targeting key actors at district level in the public, civil society and private sector.	IPEC
c) Support community mobilization activities to ensure that key stakeholders engage with issues and norms that perpetuate child labour.	IPEC, IAs
d) Train CCLC in community dialogue in order to effectively facilitate awareness-raising in the community.	IAs, IPEC
e) Identify and sensitize community change agents to raise awareness about child labour and facilitate civic action against child labour.	IAs
Strengthening the linkage between child labour and education	
a) Sensitize teachers to integrate child labour issues in school activities including children's clubs.	IAs
b) Collaborate with the district education department including, centre coordinating tutors, school inspectors in planning, implementation, and monitoring education activities.	IAs
c) Work with head teachers to integrate child labour in other district education activities like the Catholic Diocese Education Week.	IAs
Fostering meaningful community participation	
a) Dialogue with project beneficiaries and the community on the criteria that were used to select project beneficiaries and the role they are supposed to play in elimination of child labour.	IAs
b) Strengthen child participation by establishing a forum at school and community level for getting feedback from children about project activities and ensure that their concerns and needs are met.	IAs
Working with Community Resources for elimination of child labour.	
a) Identify informal community based resources and mechanisms involved in preventing children at risk and withdrawal of children from child labour and link them to ongoing project activities.	IAs
b) Work with community philanthropists and community based groups as entry points for community mobilization and awareness-raising.	IAs
c) Undertake a stakeholders mapping to identify local artisans that might be willing to provide skills training to children withdrawn from child labour at a subsidized cost.	IAs
Strengthening child labour monitoring	
a) Develop a system for collecting data and making use of the data that can be used as a CLMS.	IAs, DLO
b) Organize a meeting with different actors involved in child labour monitoring to enable them understand their roles in CLM.	IAs
c) Strengthen monitoring of children undergoing skills training to ensure they are not exploited or engaged in child labour by artisans.	IAs
d) Train CCLC members to document child labour monitoring activities.	IAs, IPEC
e) Pilot the proposed community child labour monitoring system.	IAs, IPEC
f) Integrate teachers and other community volunteers in CCLCs to strengthen the depth and coverage of CCLCs.	IAs
g) Work with CDOs, CCLCs and teachers to integrate child labour monitoring into SOVCCs and DOVCC and Education Management Information System (EMIS).	IAs, DCDO
h) Collect CLM information and share it with the CLU, MGLSD.	DLO

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