

WNCB Management Note to the Mid-term Review of ‘Work: No Child’s Business’ programme by Transition International, June – October 2022.

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| Prepared by: | WNCB Programme Management Unit/MEAL expert |
| Contributors: | Partner countries and WG leads |
| Signed off by: | Programme Steering Committee and Alliance Coordination Team |
| Date: | 13 December 2022 |
| Scope: | Work: No Child’s Business Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 1x Pathway 3 and 4 (the Netherlands and EU)- 6x Pathway 1, 2, 3 (India, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Mali, Uganda and Vietnam) |

Introduction

The Alliance coordination team of the Work: No Child’s Business programme is pleased to share the external participative evaluation of the WNCB programme. Firstly, we want to thank the consultancy team in conducting this Mid-Term Review (MTR) in collaboration with the various programme teams. We are equally grateful for the contributions of key stakeholders in all programme locations including The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and we particularly want to thank colleagues and partner organisations in India, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Mali, Uganda, Vietnam and The Netherlands for their engaged participation and involvement in this review by sharing their honest opinions.

Purpose of the MTR

This Management Note (MN) outlines WNCB’s response to the main findings and recommendations of the MTR. The purpose of the MTR was to facilitate a discussion among national and international partners and collaboratively zoom in on implemented plans and reported outcomes of the seven implementation countries. This participative MTR needed to complement already ongoing evaluative methods and research¹. Therefore, the MTR had a limited scope and focused on *reported outcomes to date, observed emerging/heightened child labour risks due to the pandemic (e.g., reduced access to education), the scale of implementation in relation to identified problems in the communities, the link between field practices and the international strategy and the level to which we succeed in (collaboratively) strengthening our approaches.*

The MTR was conducted by the external evaluation team led by Irma Specht from Transition International (TI). The company was selected by a multi-partner selection committee through a competitive bidding process. The consultants started in the second quarter of 2022 and their plan matched our ambitions to learn, grow and continue our efforts to combat child labour. We are observing that this participative review has facilitated good discussions and a common way forward.

Findings, and recommendations

We appreciate the acknowledgement of our good practices in the report, and we wholeheartedly take up many of the recommendations given for the future. To ensure a proper learning process we are responding to each of the 12 recommendations in an annex to this Management Note. We however already want to mention that we will build upon the following findings:

¹ A 5-year study into the effectiveness of WNCB using a qualitative approach and measuring key performance indicators through household surveys and tracer studies.

- a. *Overall, the WNCB programme is found to be highly relevant and is working on addressing the critical root causes of child labour.* This finding confirms the data that we have gathered about child labour, and the effects of the pandemic. In the final year of the programme, we will particularly pay attention to making our interventions more sustainable.
- b. *In almost all countries, WNCB alliance and partner staff assert that interventions are based on accurate and up-to-date analyses, and in most countries the programme is well coordinated and in line with ongoing work of national and provincial governments, reflecting relevant policy contexts.* In relation to this good practice, we will build upon our efforts and lessons learned in assessing root causes of child labour and bring the area-based approach and/or child protection system strengthening approach to scale.
- c. There are particularly interesting and good practices to further build upon behind the finding that *'MTR observes good collaboration with governments, and notably, most local stakeholders consulted confirm the quality of the collaboration'*.
- d. We will also engage with all project partners to *further combine and integrate the area-based approach, community-based child protection system strengthening, and the supply-chain approach* to increase the sustainability and scale of child labour interventions in future programming.
- e. We are taking note that the WNCB programme is progressing relatively effectively towards achieving the intended objectives, in line with the country-level work plans.

The Alliance Coordination Team, the Programme Management Unit and specifically the MEAL working group have been reviewing each recommendation of the MTR and are ensuring an active follow-up with the WNCB country teams and working groups for learning purposes, strategic adjustments and programme improvements.

Final Reflections on process and the final report

As part of the MTR, the workshops in the programme countries were welcomed and generally perceived as a positive addition to their programmes. Many of the lessons learned and MTR findings have already been picked up during the evaluation process.

The WNCB Alliance recognises that the inherent complexity of the programme, being implemented by three Alliance partners, multiple country partners and stakeholders over seven programme countries, may have led to perceptions and conclusions that do not entirely reflect the achievements and progress up to date. Throughout the process, we aimed to respect the evaluators independence and appreciated the attempt to give voice to all staff working on WNCB through the staff survey and other tools. However, we shared with the lead consultant and in-country facilitators important concerns. Primarily the suggestion was given to link up better to key respondents with source value, as quite some respondents didn't feel included, and tools were not relevant for all. For more details on methodological limitations, please refer to the last section of the table in the annex.

In the coming year, we will actively address additional validation of MTR findings in the countries and working groups. We will organise country specific and programme-wide dialogues on recommended programme adjustments, and further analyse the specific country reports in collaboration with country teams. This includes the validation of the Ivory Coast MTR findings that have not been validated yet.

Annex 1. Reflection and follow-up of key recommendations

| Key recommendations by TI | Finding / conclusion of TI | WNCB response |
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| <p>1. Strengthen partnerships with the private sector to fulfil the objective to make the private sector act. Invest in mapping relevant private sector actors (also beyond the areas targeted) and directly engage with them, including by providing support to businesses (and e.g. investment funds) to implement due diligence and other measures in their supply chains. Partner with chambers and ministries of commerce.</p> | <p>The MTR concludes that strong partnerships are being developed, However, partnerships with the private sector and related ministries require additional attention. There are no linkages to chambers or ministries of commerce. NL, the principal decision not to directly engage with individual companies seriously hampers progress on Pathway 3. Partnerships with other programmes are developed in some countries but not in others, limiting progress and leading to overlap.</p> | <p>The WNCB Alliance still strongly believes in the benefits of sectoral cooperation and will continue to build on this. Nevertheless, we also recognise that work from the Alliance with the private sector in the Netherlands/EU deserves more attention, and in particular the mapping of supply chains to programme countries. Activities for this have been included in the 2023 annual plan.</p> <p>In the Netherlands the WNCB Alliance has deliberately chosen to shape its work towards the private sector primarily through covenants and sectoral agreements on relevant industries (natural stone, gold, metals, garments and textile, banks, cocoa). In these sector agreements, WNCB partners work with companies, trade associations, government, and other civil society organisations on understanding the international supply chain and making it possible to improve social, working and environmental conditions. Even though the focus within these covenants and sector agreements is on collective actions, individual companies have received both generic and tailored support with their individual due diligence processes.</p> <p>There are big differences between programme countries when it comes to expertise and progress in engaging with the private sector. Although more partnerships could be developed, we want to highlight that the finding that there are no linkages to chambers of commerce is not applicable to all countries. We want to highlight that capacity support in the WNCB programme is demand driven. The CRBP sought to provide support through a needs-based approach and to share experiences of frontrunners in the programme. From 2023 onwards the WG structure has been adapted to cater for a more coordinated support to country teams.</p> |
| <p>2. Strengthen the youth empowerment components to become more market</p> | <p>The programme response to the economic empowerment of the youth is questionable. The MTR team</p> | <p>It is important to realize that limited time and budget remains within the WNCB programme. Hence the feasibility of our response and</p> |

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| <p>responsive, longer term and possibly certified, and to make the private sector provide apprenticeships (as per TOC).</p> | <p>found no evidence of market assessments to ensure that the vocational training is market responsive or long enough for the youth to obtain solid and certified skills. Moreover, the team identified little post-training support and mentoring to ensure that the trainees find jobs or start businesses that have a real potential for growth. The approach thus gives the impression of being short-term in character, which is insufficient for this programme’s aims of generating lasting results.</p> | <p>suggested actions will vary across contexts and may be limited depending on time, capacity, and budget available.</p> <p>With the remaining resources available, WNCB will try to increase the quality of interventions that focus on youth empowerment until the end of the project. Alliance Partners can encourage country teams to conduct (youth-led) market assessments prior to planned vocational training interventions for 2023. Youth-led market assessments can help to identify youth friendly market trends and relevant skills in the communities where youth live.</p> <p>WNCB does not directly implement or facilitate formal (long-term/certified) vocational training interventions. However, we can include the importance of accessible and quality formal vocational training programs as part of national lobby/advocacy activities. Within the scope of WNCB, Alliance Partners can, depending on remaining resources available, work with locally available vocational training providers (institutes or community-based). An important criterion here is what options prepare youth best for transitioning into decent (self) employment in their community, as well as options that are locally available and within budget, which will vary from context to context. WNCB vocational training interventions focus on acquiring skills to support youth to transition into decent (self) employment, and not necessarily on certified skills, as this is a longer trajectory and not currently in scope of WNCB. Nevertheless, good practices learnt from informal vocational training interventions can be used to feed into lobby/advocacy activities on the accessibility and quality of formal vocational training programmes.</p> <p>As WNCB, we have learned that our power to “make the private sector provide apprenticeships” is limited. There are different experiences with this, also depending a lot on the scale and nature of the private sector in the different contexts in which WNCB partners are active. Country teams can pro-actively liaise with the private sector around apprenticeships and learning opportunities for youth, emphasizing the mutual benefits of this for youth and for the company or small business</p> |
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| | | <p>and keeping in mind that apprenticeships should focus on learning and offer decent working conditions.</p> <p>The Education WG can play a role in facilitating exchange of good practices between country teams around topics such as formal and non-formal skills and vocational training, apprenticeships, or on good practices around post-vocational training monitoring, mentorship and peer support activities to support youth in accessing decent (self) employment.</p> |
| <p>3. Strengthen in-country capacities for L&A and the links between NL and international L&A, with in-country L&A efforts, with government and private sector.</p> | <p>Linkages between efforts in the NL in L&A at International level, and L&A at national level are weak.</p> | <p>We can understand that the reports over 2020 and 2021 did not provide a complete picture. But particularly in 2022 NL and international L&A and in-country L&A efforts have been linked quite successfully. There have been many consultations between NL and programme countries on the WNCB position paper ahead of the GCCL in Durban. WNCB in-country staff have attended an interactive webinar with stakeholders from producing countries (organised by MVO Platform), to include their insights in the potential benefits and challenges of due diligence legislation.</p> <p>In 2023, WNCB in-country staff are invited to a session on formulating a WNCB position on the EU ban on products made with forced labour. Where relevant, links between NL and international L&A, with in-country L&A efforts are in fact established.</p> <p>The MTR report is also critical in relation to L&A towards the private sector. In this regard it is important to stress that the lobby towards governments is also aimed at Responsible Business Conduct. The WNCB advocates towards government to oblige businesses to implement due diligence practices and responsible business conduct.</p> |
| <p>4. Ensure further linkages with important stakeholders and other programmes and initiatives, to prevent overlapping support, and conduct joint advocacy.</p> | <p>Collaboration with other programmes and actors varies per country and would benefit from greater attention to increase alignment with the interventions of other relevant programmes and actors.</p> | <p>In each WNCB country, the engagement with country specific actors and stakeholders remains dependent on local requirements and needs. Partnership development on community level, with local governments and businesses remains a key ingredient for success.</p> <p>Also, at the national level we seek to join forces and stand together with like-minded organizations to bring our message across.</p> <p>The WNCB Alliance will continue to increase alignment between the strategic focuses of the programme; specifically, to align ABA and</p> |

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| | | <p>supply chain approach including CPSS. This will be done through research, workshops in several countries (CRBP WG), learning sessions and/or master classes with key experts within the WNCB Alliance. Through further continued development of the outcome harvesting methodology we will also focus on thematic synergies, as well as the identification and effective engagement of key actors and stakeholders to pursue our ToC's objectives and goals.</p> <p>In addition, a programme-wide stakeholder mapping will further prevent overlap of efforts and consolidate global and country specific actor engagement. To prevent overlapping support we will continue to facilitate periodic L&L events and exchanges of information to identify where synergies are possible and where duplication/overlap may be avoided.</p> |
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| <p>5. Revisit the MEAL strategy to assess how it could be made lighter but also inclusive of partners. Scale up the support to country teams to ensure that it can be fully implemented. Ensure that the programme collects the data and knowledge required for learning and adaptive management, and for the final evaluation.</p> | <p>The implementation of the MEAL strategy, however, encountered some important challenges. Implementation required critical training, technical support, and coaching investment. These expected challenges were, to some extent, foreseen, and mitigation strategies were developed, including by providing support to teams in the field from NL. Meanwhile, the unexpected COVID-19 pandemic and an important staff turnover hampered the capacities of technical staff and working groups to support the rollout of the MEAL Strategy effectively and efficiently. Based on the workshop and interviews undertaken by the MTR team, it appears that the MEAL strategy and the level of understanding and mastering of the OH tool varied greatly from country to country. While in some countries, the level of understanding of the method was slightly more advanced, in most countries, weaknesses were identified vis-a-vis its practice and staff understanding of the methodology. These challenges have translated into shortcomings in measuring the programme's impact and its capacity to adapt and adjust during implementation.</p> | <p>The MEAL WG recognizes that capacity to work according to the programmes MEAL protocol is not complete and we agree that significant efforts in capacity remain beneficial. We however note that quite some MEAL work of the WNCB programme seems to be outside of the scope of the MTR team and are therefore listing our current, ongoing support:</p> <p>Outcome harvesting Outcome harvesting is used as a reflective learning methodology to determine how we contribute to change and to ensure adaptive management rather than determining WNCB's attribution to the areas where we work. The introduction of a new way of working, or new way of monitoring progress (as is the case with OH) entails an initial investment in human resources, which furthermore requires additional time for country partners to take full ownership and to make effective use of results for learning and programme improvements. In our response to recommendation six, our current and future approach to OH and validation of findings is further explained.</p> <p>Evaluating key performance indicators through household surveys and tracer studies. Progress is measured through KPI on which we report at baseline, Mid-term and at the end of the programme. The quantitative baseline studies that needed to provide baseline data on our key performance indicators in our 6 countries of implementation did not materialise as intended. Nevertheless, we have informative quantitative baseline studies. In 2022 indicators have once again been measured in a more coordinated manor with significant capacity support from the MEAL WG. A generic research approach was adopted and local consultants were hired to conduct representative household survey's and tracer studies.</p> <p>SenseMaker To collect information on root causes of child labour in our 'areas of implementation', five country teams participated in programme wide SenseMaker studies. The partners indicate that the baseline studies</p> |
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| | | <p>have facilitated learning and supported contextualization of the WNCB approaches. These studies helped country teams to contextualize the WNCB theory of change at the outset of the programme and in 2022 the studies have helped country teams to strengthen their annual plans for 2023.</p> |
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| <p>6. Work with country teams to ensure a more in-depth understanding of the OH method and adapt the limited OH approach to the full one, including formulating outcomes with the people/institutions it claims to have changed, and not only internally, which questions validity.</p> | <p>It seems that in most countries, the development of outcomes was done with limited involvement of the change agents and the validation was limited to project staff thereby not unfolding the full potential of the OH methodology. The MTR considers that further efforts should be invested in reaching a broader consultation and consensus on the OH to ensure their credibility as they are fundamental to the programme stakeholders' reflection on their achievements and the adaptation of its implementation.</p> | <p>Over the year 2022 the WNCB country partners have made considerable progress on the understanding and implementation of the OH methodology, for example through an intensive 3-day course in France for the French speaking countries.</p> <p>We concur that new ways of working and the introduction of fairly innovative methodologies, such as OH, usually require time and investment in human resources. The WNCB countries have made great progress in the understanding and implementation of OH. However, we acknowledge the need for continued capacity strengthening in OH. We will continue to work on the substantiation of key to harvested outcomes, including by change agents, that support further learning, adaptive management and programme improvement.</p> <p>Specific attention will be given to capacity strengthening of OH to relevant programme staff in the countries, other than MEAL staff. Also, we will further explore the effective use of outcome harvesting to document and visualise progress of pathway 4 concerning lobby, advocacy and private sector engagement in The Netherlands.</p> <p>Through L&L events the WNCB country partners will continue to learn about the programme's outcomes, identify opportunities for collaboration and cross-fertilisation between the pathways of change of the ToC.</p> |
| <p>7. Decide whether to further develop WNCB as a fund, or as a programme, and take relevant actions to adapt it accordingly, including in its branding/visibility and communications.</p> | <p>Some crucial national and private sector actors are not aware of any WNCB messages, which can be partially explained by the WNCB programme's lack of branding.</p> | <p>Currently WNCB is not a fund. We operate as a world-wide programme that implements as an Alliance in different countries. We are complementary to each other which means that each partner is uniquely positioned to implement parts of our work.</p> <p>Discussions about future direction of the programme, incl. governance and organization in a possible next phase, have started at the Alliance Coordination Team level. At soon as we are asked to develop a proposal for a next phase of the programme, the Steering Committee will revisit this recommendation.</p> <p>Branding and communications: The branding of WNCB and targeting general audiences (consumers) is not part of the current WNCB communication strategy for a good</p> |

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| | | <p>reason. Effective and successful branding campaigns require significant time and money. It has been more effective and efficient to work through well-known partners directly (UNICEF, Save the Children and the Stop Child Labour coalition - a coalition that already exists over 18 years) and to use their existing networks and channels to reach specific audiences. In terms of sustainability, the Alliance might not continue after the programme ends.</p> <p>The WNCB communication strategy provides a general framework that serves as an overall guidance and starting point for communication strategies and plans at country level. We have an effective set of key messages and key communication channels and tools. The leading implementation partners in the countries develop and implement their own communication strategy in line with existing ways of working, country implementation and L&A plans. Likewise, the communication strategy in the Netherlands/EU focusses on aligning on key messages for specific audiences, in close cooperation with L&A/RBC, and highlighting the cooperation of the Alliance.</p> <p>When it comes to external visibility of the WNCB programme, the Communication WG (with focal points in all countries) has planned to develop stories (case studies, stories of change) on proven strategies under the WNCB programme and success stories - in collaboration with the Research and Lobby & Advocacy, and Child Rights and Business Principles working groups, and with input from the working groups on gender equality, Education and MEAL - to use for lobby/advocacy purposes towards governments and private sector (at local/regional/national/international level), and to share within the Alliance for inspiration, learning and knowledge exchange.</p> |
| <p>8. Takes measures to strengthen coordination and communication mechanisms internally, both in-country, with partners and as a broader Alliance.</p> | <p>In terms of internal collaboration, the comparative advantages of the different Alliance members, their sharing of expertise and complementarity constitute – on the one hand - the main successes of joint implementation. On the other</p> | <p>Coordination and communication:</p> <p>We have built in opportunities to address issues that might arise regarding collaboration and governance and have open and constructive discussions on a regular basis. In 2022 ACT and PMU reflected at how we can further optimise collaboration and governance, and we have agreed on specific actions. Coordination and communication strengthening at country level is the responsibility of the country teams,</p> |

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| | <p>hand, their different procedures, mandates, and business cultures remain an obstacle to effective collaboration. While improved, staff still highlight poor coordination and communication, as well as duplication of efforts</p> | <p>with a strong role for the (in-)country leads. ACT and PMU take the lead in coordination, like facilitating an adequate governance structure, setting realistic deadlines, limit the number of meetings and ensure a proper balance of activities.</p> <p>For 2023 we have identified a set of cross-cutting activities and results that the Dutch-based working groups will develop to support the programme implementation in the countries, as well as provide capacity development for increased effectiveness. We identified a need for stronger cooperation and alignment between L&A+RBC and CRBP working groups. As a result, we merged the various components into one working group and developed a joint work plan. We believe this will deliver a more focused approach towards both areas of work.</p> <p>Overall Alliance internal communication is the responsibility of PMU and ACT. PMU facilitates communication mechanisms like Teams, internal WNCB-wide meetings, internal WNCB newsletter. The WNCB Guiding Principles and Key Messages have been developed in 2020 and shared within the Alliance and will further inform all communication initiatives and ensure alignment with the overall programme's ToC.</p> <p>Overlap and duplication of initiatives has further been addressed in the response to recommendation 4.</p> <p>Knowledge exchange:</p> <p>Following up on the country exchange visits in 2022, during which the countries had the opportunity to visit the programme implementation in Uganda and India, we will organise a WNCB-wide meeting in The Netherlands. This will be a face-to-face meeting of all involved country teams with the objectives to ensure accelerated learning, operational and strategic programme adjustments and improvements, sustained programme results and effective programme close-out, and continued partnership development. This global meeting of Alliance partners is scheduled for May 2023.</p> |
| <p>9. Consider restructuring the team in NL. The MTR recommends keeping a Programme Management Unit</p> | <p>The NL structure that was originally set-up appears too heavy and complex, and while in-country staff confirm support received, the</p> | <p>Discussions within the WNCB alliance coordination team resulted in concrete solutions to come to a more efficient governance and organization (September 2022). We all agreed that more trust has been built among the Alliance partners over the years. Also, we see</p> |

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| <p>(PMU) and a group of experts (replacing the working groups), providing both technical country support and undertaking L&A in NL and the EU. Make resources available to increase management capacities in the countries, including the expertise and manpower required for private sector engagement and L&A.</p> | <p>Working Groups (WGs) set-up is seen as top-heavy in NL, with insufficient manpower in-country. Moreover, gaps in support are significant and differ per country.</p> | <p>improved collaboration, complementarity, and added value of the different alliance partners has played out further. Therefore, there is no need to have all three partners represented in each working group. Having expertise in the WG is more important. Moreover, it has been agreed that the WGs will work based on asks from countries, ensuring that they provide tailor made support as per the identified needs. We also agreed to seek how we can combine efforts and ensure alignment between working groups. This resulted in the decision to merge L&A, RBC and CRBP into one working group with one coherent strategic plan. This all contributes to the Alliance's ambition of more complementary and effective ways of working, incl. decentralization of governance and expertise. This can allow for further realization of the WNCB bottom-up and consensus-based governance model, and a more compact presence in the Netherlands.</p> |
| <p>10. To improve the sustainability of the programme's achievements, develop an exit strategy, and involve a broad set of stakeholders in the reflection and in its subsequent implementation.</p> | <p>The issue of sustainability of results is key to the success of the programme and the MTR did not find a fully developed exit strategy for the WNCB that outlines the measures needed to ensure the sustainability of its results.</p> <p>On the question relating to the private sector and governments capacities and willingness to carry on the fight against child labour, more than half of the national stakeholders believe this is not the case, and local stakeholders are generally not convinced they will.</p> | <p>From the MTR validation workshop, we received the following feedback from one of the country programmes: <i>"In the MTR there are many recommendations related to scaling up, while one general highlight is the lack of phasing out plans, I think it is really needed at this stage to get the right direction which we need to invest our efforts to plan in the right direction."</i></p> <p>To adequately address this challenge, we will seek guidance and support from the MoFA to identify either a sustainable phase-out strategy or a continuation of the programme.</p> <p>Changes of behaviours and practices require considerable investment of time and resources, as does the capacity development of local authorities to continue the fight against child labour. Though the programme has made considerable progress on capacity development and ownership by country partners, we recognise the challenge of continued engagement and partnership building to ensure sustained efforts and results against child labour after 2024.</p> <p>In order to achieve a "critical mass" for systemic changes against child labour in the current/additional/alternative WNCB countries, we will explore possibilities for a programme continuation, in collaboration with the MoFA.</p> |

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| | | <p>In case a programme continuation is not a possibility, we will explore the sustainable phase-out of the programme in the countries, ensuring continued ownership of the programme's objectives with local and national actors of civil society, public and private sector.</p> <p>During a global WNCB-wide face-to-face meeting, scheduled for May 2023, we will jointly address and explore the above-mentioned options with all WNCB Alliance partners and country partners.</p> |
| <p>11. Scale up interventions in terms of additional locations, more sectors and including work on the informal sector. Combining the approaches (such as L&A to the government to adopt CLFZ's) will allow to foster change beyond the areas reached with the area-based approach.</p> | <p>There is scope to further align, combine and integrate and have approaches mutually reinforce each other. There are interesting discussions on how to better integrate the area-based approach with the CP system strengthening approach. Suggestions include increasing capacity development activities for communities and CP structures, strengthening the Lobby and Advocacy (L&A) and communication components, and increasing awareness-raising activities and exploring new ways to reach people.</p> | <p>WNCB has taken high incidence areas as a starting point for programming. We work in areas where child labour is rampant. In these areas we seek to make the link with sectors that are relevant for the specific country as well as the NL/EU market. In these areas we take an area-based approach, addressing all forms of child labour that interfere with the child's right to education, and tackling the root causes to ensure sustainable change. Working with an area-based approach implies adopting all-inclusive strategies; also targeting children working in the informal sector, and in more hidden forms of child labour. It also implies mobilizing all stakeholders to work together towards realizing children's rights. Norm change is key to ensure ownership by governments and private sector.</p> <p>In some countries (Ivory Coast) partners have decided to scale up interventions in terms of additional locations, to reach more children, and more sectors, to prevent children from moving from one sector to the other, and including work in the informal sector, to ensure that no child is left behind.</p> <p>We have started discussions within the Alliance on how to further combine the approaches to foster change beyond the relatively small areas reached with the pure area based/CLFZ approach. We see that best practices in the area are inspiring neighbouring villages to follow the same example. We also understand that investing in child protection system strengthening, in addition to the CLFZ, can help reach more children in surrounding areas. Moreover, bringing practical examples of successful action from the communities to the national level, will help to inform more coherent policies and programmes. This will all contribute to realizing change at larger scale.</p> |

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| | | <p>At the same time, we are exploring how we can work with a landscape approach, not only combining approaches as WNCB alliance, but also seeking collaboration and coordination with other relevant actors to address other/related challenges within the area. This implies a more holistic way of working where we strengthen and complement each other's efforts, and further realize sustainable change at a larger scale.</p> |
| <p>12. Further foster involvement and ownership by governments and the private sector, and increase collaboration and coordination with other actors, as means to scale-up.</p> | <p>Coherence in working with private sector actors needs improvement, including by establishing direct partnership with bigger firms, ministries, and chambers of commerce alongside other relevant actors. Partnerships with other programmes are developed in some countries but not in others, limiting progress and leading to overlap.</p> | <p>We acknowledge the importance to incorporate other sectors including the informal sector. Working through an area-based approach implies addressing all forms of child labour within the selected area, including work in the informal sector and more hidden forms of child labour. Children that are working in the informal sector are thus always included in our strategies to eliminate all forms of child labour and bring all children (back) into the formal education system and/or prepare them to enter decent youth employment when they have the appropriate age.</p> <p>The challenges targeting the informal sector have been on the agenda of the CRBP WG for quite some time. There have been specific requests for support from the working group and we are exploring with various countries, how CRBPs can take shape in the informal sector. One output that is coming from this WNCB collaboration is the CRBP institutionalization handbook that is being developed as a guiding framework for implementing responsible business conduct in the (formal and) informal gold mining sector. The L&A/RBC/CRBP WG intends to use it for linking and learning purposes, in relation to mining, and if possible and relevant also in relation to other sectors.</p> <p>During the recent annual planning process several countries have expressed interest in expanding the work into other sectors. We are looking at all feasible options, but we want to note here that the remaining time and funds are limited. This also relates to the comments in relation to key recommendation no. 11 on upscaling below.</p> |
| <p>Reflections on the participative MTR approach</p> | | |
| <p>The staff survey and the Most Significant Change approach opened discussions about a multitude of topics. Although the consultants see this as a positive side of their approach, we observe that it has also led to scope creep. On the one hand we observe that several findings are not new to the programme, but the recommended action is not well informed. On the other hand, the focus on a multitude of topics, distracted us from focusing on</p> | | |

the scope as identified in the ToR. Particularly the main topics of 'community engagement and accountability' (CEA) and 'up-scaling' are thus addressed insufficiently.

Due to delays caused by several reasons, the consultants had to collect data during the summer. This led to a sub-optimal situation in terms of **communication** between the PMU, evaluators, and respondents. We believe this has influenced the findings quite a bit and it would have suited the approach if the evaluators would have been more open and organized in their approach to select key informants.

The report shows both sampling error (samples are not representative) and non-sampling error (questions in questionnaires (KII's) have been misunderstood). Moreover, tools are not fully relevant for selected respondents, specific responses that fit an analysis are amplified, and the report does not provide insight in the entire discourse.

FINAL REPORT

MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE
WORK NO CHILD'S BUSINESS
PROGRAMME

DECEMBER 2022

FOR WORK: NO CHILD'S BUSINESS (WNCB) ALLIANCE



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The WNCB programme

The Work: No Child's Business (WNCB) programme aims to ensure that children and youth are free from child labour and enjoy their rights to quality education and (future) decent work. The Alliance of partners works on four pathways of change. The objectives of the pathways are:

- Children are empowered and have improved access to (quality) formal education, bridge or transitional schooling, and youth employment within a supportive family and community environment (Pathway 1).
- Governments have enforced relevant child rights-based laws and have implemented policies on child labour, education, youth economic empowerment and social security (Pathway 2).
- The private sector takes full responsibility for preventing and addressing child labour (Pathway 3).
- The EU, Dutch government and international/multilateral organisations act in support of the elimination of child labour and fulfil their obligation to protect by setting and reinforcing due diligence policies and laws (Pathway 4).

Objectives of the MTR

The overall Mid-Term Review (MTR) process was divided in several assignments, undertaken by different actors. The objective of this part of the MTR undertaken by Transition International (TI) was to facilitate a participative MTR of the WNCB and provide the Alliance Members with an 'outsider's perspective' on achievements, the quality of the work, and the ways in which the partners collaborate and learn. This MTR reviewed the process of the implementation of WNCB along its four pathways, in the seven partner countries. It is also purposed to facilitate a discussion among local and international partners and collaboratively review improvements that can be made. The MTR provides conclusions and recommendations on the programmatic approaches, collaboration and complementarity of partners, learning and WNCBs context responsiveness. It includes a review on the application of the following cross-cutting issues: gender responsiveness, conflict sensitivity and levels of Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA).

Scope and methodology

The review was conducted over a four-month period (June to end of September 2022) and covers WNCB interventions in Côte d'Ivoire, India, Jordan, Mali, Uganda and Vietnam, and the Netherlands (NL).

Guided by a set of tailored research questions, the MTR reviewed the programme functioning and results with a special focus on the criteria of relevance, sustainability, coherence, efficiency, and effectiveness.¹ The approach to the MTR was by design and intention participatory and involved all Alliance and partners staff, as well as local, national, and international stakeholders in analysing progress and formulating recommendations for the programme. A total of 395 MTR participants contributed to the findings. Their participation will foster ownership and facilitate integration of the recommendations in the programme.

The MTR began with a literature review, which underpinned a short online survey among programme staff, partners and the donor. Based on the results of this survey, the qualitative tools for the country-

¹ WNCB, Terms of Reference, the outcome harvesting community of practice in WNCB.

level data collection were developed and tested. KIIs and MTR country workshops were conducted in each country. Primary data collection and facilitation of workshops were conducted in English, French, Dutch, Arabic, Hindi, and local languages.

Data was analysed qualitatively, and for closed questions, quantitatively. For several open questions, post-collection categorisation was applied, thereby quantifying qualitative data while avoiding to lead the respondents in pre-set categories of answers. From the data analysis, descriptive statistics combining the data collected from different tools and stakeholder groups are produced, as well as graphs and tables displaying all answers provided to each question. The data set has been shared with WNCB, and seven country reports and six workshop reports were completed. These fed into the draft and final versions of the global MTR report, which was validated in a workshop and a magnitude of comments and suggestions were processed.

The WNCB provided initial lists of national and local key informants, which were complemented by TI to ensure independence. This list included some of the change agents mentioned in the outcomes harvested. TI was explicitly requested not to do any primary data collection in communities among direct beneficiaries, as this effort was being undertaken separately. TI had no access to these datasets which compromises the validity of some of the conclusions.

Main findings against the criteria

Relevance

Overall, the WNCB programme is highly relevant and is working on addressing the critical root causes of child labour, including through investments in education, child protection structures, awareness raising, improving legislation etc. However, poverty is regarded by MTR participants across the countries as by far the most important underlying cause of child labour, and while the programme is working on this through economic support to families and youth, the scope of the programme is too limited to address this factor. Also, little linking to programmes that work on poverty reduction, employment or local economic development is found. Concerning the interventions geared to the youth themselves through vocational training, it is found that the training is generally not based on market assessments and the market responsiveness is questionable.

Overall, interventions are based on accurate and up-to-date analyses, and in most countries the programme is well coordinated and in line with ongoing work of national and provincial governments, reflecting relevant policy contexts. WNCB has proven to be relatively responsive to changing contexts, with the biggest proof being its responsiveness to the COVID-19 pandemic in most countries. However, stakeholder involvement in programme design and adaptations were limited.

Coherence

The MTR observes good collaboration with governments, and notably, most local stakeholders consulted confirm the quality of the cooperation. Meanwhile, coherence in working with private sector actors needs improvement, including by establishing more direct partnership with firms higher up in the supply chains, ministries, chambers of commerce, and other relevant actors. Partnerships with other programmes are developed in some countries but not in others, limiting progress and leading to overlap.

In terms of internal collaboration, the comparative advantages of the different Alliance members, their sharing of expertise and complementarity constitute – on the one hand - the main successes of joint implementation. On the other hand, their different procedures, mandates, and business cultures

remain an obstacle to effective collaboration. While improved, staff still highlight poor coordination and communication, as well as duplication of efforts, and one in three staff express that there is lack of complementarity in knowledge and expertise.

The area-based approach is an important approach of WNCB. The success of this approach lies in its focus on norm change, and ensuring that all working and out of school children are targeted, as opposed to focusing only on certain sectors or supply chains, which risks that children are being removed from one sector, only to get employed in another one. There are, however some differences in opinion about how local this approach needs to be. Some Alliance partners are concerned that it is a too localised approach which cannot be scaled up. Further, in some countries the informal sector is not, or not efficiently included.

The programme is further working on Child Protection (CP) system strengthening, largely building on ongoing efforts on this by UNICEF and Save the Children, as part of their core activities (also in the absence of WNCB). It focusses on addressing child labour primarily through strengthening CP systems (and in WNCB especially the setting-up and/or strengthening of child protection committees), and aims for a scalable and systematic approach to address child labour.

L&A is strongly developed in NL/EU and sees important differences in scope and level per country. With few exceptions, such as around the Global Conference on Child Labour in Durban, direct linkages between L&A efforts in the NL/EU and L&A at national level are under-developed, especially in relation to the influencing of supply chain actors.

The WNCB approach of working on supply chains is the one least developed thus far, however with important differences between countries. Overall, the links and direct work with the private sector are not yet fully developed and require attention. COVID-19 reduced possibilities for direct engagement, but other obstacles also play a role, such as the fact that some of the partners traditionally have fewer partnerships with the private sector, and related institutions and ministries. Another obstacle - only expressed by the NL-based staff who participated in the workshop - is the reluctance to directly engage with the private sector from an organisational policy point of view. Therefore, the work in fulfilling the objective to “make the private sector act” is mainly done through intermediary organisations, and through structures (such as the sectoral covenants), and by influencing legal frameworks to regulate the private sector, focussing on Child Rights and Business (CRBP) and Responsible Business Conduct (RBC). In the operational countries, this hesitation appears to be less of an issue and direct partnerships are developed, but in most countries mainly at the lower end of the supply chains (as part of the area-based approach – therefore mainly local businesses).

There is scope to further combine and integrate the area-based approach, CP-system strengthening, the supply-chain approach and L&A. There are interesting discussions on how to better integrate the area-based approach with the CP system strengthening approach. Suggestions include increasing capacity development activities for communities and CP structures, strengthening the Lobby and Advocacy (L&A) and communication components, and increasing awareness-raising activities and exploring new ways to reach people. One obstacle to this is that in some countries the approaches and related funding are provided to and implemented by individual partners, compromising integration and cross-fertilisation of the approaches amongst partners.

Effectiveness

Measuring effectiveness proved challenging to assess with the current state of the MEAL data available

to the team, as explained above. At the point of the MTR it is however clear that the programme has not yet achieved its stated objectives, and had serious start-up delays due to COVID and staff changes. However, the indications are showing that now WNCB is progressing relatively effectively towards achieving the intended objectives, in line with the country-level workplans.

There are strong indications that the programme is effective in raising awareness on child labour, its risks and possible ways to reduce the phenomena. The effectiveness of the L&A of the WNCB, however, sees differences per country, and in some not enough expertise and staff-time is available for effective L&A. The MTR found that several crucial national and private sector actors are not aware of any WNCB messages, which can be partially explained by the WNCB programme's lack of branding and visibility, a conscious choice made. The L&A to influence governments (in order to oblige businesses to implement due diligence practices and RBC) and communities is clearly more effective than the L&A directly towards fulfilling the aim that the private sector takes full responsibility for preventing and addressing child labour making the private sector act.

Indeed, some *pathways of change*, as reflected in the Theory of Change (ToC), have achieved less results. More specifically, in most countries progress on Pathway 3 (making the private sector act) hasn't produced as many results and is less effective than other pathways.

Efficiency and value for money

The MTR finds that there is scope for improving the efficiency of the set-up, management and functioning of the consortium. There are many reported delays in the disbursement of funds and related delivery, and perceptions that deadlines set by the NL-team are too short. Further, the internal management of the organisations affects the general management of WNCB. The NL structure that was originally set-up appears at this point of the MTR too heavy and complex. Most importantly in this is that while in-country staff confirm support received, the Working Groups (WGs) set-up is seen as top-heavy in NL, with insufficient manpower in-country.

When reviewing evidence of efficiency of resources against the different pathways, the MTR finds the number of outcomes harvested per pathway to be proportionally in-line with resources allocated to each one. An analysis of the budget by activity shows that most funds (67%) of the 2021 budget were spent on strategic Pathway 1, where also the largest number of outcomes were harvested.² This implies that the programme spent most of its allocation on activities that reach communities directly. Investments for activities under Pathways 2 and 3 (21% and 12% respectively) realised fewer outcomes as compared to Pathway 1.

The issue of value for money of the WNCB is however difficult to assess considering that likely impacts of the programme have not yet fully materialised. Furthermore, the difficult question of attribution or contribution, the absence of some baseline information, the absence of agreed upon benchmarks, and the not yet fully developed and validated outcomes harvested, add significantly to the challenge of assessing value for money and efficiency.

(likely) Impact and sustainability

From the outset, the MEAL strategy highlights that the focus of the system will not be on attribution to change of the programme, but to capture examples of contributions. Therefore, the programme is not set-up to identify attribution and even some contributions reported are based on anecdotal evidence. Further, the MEAL system has not yet captured data to calculate quantitatively some essential data to

² WNCB, 2021, Annual Report 2021, Joining forces to scale up action against child labour.

measure impact. The outcome harvesting process is mostly internal, and thereby also does not produce entirely verified results.

Nevertheless, during this MTR several indications of contribution are identified. First, there are strong indications that the programme is raising awareness on child labour and is likely to continue doing so. Furthermore, increased access to education is by far the most often mentioned (and most significant) change so far, followed by awareness and norm changes. There also appears to be a degree of increase in community and government ownership. Importantly, the staff and external stakeholders believe that less children are working compared to last year, in the areas where WNCB intervenes. There are, however, no means to measure and back-up this perception, as the results of the mid-line survey are not available to the MTR team. The country reports highlight that results differ significantly from country to country.

In terms of likely sustainability of the changes and structures supported, the MTR gives a mixed impression. The likelihood of the continuation of the institutions, organisations and private sector supported to fight and act against child labour is high according to some staff. Others question the likelihood of continuation of the work if funding for activities were to stop. Similarly, there are questions remaining in relation to the effectiveness of the mechanisms and incentives in place to continue L&A and other activities upon completion programme activities. Part of the positive outlook on this is the fact that the Alliance is composed of organisations with long trajectory, and although some of the activities might not be continued, the main activities have been integrated in many of the programme partners.

On the question relating to the private sector and governments capacities and willingness to carry on the fight against child labour, more than half of the national stakeholders believe this is not the case, and local stakeholders are generally not convinced they will.

The programme explicitly aims to equip governments, the private sector, partner organisations, the communities, and the children themselves to act against child labour. The MTR consequently assessed the perceptions on the effect of the capacity development activities. Stakeholders consulted confirm an overall increase in their knowledge and understanding of key issues and their roles in eradicating child labour. However, the programme currently has no systematic means of measuring the effects of capacity development and L&A activities.

In some countries the WNCB is working through close partnership with national and local government to strengthen the existing child protection system, and education providers, which is regulated by the law. There is a high possibility that the systems will remain with enhanced capacity by the end of the programme. On the other hand, national stakeholders are divided on whether local and national authorities will continue to develop and enforce relevant laws, to make sufficient budget provisions for education for all and for child protection systems, and to expand social services and make them more child friendly.

Further, many national government and private sector actors are not aware if WNCB contributed to private sector regulations, which relates to the (lack of) visibility of WNCB in most countries. The issue of sustainability of results is key to the success of the programme, but the MTR did not find a fully developed exit strategy for the WNCB that outlines the measures needed to ensure the sustainability of its results.

Cross-cutting issues

Conflict sensitivity

Overall, there is clear indication that WNCB considers horizontal inequalities in the planning and implementation of its activities. The partners prioritise children and parents from marginalised communities as they are most vulnerable to engaging in child labour. While the specificities of the horizontal (cultural, religious, social, economic) inequities vary in the different contexts, respondents in all countries have confirmed that these vulnerable communities are most often lower castes, ethnic minorities, refugees, migrants, or groups facing other form of marginalisation. However, the MTR found no specific measuring of Do No Harm principle³, and consequent (reported) adaptive management, a core element of conflict sensitive programming.

Gender responsiveness

Overall, the WNCB rightly puts gender issues at the core of its approach and has set up tools, reporting requirements, knowledge and learning, and strategies to ensure the programme is gender responsive. Programme staff appear to have to a large extent mainstreamed gender issues in their programme approaches, analysis, and reporting. Meanwhile, given the complexity of the issues at hand and certain challenging contexts in which the programme is being implemented, the teams on the ground need further support to create and document gender transformative change. The Gender Analysis was only finalised this year, and lessons learnt and recommendations are to be integrated in annual plan 2023 onwards. Through the workshops and the KIIs, the MTR team has witnessed a significant level of experience, analysis, and reflection on gender issues amongst the Alliance members and partners which confirms the importance given to gender issues. At the halfway point of programme implementation, this knowledge does not appear to have been sufficiently collected and codified for the benefit of stakeholders. While some staff have confirmed that the programme has a transformative impact, the evidence provided appears to be anecdotal.

Community engagement and accountability

A key feature of WNCB's ambition to ensure CEA is that the communities can influence the design and adaptations of interventions. It is reported that the programme partners organise yearly community meetings on the programme, to hear about their ideas and suggestions, and the baseline studies captures many views. Country plans are contextualised and based on these. However, this MTR finds that among the stakeholders consulted, WNCB scores relatively low in terms of involvement of the stakeholders in design and adaptation, with only half of the stakeholders confirming that this is really the case. Further, most government and local stakeholders (non-Alliance or partner staff) were not involved in the design phase of the interventions. However, the levels of community accountability need to be further assessed through the other parts of the MTR, that will engage with the direct beneficiaries.

Main observations on MEAL

Designing, planning, and implementing an efficient and effective MEAL is challenging in the context of the WNCB, due to the variety of contexts in which the programme is being implemented and by the number of organisations (each with its own Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) culture) involved. Using an innovative approach to M&E, namely Outcome Harvesting (OH), which partner organisations are

³ UNDP, 2013, Framework Do No Harm Presentation, sdgs.un.org/statements/un-sustainability-framework-do-no-harm-and-do-good-11238

little or not familiar with, further increased the complexity and the investment required to ensure that the M&E allowed for learning, accountability, and adaptive management.

While ambitious, the design of the MEAL strategy is technically sound and based on the latest development in M&E theories, with a strong focus on learning. Plans were also made to adapt the MEAL Strategy to each local context, and flexibility was introduced to allow each partner organisation to also use their own M&E tools. While this decision might have been welcome by partnering organisations and might have eased their M&E responsibilities, it likely also translated into weaker appropriation of the OH methodology.

The implementation of the MEAL strategy, however, encountered some important challenges. More specifically, the implementation required critical training, technical support, and coaching investment. These expected challenges were, to some extent, foreseen, and mitigation strategies were developed, including by providing support to teams in the field from NL. Meanwhile, the unexpected COVID-19 pandemic and an important staff turnover hampered the capacities of technical staff and working groups to support the rollout of the MEAL Strategy effectively and efficiently. In workshop and interviews undertaken, the MTR found that that the MEAL strategy and the level of understanding and mastering of the OH tool was generally low. These challenges have weakened the capacity to measure the programme's impact and its capacity to adapt and adjust during implementation.

The challenges in implementing the MEAL strategy appear to have hampered the appropriation of the methodology at country level. Further, it seems that in most countries, the development of outcomes was done with limited involvement of the change agents and the validation was limited to project staff thereby not unfolding the full potential of the OH methodology. The MTR considers that further efforts should be invested in reaching a broader consultation and consensus on the OH to ensure their credibility as they are fundamental to the programme stakeholders' reflection on their achievements and the adaptation of its implementation.

In terms of learning, the MTR concludes that the programme has invested significant resources with the objective to improve programme implementation based on MEAL. Many respondents confirm that the programme adapted based on learning and is continuously innovating. Meanwhile, MTR participants systematically conclude that more should be done in sharing the information coming from the MEAL system. Furthermore, a majority of respondent highlight that there is limited sharing of lessons across staff and stakeholders.

Summary of conclusions against research questions

Firstly, the MTR concludes that the WNCB intervention are **context specific**, based on accurate assessments and adapted to changing realities in-country. The programme overall aligns with work of governments and policy contexts. There are however concerns on the context responsiveness of the youth economic empowerment work in terms of market responsiveness.

In terms of **approaches** applied, the MTR concludes that the area-based, L&A, CP system strengthening, and supply chain approaches are implemented to a certain extend in all countries, but that there is scope to further foster their alignment and integration. Further, the supply chain approach with the aim to make the private sector act (Pathway 3) remains the least developed and requires more focus, resources, and expertise. Further, L&A capacities at national level require strengthening.

The MTR also concludes that strong **partnerships** are being developed, However, partnerships with the private sector and related ministries require additional attention. In most countries there are no

linkages to chambers or ministries of commerce (except for Vietnam) and in NL, the principal decision not to directly engage with individual companies seriously hampers progress on Pathway 3. Partnerships with other programmes are developed in some countries but not in others, limiting progress and leading to overlap.

The programme experienced initial challenges in functioning as a complex consortium, and in defining roles and responsibilities of Alliance members with different business cultures. In terms of internal collaboration, the different comparative advantages, sharing of expertise and complementarity demonstrate, on the one hand, the clear benefits of joint implementation, as well as coordination and collaboration of actions and sharing of resources. On the other hand, the different procedures, mandates, and business cultures remain important obstacles to effective collaboration. Staff programme-wide highlight poor coordination, communication, and duplication of efforts though these have improved. Further, there is a perceived inefficiency resulting from the delays in disbursements and delivery. While in-country staff recognise the support being received, the working groups set-up is especially seen as top-heavy in NL, and that there is insufficient manpower in-country.

The MTR further observes that “*the raison d’être*” of the WNCB is somewhat unclear as it operates both as a programme and a fund. While all elements are put in place to operate as a programme, WNCB is not at all branded (which was a choice), and several Alliance partners use the funding to pursue their regular activities on CP and combatting child labour (while others initiated new activities with WNCB funding). In NL, organisations are contracted to execute projects. The MTR concludes that either way is feasible, but a strategic decision needs to be taken in this regard and appropriate measures put in place. For example, if WNCB is more of a fund, the governance and MEAL structures can be much lighter. If it is more of a programme, organisational sensitivities need to be further dissolved to create one team, and its visibility needs strengthening.

Further, a key WNCB ambition is to ensure CEA so that communities can influence the design and adaptations of interventions. While there are strong indications for community engagement and in some country’s complaint mechanism, feedback and influence in adaptations seems less developed.

The MTR concludes that in terms of **learning**, the programme is to a certain extent succeeding in collecting relevant lessons from the field, transforming them into good practices and mainstreaming them into the implementation of the programme. Most respondents to the online questionnaire confirmed that the programme was successful (especially in India, Mali, and Uganda), or somehow successful, in improving its approach during the implementation based on the learning emanating from the MEAL capacities and teams. Meanwhile, most country reports highlight the need to improve the sharing of knowledge and more inclusive reflections on how to adapt the programme. The MTR found little evidence in the documentation provided and few examples during field visits to illustrate the adaptations mentioned by respondents and participants. The only exception is the adaptation required to mitigate the impact of COVID-19, which is not triggered by learning from the programme.

On a few occasions, learning has generated opportunities to bring the partners together to reflect on their joint efforts and improve synergies between their contributions. Country reports mention that a high number of participants confirmed they adapt and innovate in the context of project implementation. The observed discrepancies in presenting results on adaptation may be caused by confusion regarding the level of adaptation. Programme staff likely adapted and innovated at the tactical level and in the daily implementation of the programme, but there is little evidence of adaptation at the strategic level, including vis-a-vis the programme ToC or implementation strategy.

Key recommendations

In the country reports specific recommendations per country are made. The most important overarching recommendations for the WNCB to consider include to:

- 1) Strengthen partnerships with the private sector to fulfil the objective to make the private sector act. Invest in mapping relevant private sector actors (also beyond the areas targeted) and directly engage with them, including by providing support to businesses (and e.g. investment funds) to implement due diligence and other measures in their supply chains. Partner with chambers and ministries of commerce.
- 2) Strengthen the youth empowerment components to become more market responsive, longer term and possibly certified, and to make the private sector provide apprenticeships (as per TOC).
- 3) Strengthen in-country capacities for L&A and the links between NL and international L&A, with in-country L&A efforts, with government and private sector.
- 4) Ensure further linkages with important stakeholders and other programmes and initiatives, to prevent overlapping support, and conduct joint advocacy.
- 5) Revisit the MEAL strategy to assess how it could be made lighter but also inclusive of partners. Scale up the support to country teams to ensure that it can be fully implemented. Ensure that the programme collects the data and knowledge required for learning and adaptive management, and for the final evaluation.
- 6) Work with country teams to ensure a more in-depth understanding of the OH method and adapt the limited OH approach to the full one, including formulating outcomes with the people/institutions it claims to have changed, and not only internally, which questions validity.
- 7) Decide whether to further develop WNCB as a fund, or as a programme, and take relevant actions to adapt it accordingly, including in its branding/visibility and communications.
- 8) Takes measures to strengthen coordination and communication mechanisms internally, both in-country, with partners and as a broader Alliance.
- 9) Consider restructuring the team in NL. The MTR recommends keeping a Programme Management Unit (PMU) and a group of experts (replacing the working groups), providing both technical country support and undertaking L&A in NL and the EU. Make resources available to increase management capacities in the countries, including the expertise and manpower required for private sector engagement and L&A.
- 10) To improve the sustainability of the programme's achievements, develop an exit strategy, and involve a broad set of stakeholders in the reflection and in its subsequent implementation.
- 11) Scale up interventions in terms of additional locations, more sectors and including work on the informal sector. Combining the approaches (such as L&A to the government to adopt CLFZs) will allow to foster change beyond the areas reached with the area-based approach.
- 12) Further foster involvement and ownership by governments and the private sector, and increase collaboration and coordination with other actors, as means to scale-up.

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ACRONYMS

| | |
|------|---|
| CEA | Community Engagement and Accountability |
| CP | Child Protection |
| CRB | Child Rights and Business |
| CRBP | Children’s Rights and Business Principles |
| CSI | Country Specific Indicator |
| FGD | Focus Group Discussion |
| KII | Key Informant Interview |
| KPI | Key Programme Indicator |
| L&A | Lobby & Advocacy |
| L&L | Linking and Learning |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MEAL | Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning |
| MFA | Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| MSC | Most Significant Change |
| MTR | Mid-Term Review |
| NL | The Netherlands |
| OH | Outcome Harvesting |
| PMU | Programme Management Unit |
| RBC | Responsible Business Conduct |
| RBM | Results Based Management |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goal |
| SCL | Stop Child Labour (Coalition) |
| TI | Transition International |
| ToC | Theory of Change |
| ToR | Terms of References |
| VCCI | Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry |
| WG | Working Group |
| WNCB | Work: No Child’s Business |

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SUMMARY OF THE WNCB PROGRAMME

The Work: No Child's Business (WNCB) programme is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and aims to ensure *that children and youth are free from child labour and enjoy their rights to quality education and (future) decent work, thereby contributing to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8.7*. The WNCB Alliance, consisting of Save the Children Netherlands, UNICEF Netherlands and the Stop Child Labour coalition (SCL)⁴, works in accordance with four pathways of change, each consisting of a diverse set of strategies and interventions that vary by country and build on each other to promote sustainable change. The Alliance works with national and local partners, which differ per country and include NGOs and government partners.

The objectives (planned long-term outcomes) of the pathways are:

- Children are empowered and have improved access to (quality) formal education, bridge or transitional schooling, and youth employment within a supportive family and community environment (Pathway 1).
- Governments have enforced relevant child rights-based laws and have implemented policies on child labour, education, youth economic empowerment and social security (Pathway 2).
- The private sector takes full responsibility for preventing and addressing child labour (Pathway 3).
- The EU, Dutch government and international/multilateral organisations act in support of the elimination of child labour and fulfil their obligation to protect by setting and reinforcing due diligence policies and laws (Pathway 4).

The Alliance has defined key assumptions and barriers that underlie the Theory of Change (ToC), and which have supported the decisions underpinning the approaches adopted throughout this programme. The key assumptions and barriers are:

- There is a lack of awareness of child rights at all levels.
- There is a lack of opportunities for alternative livelihoods for parents/ caregivers and children.
- There is a lack of effective legislation and/or policies on child labour and education and implementation/ enforcement thereof.
- Collaborative efforts between governments, businesses and communities are often weak or even non-existent.
- Beyond a lack of awareness and knowledge, supply chain actors lack the commitment and technical capacity to respect and promote child rights thereby allowing for poor labour practices in supply chains.
- There is a lack of reliable data on, and insights in, the prevalence of child labour.

WNCBs guiding principle is that no child up to the age of 15 should be in child labour. In particular:

- No child between 15-18 years old should be in the worst forms of child labour. All children in this age group should be supported to continue formal, full-time, and quality education.
- Bridge schooling or any other form of non-formal education for children up to the age of 15 can only serve to prepare them to (re)enter the formal education system.

⁴ WNCB, n.d., Onboarding work: No child's business.

- Vocational training or any other form of non-formal education for children between 15-18 years old is only supported in case formal education is not possible or viable and should serve to prepare them to enter decent age-appropriate employment.
- Governments remain responsible for providing formal, full-time, and quality education to all children of compulsory education age as set by national law.

Project teams from various WNCB Alliance members collaborate in Côte d'Ivoire, India, Jordan, Mali, Uganda, Vietnam, and the Netherlands (NL), to address the root causes of child labour through an integrated approach (see WNCB's organisational set-up in annex C). They support children to stop working and empower them to pursue an education in a supportive environment with quality formal education and, if relevant, bridge schooling.

Given that the programme operates in seven countries, with many partner organisations sharing the same objectives, monitoring results, and learning from activities, its implementation requires a strong Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) capacity. The programme actively sets-up systems and tools to nurture accountability, and the key instruments developed by the programme are presented below. Reviewing the project documents, tools, and guidance testifies to the importance of MEAL. The MEAL protocol⁵ is a foundational document for the programme and was developed with the concern of upward and downward accountability: upward toward the financial partners of the project and downwards toward the communities where the programme is being implemented. Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) rests on the systematic use of participatory approaches, information sharing, feedback loops and complaint mechanisms. Mapping of available accountability mechanisms was also planned. Given the diversity of contexts in which the programme is implemented, and the variety of partnership arrangements used to implement its activities, a protocol was developed to nurture conformity of collected data and a MEAL specific workplan was drafted⁶. Further, Working Groups (WGs) were established to facilitate cross-learning and alignment of reporting. The seven WGs are: Communication, Child Rights and Business Principles (CRBP), Research, MEAL, Gender, Education, and Lobby & Advocacy (L&A) and Responsible Business Conduct (RBC).⁷

Beyond the straightforward monitoring of progress against the indicators, the WNCB also uses different tools to capture and understand transformations and assess the programme's contribution to these changes. These tools are Outcome Harvesting (OH) and SenseMaker⁸, which aim to define the contribution and/or attribution of the programme to these transformations and should be analysed against the ToC of the programme. While the roll-out of the MEAL agenda is the responsibility of every staff, WGs and tools were developed to ensure its consistency and quality across the programme. MEAL Plans at country level have been developed to define timelines, responsibilities, and common MEAL objectives of the in-country partners and required the development of Country Specific Indicators (CSIs) based on the ToC. It also included requirements on downward accountability and budget.⁹ These country specific plans were overseen by the MEAL WG.

For the literature review outlining the above in further detail, see separate document.

⁵ Work: No Child's Business Alliance, 2019, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning Protocol 2019-2024.

⁶ Annual MEAL Timeline, 2021, (PowerPoint Presentation).

⁷ WNCB, Onboarding work: No child's business.

⁸ SenseMaker is a narrative-based research methodology that makes it possible to capture and analyse a large quantity of stories in order to understand complex change, Work: No Child's Business Alliance, 2019, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning Protocol 2019-2024, 2 December 2019, p. 5.

⁹ Work: No Child's Business Alliance, 2019, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning Protocol 2019-2024, 2 December 2019, p. 23.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE MTR

The Mid-Term Review (MTR) process has been divided in three parts, undertaken by different actors, covering this report but also separately a mid-line KPI survey and the mid-line SenseMaker report.

The objective of this part of the MTR undertaken by TI is to facilitate a participative MTR of the WNCB and provide the Alliance Members an ‘outsider’s perspective’ on achievements, the quality of the work, and the way the partners collaborate, and learn. This MTR seeks to review the process of the implementation of the programme along its four pathways in the seven partner countries. It is also purposed to facilitate a discussion among local and international partners and collaboratively review improvements that can be made. The MTR has a strong focus on the programmatic approaches, capacities, collaboration and complementarity of partners, the MEAL system and its structures and procedures, and the extent to which participatory approaches towards CEA are developed and used. The review is conducted over a 4-month period beginning June to end of September 2022 and covers MTR interventions in Côte d’Ivoire, India, Jordan, Mali, Uganda and Vietnam, and NL.

The MTR consists of the following outputs:

- A draft, and final literature review document
- 7 Workshop reports
- 7 MTR Country reports
- This global MTR meta-analyses report
- A validation workshop and PPP

1.3 SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY

The overall approach of the MTR is in line with the approach of the programme presented in the MEAL protocol.¹⁰ It builds on tools developed by the programme and the investment made by the Alliance in OH. The approach to the MTR is by design and intention participatory and involved Alliance and partner staff and stakeholders in analysing progress and formulating recommendations for the programme. The approach is intended to build ownership and consensus on the findings amongst the stakeholders. Similarly, participation in developing the findings and conclusions will foster ownership and facilitate integration of the recommendations in the programme.

Guided by a set of research questions (see Annex A), the MTR reviews the programme functioning and results with a special focus on the criteria of relevance, sustainability, coherence, efficiency, and effectiveness.¹¹ The MTR process began with a literature review, which fed into a short online survey targeting project and programme staff, partners and the donors. Based on survey results, the tools for the country-level KIIs were developed. A series of MTR country workshops were conducted per country. The data collection tool questions for the MTR are presented in Annex A. Tools were contextualised, tested in-country, slightly adapted where needed, and the field research team were trained on their application. Primary data collection and workshop facilitation were conducted in English, French, Dutch, Arabic, Hindi and local languages.

Many of the tool questions (mainly KII and workshops) were open, designed to allow respondents to provide original answers using their knowledge and perceptions. Each question has at least 30 respondents and the validity of the conclusions relies extensively on the credibility of key informants

¹⁰Work: No Child’s Business Alliance, 2019, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning Protocol 2019-2024, 2 December 2019.

¹¹ WNCB, Terms of Reference, the outcome harvesting community of practice in WNCB.

and the documentation, and the neutrality of the evaluation team. Triangulation is ensured using the primary data collected from these multiple tools and stakeholders and reported data from the programme documentation. Data is analysed qualitatively, and for closed questions, quantitatively. For several open questions, post-collection categorisation was applied, thereby quantifying qualitative data. From the data analysis, descriptive statistics combining the data collected from different tools are produced, as well as graphs and tables. Graphs and tables present all answers provided by respondents and the percentage of respondents mentioning certain categories (answers), are ranked by the most mentioned categories. A low percentage indicate that a category was relatively less mentioned by respondents. Some questions were not asked in all tools and, respondents did not provide answers to questions they had limited knowledge on, hence a difference in the number of respondents per question.

The data set has been shared with WNCB, and seven country reports and six workshop reports were completed. These fed into the draft and final versions of the global MTR report, the latter of which was validated in a workshop and comments and suggestions from the workshop have been incorporated.

TI applied a combination of two sampling methods to identify interview targets: purposive sampling¹² and snowball Sampling.¹³ The WNCB provided initial lists of key informants, which were complemented by TI to ensure independence, and included some of the change agents mentioned in the outcomes harvested. TI was explicitly requested not to collect any primary data in communities among direct beneficiaries, which is happening separately. The following tools were developed, and targets reached.

| Tool | Target reached | MTR participants |
|--|-----------------------|--|
| Tool 1 Online survey | 166 | Alliance and partner staff |
| Tool 2 KIIs senior programme staff/donors | 32 | Senior programme and project staff (not in workshop), donors |
| Tool 3 KIIs – face to face | 144 | National/local-level stakeholders (national and local government, local leaders, including youth, women) |
| Tool 4 KII private sector | 38 | National and local-level businesses |
| Tool 5 Workshops | 143 | Programme and partner staff |

Figure 1: Tools and targets

The reliability of this MTR is to an extent compromised as the team did not have access to the SenseMaker report, and neither the midline data against the Key Programme Indicators (KPIs). Further, TI was instructed to keep the MTR light, minimise the burden on country teams, and not to undertake fieldwork as the SenseMaker part of the MTR was also ongoing. A compromise was reached to interview a small number of local stakeholders, but no verifications by the target groups of the interventions took place. However, as a learning exercise, most staff found the process and outcomes interesting, and the process gave voice to all staff, including the local partners and local stakeholders and change agents. However, the availability of programme staff was limited in the Netherlands due to the holiday season. Further in the Netherlands the WNCB team decided to reduce the workshop in the Netherlands to only one day, and with very few people, instead of a three days' workshop with all Alliance and partner staff,

¹² A sampling method through which the intentional selection of respondents is based on their knowledge of the subject and/or their direct participation in the activities studied – especially for the initial survey, the KIIs with staff, partners, donors and national counterparts, and for the fieldwork.

¹³A sampling method through which the initial respondents are used to identify additional informants – applied in this MTR among local key informants in-country).

as was done in the other countries. TI noted in the comments to the report the feelings of exclusion due to this decision.

This report presents the meta-analysis across the seven countries, with in Annex D, the seven country reports. Separate workshop reports were developed and shared with country teams for internal use.

The figure below presents the profiles of the 395¹⁴ MTR participants¹⁵:

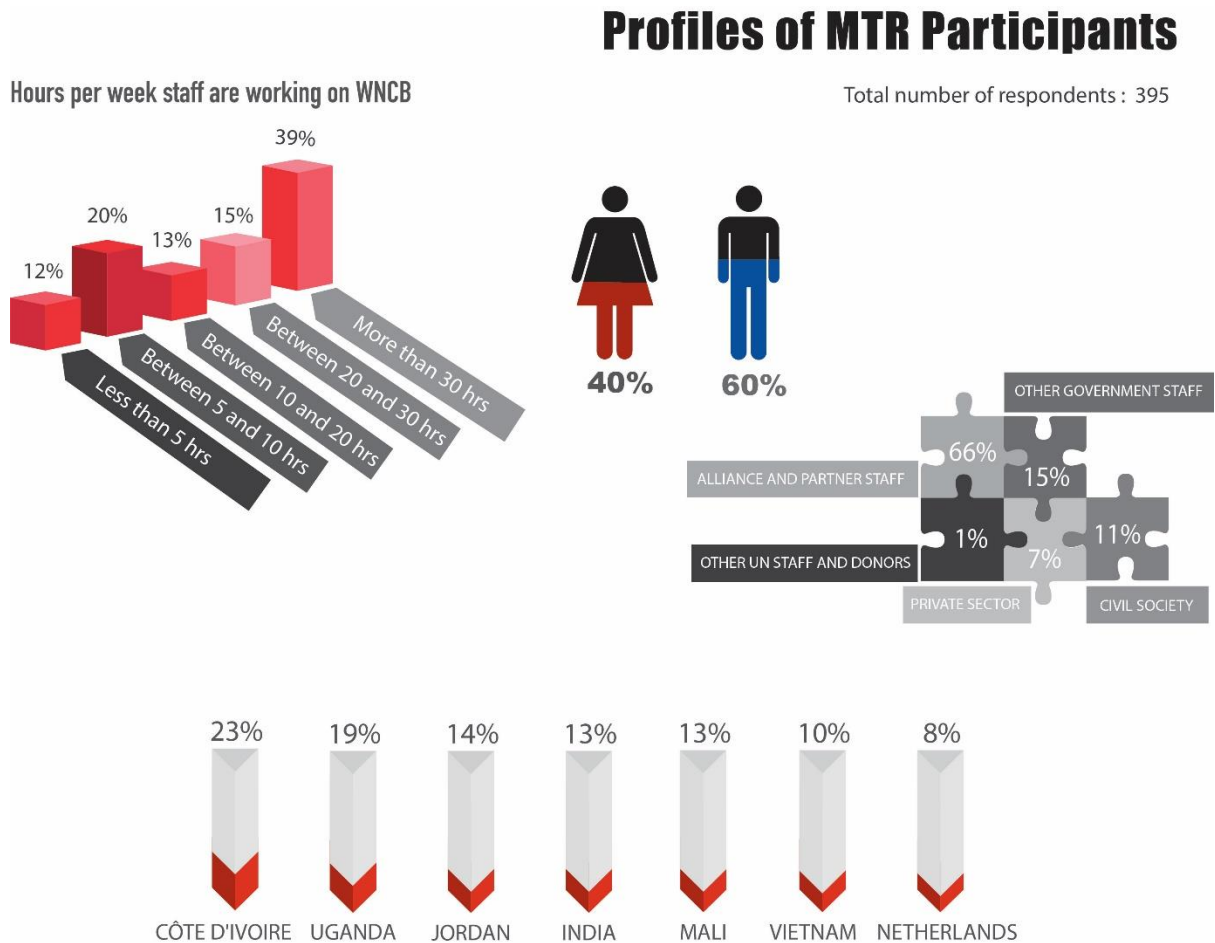


Figure 2: Profiles of MTR participants

¹⁴ Cote d'Ivoire: 87, India: 51, Jordan: 55, Mali: 46, Netherlands: 37 Uganda:78, Vietnam: 41

¹⁵ The inclusion of the implementing partners in the survey and workshops meant in Vietnam, where most partners are of the Government, that there are in fact more government respondents, but these are listed as partner staff as they are implementing and are thus internal to the WNCB.

2. MAIN FINDINGS PER CRITERIA

2.1 RELEVANCE

Addressing root causes

According to the WNCB "Poverty is often not the decisive factor in pushing children into work. Research shows that children's wages only contribute marginally to the family's income. Key reasons why children are working and not going to school are social norms and traditions, social exclusion and discrimination, as well as a poor functioning education system."¹⁶ However, as per the table below, the private sector, national and local actors most often note poverty as the root cause of child labour, across all countries.

| What are the underlying causes of child labour? According to private sector, national and local stakeholders, interviews (N=168) | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|-------|--------|------|--------|---------|--------|
| | Côte d'Ivoire | India | Jordan | Mali | Uganda | Vietnam | Global |
| Poverty, poor access to basic services and social protection | 82% | 90% | 79% | 81% | 82% | 70% | 81% |
| Lack of awareness on child rights and benefits of education | 39% | 20% | 7% | 62% | 31% | 70% | 35% |
| Poor quality and access to education (infrastructure, costs, distance, teaching methods, school dropout) | 41% | 40% | 48% | 33% | 12% | 0% | 30% |
| Parenting issues (alcoholism, child neglect etc) | 22% | 0% | 24% | 5% | 59% | 10% | 29% |
| Social/cultural norms and beliefs | 22% | 10% | 45% | 10% | 12% | 10% | 20% |
| Expensive and insufficient workforce | 33% | 0% | 3% | 24% | 2% | 10% | 14% |
| Most orphans are involved in child labour | 8% | 0% | 0% | 5% | 22% | 0% | 10% |
| External factors (COVID-19, insecurity, conflicts) | 0% | 0% | 24% | 5% | 8% | 0% | 7% |
| Peer pressure, other youth working and no role models | 0% | 0% | 0% | 10% | 12% | 10% | 5% |
| Poor legislations and capacity of CP systems | 4% | 0% | 3% | 5% | 2% | 20% | 4% |
| Lack of livelihoods and descent jobs for adults | 2% | 30% | 0% | 0% | 4% | 0% | 4% |
| Cross-border trade and migration | 4% | 0% | 0% | 5% | 2% | 10% | 3% |
| Proximity to mining sites | 0% | 0% | 0% | 10% | 4% | 0% | 2% |

Figure 3: Underlying causes of child labour

Per the figure below, most local stakeholders and about half of Alliance and partner staff think that WNCB is working to address all these root causes of child labour. The private sector actors consulted are slightly less convinced that this is the case.

¹⁶ WNCB, Work: No Child's Business: Guiding principles & Key messages

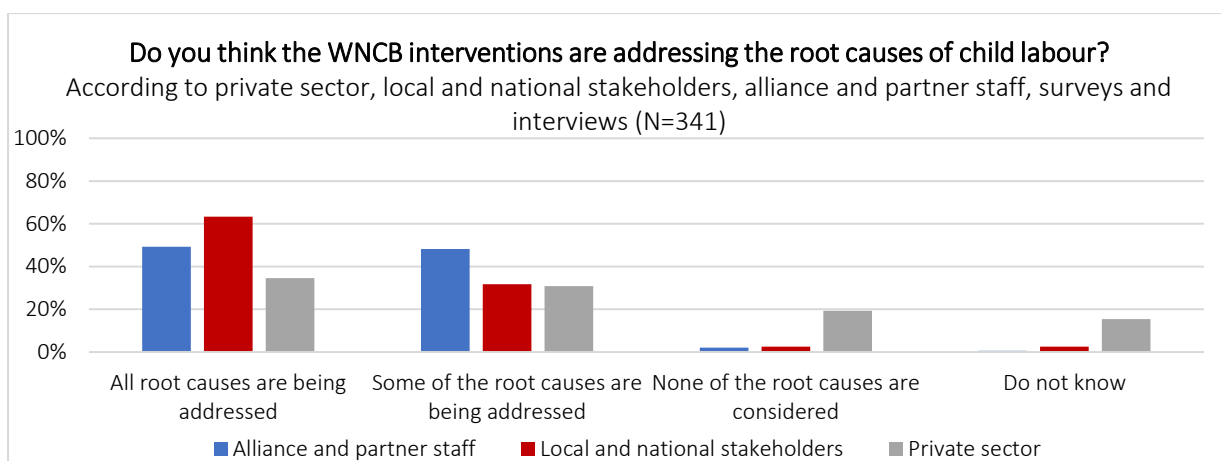


Figure 4: WNCB interventions addressing the root causes

The table below summarises how WNCB interventions are addressing the root causes of child labour, per country. Globally most efforts appear to focus on education and other alternatives to child labour, and awareness-raising on child labour. Differences per country are important.

| How WNCB interventions are addressing the root causes of child labour? According to private sector, local and national stakeholders, alliance and partner staff, survey, interviews and workshops (N=286) | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|-------|--------|------|-----|--------|---------|--------|--|
| | Côte d'Ivoire | India | Jordan | Mali | NL | Uganda | Vietnam | Global | |
| Interventions on education or other alternatives to child labour | 77% | 30% | 11% | 59% | 42% | 74% | 29% | 57% | |
| Awareness raising on child labour | 48% | 53% | 61% | 57% | 0% | 63% | 71% | 54% | |
| (Economic) empowerment and support to families and communities | 39% | 38% | 39% | 59% | 33% | 47% | 58% | 45% | |
| Capacity development and strengthening of national CP systems | 8% | 40% | 28% | 16% | 0% | 24% | 58% | 22% | |
| Involvement of CBOs and working with communities and local leaders | 4% | 50% | 11% | 12% | 8% | 15% | 0% | 14% | |
| L&A and working with governments | 1% | 18% | 11% | 6% | 17% | 8% | 21% | 9% | |
| Changing social and cultural norms and taking gender into account | 6% | 18% | 0% | 4% | 42% | 8% | 0% | 8% | |
| Partnership with the private sector, supply chain approach and involvement with the informal sector | 3% | 0% | 0% | 4% | 25% | 18% | 8% | 7% | |
| Addressing the worst forms of child labour | 8% | 0% | 0% | 12% | 0% | 3% | 4% | 5% | |
| By applying an area-based approach | 0% | 3% | 6% | 0% | 50% | 2% | 0% | 3% | |
| Interventions are contextualised and adjusted | 3% | 3% | 0% | 2% | 25% | 2% | 4% | 3% | |
| In combining different approaches | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 1% | |
| Setting up of accountability mechanisms and monitoring of activities | 1% | 0% | 0% | 2% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 1% | |

Figure 5: Ways WNCB is addressing the root causes

Considering figure 3 above on root causes, an important observation by the MTR team is that while the WNCB works economic support to families and economic empowerment of youth, the scope of WNCB to address the most mentioned root cause (poverty) is limited. Indeed, while some interventions are geared to address this root cause, one in three MTR participants refer to the need for more support to families to better address poverty reduction, as per the table below. Especially in Vietnam and Jordan this is called for.

There is further a strong call to increase L&A for policy enhancement, collaboration with government and increasing government actions to address root causes, mostly highlighted in Uganda. Mali is highlighting the need for more Interventions on education, while in India working more with the private

sector and a strong supply chain approach is called for to better address the root causes. In Côte d'Ivoire more work on fostering norm change is called for.

| What is lacking in WNCB interventions in addressing the root causes of child labour? According to private sector, local and national stakeholders, alliance and partner staff, survey, interviews and workshops (N=168) | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|-------|--------|------|-----|--------|---------|--------|
| | Côte d'Ivoire | India | Jordan | Mali | NL | Uganda | Vietnam | Global |
| Economic support to families and communities | 0% | 22% | 57% | 25% | 17% | 31% | 79% | 31% |
| L&A policy enhancement, collaboration with government and increasing government actions | 11% | 28% | 35% | 0% | 17% | 44% | 4% | 30% |
| A bigger scope and more funding | 11% | 0% | 47% | 0% | 0% | 13% | 0% | 18% |
| An integrated holistic, multi-sectoral approach and coordination and collaboration among partners | 11% | 22% | 14% | 0% | 50% | 15% | 4% | 16% |
| Interventions on education and building of classrooms and schools | 0% | 0% | 14% | 50% | 25% | 11% | 4% | 11% |
| Working with the private sector and strong supply chain approach | 22% | 44% | 0% | 0% | 17% | 0% | 4% | 8% |
| Long term support and follow up of beneficiaries | 0% | 0% | 8% | 25% | 0% | 7% | 8% | 7% |
| Changing social norms/behaviours, gender transformative interventions | 56% | 0% | 4% | 0% | 0% | 7% | 0% | 7% |
| (More) interventions for strengthening of the CP system | 11% | 0% | 2% | 0% | 8% | 4% | 0% | 3% |
| Increasing community-based support, contextualised interventions, flexibility in the ways of working | 0% | 0% | 2% | 0% | 17% | 4% | 0% | 3% |
| Awareness raising of the community | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 6% | 4% | 2% |
| Involvement with the informal sector | 0% | 6% | 0% | 0% | 17% | 0% | 0% | 2% |
| Linking decisions in countries to the context in NL | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 17% | 0% | 0% | 1% |
| Support to project staff | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 2% | 0% | 1% |
| Considering COVID 19 effects | 0% | 0% | 2% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 1% |

Figure 6: Lacking in addressing the root causes

Relevance to national policies and ownership

Most staff (72%) and local and national stakeholders (85%) consulted confirm that the programme is well coordinated and in line with ongoing work and policy contexts of national and provincial governments. Explanations presented below point to good alignment with national legislations/plans and policies, and involvement of local and national institutions in activities/joint activities.

| Why the programme is well coordinated and in line with ongoing work of national and provincial government, including the policy context. According to national stakeholders, alliance and partner staff, interviews and workshops (N=100) | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|--------|------|-----|--------|---------|--------|
| | Côte d'Ivoire | Jordan | Mali | NL | Uganda | Vietnam | Global |
| Alignment with the national legislations, plans and policies in place | 91% | 90% | 21% | 67% | 100% | 0% | 66% |
| Involvement of local and national institutions in activities and joint activities | 9% | 10% | 75% | 50% | 100% | 100% | 53% |
| Policy enhancement and law enforcement with government | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 95% | 11% | 19% |
| Activities include capacity development of state agents | 3% | 0% | 42% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 13% |
| Common understanding of child labour concepts | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 78% | 7% |
| Existence of national L&A strategies and policy papers are shared | 0% | 0% | 0% | 17% | 0% | 0% | 1% |
| Joint forces with other CSOs and other strategic partners | 0% | 0% | 0% | 17% | 0% | 0% | 1% |
| Participation in national events | 0% | 0% | 0% | 17% | 0% | 0% | 1% |

Figure 7: Reasons the programme is in line with government work

Those who believe the programme is not well coordinated and in line with ongoing work of national and provincial governments, mainly attribute this to national level engagement and advocacy strategies being still in development, and that there are poor synergies and experience-sharing with institutions. In India, there is a complaint that Pathways 3 and 4 are not aligned with ongoing discussions on business and child rights and on local realities. Conversely, staff in NL point to some governments not always providing a steady base for collaboration, see figure below.

| Why the programme is not well coordinated and in line with ongoing work of national and provincial government, including the policy context - According to national stakeholders, alliance and partner staff, survey, interviews and workshops (N=61) | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|-------|--------|------|------|--------|---------|--------|
| | Côte d'Ivoire | India | Jordan | Mali | NL | Uganda | Vietnam | Global |
| National level engagement and advocacy strategies are in development | 0% | 73% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 82% | 0% | 43% |
| Poor synergy and experience sharing with institutions | 91% | 9% | 100% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 41% |
| Pathways 3 and 4 are not aligned with ongoing discussions on business and child rights and local realities | 0% | 73% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 13% |
| High staff turnover and staff roles are not clearly defined | 0% | 18% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 5% |
| Governments do not always provide a steady base for collaboration | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 5% | 0% | 3% |
| Lack of multi-sectoral approach | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 5% | 0% | 2% |

Figure 8: Reasons why the programme is not in line with government work

Relevance to the changing contexts

In almost all countries, WNCB alliance and partner staff believe that interventions are based on accurate and up-to-date analyses (mainly the baseline). It is interesting to note that the NL-based staff agree, while no baseline or assessments were done in NL or EU, such as on supply chain actors etc.

A survey was done over the geographical context, based on the survey results, we were able to identify and reach hot spots with the worst cases of child labour, like the landfill and vegetable central market. The intervention needs more development to advance it from rescue to empowerment and expand areas of intervention. Programme staff, Jordan

Overall, countries staff express that they feel that the interventions are responsive to the contexts, as presented in the graph below. Jordan-based Alliance and partner staff are less convinced and point to not all sectors being covered.

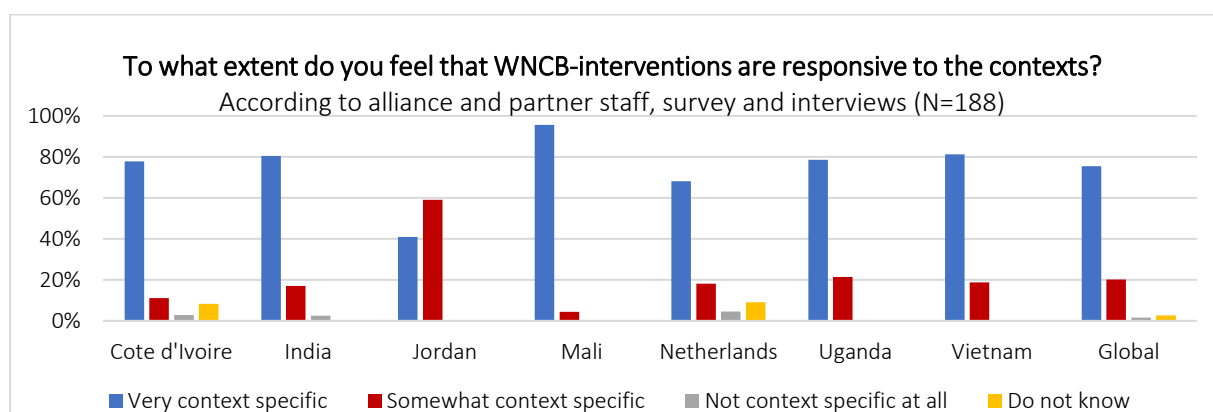


Figure 9: Context responsiveness of WNCB interventions

To increase the context responsiveness, the following suggestions are made by the staff, half of whom call for extending the intervention’s scope. Differences per country are significant, most notably in Asia where is call for more L&A.

| What would be needed to improve context responsiveness? According to alliance and partner staff, interviews and workshops (N=101) | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|-------|--------|------|-----|--------|---------|--------|
| | Côte d'Ivoire | India | Jordan | Mali | NL | Uganda | Vietnam | Global |
| Extend the scope of the intervention | 93% | 0% | 100% | 88% | 0% | 0% | 10% | 50% |
| Focus on the multisectoral approach, and diversify activities | 93% | 0% | 92% | 0% | 11% | 0% | 0% | 39% |
| Increase interventions on education | 93% | 67% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 5% | 0% | 32% |
| Increase economic support to the community | 0% | 8% | 92% | 6% | 0% | 86% | 0% | 29% |
| Increase capacity development activities and capacity development of CP system | 0% | 67% | 92% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 80% | 25% |
| Focus more on L&A activities at national and international levels and involve more governments | 7% | 92% | 0% | 6% | 56% | 0% | 80% | 25% |
| Change social and cultural norms | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 86% | 0% | 16% |
| Avoid delays in funding | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 86% | 0% | 16% |
| Increase gender responsiveness and targeting | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 86% | 0% | 16% |
| Promote environmentally friendly practices | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 86% | 0% | 16% |
| Strengthen collaboration with local actors and strengthen the bottom-up approach | 4% | 67% | 0% | 6% | 33% | 0% | 10% | 12% |
| Flexibility, constantly adapt to the needs and continuous analysis of the context | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 22% | 5% | 0% | 4% |
| Strengthen outcomes harvesting | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 22% | 0% | 0% | 2% |
| Strengthen partnership with private sector | 0% | 8% | 0% | 0% | 11% | 0% | 0% | 2% |

Figure 10: Needed to improve the context responsiveness of the interventions

Further, all staff confirm that the stated objectives remain relevant to the issues central to child labour. They express that there are constant evaluations and adaptations, that the programme focuses on different areas relevant for the child rights, but also indicate that more engagement with the private sector is needed. Further, staff are of the opinion that the programme has responded with flexibility to changing circumstances over time, with some hesitations among NL-based staff on the latter. The flexibility in terms of the COVID-19 response is notably mentioned, although it also caused serious delays, and Jordan staff report poor adaptation, as presented in the figure below. While adaptation to budget is only mentioned in Cote d’Ivoire, it is important to note that some countries like India, Jordan and Vietnam specifically decided to spend part of their budget on COVID response interventions, next to the planned activities.¹⁷

¹⁷ 2020, Annual Report 2020, Joining forces to scale up action against child labour.

| How has the programme adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic? According to alliance and partner staff, workshops (N=85) | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------|------|-------|--------|------|------|--------|---------|--------|
| | d'Ivoire | Côte | India | Jordan | Mali | NL | Uganda | Vietnam | Global |
| Online staff meetings | 95% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 100% | 100% | 72% |
| Provision of COVID19 kits and awareness raising on safety measures | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 62% |
| Adapting strategies to reach communities | 100% | 100% | 67% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 61% |
| Adaptation to the budget | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 24% |
| Delays in delivery | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 24% |
| Provision of home learning kits | 0% | 0% | 67% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 100% | 20% |
| Constant follow-up on vulnerable families(online) | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 9% |
| Creating new activities (online) | 0% | 0% | 67% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 9% |
| Introduction of remedial centres | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 9% |
| Poor adaptation (targets/budget) | 0% | 0% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 5% |
| Orientation of the intervention on COVID-19 related issues (teenage pregnancies etc) | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 4% |

Figure 11: Ways the programme adapted to COVID-19

In Côte d'Ivoire, it is further highlighted that adjustments were made to the selection criteria of beneficiaries in the areas of intervention. Further, almost all staff highlight that they are innovating and changing how they work. The innovations made per country are summarised in the table below, and the MTR team suggests that these innovations are shared and discussed among country teams and partners to assess their applicability in other countries and contexts.

| How and what are you innovating? According to alliance and partner staff, workshops (N=90) | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------|------|-------|--------|------|------|--------|---------|--------|
| | d'Ivoire | Côte | India | Jordan | Mali | NL | Uganda | Vietnam | Global |
| Specifying targets (i.e women, elders, specific communities) | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 100% | 37% |
| Developing new awareness raising strategies in schools and communities | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 33% |
| Introducing OH | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 29% |
| Introducing/working on new models for vocational training & economic empowerment (community-based, entrepreneurship model etc) | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 28% |
| Capacity development of country staff in L&A and L&L within and across countries | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 100% | 0% | 25% |
| Addressing the double reporting of the project beneficiaries/participants | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 20% |
| Partnerships with other relevant actors | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 20% |
| Innovations are done based on the feedback and realities | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 16% |
| Changing ways of meetings and sharing information | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 9% |
| Addressing gender issues | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 8% |
| Contextualisation of CRBP | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 8% |

Figure 12: How and what are you innovating

Alignment to other programmes

The MTR observes a lack of collaboration with other relevant programmes in some countries. For example, UNICEF chose not to be part of the Alliance in India, was not aware of the programme and its objectives, and the programme is not part of important national initiatives. In other countries, the

collaboration with ILO (who also receives funding to work on child labour) works well. In Vietnam UNICEF works closely with ILO in our advocacy on the development of the national programme on child labour, 2021-2025 as well as in public awareness raising on prevention of child labour e.g in the commemoration of the International World Day against Child Labour. Also, in Côte d'Ivoire ILO and WNCB share intervention areas and undertake joint missions.

In Côte D'Ivoire, when the two projects started (ILO and WNCB) detailed planning at country level, we sat down together and then discussed quite a bit in terms of selection of intervention area and then the division of labour. On country level ILO was involved. National stakeholder

Regarding the programme adapting to increase its alignment with other related or thematically aligned programme interventions, staff generally feel this is happening (although less so among NL-based staff). Especially in Côte d'Ivoire and Jordan, explicit alignment with other programmes is highlighted, and in Uganda and NL reference is made to the joint participation in the commemoration of the International World Day against Child Labour with other organisations. However, there is scope for increased collaboration and synergies, as explained by a staff member in Vietnam.

Some of children who have special circumstance received overlapping support from different programmes including the WNCB programme, yet there were other children who did not receive any support under any programme. Programme staff, Vietnam

2.2 COHERENCE

Internal collaboration

With respect to coherence, a key issue is the **functioning and coherence within the Alliance**, and their partners. Alliance members report initial difficulties functioning as a complex consortium and defining the WGs and Alliance members' roles and responsibilities as they have different business cultures.

The collaboration between the WNCB partners was very bad in the beginning, a lot of tension and searching and not being open to each other and each other's approaches. Especially the first year, after that it really improved. During the COVID time it has really improved, also due to new people who are fresh and open. Programme staff

Subsequent improvements can be seen in the figure below, as most staff now indicate good collaborations between the partners, although there remains space for improvements. In India, internal collaboration remains complicated, as outlined in detail in the India country report. In Vietnam, Côte d'Ivoire and Uganda Alliance and partner staff are most satisfied with the collaboration.

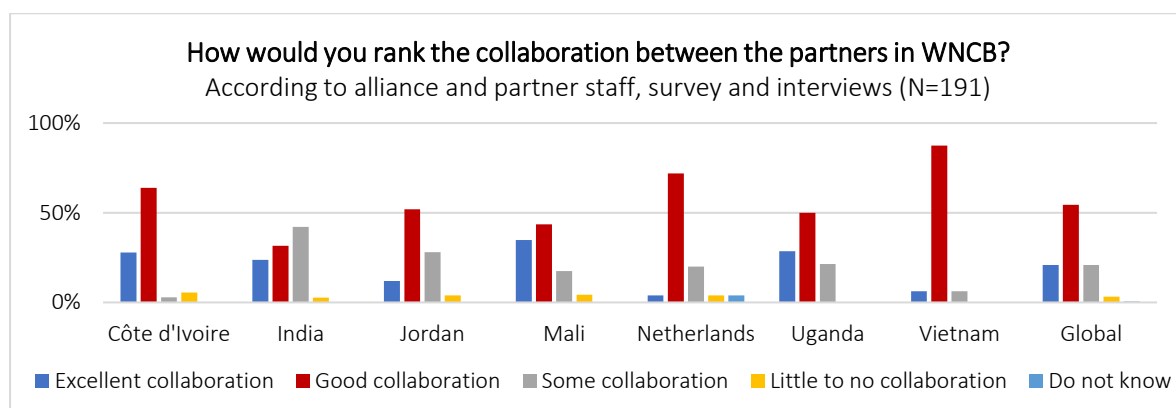


Figure 13: Collaboration between WNCB partners

The most frequently mentioned explanations for the good collaboration, according to Alliance and partner staff are that there are (regular) follow ups/meetings, and that people learn from each other and share experiences. However, albeit limited cross country exchanges, references are mainly made to in-country sharing and learning, and not across countries. Further, especially in Vietnam good collaboration is noted with and between local partners. The NL based staff mostly refer to a gradual increase in trust. In Jordan the MTR found lack of sharing information and using examples from each other. In terms of visibility and consistent messaging the local programme partners tend to channel their own messages while interacting with the local and national stakeholders and the media without mentioning WNCB and other partners

Survey results show that most programme staff see the comparative advantages of the different Alliance members, their sharing of expertise and complementarity as the main successes of joint implementation. The related coordination and collaboration of actions and sharing of resources is also highlighted. Per the figure below, 17% mention reduction of child labour and related impact.

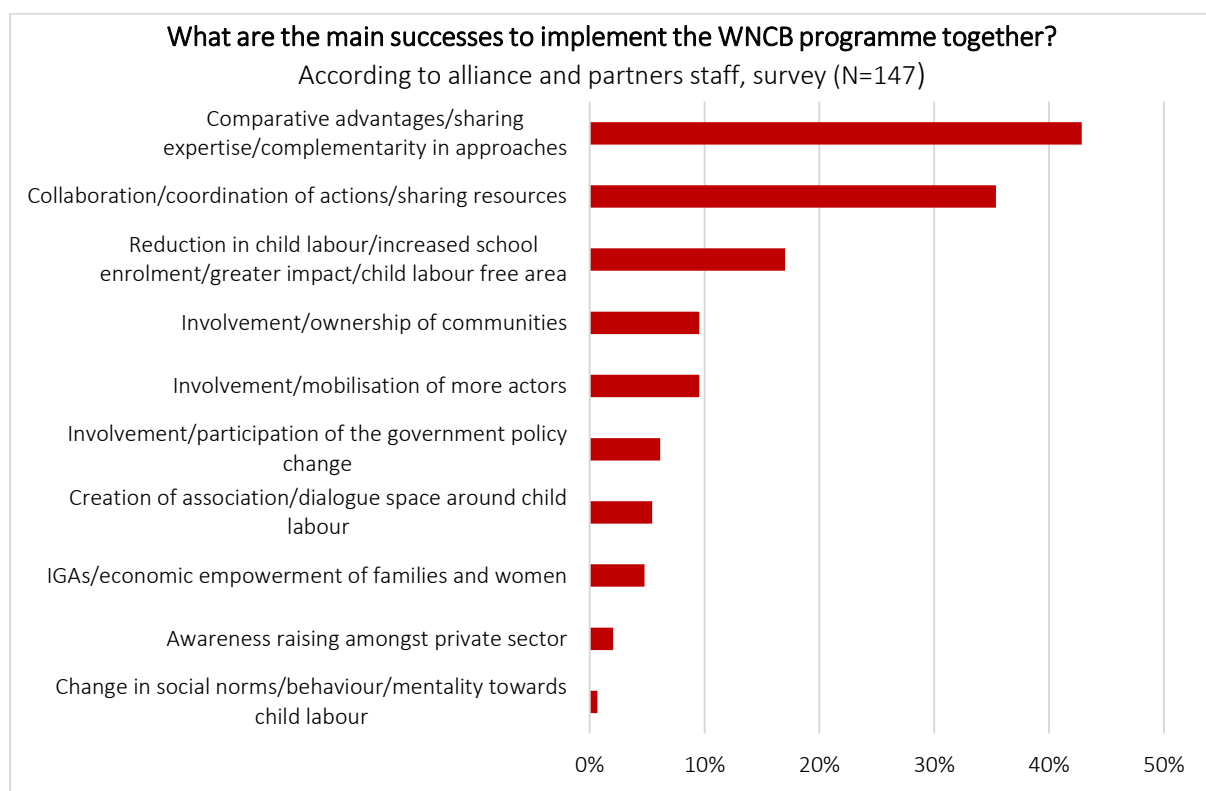


Figure 14: Main successes of implementing the WNCB programme together

Those who are less positive about collaboration mainly mention (in order of most mentioned) poor coordination leading to duplication of activities, a lack of transparency and competition between organisations, and poor communication between members. Others highlight problems with the WGs that show poor coordination and create heavy workloads, followed by understaffing and high staff turnover, and poor support to local partners.

There are numerous WGs within the structure of HIVOS. Each group has its own budget and activity plan. Each WG sends emails directly to the country teams regarding training, studies, meetings, etc. which creates confusion, inconsistency, and conflict in the schedule of meetings and training, and wastes a lot of time. There is high staff turn-over in the WGs, and country team doesn't have sufficient information on their responsibilities

This results in overlapping meetings, conflicting messages and thus in losing progress, and data, so the working groups start reaching out again asking for duplicated information or work. Programme staff, Jordan

We could have activated a core team/coordination committee, from the heads of each partner organisation for better/smooth functioning of the WNCB programme. Programme staff, India

Per the figure below, in addition to poor coordination and communication and duplication of efforts, 1 in 3 staff feel that there is lack of complementarity in knowledge and expertise. Further, there is perceived competition among partners and procedures and budgets are not aligned.

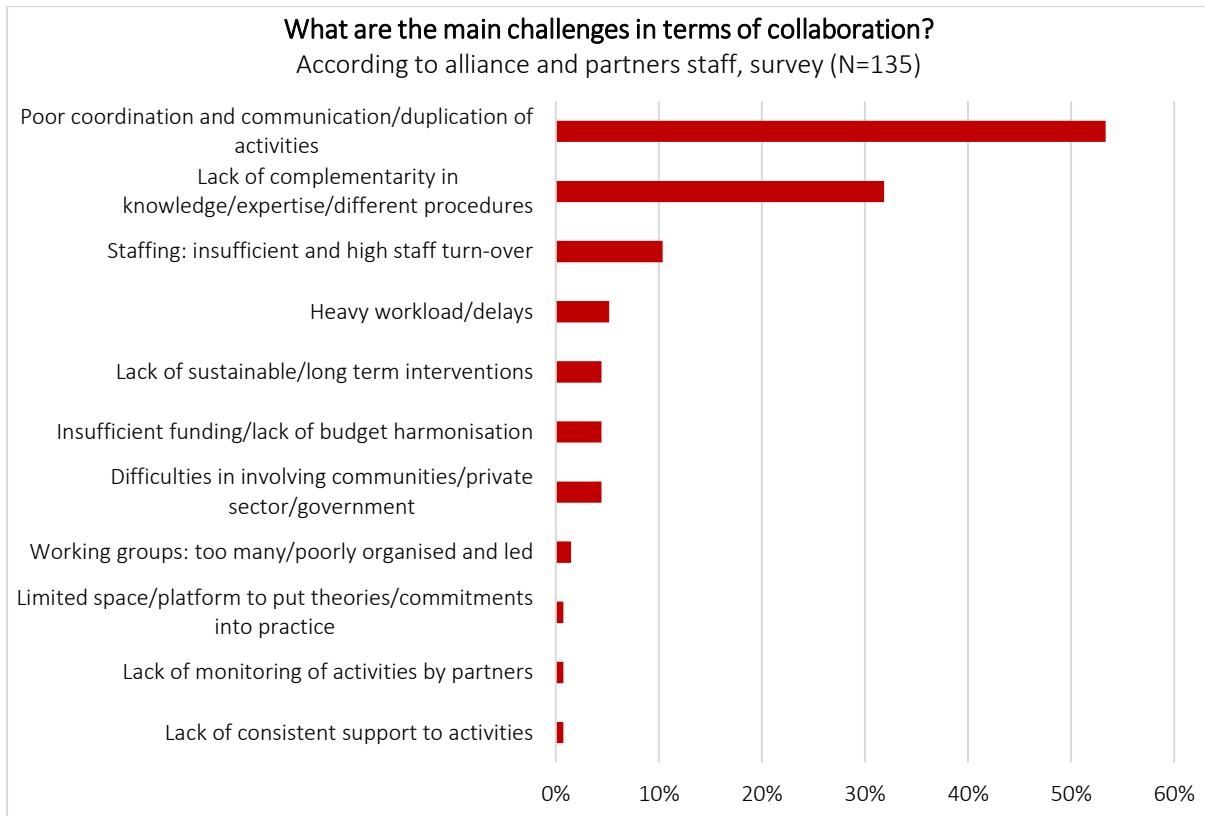


Figure 15: Main collaboration challenges

Collaboration with stakeholders

Overall, the MTR observes good collaboration with governments, and most local stakeholder consulted confirm good collaboration. In Jordan and Vietnam for example, the MTR witnessed strong government support/ownership as evidenced by new (by)laws, decrees, taskforces, SOPs and even government funding. As presented in the graph below, less of the private sector actors contacted confirm collaboration. In some countries it is reported that partners have not been given a strong mandate to reach out to private sector partners (e.g. little activities or budgets for this).

Interestingly, is that the programme is rarely in touch with chambers of commerce, an obvious entry point for private sector identification and engagement. Lessons learned can be drawn from Vietnam, where WNCB is working in close collaboration with the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) to reach out to businesses and advocate for better implementation of Child Rights and Business Principles, with a focus on child labour prevention.



Figure 16: Involvement of external actors with the programme

As per the table below, the awareness-raising and capacity development activities in particular are mentioned as ways of partnering among stakeholders.

| How stakeholders have been partnering or engaged with the programme/organisations | | | | |
|---|---------------|------------|----------------|-------|
| According to private sector, national and local stakeholders, interviews (N= 149) | | | | |
| | Civil society | Government | Private sector | Total |
| Awareness raising activities | 30% | 54% | 42% | 43% |
| Capacity development activities | 30% | 42% | 67% | 42% |
| Consultation, coordination, and overall support to activities | 24% | 40% | 0% | 27% |
| Monitoring of the project, handling cases of child labour | 14% | 37% | 21% | 26% |
| Identification of beneficiaries, mobilisation of the community | 20% | 15% | 4% | 15% |
| In CP platforms and committees | 20% | 6% | 21% | 14% |
| L&A activities | 4% | 6% | 4% | 5% |
| Economic support | 4% | 2% | 0% | 2% |

Figure 17: Ways stakeholders have been partnering or engaged with the programme

Coherence of approaches

An important task of this MTR is to assess the coherence in approaches applied. The area-based approach is an important strategic approach of WNCB. The success of this approach lies in its focus on norm change, and ensuring that all working and out of school children are targeted, as opposed to focusing only on certain sectors or supply chains, which risks that children are being removed from one sector, only to get employed in another one. For several SCL partners, the area-based approach is part of their core activities (also without the WNCB). As presented in the figure below, most staff across the countries believe that an area-based approach is applied.

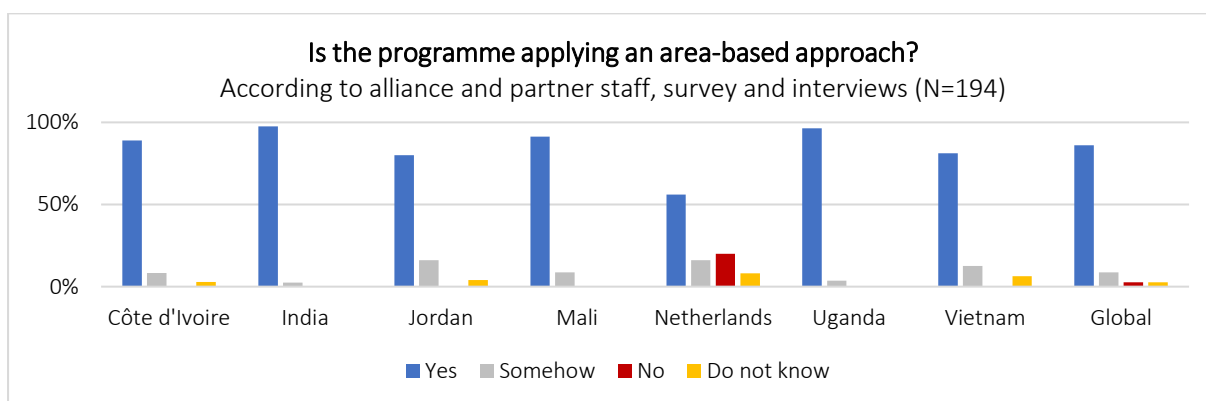


Figure 18: Programme applying an area-based approach

There is however some difference in opinion of precisely how local this approach needs to be, and some Alliance members express concern that approaches that are too localised have an adverse effect on its scalability. Per the table below, suggested improvements to the area-based approach vary by country but centre on extending its scope, and conducting more research to identify target groups and local specificities.

| What would be needed to improve the area-based approach? | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|-------|--------|------|-----|--------|---------|--------|
| According to alliance and partner staff, interviews and workshops (N=96) | | | | | | | | |
| | Côte d'Ivoire | India | Jordan | Mali | NL | Uganda | Vietnam | Global |
| Extend the scope | 100% | 0% | 80% | 100% | 33% | 5% | 91% | 60% |
| More research to identify targets and local specificities | 0% | 0% | 93% | 7% | 0% | 86% | 91% | 45% |
| Increase coordination and collaboration between stakeholders | 100% | 75% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 30% |
| Work with local structures and leaders | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 90% | 0% | 20% |
| Improve the L&A at local levels | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 86% | 0% | 19% |
| Link the youth groups supported to national economic programmes | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 86% | 0% | 19% |
| Capacity development of the team, sharing experience, build on the work already done | 0% | 17% | 0% | 86% | 67% | 0% | 0% | 17% |
| Increase budget, resources | 0% | 83% | 7% | 0% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 13% |
| Capacity development of the government | 0% | 75% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 9% |
| Focus on informal sectors | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 9% | 1% |
| Increase awareness raising activities | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 9% | 1% |
| Increase flexibility in applying the approach | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 5% | 0% | 1% |

Figure 19: Needed to improve the area-based approach

The programme is working on CP system strengthening, largely building on ongoing efforts on this by UNICEF and Save the Children, as part of their core activities (also in the absence of WNCB). There are interesting discussions on how to better integrate the area-based approach within the CP system strengthening approach.

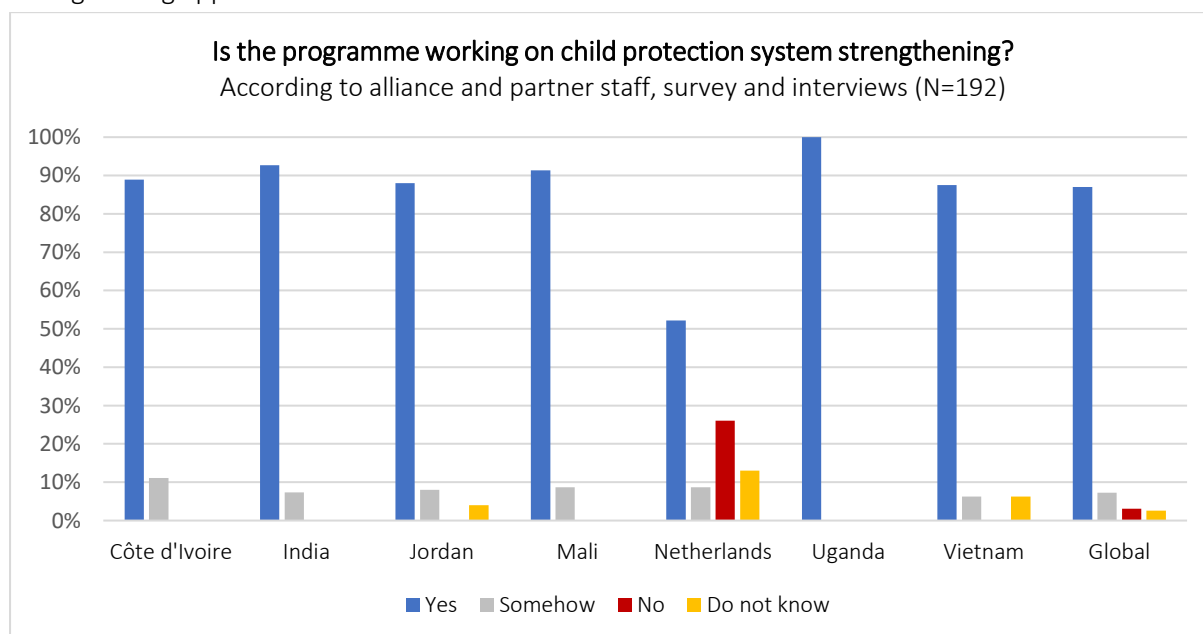


Figure 20: Programme work on child protection system strengthening

Suggestions to improve CP system strengthening include increasing capacity development activities for communities and CP structures, strengthening the L&A and communication components, increasing awareness-raising activities and exploring new ways to reach people. The table below presents specific recommendations per country.

| What would be needed to improve this? According to alliance and partner staff, interviews and workshops (N=89) | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|-------|--------|------|-----|--------|---------|--------|
| | Côte d'Ivoire | India | Jordan | Mali | NL | Uganda | Vietnam | Global |
| Increase capacity development activities (for communities and CP structures) | 0% | 70% | 0% | 85% | 0% | 90% | 8% | 43% |
| Strengthen the L&A and communication components | 5% | 0% | 10% | 0% | 0% | 90% | 83% | 34% |
| Increase awareness raising activities and explore new ways to reach people | 90% | 0% | 0% | 7% | 0% | 0% | 83% | 33% |
| Collaboration, coordination and sharing experience between CP actors | 90% | 20% | 0% | 0% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 24% |
| Use a multisectoral approach and integrate different approaches | 0% | 0% | 0% | 7% | 32% | 90% | 0% | 22% |
| Scaling up to reach more children | 0% | 10% | 0% | 87% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 16% |
| Improve access to basic services and economic support | 0% | 0% | 0% | 86% | 0% | 0% | 8% | 15% |
| Increase ownership of the government | 5% | 0% | 90% | 0% | 34% | 0% | 0% | 13% |
| Link local CP system to the national level | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 33% | 0% | 8% | 2% |
| Update statistics on child labour | 0% | 0% | 10% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 1% |

Figure 21: Needed to improve programme work on child protection system strengthening

As presented in the figure below, most surveyed staff confirm that the programme works on L&A. In Cote d'Ivoire, L&A activities are mostly facilitated by UNICEF and take place at national and local levels while in other countries, like India and Mali, advocacy work is mostly happening at state and local levels, and not so much at national level.

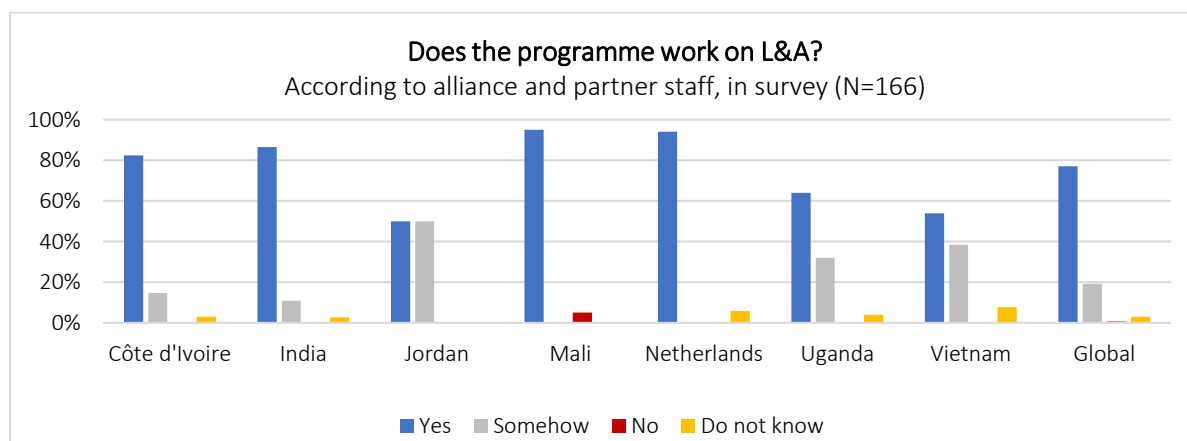


Figure 22: Programme work on L&A

While the NL-based staff provide support in national L&A activities, the MTR observes weak direct linkages between L&A at international and national levels, which would benefit from strengthening. Staff interviews point to the absence of these linkages, especially in the supply chain approach: L&A to make the private sector act. However, some examples are there such as in the gold sector in Uganda and the natural stones in India (although even in the later India-based staff explain that the link was not strong enough).

The WNCB approach of working on supply chains is the least developed so far, albeit with country differences. Overall, the links and direct work with the private sector is not yet fully developed and requires attention. COVID-19 reduced possibilities for direct engagement, but other obstacles also play a role, such as the fact that the partners traditionally have less partnerships with the private sector and related institutions and ministries. Another obstacle, though only expressed by NL-based staff, is the reluctance or choice not to directly engage with private sector actors from an organisational policy point of view¹⁸. Therefore, meeting the objective to “make the private sector act” is mainly done through intermediary organisations. In the operational countries this hesitation seems to be less of an issue. Mali and Vietnam score highest according to the staff, as presented below, and Jordan and NL score lowest.

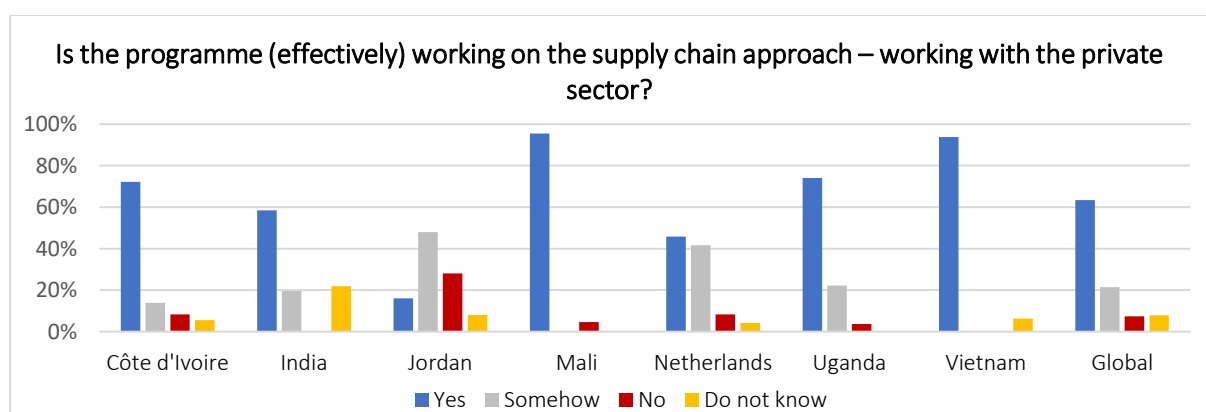


Figure 23: Programme work on supply chain approach

The table below presents the suggestions made to improve the supply chain approach. Most mentioned is the need to increase involvement of governments to monitor the private sector, and to initiate dialogue and explore ways of working with the private sector.

| What would be needed to improve this? According to alliance and partner staff, interviews and workshops (N=86) | |
|---|-----|
| Increase involvement of governments to monitor the private sector | 51% |
| Dialogue and explore ways to work with the private sector and work with local businesses | 41% |
| Awareness raising and capacity development of private sector actors | 35% |
| Private sector actors should create a platform to coordinate their actions against CL | 35% |
| Extend the work to other sectors and increase the scope | 23% |
| Engage with the informal sector | 13% |
| Adapt the vocational training courses to the market demands | 12% |
| Work with larger companies and increase efforts on supply chain approach | 12% |
| Link the needs in the NL to the context and strong collaboration between the NL and countries | 5% |
| Better linking and learning between countries of interventions | 2% |
| Increase funding | 2% |
| Engagement with workers in factories | 1% |
| Integrate supply chain to the area-based approach | 1% |
| Link private sector with CP committees | 1% |

Figure 24: Needed to improve programme work on supply chain approach

¹⁸ In the workshop Save the Children explained a slight nuance and the organisation can create a 3-year programme or something but not one on one with companies in NL they have no broader programmes with.

2.3 EFFECTIVENESS

Effectiveness to reach objectives

As presented in the figure below, staff are divided on the level of progress made towards the stated objectives, but are overall positive.

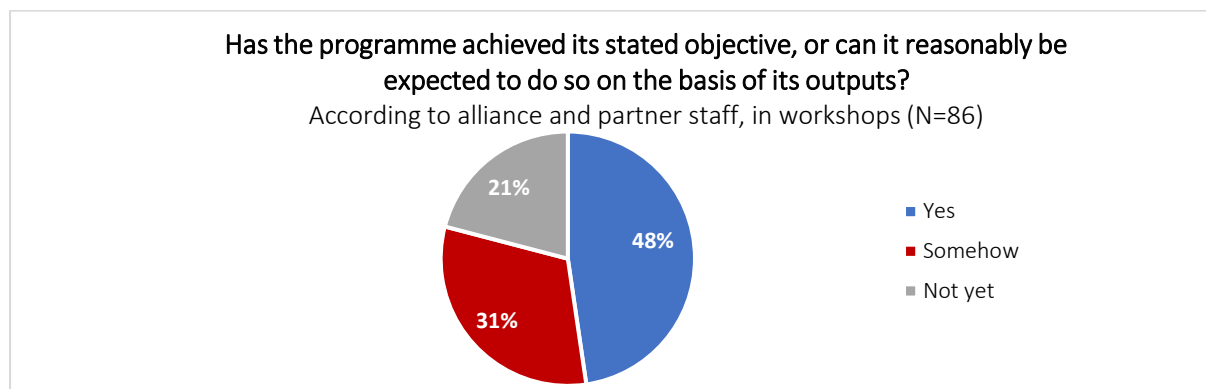


Figure 25: Achievement of programme objective

As per the table below, Alliance and partner staff mention capacity of the alliance as the main factor contributing to achieving programme objectives, followed by working with governments and communities. In India, capacity of the Alliance was interpreted as capacities of the individual partner agencies, which are felt to be strong, despite having weaker capacities in terms of coordination and collaboration.

| Major factors that are contributing to achievement of the objectives of the programme | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|-------|--------|------|-----|--------|---------|--------|
| According to alliance and partner staff, interviews and workshops (N=99) | | | | | | | | |
| | Côte d'Ivoire | India | Jordan | Mali | NL | Uganda | Vietnam | Global |
| Capacity of the alliance | 77% | 100% | 94% | 92% | 88% | 100% | 64% | 88% |
| Working with governments, governments involvement and focusing on legal frameworks | 73% | 0% | 88% | 100% | 13% | 10% | 62% | 55% |
| Working with communities and community mobilisation | 95% | 100% | 6% | 92% | 13% | 0% | 36% | 46% |
| Capacity development activities | 91% | 0% | 71% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 18% | 34% |
| Appropriate methodologies and approaches | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 25% | 95% | 45% | 27% |
| Economic empowerment activities | 91% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 20% |
| Involvement of children as actors and not only beneficiaries | 91% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 20% |
| Considering local specificities/environment | 0% | 0% | 6% | 0% | 13% | 0% | 45% | 7% |
| Involvement of the private sector | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 36% | 4% |

Figure 26: Factors contributing to achievements of programme objectives

Several staff explain that the programme has not yet achieved its stated objectives but is progressing towards achieving them in accordance with workplans developed at country level. There are, however, some pathways of change, as reflected in the ToC, that are progressing slower. In most countries making progress on pathway three (making the private sector act) is thus far less effective. When asked, staff mostly mention the following factors that hinder the achievement of objectives: i) reluctance of some communities/ existing social and gender norms; ii) limited scope and resources in comparison to

the problem; iii) political, economic, and security factors in countries, including where CP structures are sometimes politically influenced; iv) the limited capacities of the Alliance in terms of organisation, staff turnover and disagreements; v) delays caused by COVID-19 measures; vi) poor L&A strategy with limited work with government and law enforcement, and vii) challenges in engaging with private sector.

Further, the effectiveness of the economic empowerment of youth is questionable. The team found no evidence of market assessments to ensure the vocational training is market responsive, and in several countries the training is not long enough to obtain solid and certified skills. There is a noted little post-training support to ensure the graduates find decent jobs or start businesses that have a real potential for growth.

Noting key differences per country, in the workshops staff identify ways to better achieve the stated objectives. Most mentioned is the need for more engagement with the private sector (especially in Jordan and Uganda), followed by the need for national advocacy strategies (especially in India and Uganda), better engagement with communities (especially Cote d'Ivoire) and that economic and social vulnerabilities of families need to be addressed (especially in Uganda). In Vietnam staff highlight the need for strengthening the CP actors.

Effectiveness of communication and L&A

The effectiveness of the L&A of the WNCB is overall rated relatively effective or highly effective by the MTR participants. However, as presented in the figure below, some crucial national actors and private sector actors are not aware of any WNCB messages. As above, this can partially be explained due to the lack of branding / visibility of the programme.

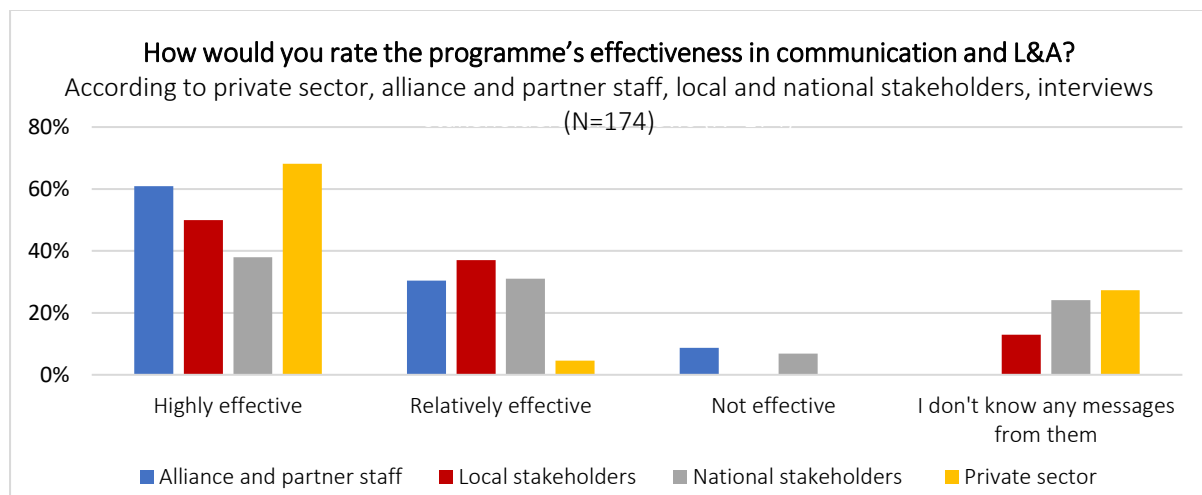


Figure 27: Programme's effectiveness in communication and L&A

The MTR participants especially highlight successes of L&A at local levels where the WNCB is part of, and even sponsors, the building of a network of key players, and plays its role in the covenants. A small majority of external stakeholders consulted only know some of the organisations that are implementing WNCB. This limited awareness relates to the lack of branding or visibility (with the exception of Uganda) of WNCB as a programme and is in line with the impression that the WNCB is somehow more operating like a fund, enabling organisations to continue and expand their activities. 14% of the external stakeholders consulted are not aware of any of the organisations, mainly among national actors and the private sector. Those who are aware, mainly mention that WNCB is addressing child labour in the communities, that it provides support for education and vocational training for children and youth and

works on awareness raising on CP and child labour. In the staff workshops and interviews with the private sector, the following weaknesses were identified:

| Reasons why the programme's communication and L&A are not effective According to private sector and senior programme staff | |
|---|-----|
| Limited effectiveness of L&A at national and policy levels | 61% |
| Limited visibility of the programme | 44% |
| No harmonisation of the messages among partners | 25% |
| Right stakeholders are not reached | 11% |

Figure 28: Reasons programme communication and L&A are not effective

One example is that WNCB supported the development of a website¹⁹ on the identification of child labour in specific value chains, but the MTR found little proof that this is known. On a positive note, however, 92% of the alliance and partner staff believe that the L&A efforts result in broader awareness on issues of child labour.

Effectiveness of engaging with the private sector

As already mentioned above, the WNCB has not made very much progress in directly engaging with the private sector, except for some countries (Vietnam, Uganda, India).

Further, in Mali, India and to some extent in Uganda and Côte d'Ivoire, there are positive reports on progress in ensuring that good business principles are applied (not involving children). In Mali, the private sector is providing apprenticeship places to youth. The table below presents some views of private sector actors themselves on how to improve progress on private sector engagement, with interesting differences per country.

| What changes would you propose for more effective engagement of the private sector in the programme? According to private sector, interviews (N=31) | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------|------|-------|--------|------|--------|---------|--------|
| | d'Ivoire | Côte | India | Jordan | Mali | Uganda | Vietnam | Global |
| Engage with unions and miners organisations | 0% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 73% | 0% | 29% |
| Increase awareness raising on child labour and work on consumer awareness | 40% | 33% | 11% | 100% | 18% | 0% | 0% | 26% |
| Capacity development of private sector for combatting CL | 60% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 13% | 13% |
| Economic support of families | 0% | 0% | 44% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 13% |
| Information sharing, regular meetings and building trust | 40% | 67% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 13% |
| Engage with informal sector | 0% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 18% | 0% | 0% | 10% |
| Ensuring that companies are complying with regulations and business principles are applied | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 27% | 0% | 0% | 10% |
| Support access to education and skills training of children | 0% | 0% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 10% |
| Capacity development of watch committees and include private sector representative in committees | 20% | 0% | 11% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 6% |
| Focus on supply chain (mapping) | 0% | 67% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 6% |
| Engage in neutral platforms (not only private sector) | 0% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 3% |

Figure 29: Changes proposed for more effective private sector engagement

¹⁹ <https://www.ondernemen.nl/tegen-kinderarbeid>.

2.4 EFFICIENCY AND VALUE FOR MONEY

Efficiency of the organisation of the WNCB

As discussed in the coherence section above, several staff strongly feel that the initial set-up of the WNCB structure may need revisiting to increase efficiency and impact. About half of the staff perceive the general management of the intervention as efficient, especially referring to good collaboration, steering and direction. However, there are areas for improvement, as reflected in the table below. Most highlighted are the delays in disbursements of funds and delivery, and that the deadlines set by NL are too short (especially Mali and Uganda).

With the project coordination unit, they do their best to involve all stakeholders in everything; but sometimes the alliance members can't keep up with the pace because more often the requests from NL are high, the deadlines are short and logistical problems can occur. With the deadlines that the PMU [Programme Management Unit] sets, it is often the country coordinator with only two or few structures that could satisfy the request. It could not be efficient. Programme staff, Mali

In Mali, staff further express that the internal management of each organisation affects the general management, and in Jordan staff being overall satisfied with the technical side of the general management, highlight, however, a lack of direction and efficiency in addressing financial issues and sharing workplans. In India, staff seem least happy with the general management and highlight that there is need to strengthen the general and structural management, and that the national lead offers little to no value and poor communication, which hinders efficiency. They further explain that a bottom-up approach takes time, and a better balance is needed with the top-down approach.

Decisions which are to be taken by PMU, should be taken, and accumulated with the national partners rather than using the Top-Down approach. India Programme partners

Interestingly, it is especially the NL-based staff that further expresses that there is too much overhead in NL, that there are challenges with the WGs and that the structure is too complex and heavy. Additionally, half of the alliance and partner staff indicate perceiving the general management as limited efficient because of existing delays and short deadlines set by NL. Other reasons are indicated in the figure below.

| Reasons for the perceived limited efficiency of the general management of the intervention (steering, management, organisational and governance structures and procedures) According to alliance and partner staff, interviews and workshops (N=65) | |
|--|-----|
| Delays due to disbursement of funds, delivery | 51% |
| Internal management of each organisation affects the general management | 20% |
| Bottom-up approach costs time and is sometimes limited. Balance needed with top-down approach | 14% |
| Need to strengthen the general and structural management/Little to no value of the national lead | 14% |
| Poor communication with partners/need for more (regular) sharing of progress | 12% |
| Too much overhead in NL/ The structure is complex/heavy | 12% |
| Challenges with the functioning of the working groups | 5% |
| Heavy workload/too many requests from NL/little time for implementation/ deadlines set by NL are too short | 5% |
| Staffing: roles and responsibilities are not clear/high staff turnover | 3% |
| Improvement needed in L&A | 2% |

Figure 30: Reasons for the perceived limited efficiency of the general management

While the set-up of the WGs is perceived as too heavy, it does provide support to the countries, as presented below. Most staff (84%) confirm support received from the WGs. While most countries report most support coming from the MEAL and communication WGs (more progress oriented WGs) there are variations per country. Important gaps in support can also be observed, such as lack of support to India on Children’s Rights and Business Principles (CRBP) and the relatively low support to Côte d'Ivoire from the more thematic WGs.

| From which of the working groups have you received support? According to alliance and partner staff, survey and workshops (N=64) | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|-------|--------|------|-----|--------|---------|--------|
| | Côte d'Ivoire | India | Jordan | Mali | NL | Uganda | Vietnam | Global |
| MEAL | 100% | 92% | 80% | 88% | 67% | 100% | 80% | 93% |
| Communication | 94% | 8% | 20% | 88% | 78% | 92% | 60% | 74% |
| Gender | 6% | 8% | 80% | 38% | 56% | 96% | 100% | 45% |
| Education | 6% | 15% | 20% | 88% | 56% | 92% | 20% | 42% |
| CRBP | 6% | 0% | 20% | 25% | 67% | 96% | 40% | 38% |
| Lobby and advocacy/RBC | 6% | 0% | 20% | 25% | 78% | 96% | 0% | 37% |
| Research | 3% | 8% | 40% | 50% | 56% | 12% | 80% | 20% |

Figure 31: Support received from WGs

Staff equally point to missing support areas from the WGs, with 30% stating that partners are not aware of the WGs, especially in India and Côte d'Ivoire. In India, this is related to the lack of communication between ICCO and the partners, and both in India and Vietnam staff indicate the work of the working groups has been helpful in terms of providing technical support, yet it was also seen as time consuming while the outputs of the WGs lacked meaning for the country context.

There is a lack of awareness of the different working groups working internationally or in NL. There is a need of hierarchical transparency at the three levels (PMU, National and Organisations). Programme staff, India

Further, staff express missing support on OH (especially in Mali and Côte d'Ivoire), more support required in Uganda to L&A, finance in Jordan, and communication and gender in Uganda. Staff in NL express missing support in experience and expertise sharing. Finally, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire and NL-based staff miss support in private sector engagement, CRBP and CSR.

Finances

The WNCB programme has a **total budget of €34.995.822** for 5 years of implementation, from 01.07 2019 to 30.06.2024.²⁰ The budget is made up of the following components: country programme allocations, Innovations and new opportunities, Linking and Learning, Political and Corporate Lobby, Communications, Monitoring, Evaluations, Accountability and Learning, and Programme Management. It is further distributed against Alliance partners and 4 programme Outcomes (Outcome 1-4).

While most budget allocations are provided specifically for identified partners, some are made open to all partners. These “all” budget lines are distributed across all budget components and are managed by the lead party, HIVOS. Alliance partners can request funding from the said lines as needed.²¹ According to the annual report 2020, the budget for “all” budget lines were not fully used due to the COVID-19

²⁰ WNBC, 2020, Inception Report and Annual Plan 2020, Annexes, February 2020.

²¹ Ibid.

pandemic and the delays were experienced in implementation through the period under review. However, the budget lines were re-programmed for use in countries in 2022 and were according to the annual report effectively devised to ensure reduction of possible delays and to support immediate use of transferred funds.²²

The WNCB programme aims to ensure country programmes can over time assume the responsibility to continue addressing issues of child labour, leading to complete eradication of Child Labour and improvement of the labour market conditions for young people. During the inception phase, a budget allocation of €2.217.793 was planned against the actual utilisation of €1.150.754. According to the Inception Report 2020,²³ there was delay in finalising consortium agreements between the lead organisation HIVOS and the Alliance partners, leading to further delays in the transfer of funds. Many organisations, according to the report²⁴, were not able to implement the planned activities for the inception phase on time, resulting in low expenditures in 2019.

According to the Annual Report, WNCB programme spent some 75% of the planned budget for 2020, which also accommodated many carry-over activities from the inception phase. From the annual report 2020, the shortfall occurred because some countries experienced external barriers for programme implementation, such as hazards, conflict, and political tensions. In India, the report²⁵ explains, the introduction of Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) meant that Alliance partners were not able to transfer the funding to the local implementing partners in full and in a timely manner and procedures had to be reviewed which resulted in some delays. Importantly, new activities were further unable to begin on time and ongoing activities were delayed because of the COVID 19 measures. This was particularly true of community-based activities in the intervention areas in which preventive measures were put in place. For example, the education unions' activities in schools and with teachers could not be implemented as schools were closed. It is also important to note that some countries like India, Jordan and Vietnam specifically decided to spend part of their budget on COVID response interventions, next to the planned activities. These activities were, however, in line with the objectives of the programme.²⁶

The approved budget for 2021 was €9.678.707, including the unspent balances from the inception period and 2020.²⁷ In 2021, the total programme expenditure was €7.584.134 or a utilisation of 78% of the approved budget. As detailed in the Annual Report, the highest spending was incurred by Côte d'Ivoire (103%) followed by India (90%), Mali (89%), and Jordan (82%). Uganda spent 76%, and Vietnam 75% of their 2021 annual allocation.²⁸ In Mali, the same report explains that the low utilisation of funds was caused by a long series of strikes, insecurity, the COVID-19 pandemic and political tensions. In India, it was reported that the low utilisation of funds was influenced by the closure of all elementary schools throughout the year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Per the 2021 the annual report, India, Jordan and Vietnam spent part of their budgets on the COVID-19 response. Côte d'Ivoire and Uganda spent their budget allocations according to plan and in some cases exceeded the budget slightly.²⁹

²² Ibid.

²³ WNCB, 2020, Annual Report 2020, Joining forces to scale up action against child labour.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ 2020, Annual Report 2020, Joining forces to scale up action against child labour.

²⁶ 2020, Annual Report 2020, Joining forces to scale up action against child labour.

²⁷ WNCB, 2021, Annual Report 2021, Joining forces to scale up action against child labour.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

An analysis of the budget by activity shows that most funds (67%) of the 2021 budget were spent on strategic Pathway 1, where also the largest number of outcomes were harvested. This implies that the programme spent most of its allocation on activities that reach communities directly.

In Vietnam, Uganda, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire and India, a significant number of outcomes were achieved in relation to education. For example, education outcomes were achieved by training teachers in child-friendly teaching methods to improve the quality of education (all countries), creating child-friendly spaces and motivational centres as well as massive back-to-school campaigns (Uganda), promoting education through vocational training (Vietnam), establishing bridging classes and reintegration of students into formal schools (Côte d'Ivoire), as well as awareness-raising campaigns for parents and caretakers (Mali). Through active government engagement, the programme further reports to have generated significant changes to the behaviour of authorities, and political agenda.³⁰

In the remaining years of the WNCB, it is expected that the results of government engagement will increasingly lead to political and legal frameworks in support of the fight against child labour. For example, the government of Rajasthan (India) included a child-labour-free clause in supply chains, local authorities in Mali have made formal commitments to children's access to and retention in school, a National Action Plan provides measures against child labour in Vietnam, and by-laws have been developed on child labour in Jordan and Uganda. 21% of the funds were directed towards activities within strategic Pathway 2, which aims to influence local and national child rights-based laws and policies, through which WNCB works in collaboration with government stakeholders to strengthen child protection (CP) systems.³¹

12% of the funds were spent on activities that fall under strategic Pathway 3, which aim to increase corporate social responsibility at local level and/or within specific targeted sectors. Consistent with the total investment against activities for activities under Pathways 2 and 3 (21% and 12% respectively) fewer outcomes as compared to Pathway 1 were realised.³² As explained in the Annual Report 2021, engagement with local and national governments and with private sector businesses generally is a longer process in which the WNCB partners' awareness-raising activities and campaigns are crucial. As observed in the report,³³ even though building trust and engaging with governments and the private sector takes more time, it ensures value for money as it is less cost intensive. The report³⁴ postulates that the remaining years of the programme will see increased involvement by government and private sector actors, who will increasingly join us in our fight against child labour.

As provided in the Annual Report 2021, the budget for the programme management in NL was all spent except for the "for all" budget lines, specifically under Innovations and new opportunities (budget line 2), Linking and learning (budget component line 3.5, and 3.6, Communication (budget line 5), and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (line 7). Though there were low expenditures by the WGs in NL, their work generally contributed to the realisation of several outcomes reported in various pathways. By analysis, it is important to note that WGs are a collaboration of all partners with a limited sphere of control considering the bottom-up and consensus-based method of work adopted to deliver results within the WNCB programme. Outcomes achieved by WGs can either directly contribute to the achievement of the long term or planned outcomes of strategic Pathway 3 and 4. Other outcomes can

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ WNCB, 2021, Annual Plan 2021, Joining forces to scale up action against child labour.

be seen as a form of capacity building and programmatic support to learn and innovate existing approaches.

When asked to reflect on the value for money for each pathway, the staff have strong opinions, most of which are based on well-informed albeit subjective perceptions. It is difficult to gather evidence to support the perception beyond the already discussed number of Outcomes harvested per pathway. Nevertheless, 95% of the staff see that certain pathways received more resources than others which is sometime a source of frustration (mostly for staff working on ‘under-financed’ pathways). According to staff, Pathway 1 is highly funded, carries-out more activities, objectives and achieves more results. This is mainly because activities under this pathway have a more visible and direct impact on the communities. In India, for example, the staff stresses that there is more availability and accessibility of resources to implement Pathway 1 as most partners are working towards community empowerment. Pathways 2 and 3, in comparison, are perceived to be costly to implement and can only bring results in the medium to longer terms. However, many staff, especially in Jordan (and India), lack clarity of the resources available and in the KIIs it is highlighted that think that the scope and funding of the project is not enough to address the private sector strategically.

Value for money

The MTR concludes that the value for money is hard to assess, partly as many results cannot be attributed to the WNCB alone and separating and applying figures to its contributions to change is challenging. The difficulty to assess value for money is explained by a staff member as follows:

I think this question is difficult to answer. When it comes to direct results – number of children reached – one could think that costs are high. However, we also must look at indirect beneficiaries as result of the (norm) change within communities, spill over effects to other communities and longer-term results following improved policies and programmes, system change at larger scale etc. Programme staff

As presented in the graph below, and while very few consider that the interventions are not efficient, alliance and partner staff are divided on the levels of efficiency of the intervention.

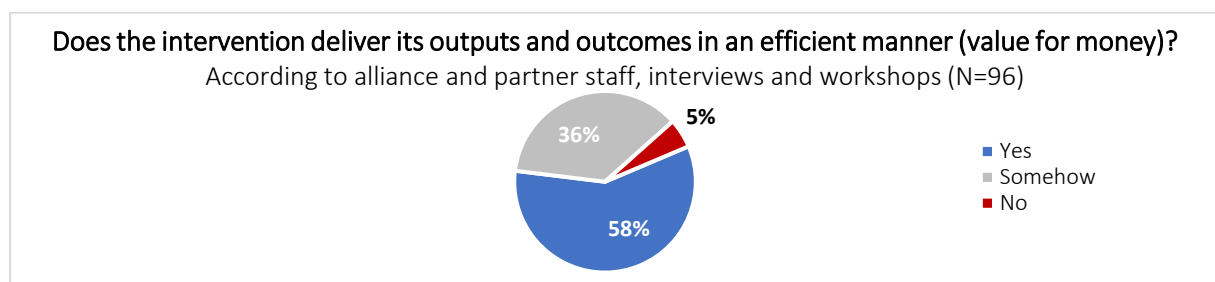


Figure 32: Outputs and outcomes delivered in an efficient manner

One respondent explains how complex value for money is to assess, with a lack of benchmarks.

We only have one other project on eliminating of child labour. WNCB received a bit more, but the ticket sizes are very comparable. ILO is the other project. Their work in Côte d'Ivoire and WNCB's work seems very comparably, but we have no standards, no benchmark on, for example, how much it costs to send a kid back to school in a cocoa area in Côte D'Ivoire or gold mine regions in Uganda. We don't know the standard but also not the challenges of reaching children for example. Donor

As presented in the table below, the most mentioned reasons for perceived inefficiency are the limited allocation and especially the delays in disbursements, followed by the view that the overall programme is expensive, also referring to perceived heavy structure in NL.

| Perceived reasons of inefficiency - According to alliance and partner staff, interviews and workshops (N=72) | |
|---|-----|
| Limited and poor allocation, delays in disbursing budget | 49% |
| The programme is expensive | 22% |
| Economic support was partly effective (poor targeting, no long-term support) | 21% |
| Awareness raising activities were partly effective | 10% |
| The organisational structure is heavy and WGs and NL cost too much | 5% |
| COVID-19 affected the delivery of the programme | 3% |
| It takes time/a lot of resources to achieve the results | 1% |
| The programme does not build on other actors' achievements | 1% |

Figure 33: Perceived reasons of inefficiency

As mentioned in the coherence section, others mention that economic support provided to youth and their families is not efficient and questions are raised about the targeting of youth and the likely long-term impact of these activities. One example on this comes from Uganda.

Vocational training of youth in Karamoja is very expensive and we have supported very few youths. An area where we need to rethink to reach more people cheaply. Programme staff, Uganda

Coordination is an area that was also enquired by the MTR, including as it relates to efficiency. A significant number of respondents mentioned that sub-optimal coordination, both internally and with other programmes, is resulting in reduced efficiency and value for money.

The management of resources is difficult. We do not necessarily build on the achievements of another project or intervention. We go to a locality where other people have built relationships, but we do not capitalise on these relationships. This often makes the intervention inefficient. Programme staff, Mali

On the other hand, half of the respondents believe that the WNCB is efficient, and that it has produced valuable outcomes despite its limited budget. The reasons given to support this position are presented in the table below. The education component in particular is mentioned as being highly efficient.

| Perceived reasons for efficiency - According to alliance and partner staff, interviews and workshops (N=74) | |
|--|-----|
| There are good outcomes despite the limited budget | 77% |
| The education component is efficient | 36% |
| There is involvement /appropriation of other actors | 32% |
| There is a commitment of partners | 9% |
| There is a respect of the defined procedures and quality standards | 9% |
| There are spill over effects/indirect beneficiaries | 1% |

Figure 34: Perceived reasons for efficiency

The intervention delivers its outputs and outcomes in an efficient manner especially with the education component where children are enrolled in school. Programme staff, Uganda

The MTR team tried to assess WNCB's approach in terms of costs to other options for achieving the same goals. The table below presents the views of the staff with a focus on the comparative perception with other programmes. As can be observed, differences of opinions exist per country.

| How does the WNCB approach compare in costs to other options for achieving the same goals? According to alliance and partner staff, interviews and workshops (N=97) | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|-------|--------|------|------|--------|---------|--------|
| | Cote d'Ivoire | India | Jordan | Mali | NL | Uganda | Vietnam | Global |
| The programme is more cost efficient and flexible/more people are reached with less resources | 0% | 80% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 47% |
| The scope and approaches are different, and objectives are more ambitious | 95% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 86% | 0% | 42% |
| There are no standards for comparison/no benchmark | 95% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 50% | 0% | 100% | 31% |
| The budget/ resources are limited for the objectives | 0% | 100% | 94% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 27% |
| Other options had better ability to achieve the objectives | 0% | 0% | 71% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 12% |
| There is commitment to accountability | 5% | 0% | 6% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 2% |
| Good relationship with partners helps to meet the objectives | 0% | 0% | 6% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 1% |

Figure 35: WNCB costs compared to other options

Staff further highlight that the comprehensive approach of the programme, with its four complementary and multi-dimensional pathways, increases the efficiency of the programme as it addresses the issue of child labour more holistically.

Compared to other programmes, this programme has the advantage of covering a package of services instead of focusing on a single type of intervention. It is therefore difficult to have similar options. Programme staff, Côte d'Ivoire

You might go for quick fixes which are cheaper to achieve. However, to realise sustained change more investment is needed. It is not just to get children out of work but also address root causes of child labour incl. social norms and provide alternatives in the form of formal and quality education, decent work incl. living wages and economic empowerment of households. Without addressing these issues, without a strong social norm against child labour and without any alternatives, one child will soon be replaced by another, and the problem will continue to exist. Programme staff, Netherlands

The multi-dimensional nature of WNCB is also perceived as increasing efficiency since it allows more flexibility to adapt - with varied focus of the different pathways - to the local and evolving realities in each country.

WNCB approaches are more flexible and ensure contextualisation of project interventions compared to other static project approaches which are not flexible. During annual planning, the programme allows adaptations gained from the lessons learnt and this aims at promoting value for money on the interventions being implemented. This is unlike another programme approaches that are static. Programme staff, Uganda

2.5 (LIKELY) IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Likely Impact

The set-up and nature of the programme is such that attribution of change to the programme is very hard to establish, and even contribution is largely based on anecdotal evidence. Further, the MEAL system did not provide the MTR team with means to measure quantitatively certain essential data to measure impact, given that data from the mid-line are not yet available. The OH is purely internal so is also not producing entirely reliable results.

This MTR does, however, identify several indications of contribution. First, there are strong indications that the programme is making progress on raising awareness on child labour, its risks and possible ways to reduce the phenomena. Further, 80% of the staff declare a positive programme impact on school enrolment. However, the MTR team does not have access to data to back up this positive impact, which could probably be measured against the KPI mid-line survey.

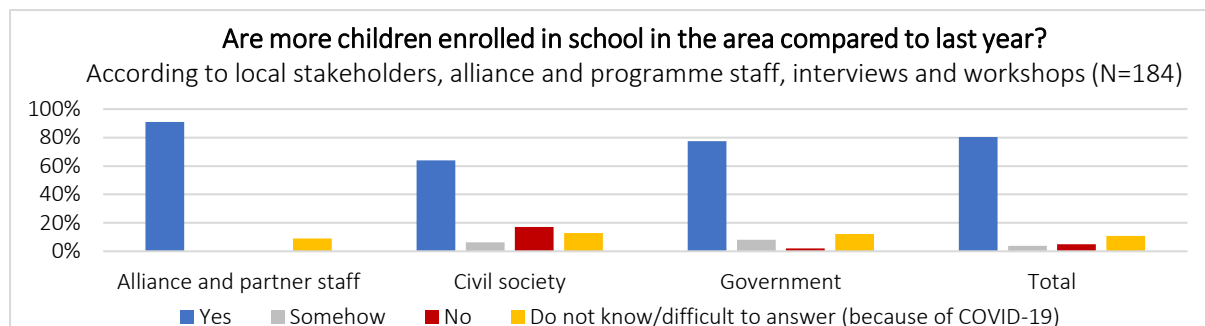


Figure 36: Increased enrolment of children in school

As presented below, staff and external actors mostly confirm the positive role of WNCB in this.

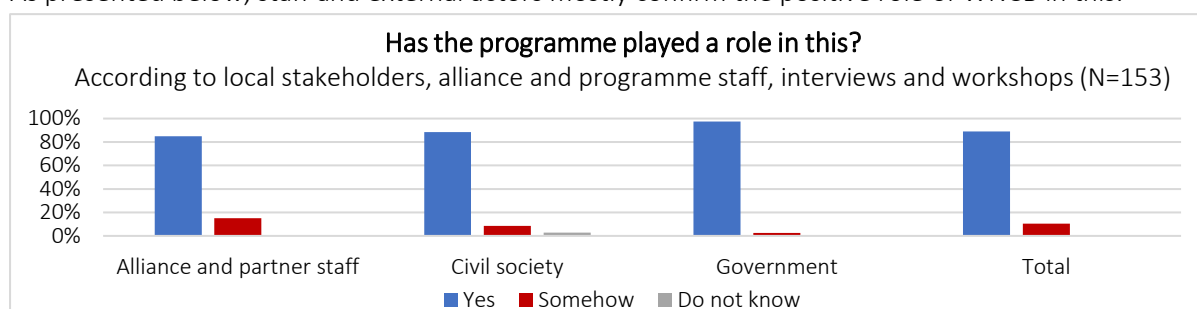


Figure 37: Programme role in increased enrolment in school in the area

Importantly, the staff and external stakeholders believe that less children are working compared to last year, in the areas where WNCB intervenes. There are however no measurements to back-up this perception. 99% of the MTR participants further confirm the role of WNCB in this. However, these conclusions are based on anecdotal evidence, and not on empirical studies.

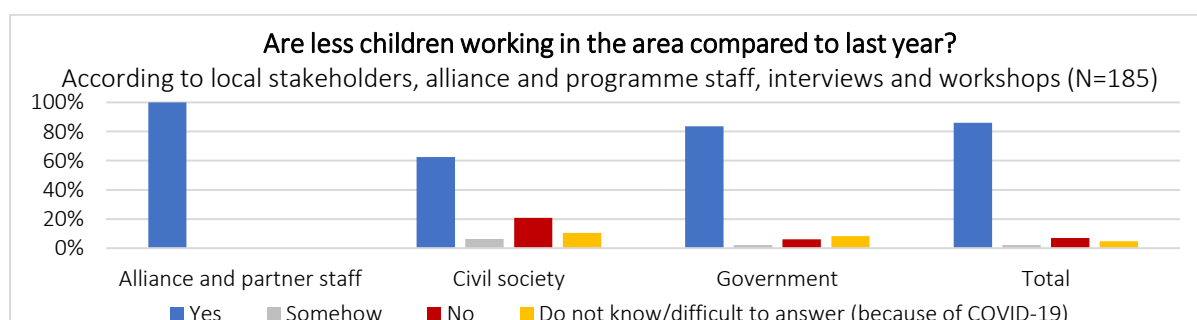
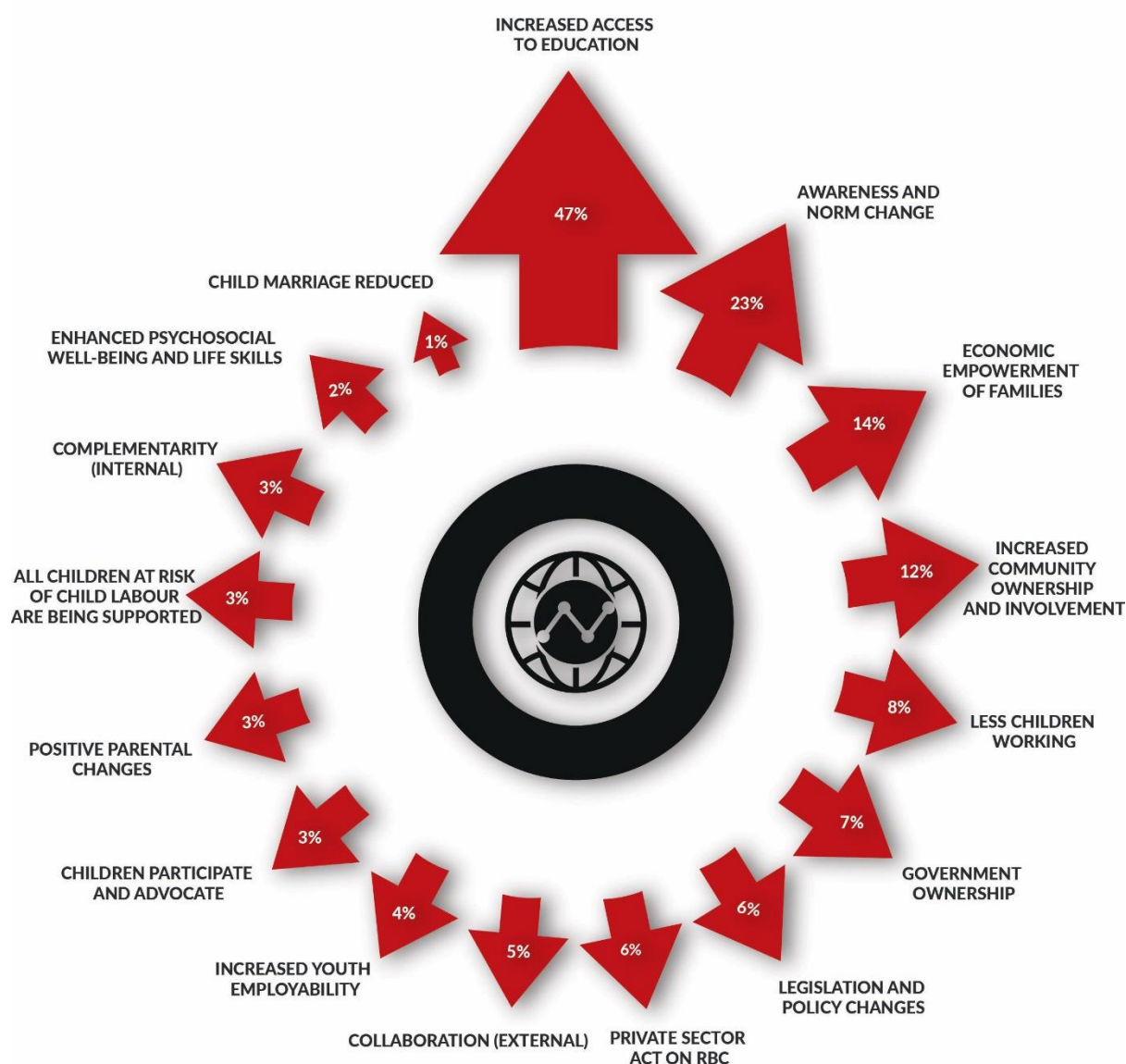


Figure 38: Change in children working

The first question on (likely impact) relates to the **Most Significant Changes (MSCs)** the programme has created or contributed to so far. The table below presents the perceived MSCs, as reported by staff and national stakeholders consulted via the survey, KIIs and during the workshops. Increased access to education is by far the most mentioned change that has observed so far, followed by awareness and norm change. Further, there is some increase in community and government ownership, and 8% of the respondents highlight that there are less children working. The country reports in Annex D highlight the

changes per context in details, that differ significantly. The meta-categories are presented in the infographic below.

Most significant changes as result of the WNCB interventions



According to 370 MTR participants.

Figure 39: Most significant changes

In the country reports, detailed suggestions on how these changes can be scaled up are presented.

The MTR participants were also asked what their **biggest disappointments** are with the programme. Programme staff, local and national stakeholders are mostly disappointed with the capacity of the alliance, which they find to be limited, the difficulty in scaling up and the limited resources available. Programme staff and private sector actors further mention the limits of interventions on education and the quality. Private sector actors are particularly disappointed in terms of the partnership with them.

| What is your biggest disappointment with the programme so far? According to private sector, alliance and partner staff, local and national stakeholders, survey and interviews (N=195) | | | | | |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------|
| | Alliance and partner staff | Local stakeholders | National stakeholders | Private sector | Total |
| Limited capacity of the alliance, limited scope/difficulty in scaling up, limited resources available | 30% | 38% | 65% | 21% | 33% |
| Education: not all children enrolled, lack of children staying in school, poor school capacity and/or poor quantity and quality of education | 10% | 8% | 0% | 26% | 11% |
| Delays in delivery | 10% | 0% | 20% | 0% | 10% |
| Heavy organisational structure: WGs, bureaucracy, workload, top-down, poor collaboration and L&L, staffing issues | 12% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 9% |
| Inefficient partnership with private sector | 6% | 15% | 5% | 26% | 9% |
| Lack of lasting impact and return of children in CL | 4% | 15% | 15% | 11% | 7% |
| Poor involvement of the government and slow policy changes | 7% | 8% | 5% | 5% | 7% |
| COVID-19 related challenges and impacts | 8% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 6% |
| Economic support is inefficient and insufficient | 4% | 8% | 5% | 16% | 6% |
| Poor communication and visibility of the project insufficient and inefficient awareness raising, misunderstanding of the message and poor L&A strategy and inefficient tools | 3% | 8% | 15% | 5% | 5% |
| Poor capacity development of CP actors and system | 2% | 23% | 10% | 0% | 4% |
| MEAL component is too heavy/lack of clear targets and results/lack of OH in NL | 3% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 3% |
| Slow mindset change | 2% | 0% | 5% | 0% | 2% |
| Approach is not holistic but only one area-focused and root causes are not being addressed | 1% | 0% | 0% | 5% | 2% |
| Limited participation of communities | 1% | 0% | 0% | 5% | 2% |
| Contextual and external factors limit results | 2% | 0% | 5% | 0% | 2% |
| Limited gender considerations | 1% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 1% |

Figure 40: biggest disappointment

In the country reports, detailed reflections are provided on why these disappointments happened and how the alliance and partner staff think these could be addressed.

Sustainability

The MTR found no exit strategy for the WNCB, and thereby no real reflection on sustainability after the closure of the programme.

However, some of the activities of the WNCB are likely to continue, as they are in line with the mandates and core activities of the partners. One of those is the set-up and support to community-based CP committees. WNCB is encouraged to find innovative means to address the sustainability of these structures, learning from extensive lessons learned globally. In some contexts, for example the committees are provided with means to operate as a cooperative.

The community CP committee aim to contribute to the prevention and response to all forms of violence against children including child labour. We empower the community to mobilise local leaders, and influential parents and empower them as an advocate for children. As it's a community platform, this will be used as an entry point to deliver messages and other activities, not just only activity supported by WNCB. It is not branded as a WNCB committee. It is expected to be self-sustain after some time when we phase out from the project. It depends on their ability to self-system; the period of phase-out may differ. We aim to have the committees supported by WNCB to be self-sustained at the end of the project (June 2024). But if there is a need to continue to support them, UNICEF will find other funding to continue to work with them until we phase out. The phase-out strategy will be case by case. Senior programme staff Jordan

In several countries the WNCB has contributed significantly to the improvement of the legal and policy on child labour, which is a lasting result. Further, the successes in awareness raising will not be lost. The likelihood of the continuation of the institutions, organisations and private sector actors supported to fight and act against child labour is high according to staff. Others question the continuation of the work if funding for activities would stop.

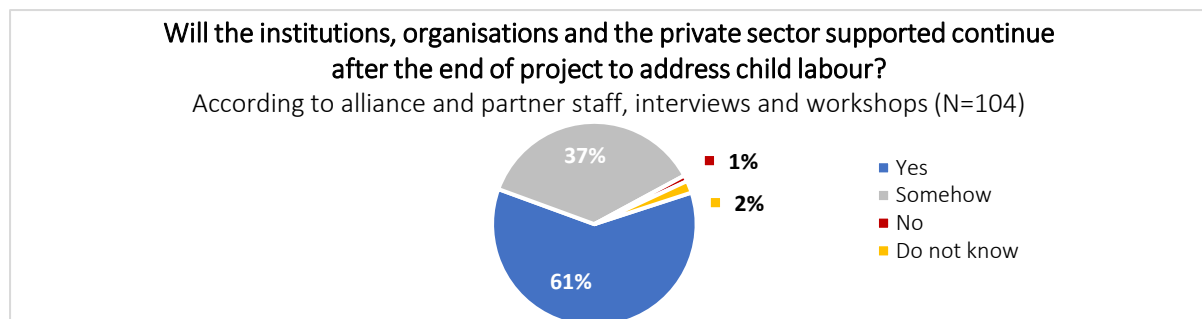


Figure 41: Support continue after end of programme

Similar answers were given to the question if there will be effective mechanism and incentives in place to continue L&A and other activities of the programme. 60% were positive to this while others question if this will continue without WNCB. Part of the positive outlook on this is due to WNCB working with and through existing structures that have this topic as part of their mandates.

On the question if the private sector and governments have the capacities and willingness to carry on the fight against child labour, opinions are divided, as presented above. Importantly, more than half of the national stakeholders believe that the capacities are lacking. In Jordan, a lack of collaboration with the Ministry of Education is observed, and therefore the trust in the continuation of the government work on education is low.

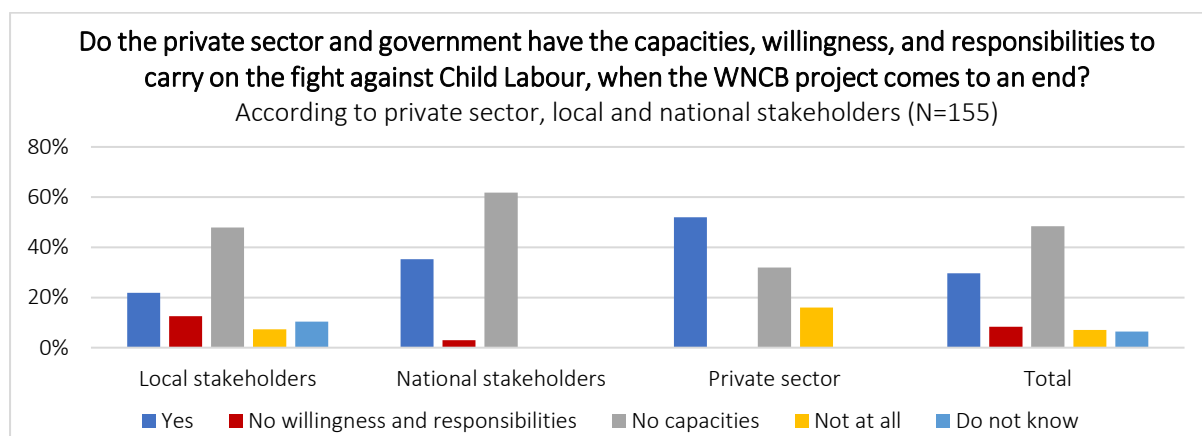


Figure 42: Private sector and government capacity, willingness and responsibility

Capacities strengthened

Further, the programme explicitly aims to equip governments, the private sector, partner organisations, teachers, the communities, and the children themselves to act against child labour. The programme is engaged in awareness raising but also to strengthen capacities these stakeholders to take action. As presented in the figure below, the stakeholders are overall confirming an increase in knowledge and understanding of key issues and their roles in eradicating child labour.

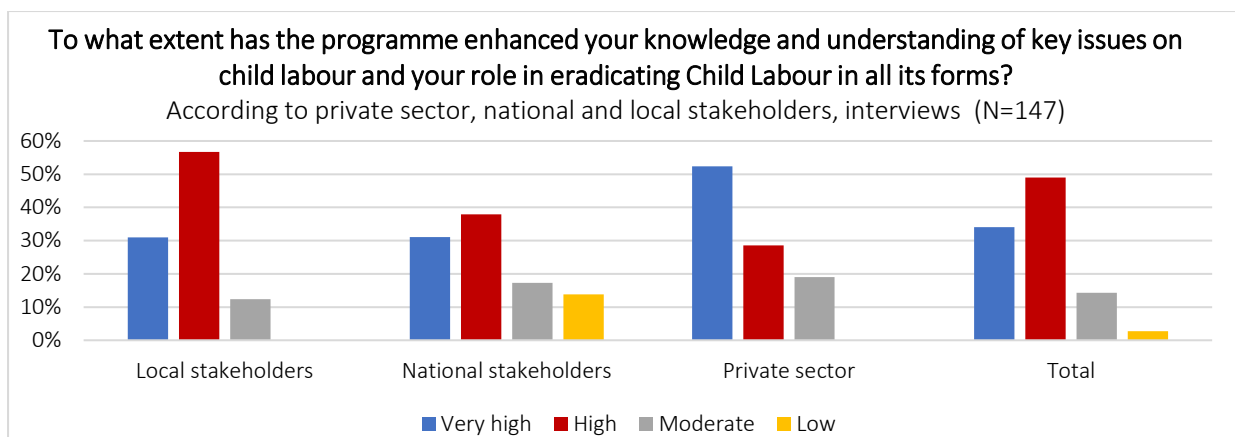


Figure 43: Programme enhanced knowledge and understanding on child labour

The MTR consequently assessed the effects of the capacity development. However, as discussed during the workshop in NL, the programme has currently no dedicated, systematic means of measuring the effects of L&A and capacity development activities. There is however reporting on the activities (more output level), such as how the programme has strengthened the institutional capacity of the social service workforces and local child protection committees. Another example is that the trained teachers continue to work in the area, with the knowledge and experience they gained. There are however no pre- and post- capacity assessments found by the MTR team.

On a positive note, the large majority of the private sector actors consulted confirm that their increase in know-how led to behaviour change on addressing child labour within businesses. Over one third of respondents from the private sector also indicate that the due diligence process of their company ensures that no children are exploited and that children rights are respected, as per the figure below.

| How is the due diligence process of your company, in terms of Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) and respect for children's rights in your supply chain? According to private sector, interviews (N=24) | |
|--|-----|
| Ensuring that no children are exploited and respect of children rights | 38% |
| Compliance measures and code of conducts are implemented | 29% |
| Hiring children support economically families/learn skills | 21% |
| Presence of par asocial workers in the organisation, existing monitoring and remediation of worst forms of CL system | 8% |
| Set up of committees to watch the implementation child labour policies and collaboration with community relays | 8% |
| Work closely with clients/brands on the supply chain | 8% |
| Conformity to societal diligence | 4% |
| Encourage parents to send children to schools | 4% |
| Government should provide basic infrastructures | 4% |
| No due diligence process | 4% |
| Promotion of societal diligence among companies | 4% |

Figure 44: Due diligence process of private sector companies

However, the two quotes below from Jordan illustrate the pressure put on firms and in the broader context of poverty, and solidarity.

We do respect children's rights, and it breaks my heart to see a ten-year-old boy working in this heat, tired, hard to breathe. However, when their widow mother comes to us and asks to hire in our shop so that her son doesn't go to work in the farm and be abused there, we can't say no. Private sector, Jordan

We have responsibility towards our neighbours, who ask us to hire their children part-time, to bring some small income to the family. They know that with us, their children are safe. Private sector, Jordan

36% of the national stakeholders and the private sector consulted state that the private sector is appropriately regulated to enhance the fight against child labour, with important differences between countries. NL scores lowest (because this legislation is indeed non-existent in NL and currently under development) while India highest (75%). Importantly in Côte d'Ivoire, 75% do not know, pointing to a lack of awareness of the legal framework. As presented in the graph below, many national government and private sector are not aware if WNCB contributed to private sector regulations.

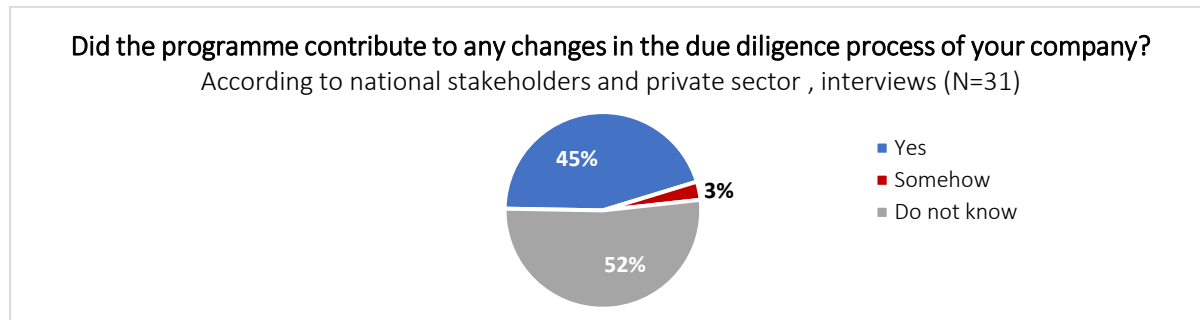


Figure 45: Programme contribution to this

Finally, national stakeholders are divided on the question of whether local and national authorities develop and enforce relevant laws, make sufficient budget provisions for education for all and CP systems, expand social services and make them more child friendly. Notably in India (0%) and NL (0% and 50% somehow) scores are lowest, while Vietnam and Jordan score highest (100%). At local level, however, there is lack of awareness and henceforth very limited case management or enforcement. But indeed, increasing quality of education, capacity building of schoolteachers and CP workers does lead to the detection of child labour.

2.6 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

WNCB aims further to ensure that girls and boys, women, and men - without distinctions of caste, religion, disability, or any other forms of discrimination and exclusion - participate and hold equitable and meaningful influence in all activities, including decision-making. WNCB aims to make sure they feel safe and empowered to share their views and inputs, and to engage men and boys as key stakeholders in promoting gender equality and inclusion and addressing gender-specific discrimination and disadvantages.³⁵

Conflict sensitivity

The MTR also [lightly] assesses the conflict sensitivity of the programme, and the mechanisms in place to apply a *Do No Harm* approach. To this effect, an explicit question was added to the survey in relation to leaving no child behind and addressing horizontal inequalities (ethnic, religious, geographical, etc.).³⁶

According to the staff, only few and unintended outcomes were created by the interventions, and very limited negative outcomes could be identified, as presented in the tables below. However, it is not clear if the absence of negative outcomes is the result of the conflict sensitivity features of the programme

³⁵ WNCB, Guiding principles & Key Messages

³⁶ UN, 2020, Immunization agenda 2030: A global strategy to leave no one behind

or because of what appears to be lack of mechanisms to track them. Indeed, the MTR has not identified means to ensure community monitoring or feedback to the programme management.

| Positive unintended outcomes created by the WNCB interventions According to alliance and partner staff, workshops and interviews (N=85) | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|-------|--------|------|---------|--------|
| | Cote d'Ivoire | India | Uganda | Mali | Vietnam | Jordan |
| More enrolment in schools and VT (exceeding targets) | X | | X | X | | |
| Construction of schools | X | | X | X | | |
| Success of the case management approach | | | | | | X |
| Targeting women in economic support | | | | | X | |
| Increased initiatives from governments | | X | X | | | |
| Decrease in reported child marriage cases | | X | | | | |
| WNCB interventions encouraged other organisations to work in the area | | X | | X | | |
| Supporting communities increased trust | | X | | | | |
| Local interventions positively influence advocacy work at national level | | | | | X | |

Figure 46: Positive unintended outcomes

An unintended outcome in Vietnam (although not fully attributed to WNCB) is caused by the private sector being confused about the legal definitions of child labour and are therefore fearful of being in violation of the law. Several companies therefore decided to no longer recruit people below 18-years old. This explains the statement that some youth can no longer find work, and 'suspicion' from companies. Opportunities for youth to learn and have some on-the-job experience through e.g., internships are now lost. In Cote d'Ivoire, there has been some repressive actions of the police (*Brigade des mineurs*) against perpetrators of child labour, involving sometimes the parents. While it is not clear to what extent there is a causal relation between repressive actions and WNCB interventions, the repressive actions have impacted the delivery of the programme³⁷. In response, programme staff indicate that consultations with communities took place to ensure the continuity of activities and families of incarcerated persons were referred to social centres. Further, UNICEF reportedly organised a training workshop on child friendly policing and collaboration with other child protection actors. L&A activities with the government on law enforcement were also conducted and associated UNICEF and the Embassy of the Netherlands in Cote d'Ivoire.

| Negative unintended outcomes created by the WNCB interventions According to alliance and partner staff, workshops and interviews (N=65) | | | |
|--|---------------|---------|--------|
| | Cote d'Ivoire | Vietnam | Jordan |
| Reluctance of some communities | X | | X |
| Some youth (not children) can no longer find work | | X | |
| Repressive actions of the police | X | | |
| Shift of child labour from one sector to another | X | | |
| Suspicion from companies | | X | |

Figure 47: Negative unintended outcomes

³⁷ WNCB, 2021, Alliance Partner Annual Plan 2021 Overview (Document A), December 2021.

Overall, there clear is indication that WNCB considers horizontal inequalities in the planning and implementation of its activities. While the specificities of the horizontal inequities vary in the different contexts, respondents in all countries have confirmed that these vulnerable communities are most often lower castes, ethnic minorities, refugees or groups facing other form of marginalisation. It was also confirmed during the MTR that Alliance members and their partners pay special attention and put in place measures to reach children with disabilities. For example, In India, the MTR finds that the partners prioritise children and parents from marginalised communities as they are most vulnerable to engaging in work. These vulnerable communities are most often from lower castes, minorities, or specific ethnic groups.

We work with the most socially excluded communities (such as MahaDalits), migrant labourers and different religious communities. The children from these most excluded groups belong to the most vulnerable risk groups, and easily fall into child labour. The engagement of these groups is key to addressing the issue of child labour.
Programme Partner India

One limitation noted was the lack of resources to reach and engage communities in very remote areas, and in Jordan the need to strengthen L&A work on gender and on conflict sensitivity related to migration.

Globally, it appears that Alliance members are sensitive to the issue of discrimination against minorities and marginalised groups and consider that the programme had no negative outcomes or impacts in this regard. However, systematic monitoring of negative side effects should lead to actions to correct these and should be reported systematically.

Gender responsiveness

The gender issue is front and centre of the WNCB approach and stated in their initial proposal.³⁸ All the WNCB documents reviewed by the MTR systematically integrate the gender dimension. The programme proposal also includes the elements of its gender strategy.³⁹

In all countries, the gender transformative agenda appears to be present in the programming approach and in line with the programme gender objectives. This agenda is most relevant as some of the contexts where the programme is implemented have significant gender inequities, including some highly patriarchal societies. Gender issues are integrated into workplans with a strong focus on sensitisation and capacity building, initiating gender strategies, and collecting gender-disaggregated data.

The partners are adapting their interventions to respond to gender issues in their contexts. Gender Committees have been formed in schools to respond to gender issues. India Programme Staff

For example, while selecting members from the community structures to be part of the programme, such as the selection of the para-social workers and community mobilisers, we ensure gender balance to ensure that both male and female para-social workers were recruited. This was a key benchmark that informed this selection process. Uganda Programme staff

³⁸ "The Alliance's choice of strategies, our approach towards children, families, communities, stakeholders and target audiences and our intended outcomes are informed by three main principles: that of a rights-based approach, gender mainstreaming and gender equality, and child participation. As a second principle, the Alliance aims for a gender transformative approach across all country programmes and will contribute to gender equality in schools, workplaces (for those who have attained legal working age), households and communities. We mainstream gender throughout the programme 's design, implementation and monitoring stages by integrating a gender equality strategy and action plan into all country plans." (WNCB, Programme proposal, Joining forces to scale up action against child labour. 2019).

³⁹ "Mainstreaming gender and promoting gender equality, requires thorough gender analyses that will be conducted as a core element of strategic planning, programme design, supply chain analysis, monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning. This includes using gender responsive indicators and monitoring processes as well as the collection of adequate and relevant sex disaggregated baseline information to be able to ascertain the gender transformative outcomes of the programme at mid-term and closure" (WNCB, Programme proposal, Joining forces to scale up action against child labour, 2019).

The Gender WG and the Programme Management Unit (PMU) organised online capacity building programmes on gender sensitive programme implementation. The training was appreciated but the response to the survey and interviews also highlights that the support by the WG was insufficient and not timely. Some Gender WG staff report limitations in time and budget, and too much work taken up by administrative work. It is further reported that the WG would have preferred to start with the Gender Analysis earlier, but there were delays due to Covid and internal processes to obtain approval and funds for the GA. The Gender Analysis was only finalised this year, and lessons learnt and recommendations are to be integrated in annual plan 2023 onwards.

Each country is working on developing a gender strategy to include specific strategies towards Gender and Inclusion in relation to child labour. Also, in this there are complaints about delays and lack of support, and it has been explained that the gender WG had to go through a long and strict internal procedure of proposal drafting to receive the funds to support the countries. Indian partners are disappointed with the global strategy, as it caused almost two years of delay to implement improvements and specific activities related to gender mainstreaming. They want a more country-specific process and it raises the issue of timely response and interaction between the WGs and the partner organisations on this exercise, and whether investing time on participating in these WGs is regarded as meaningful to the Indian context.

The perception that more support and continued capacity development is required was echoed in the workshops in almost all countries, as shown in the table below, where capacity development was identified as the most needed area of support.

| What would be needed to improve this? According to alliance and partner staff, workshops (N=74) | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|-------|--------|------|--------|---------|--------|
| | Cote d'Ivoire | India | Jordan | Mali | Uganda | Vietnam | Global |
| More awareness raising activities/capacity development on gender sensitivity | 0% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 73% |
| Improve the scope (timeline, location, targets) | 100% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 49% |
| Increase women's participation in activities (in leadership roles) and partnership with women's organisations | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 35% |
| Define explicit gender indicators | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 27% |
| Include boys and girls in programme design | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 24% |
| Address GBV issues | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 11% |
| Include male participants in activities | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 11% |

Figure 48: Capacity building programmes' needs for improvement

In Jordan, the participants considered that most of the gender adaptations the programme is making are responses to blockages as opposed to a more proactive approach to gender issues. It is worth noting that in some countries (Jordan, Uganda and to a more limited extent Vietnam), the gender strategy involves work on masculinities, and targeting men to induce a more transformative gender agenda.

The project should engage and train cultural leaders on gender mainstreaming to enable them to address the problem of gender stereotyping of women and girls and should also engage men as gender champions so that they are able to support the women. It is also important to include boys and girls in programme design. This is a key aspect that has been missing in the programme and needs improvement. Programme staff, Uganda

In the MEAL strategy, gender issues are identified as important and provision are made to ensure that the views of boys, men, girls, and women can be disaggregated. Gender is highlighted in the document presenting the use of the SenseMaker as an important dimension to be enquired. In the report from the baseline (for which SenseMaker was used), only a portion of the questions are disaggregated by sex. A more systematic disaggregation of the data could have contributed to finetuning or confirming the programme's approach. While some questions are disaggregated by age of children, some key questions, for example, relating to security of children or how much time is spent on home chores, should have also been disaggregated by sex as it could be expected that boys and girls have very different results.

Overall, respondents are clear that the approach has been successful in mainstreaming gender issues in the design and conducting of activities in the field, meanwhile a detail and in-depth review of the gender responsiveness of the programme would be required to triangulate the finding. Cross-learning was also used for the purpose of building capacities on gender. Study visits that were organised helped in learning and applying good practices from other partners' implementation. MEAL protocols helped in inclusive gender and age aggregation during programme implementation to ensure all age-groups and genders are considered.

In Mali and Uganda gender-transformative changes has been achieved, according to the staff.

In assessing transformative change that has been achieved, the following can be seen in the project community, more women are now actively participating in trainings and in community dialogues, women have taken up leadership roles in the VSLA groups and in the community including the school structures, Community leaders are aware of gender consideration while mobilising participants for trainings/meetings, boys are embracing various trades that were originally stereotyped for women such as taking on – Tailoring and Fashion and design courses. Further, in Karamoja, men are now participating in household chores an issue that was unheard of in the past. Programme staff, Uganda.

In Jordan and Uganda, it is further noted that gender is considered in the selection of beneficiaries, and in most countries, gender is taken into consideration in the recruitment of staff. The quote below presents how in Jordan changes were made to ensure male participation in the programme.

The programme is gender responsive, given the context of the country. It did address a few issues, females were included and participated actively, while it was difficult to attract males as they were not interested in the activities, or the timing of the activities was not suitable for them. To improve this better timeline and locations could be allocated to suit males' working hours, choose topics that are of interest to them, and provide a type of incentive for their attendance to encourage them to come. Programme staff, Jordan.

Community Engagement and Accountability

The programme is ambitious in terms ensuring CEA. While a question was included on this dimension in the MTR, the limitation of not being able to talk to communities limits the team's ability to assess actual levels of CEA, which needs to be verified through the Sensemaking exercise and KPI survey, as part of the MTR. Overall, the impression is that there are high levels of local community engagements, as part of the area-based approach, and for example in India the programme partners organise a yearly community meeting on the programme, to hear about their ideas and suggestions, especially related to fostering CLFZs.

Another element of CEA is the existence of complaint mechanism. As presented in the figure below, many civil society members and government officials are not aware of the existence of a feedback and

complaint mechanism. However, in some countries there are complaint mechanisms linked to individual partners in place.

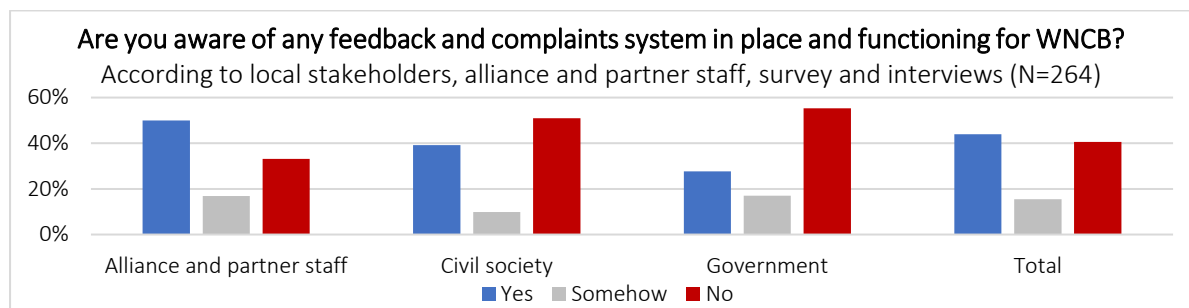


Figure 49: Awareness of feedback and complaints system

A key feature of ensuring CEA is the that communities, beneficiaries and other stakeholders can influence the design and adaptations of interventions. However, as per the graph below, among the stakeholders consulted WNCB scores relatively low in this, with only half of the MTR participants confirming community involvement in design and adaptations.

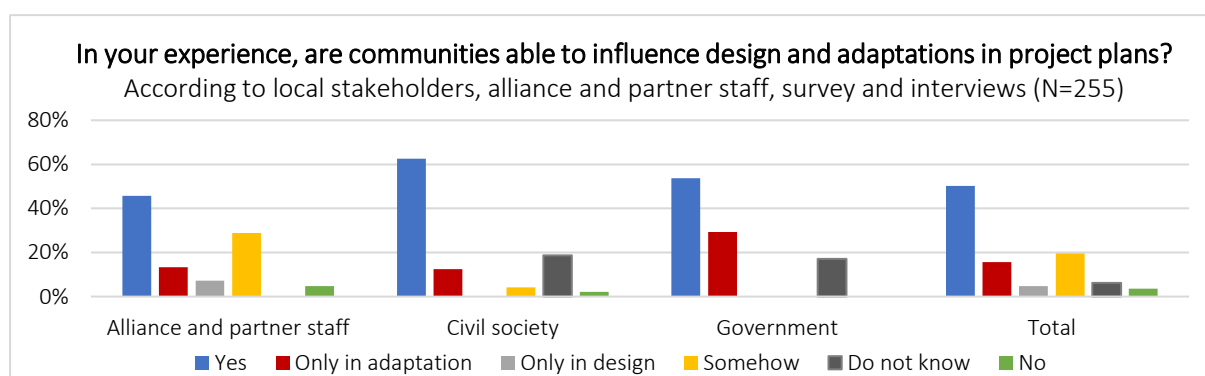


Figure 50: Community influence on design and programme adaptations

Importantly, as summarised in the figure below, only in India and Vietnam do private sector, national and local stakeholders express that they were involved in the design phase. But in Vietnam, the programme was designed by UNICEF and SC, and then sent to government partners for comments. In that sense, they were involved although proper involvement requires government partners or communities to generate ideas and take a degree of ownership and leadership in the formulation of the proposal, which is not the case. Most stakeholders say they were not involved at that stage.

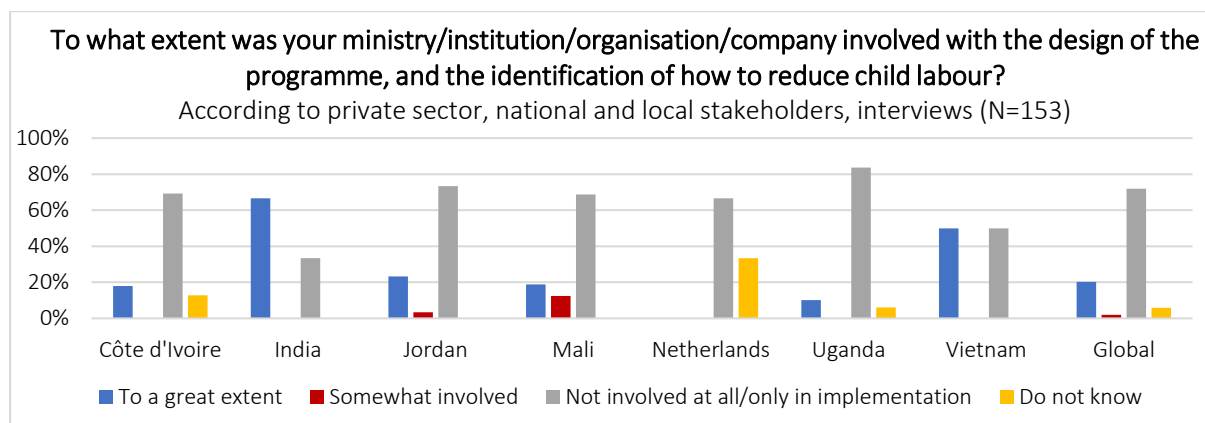


Figure 51: Involvement of external actors in design of the programme

3. MAIN OBSERVATIONS ON MEAL

This section presents the MTR findings in relation to the MEAL system, especially the OH process, the observations on the ToC in light of this, and the evidence that the MEAL system fosters learning and adaptation.

The programme document clearly articulates the goal and objectives of the programme. Thereafter, the four pathways are identified to achieve the results of the programme, each one with an underpinning transformational agenda and its outcome indicators (5 in total at the outcome level). Each country team was asked to focus on specific pathways based on an analysis of the local context and to select and adapt the Intermediate Outcome Indicators (14 in total distributed over the four pathways).

In setting up the overall result framework and ToC, the programme tries to ensure that all country programmes contribute to the overall objective and are measuring results in a similar way, which would allow reporting that aggregates results at the global programme level. Meanwhile, these efforts to ensure consistency in measuring across the countries were balanced and allow for some level of flexibility for Alliance members to use their own tools and methods to measure progress.

The MEAL⁴⁰ WG, with members in NL and focal point in other countries, has the responsibility for the meta-analyses and monitoring, ensuring cross-country learning, and to support the MEAL of country operations. It is thereby planning to:

- Establish a MEAL system as per MEAL Protocol
- Conduct baseline studies
- Establish WNCB reporting agreements and coordination of reporting
- Prepare and coordinate Annual Reporting
- Follow-up on developing and integrating learning questions in MEAL
- Follow-up and support the establishment of accountability mechanisms in focus countries
- Provide overall MEAL support to country teams and WGs and ensure compliance with Donor Requirements (e.g. IATI)

Reported progress on MEAL

The MEAL WG reported the following progress in the annual reports of 2020⁴¹ and 2021⁴²

- The MEAL protocol was rolled out (including three methods that would help the country partners and programme to monitor, evaluate and learn about root causes of child labour and key assumptions in the programme's ToC)
- Harvested outcomes were reported by the partners. Although this was a challenge for several country teams, many partners reported interesting, harvested outcomes. These outcomes should allow programme partners to assess their effectiveness and the way they are collaborating towards achieving planned WNCB 'ToC' objectives
- SenseMaker studies have been conducted and finalised for six countries (not in NL)
- The baseline studies have been finalised for five countries. Uganda has collected data for the Key Programme Indicator (KPI) baseline and will finalise the analysis in 2022. Meanwhile, in NL, on Pathways 3 and 4, no baseline was collected
- All countries are working towards identifying their targets relating to the KPIs

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ WNCB, 2020, Annual Report 2020, Joining forces to scale up action against child labour.

⁴² WNCB, 2021, Annual Report 2021, Joining forces to scale up action against child labour.

- The annual planning process saw the inclusion of several improvements to facilitate more interaction between partners, such as information meetings about formats and requirements with all country teams
- The planning and contracting for the MTR of the programme

3.1 LEARNING

An important finding outlined in the figure below is that 46% of the Alliance and partner staff see evidence, and 24% somehow see evidence that lessons learned and/or the MEAL data were used to finetune or adapt the project strategies. Importantly, 30% do not agree this is the case or do not know if this is the case, pointing to their lack of involvement in learning (equally among Alliance and partner staff). Those who answered somehow or no, mostly mention that information is not shared enough.

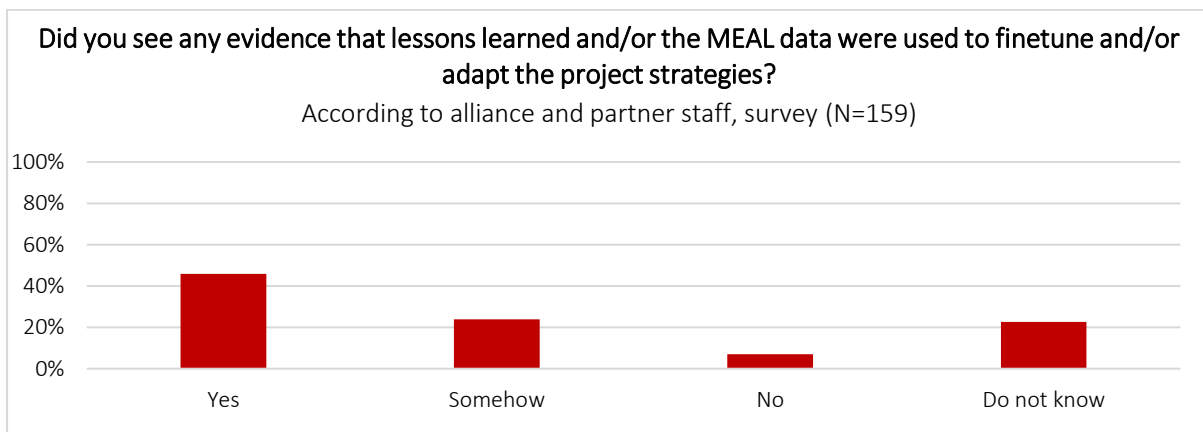


Figure 52: Lessons learned and/or MEAL data used

Beyond the response to the survey, staff have expressed clear examples of adaptation of the project based on learning.

There is great evidence that lessons learnt from the MEAL data was used to finetune and adapt the programme strategies. For example, the programme partners implementing interventions in the same districts, especially in Karamoja, had a problem of double reporting because in their separate programme activities in the same community they would end up reaching out to the same beneficiaries. To address this challenge, we introduced coding of beneficiaries and participants. This has greatly resolved this challenge. Programme staff, Uganda

Analysing these answers per country, as presented in the map below, India, Mali and Uganda are most positive in terms of adaptation based on MEAL data. Vietnam and NL score lowest.

Where MEAL data is used to finetune and/or adapt the project strategies

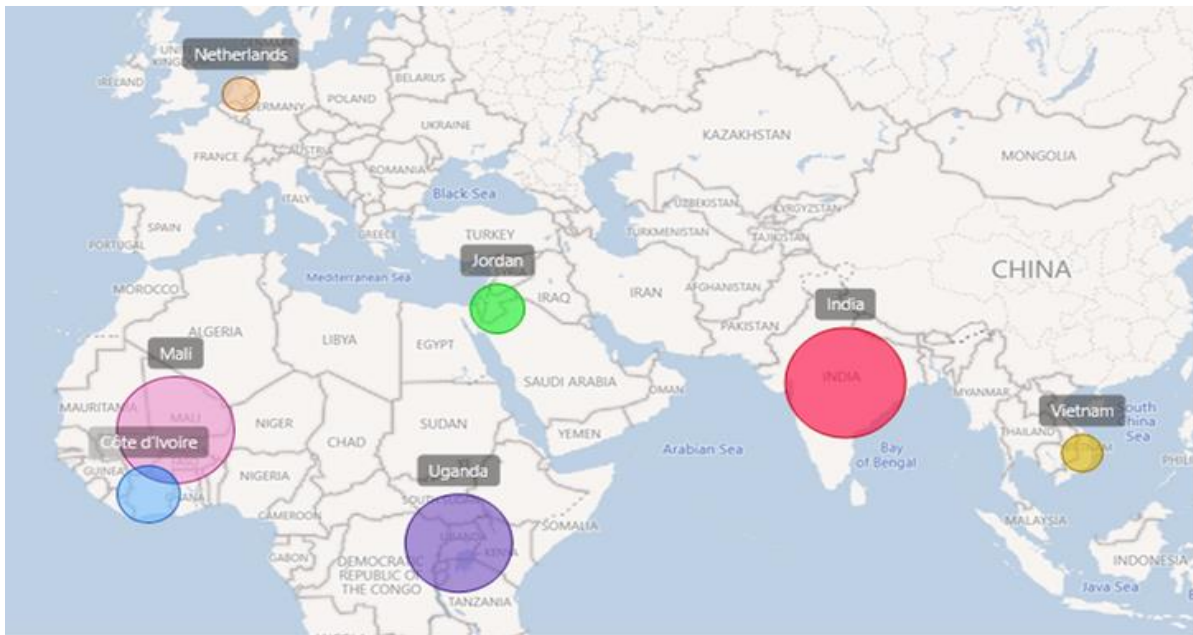


Figure 53: Where MEAL data is used

Respondents who do believe lessons learned are used to adapt project strategies, mostly give examples of how the baseline informed design and how lessons learned are used for upscaling, as presented in Figure 54 below.

The completion of in-country the baselines made it possible for country teams to track their progress against the KPIs and to assess the assumptions of the ToC. WNCB also reports that partners can align work and monitor the implementation of their workplans based on their own Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) tools.

On learning, the interviews, workshops, and the survey results appear to indicate that the MEAL set-up has had some success in collecting lessons and transforming them into improved practices and programme implementation. Meanwhile, the MTR team also notice some shortfalls in certain countries. For example, in NL, the WNCB did not undertake a systematic baseline study on outcomes related to Pathways 3 and 4 on influencing governments and the private sector in the EU. The actual mapping of the supply chain actors is the most important step to improve the work on the supply chain approach, which was not done and there is no baseline to measure progress against.

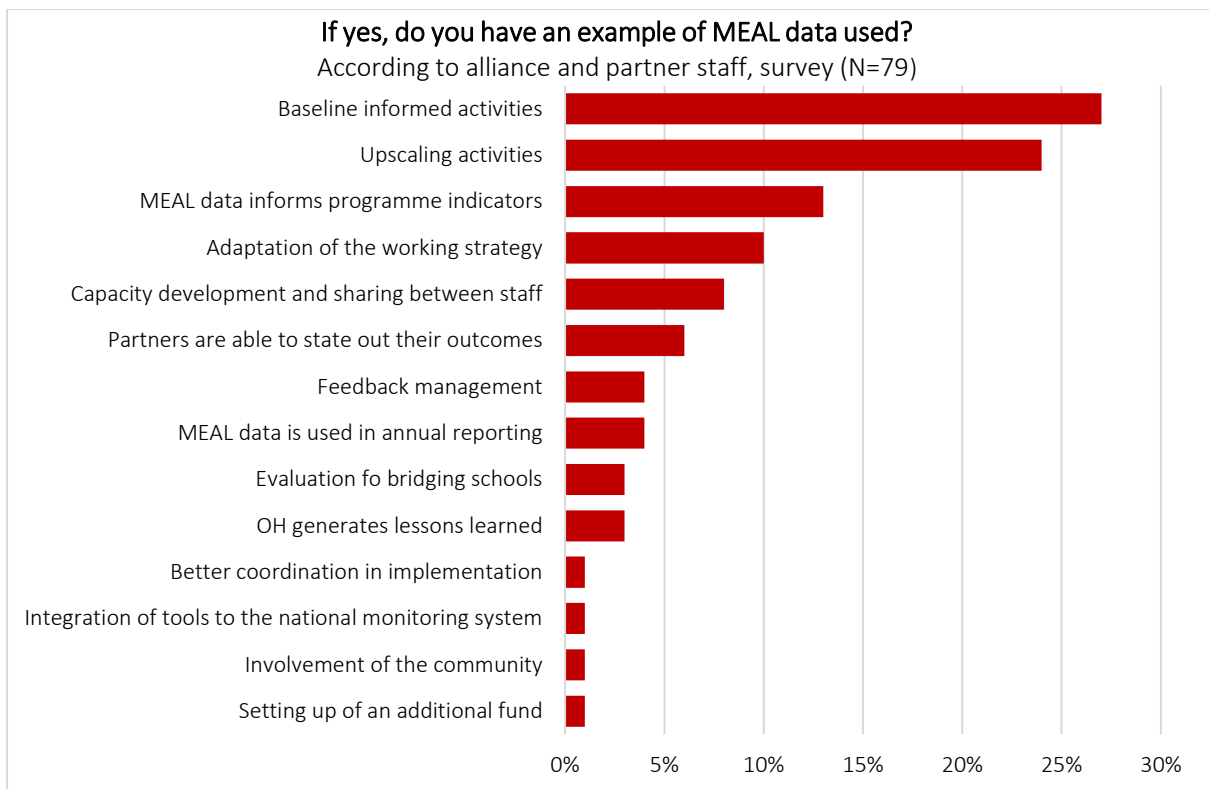


Figure 54: Examples of MEAL data used

More specifically, not all staff feel that the OH exercise leads to the definition of good practices, as presented in the figure below, but variations per country are high. As above, it is not clear to the MTR team if and how these good practices were used to adapt/adjust the programme.

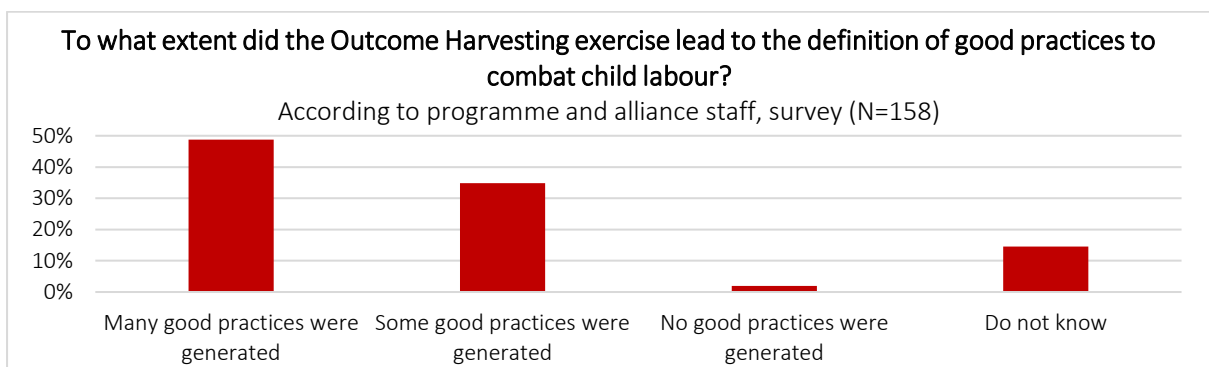


Figure 55: OH leading to defining good practices

Most staff confirm that good practices at country level were shared with NL WGs. When triangulated with the previous chart, it appears that the knowledge loop, aiming to improve implementation based on lessons learned in the field, only led to slightly stronger programme activity implementation, as very limited evidence could be collected on the adaptation made on the basis of the learning. As noted, staff in India and Vietnam are most negative about the contributions of the WGs to country specific implementation. Partners in Vietnam indicate not yet having received a lot of support from the WGs, mainly because of staff turnover and COVID-19. In India, Programme staff express a need for hierarchical transparency at the PMU and country levels.

The upcoming strengthening of the Linking and Learning capacities is a positive opportunity to bolster the mainstreaming of lessons and learning into adaptive management.

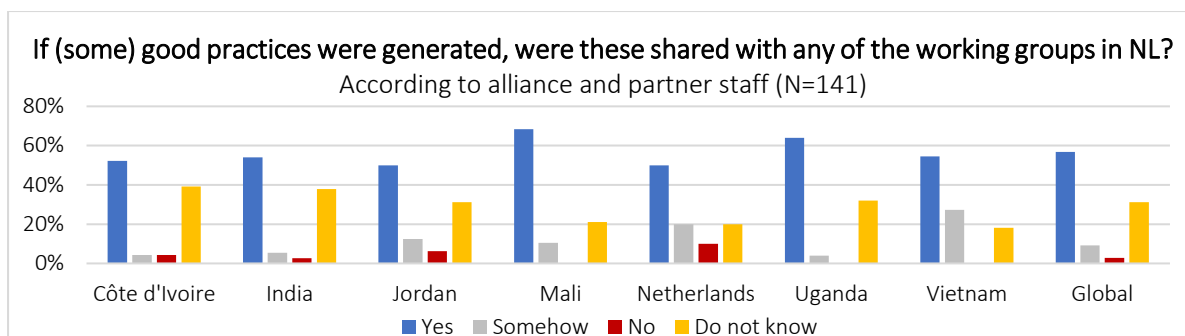


Figure 56: Good practices shared with WG in NL

Based on the outcomes of the survey, the follow-up interviews and the workshops, the MTR observes that there is an overall poor understanding of the OH process. Staff received, albeit the engagement of the WG, insufficient training on OH, and there is lack of feedback mechanisms and sharing of lessons learned. Some staff go as far as expressing that OH does not capture successes and lacks accountability. This last point may relate to the MTR finding that in several countries, the OH process was not fully implemented, and that little to no validation took place by the change agents or external actors (see section 3.2 below).

3.2 OUTCOME HARVESTING

The MEAL Protocol of WNCB partly relies on OH for qualitative and participative methods to learn and report on the programme's impact and to learn ways to improve on project implementation. To support the MEAL tool's implementation, a community of practice was to be established and Terms of References (ToRs) were drafted to specify the parameters of their work,⁴³ and a guidance note developed to support the implementation of the OH.⁴⁴ A shared online library, monthly discussions, and webinars were planned to support the capacity development. Strengthening capacities, given the pandemic, was challenging but remote support was nevertheless provided through engagement with the WG. The tool was to be integrated into all countries' MEAL plans, and outcomes were to be reported in annual reports. While each country has harvested outcomes, the number and quality of outcomes harvested varies from country to country. As further detailed below, some reasons for this disparity include: i) the novelty of the method; ii) the large number of partners and number of countries; iii) the challenges in capacity development due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Feedback on the methodology of OH

OH is a relatively recent methodology that is increasingly used for projects that *experience constant change and contend with unexpected and unforeseeable actors and factors in their programming environments*.⁴⁵ While the choice of this methodology for WNCB is understandable, the novelty of the approach required a significant investment to ensure that stakeholders understood the parameters, the steps, and the rationale of the process. Also, the monitoring systems of the partners are mostly based on results frameworks, whereas outcome harvesting is a different technique of data collection, that is not specifically focused on the indicators. One of the discussions that may need to take place is on whether the results of outcome harvesting can be adequately used in their results-based management systems, or if this causes conflicts in their systems.

⁴³ WNCB, Terms of Reference, the outcome harvesting community of practice in WNCB.

⁴⁴ WNCB, WNCB Outcome Harvesting Guidelines.

⁴⁵ Wilson-Grau, R. *Outcome Harvesting, Principles, steps, and Evaluation Applications*. Information Age Publishing, 2019, p. 1.

While outcomes were harvested in every project country, the methodology's level of understanding and integration into the project implementation differ significantly between countries. If all MEAL focal points seem comfortable with the methodology and the training they have received, the level of awareness of the method of other Alliance members varied significantly. The evaluation of the country workshops confirms that the event helped bring better understanding and more support for the OH approach. In many countries, some, or all workshop participants were unfamiliar with the methodology (Côte d'Ivoire and Mali). In several countries including NL, the participants concluded that the use of the OH methodology is complex and has contributed little so far to the learning among the Alliance staff.

While it was recognised that MEAL focal points had been trained in the methodology, other participants stated that it was their first introduction to OH. Participants of these countries confirmed that the sessions on OH during the workshop contributed to improve their understanding of the methodology. In Jordan, a refresher OH was given by the MTR team after the participants requested it, and in NL, workshop participants were similarly trained but still expressed difficulties. Meanwhile, in other countries (India, Vietnam), some participants were aware of the methodology and, to varying extents, understood its practice and benefits. This includes how the methodology allows for reflection on the programme approach and how it has the potential to build a common view of the programme, a critical benefit for such a multi country multi-partner programme.

In Mali, Alliance members participating in the workshop, after being introduced to the OH methodology, approved of its use as a tool that is better adapted to the project realities than more traditional M&E methods. In Uganda, participants were positive about the methodology and how the MEAL focal point were supportive in its roll-out. In Jordan and India, albeit limited to the MEAL team, significant efforts have been invested in ensuring stakeholders were consulted in the harvesting, formulating, and validating the outcomes, including local stakeholders. This was achieved with a concern for inclusivity through field visits, spot checks on the ground, FDGs with the local teams and beneficiaries, and quarterly sessions with the partners. In India, a special consultant was recruited to support with the participatory formulation of outcomes and outcome harvesting. Still, overall, it appears insufficient efforts and time were invested to validate and substantiate the outcomes by a broader set of change agents and external actors to improve their creditability and usefulness.

Based on interviews and review of literature, the MTR could assess that the significant and uneven gaps in mastering the method could be explained primarily by three causes. First, the novelty of the approach meant that a large majority of individuals involved in the project implementation had to be trained and familiarised with the OH process. Few, if any, Alliance members make systematic use of this approach and capacity had to, in most cases, be built from the ground up. For example, even the basic concepts of *outputs and outcomes* were misunderstood in Vietnam, which, beyond highlighting the need for support, also give an indication of how great the need for support is. Based on the workshop exchanges in Vietnam, it is worth noting that OH does not seem to have yet been institutionalised or done by stakeholders. The prevailing results-based management/logical framework culture is the prevailing management system used by the implementing partners. This implies that all staff heavily focus on indicators and outputs rather than outcomes. Outcome level monitoring requires a different set of monitoring tools to collect data and report outcome level results. For instance, local implementing partners – in Vietnam still - shared that they often reported on the number of trainings sessions delivered, the number of children that were supported, the dropout levels, etc., but that it does not lead to information or analysis about the changes resulting from the intervention, drivers of child labour

or stories and cases concerning child labour. It is therefore reasonable to wonder if the level of support required to implement such a novel M&E approach efficiently and effectively was adequately assessed during the planning and inception phase of the programme. Further, Alliance staff seem to master the approach better than the partners. They would benefit from being informed about the methodology so that they could contribute to the system. Furthermore, involving external partners in the validation of outcomes would also contribute to improving the understanding of the methodology.

Second, the COVID19 pandemic disrupted the capacity development efforts of the MEAL teams, both in-country and by the MEAL team in the NL. Significant efforts had to be allocated to enable the critical adjustments required to deliver the programme under COVID-19 restrictions. This health crisis impacted the project's capacity to strengthen its members on OH, and given its novelty, this support was made even more critical. In Vietnam, for example, it was noted that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been challenging to organise workshops and meetings between partners. Managing data collection or field visits to observe and monitor the implementation has also been puzzling. The necessary meetings to institutionalise OH as an outcome-level monitoring system could not be organised and some are still pending. Consequently, there is a lack of comprehensive understanding of OH among project partners.

Third, while it is hard for the MTR to assess if the programme was affected by a larger than usual staff turnover, reports and feedback during workshops and interviews indicate that this phenomenon has also impacted mainstreaming of the OH methodology into the programme implementation and would have required more regular training sessions to mitigate staff turnover. In some countries, particularly Uganda, consistent efforts have successfully strengthened the Alliance members' capacities and partners' regular refresher/mentorship, which has significantly supported the team in developing quality outcomes. Following the MTR workshop in Hanoi, all participants were keen to apply OH (and potentially outcome mapping) as an approach to monitor changes in the behaviour of key stakeholders and target groups.

As already mentioned, the MTR considers that, given the complexity of the settings, the challenges of predicting outcomes, and the resources that the programme has already invested, the OH methodology is well adapted to the programme MEAL needs. Overall, the MTR considers that OH should be more strongly institutionalised in the monitoring practices of the Alliance and implementing partners. More training is needed on OH. The PMU should work on a guide on how to collect data, monitor, validate and process outcomes. MEAL officers should take a lead on this issue and training should be bolstered.

Validation/substantiation of outcomes harvested

The typical process of OH includes six steps, namely:

- i) Design of OH
- ii) The gathering of data and drafting of the outcome descriptions
- iii) Engaging change agents in formulating outcome descriptions
- iv) Substantiating the outcome statements
- v) Analysing the interpreting the outcomes harvested
- vi) Supporting the use finding to ensure the improve the programme⁴⁶

While systematic validation and substantiation of outcomes is not a requirement of the methodology, given the complexity and the number of partners involved in the project, the MTR considered that in

⁴⁶ R. Wilson-Grau & H. Britt, 2012, Outcome Harvesting, MENA office, Ford Foundation, p. 4

most countries, more should have been done to ensure the credibility of the outcomes harvested by WNCB ...*The more important the use and the more controversial the outcomes are, the more effort should be placed on substantiating them...*⁴⁷

The level of validation and substantiation seems to have varied from country to country but with an overall trend of limited to no validation by external actors but also, in most countries, by change agent themselves. To improve the credibility of the OH with a view to increasing their usefulness to adapt the programme and the accountability of the implementers, a minimum level of substantiation is required. Overall, the harvested outcomes were not systematically formulated with the change agents, and not validated by external actors, therefore remaining an internal and non-validated process. To some extent, this decision was based on trying to keep the MEAL process light and manageable for country teams.

While in none of the countries change agents have been involved in the formulation of the outcomes, and no external validation took place, in some countries the level of internal validation also varies. In India, the conclusion of the participants in the workshop seems to indicate minimal validation of outcomes beyond the MEAL team and in some case a broader set of programme staff. In Jordan, where validation appears to go a bit further, the participant explained that the field staff collected data sent to the WNCB MEAL focal point. The MEAL expert made sure that all observations were consistent and accurate and related to the work based on the activities. In case of any concern or need for clarification, the MEAL expert went to the field to do spot-checking and FDGs with the local teams and beneficiaries. The final step of validation is sending the data to the NL for validation. No further validation is performed by the external actors at the country level beyond what is described here. In Mali, participants confirmed that some government officials, linked to the project implementation, were consulted occasionally. In NL, two of the four outcomes reported in 2021 could not be validated by the change agents, during this MTR.

The MTR highlights the important variation in the methods and levels of validation of the OH. However, it notes that, halfway through the programme, further systematic efforts should have been undertaken to validate the outcomes harvested, improve their credibility and nurture reflection on potential adaptations of the programme's implementation. In the absence of such efforts, reflections and learning on the programme could appear to be based on uncertain statements.

Thus far, the programme reports on OH annually. Meanwhile, outcomes are cumulative and unfold over period longer than a year. When outcomes are only mentioned once in an annual report, it is not clear for reader if previously identify outcomes are still relevant and the transformations they describe are still in effect.

The use of outcomes harvested to adapt the programme

One of the objectives of the monitoring system and of OH is to provide feedback to project management and stakeholders to adapt their programming based on evidence collected in the field. *For M&E... support for use can be periodic throughout the process, to support decision-making after moments of reflection and learning...*⁴⁸ The use of the outcomes harvested to adapt, adjust, or review projects approaches seems to have varied between countries. In about half of the countries, participants in the workshops expressed that they have limited knowledge of "if and how" the harvested outcomes were used to feedback into project implementation. In Uganda, examples were

⁴⁷ Wilson-Grau, R. *Outcome Harvesting, Principles, steps, and Evaluation Applications*. Information Age Publishing, 2019, p. 90.

⁴⁸ Wilson-Grau, R. *Outcome Harvesting, Principles, steps, and Evaluation Applications*. Information Age Publishing, 2019, p. 130.

given of initiatives that were undertaken based on the findings of the outcomes harvested. In Jordan, participants expressed that the MEAL team works in relative isolation, and that little adaptive managements is taking place. In Vietnam, project outcomes have been used to advocate for scaling up in the whole country as well as for a larger number of beneficiaries. For example, Thao Dan Center recommended that children who live in CP centre be sent to public school for comprehensive studies and with the aim of attending higher education. Few countries, for example Uganda, mentioned several adaptations to programme based on the SenseMaker. Beyond these arguably anecdotal examples, the MTR finds little documented evidence of how the methodology was used to adapt, adjust, or review the project implementation, strategy, or ToC.

3.3 LINKAGES BETWEEN THE INDICATORS AND THE OUTCOMES HARVESTED

The WNCB has chosen to use a ToC and a results framework to measure its progress toward its objectives. There are two types of indicators:⁴⁹

| Key Programme Indicators: | Country Specific Indicators: |
|--|---|
| <p>A set of generic outcome and output indicators at programme level to monitor our progress against our stated objectives as specified in our programme ToC. The purpose of these KPIs is fivefold:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Monitoring our general progress against outcomes in our ToC. 2) Document our strategic impact. 3) Be accountable to ourselves, our donor and the affected communities. 4) Inform our work on L&A. 5) Communicate to external stakeholders about the progress of our efforts. | <p>A set of country and WG specific indicators that can be decided upon within the country teams and WGs and do not need to be shared programme wide. The purpose of these specific indicators is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Monitoring our progress against objectives in country/WG work plan. 2) Be accountable to ourselves and the affected communities. 3) Generate learning to inform and improve/adapt our strategies. 4) Inform our work on L&A. 5) Communicate to external stakeholders about the progress of our efforts. |

While some provisions were originally made for CSIs, most Alliance partners have used their existing organisation’s indicators. These mostly quantitative indicators measuring outputs are also used to quantify some of the outcome harvested. To ensure common interpretation, use, and reporting on indicators, the programme developed a reference tool to describe each indicator and to present its scope and parameters.⁵⁰ This tool was especially relevant given the large number of Alliance partners and the diverse level of technical expertise on MEAL related issues amongst them.

While the Alliance members continue using their own M&E methods in parallel to the programme, it is unclear how they reported, if they did, on the indicators presented in the MEAL protocol. The MTR has been split into several separate components, and TI had no access to the findings of the (ongoing) SenseMaking exercise, or the related mid-term KPI survey data.

⁴⁹ The ToC in annex C presents the output and outcome indicators.

⁵⁰ WNCB, 2019, Indicators protocols for key programme indicators, 29 November 2019.

3.4 THE TOC

At any MTR, it is important to revisit the TOC and its underlying assumptions. A start on this was made in the seven country workshops, but further work is required.

During the workshops, participants were invited to reflect on the OH (and MSCs discussed) to assess how they were linked and supported the ToC. One essential exercise was to cluster the different outcomes under their respective pathways. In several countries the participants considered Pathway 1 as the *foundational* pathway to which different pathways contribute, and under which they achieve the MSCs. Most countries confirmed achieving some levels of results under Pathway 2.

Pathway 3 has fewer outcomes to report against. In most countries, participants have expressed that this pathway as the most challenging. While most Alliance partners have the expertise, networks, and experience in engaging at the community level, and some with government counterparts, engaging with the private sector, especially higher in the supply chains, has proven challenging for most. In several countries, there is explicit demand for more expertise in engaging with the private sector, and to include work on the informal sector, where many children work. The pandemic has, for instance, seen many families lose economic opportunities, and caused migration, which may have led to a surge or increase in child labour in the informal sector.

Concerning progress on pathway 3 in NL/EU, the MTR finds that while work is actually being done currently through WNCB engagement with sector-wide covenants, there is little linkages to supply chain actors operating with or as part of supply chains in the six countries; and to scale-up interventions that will make the private sector act. In order to make more progress on Pathway 3 from the Netherlands, further work is required and could include finding more entry points and understanding of the business culture of bigger firms and discussing organisational hurdles and establish partnerships with the RVO one-stop-shop⁵¹, or with certain Alliance members with less organisational constraints, or even an additional partner.

There are some good practises highlighting the interlinkages between Pathways. For example in Jordan Alliance and partner staff express that while real challenges have been encountered on Pathway 1, they found a number of examples of synergies including working with the MoL to deliver awareness-raising sessions to communities and the private sector around local labour laws and child labour – interlinkages with both Pathway 1 and 3. Further, some business owners joined the community committees whose activities focus on reducing and fighting child labour (they conducted inspection visits) – interlinkages with the Pathway 3. Jordan also directly trained home business owners through referral system to reduce child labour and present to them the effects of child labour on the health and wellbeing of children – interlinkages with Pathway 3. In Cote d'Ivoire, alliance and partner indicate that the improvement of the productivity of cocoa farmers through the training provided by ANADER ("*champs-ecoles*") have significant effects on the household's economic empowerment, interlinking pathways 1 and 3. Further, the acceptance of the "*champs-ecoles*" intervention by farmers is the result of awareness raising sessions and involvement of authorities who denounce and take coercive measures against Child Labour (pathway 2)

⁵¹ RVO is setting up an entity, one-stop-shop, where companies can knock-on the door and flag their need for support. RVO can then ask CSOs to help these companies.

Across the countries, discussions on the different pathways highlighted that few Alliance partners work across more than one pathway. Based on their mandates and expertise, most members focus on a pathway where they have a comparative advantage as can be seen across country reports. To some extent, this plays against potential synergies between the pathways and that more coordination and information sharing could lead to stronger complementarity and impact. A more unified communication strategy across stakeholders is believed to yield more robust results, including advocacy with local governments.

Proposed revisions

In several countries, proposed changes to the ToC were discussed. The proposed changes to the ToC can be found in the country reports.

The workshop in NL highlighted the need to revise the part of the ToC relating to the advocacy towards multilateral organisations, as the programme has little capacity to directly influence such organisations, except through international fora.

It was further recommended to possibly reformulate outcome 3.1 to: *Private sector realises decent work conditions including remediation measures for former child labourers, fair wages for adults and youth and fair prices for goods.* “Fair prices for good” is possibly beyond the scope of WNCB, as there are no specific interventions on this.

In Côte d’Ivoire and Mali, it was recommended to strengthen coordination between change agents, to link the programme outcomes and improve the synergies between pathways more systematically. It was further recommended to regularly update the ToC through constant problem and stakeholder analyses. In Uganda, programme staff stress the need for systematic linkages between advocacy at international and country levels.

In India, Vietnam and Jordan, no adaptations were proposed.

Workshop participants in several countries also highlighted the need to link L&A at national and international levels, including with a view to linking Pathway 4, which has only been invested in, in NL. Regional organisations and structures could also be targeted.

Overall, while challenges were encountered towards progress on some pathways, participants confirmed that the four pathways are relevant to achieving long-term results. The MTR team recognises that analysing and reflecting on the linkages between the pathways is an area of learning that yielded highly valuable lessons, and also nurtures a more holistic approach by all Alliance and partner staff.

4. CONCLUSIONS AGAINST RESEARCH QUESTIONS

4.1 CONTEXT RESPONSIVENESS

In almost all countries, interventions are based on accurate and up-to-date analyses, and in most countries the programme is well coordinated and in line with the ongoing work and policy contexts of national and provincial governments. The MTR observes in most countries a good engagement with governments, and most local stakeholders consulted also confirm good collaboration. However, national and local stakeholders consulted were either insufficiently involved in the design phase. Further, collaboration with the private sector needs improvement in most countries, including establishing direct partnership with bigger firms (higher-up in the value chain), ministries and chambers of commerce and other relevant actors.

The assumptions underpinning the ToC are to a large extent still relevant. WNCB is responsive to changing contexts, as illustrated by its responsiveness to the COVID-19 pandemic in some countries. Documentation of other adaptations can be improved. Overall the TOC itself is still relevant but adaptations, especially per country, are discussed.

Overall, the WNCB programme is working on addressing the critical root causes of child labour, including through investments in education, child protection structures, awareness raising, improving legislation etc. However, an important observation by the MTR team is that poverty is regarded by MTR participants across the countries as by far the most important underlying cause of child labour. While the programme is working on this through economic support to families and youth, the scope of the programme is too limited to address this root cause, and little linking to programmes that work on poverty reduction, employment or local economic development is found.

Concerning the interventions geared to the youth themselves through vocational training, it is found that the training is generally not based on market assessments and that there is need to review and possibly scale-up its investments in (more market-oriented, certified and longer-term) vocational training for youth that will not go back to school. Moreover, the team identified little post-training support and mentoring to ensure that the trainees find jobs or start businesses that have a real potential for growth. Further, the WNCB Key messages and guiding principles highlight that child labour perpetuates poverty, as children's wages only contribute marginally to the family's income. Children who work and do not go to school will end up in low paid jobs, and so will their children –which means the vicious cycle of poverty is continued.

Collaboration with other programmes and actors varies per country and more attention is required to increase alignment and reduce duplication between interventions. Specifically, collaboration with other larger programmes working on poverty reduction are missing.

4.2 APPROACHES

There are strong indications that the programme is making progress on raising awareness on child labour, its risks and possible ways to reduce the phenomena. **L&A** is strongly developed in NL/EU and sees important differences in scope and level per country. With few exceptions, such as around the Global Conference on Child Labour in Durban, and through the sectoral covenants, direct linkages between L&A efforts in the NL/EU and L&A at national level are weak, especially in relation to the influencing of supply chain actors. In some countries there is insufficient expertise and available staff-time for effective L&A. The L&A to influence governments and communities is clearly stronger than the

L&A vis-a-vis the private sector. The work in fulfilling the objective to “make the private sector act” is mainly done through intermediary organisations, and through structures (such as the sectoral covenants), and influencing legal frameworks to regulate the private sector, focussing on Child Rights and Business (CRBP) and Responsible Business Conduct (RBC). Further, some crucial national and private sector actors are not aware of any WNCB messages. This can in part be explained by the programme’s lack of branding/visibility.

The **area-based approach** is an important approach of WNCB. The success of this approach lies in its focus on norm change and ensuring that all working and out of school children are targeted, as opposed to focusing only on certain sectors or supply chains, which risks that children are being removed from one sector, only to get employed in another one. There are, however, some differences in opinion about how local this approach needs to be. Some Alliance partners are concerned that it is a too localised approach which cannot be scaled up. Further, in some countries the informal sector is not, or not efficiently included. It is highlighted in several countries that the government tries to hide the very existence of this hidden economy, which makes it difficult.

The programme is further working on **Child Protection (CP) system strengthening**, largely building on ongoing efforts on this by UNICEF and Save the Children, as part of their core activities (also in the absence of WNCB). It focusses on addressing child labour primarily through strengthening CP systems (and in WNCB especially the setting-up and/or strengthening of child protection committees) and aims for a scalable and systematic approach to address child labour.

The WNCB approach of working on **supply chains** is the one least developed thus far, however with differences between countries. Overall, the links and direct work with the private sector are not yet fully developed and requires attention. So far, the supply chain approach has mostly been integrated in the area-based approach, so mainly engaging with the mostly smaller businesses in the area. However, the supply chain should be targeted upwards (and downwards for the NL-based team), for which supply chain mappings are needed. COVID-19 reduced possibilities for direct engagement, but other obstacles also play a role, such as the fact that some of the partners traditionally have fewer partnerships with the private sector, and related institutions and ministries. Another obstacle - only expressed by the NL-based staff who participated in the workshop - is the reluctance to directly engage with the private sector from an organisational policy point of view. Therefore, the work in fulfilling the objective to “make the private sector act” is mainly done through intermediary organisations, and through structures (such as the sectoral covenants), and influencing legal frameworks to regulate the private sector, focussing on Child Rights and Business (CRBP) and Responsible Business Conduct (RBC). In the operational countries, this hesitation appears to be less of an issue and direct partnerships are developed, but in most countries mainly at the lower end of the supply chains. In the operational countries, this hesitation seems to be less of an issue.

There is scope to further **align, combine and integrate** and have approaches mutually reinforce each other. There are interesting discussions on how to better integrate the area-based approach with the CP system strengthening approach. Suggestions include increasing capacity development activities for communities and CP structures, strengthening the Lobby and Advocacy (L&A) and communication components, and increasing awareness-raising activities and exploring new ways to reach people. One obstacle to this is that in some countries the approaches and related funding are provided to and implemented by individual partners, compromising integration and cross-fertilisation of the approaches amongst partners.

Conflict sensitivity

Overall, there is clear indication that WNCB considers horizontal inequalities in the planning and implementation of its activities. The partners prioritise children and parents from marginalised communities as they are most vulnerable to engaging in child labour. While the specificities of the horizontal (cultural, religious, social, economic) inequities vary in the different contexts, respondents in all countries have confirmed that these vulnerable communities are most often lower castes, ethnic minorities, refugees, migrants, or groups facing other form of marginalisation. However, the MTR found no specific measuring of Do No Harm principle⁵², and consequent (reported) adaptive management, a core element of conflict sensitive programming.

Gender responsiveness

Overall, the WNCB rightly puts gender issues at the core of its approach and has set up tools, reporting requirements, knowledge and learning, and strategies to ensure the programme is gender responsive. Programme staff appear to have to a large extent mainstreamed gender issues in their programme approaches, analysis, and reporting. Meanwhile, given the complexity of the issues at hand and certain challenging contexts in which the programme is being implemented, the teams on the ground need further support to foster gender transformative change. The Gender Analysis was only finalised this year, and lessons learnt and recommendations are to be integrated in annual plan 2023 onwards. Through the workshops and the KIIs, the MTR team has witnessed a significant level of experience, analysis, and reflection on gender issues amongst the Alliance members and partners which confirms the importance given to gender issues. At the halfway point of programme implementation, this knowledge does not appear to have been sufficiently collected and used. While some workshop participants have confirmed that the programme has a transformative impact, the evidence provided appears to be anecdotal.

Community engagement and accountability

Finally, a key feature of WNCB's ambition to ensure CEA is that the communities can influence the design and adaptations of interventions. It is reported that the programme partners organise yearly community meetings on the programme, to hear about their ideas and suggestions, and the baseline studies captures many views. Country plans are contextualised based on this. However, this MTR finds that among the stakeholders consulted, WNCB scores relatively low in terms of involvement of the stakeholders in design and adaptation, with only half of the stakeholders confirming that this is really the case. Further, most government and local stakeholders (non-Alliance or partner staff) were not involved in the design phase of the interventions (with exceptions in some countries). However, the levels of community accountability need to be further assessed through the other parts of the MTR, that will engage with the direct beneficiaries.

Finally, the issue of **value for money** of the WNCB was difficult to assess, especially as TI did not have access to the data collected through the other parts of the MTR. Further, the difficult question of attribution and contribution, the absence of some baseline surveys as well as agreed upon benchmarks, and the not yet fully developed and validated outcomes harvested all add significantly to the challenge of assessing value for money and efficiency. When reviewing evidence of efficiency of resources against the different pathways, the MTR found that the number of outcomes harvested per pathway were proportionally in-line with the resources allocated to each one. Part of the staff perceives the structure in NL and the WGs as top heavy and thereby compromising efficiency and value for money.

⁵² UNDP, 2013, Framework Do No Harm Presentation, sdgs.un.org/statements/un-sustainability-framework-do-no-harm-and-do-good-11238

4.3 PARTNERSHIPS

The MTR concludes that overall strong **external partnerships** are being developed, However, partnerships with the private sector and related ministries require additional attention. There are no linkages to chambers or ministries of commerce. In NL the principal decision not to directly engage with individual companies seriously hampers progress on Pathway 3. Partnerships with other programmes are developed in some countries but not in others, limiting progress and leading to overlap.

The Alliance members report a difficult initial start-up to function as a complex consortium, and challenges in defining the roles of the WGs and Alliance members – all of whom have different business cultures. In terms of **internal collaboration**, on the one hand, the comparative advantages of the Alliance members, their sharing of expertise and complementarities are the main successes of joint implementation, in addition to the coordination and collaboration of actions and sharing of resources. On the other hand, their different procedures, mandates, and business cultures remain notable hurdles. While improved, staff highlight poor coordination and communication, as well as duplication of efforts, and 1 in 3 three staff feel that there is lack of complementarity in knowledge and expertise. Further, the most mentioned reasons for this perceived inefficiency are the limited funding allocations and, especially, the delays in disbursements, followed by the view that the overall programme is too costly. While in-country staff confirm support received, the WGs set-up is seen as top-heavy in NL, with insufficient manpower in-country.

The MTR further observes that the WNCB operates with characteristics and modalities of both a **programme and a fund**. While all components are in place to operate as a programme, WNCB is not branded or visible as such, and several Alliance partners use the funding to continue their regular activities (such as strengthening the CP system). The M&E is largely done through the existing operational and monitoring systems of the partners. In NL, organisations are even funded to execute projects. The MTR concludes that either way is feasible, but a strategic decision needs to be taken in this regard and then put in place. For example, if WNCB is determined to be more of a fund, the governance and MEAL structures can be much lighter. Conversely, if it is deemed to be a programme, organisational sensitivities need to be further dissolved to create one team, and the branding/ visibility needs strengthening.

Finally, a key feature of WNCBs ambition to ensure **community engagement and accountability** is that communities can influence the design and adaptations of interventions. There are clear signs of community engagement, but among the stakeholders consulted, WNCB scores relatively low in this regard, with only half of the stakeholders confirming this is really the case. Further, most government and local stakeholders (non-alliance and partner staff) were not involved in the design phase of the interventions. However, the level of CEA needs to be further assessed through the other part of the MTR that will engage with the direct beneficiaries.

4.4 LEARNING

One choice of the WNCB MEAL strategy was to keep the MEAL reporting, and thereby including the learning function of the programme and some elements of the OH methodology as light as possible. While the learning in the context of the L&L is mostly driven by requests emerging from the field, learning drawing from the MEAL is meant to nurture cross-country exchanges. Further, while the argument was to keep MEAL light to reduce pressure on country teams, it is generally not perceived

this way by them. They feel the requirements are heavy in terms of complying to the requests and execution.

This strategic choice (keeping MEAL light) may be justified while a complex programme is being initiated during the inception phase. But given the diversity of contexts and the importance of building synergies among country efforts, it is also important to bolster learning once the programme is launched and operational. As the programme is being implemented, it becomes increasingly important to collect, codify and apply lessons learned and best practices. Furthermore, as the programme is being implemented, questions may arise for which research is required to better inform programming. And while the MTR understands the rationale for keeping it light, this choice also has an impact on the programme, including some **shortfalls in sharing knowledge and lessons across the programme**. With the programme now well underway, improving and strengthening learning should become a priority.

Designing, planning, and implementing an efficient and effective MEAL is always challenging. In the context of the WNCB, the challenge is increased by the variety of contexts where the programme is undertaken and by the number of organisations, each with its own results-based management (RBM) and M&E culture. While ambitious, the **design of the MEAL strategy** remains technically sound and based on the latest development in M&E theories with a strong focus on learning. Plans were also put in place to adapt the MEAL Strategy to each local context, and flexibility was introduced to allow each partner organisation to use their own M&E tools. Using an innovative approach to M&E, namely OH, which partner organisations are poorly or not at all familiar with, also increased the complexity and the investment required to ensure that the M&E allowed for learning and accountability.

The **implementation of the MEAL strategy** encountered some noteworthy challenges; some to be expected, and others unexpected. Implementing an innovative approach in numerous country contexts and with such diverse partner organisations required critical training, technical support, and investments in coaching. These expected challenges were, to some extent, foreseen, and mitigation strategies were developed, including an intensive programme of support to teams in the field from HQ. Meanwhile, the unexpected COVID-19 pandemic and, according to interviews, an important staff turnover challenged and partially hampered the capacities of technical staff and WGs to support the rollout of the MEAL Strategy in an effective and efficient manner. A lot of monitoring data was nevertheless collected during COVID-19, and adaptations were not just made as a direct impact of COVID, but also through interpreting key data that was collected. Some of this information is also presented in the annual plans over 2021 and the report over 2021. While mitigation measures were developed, it appears that the MEAL Strategy and the Outcome Harvesting new and innovative tool are mastered very differently in the different countries of the programme, based on the workshop and interviews undertaken by the MTR team. In some countries, the level of understanding of the OH method was slightly better, while in most countries, weaknesses are identified with its practice. These challenges have translated into shortcomings in measuring the programme's impact and its capacity to adapt and adjust during implementation. Important staff turnover and the novelty of the approach, albeit some significant support capacity development for MEAL, further support is required.

The programme succeeded to a certain extent, in collecting lessons learned from the field and transforming them into good practices and mainstreaming them into the programme implementation. Most respondents to the online questionnaire confirmed that the programme was successful (especially in India, Mali, and Uganda), or somehow successful, in improving its approach during the implementation based on the lessons emanating from the MEAL capacities and teams. Meanwhile,

most country reports highlight the need to **improve the sharing** of knowledge and more inclusive reflection on how to adapt the programme. The MTR found little evidence in the documentation provided and few examples during field visits to illustrate the adaptations mentioned by respondents and participants. The only exception is the adaptation that was required to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is little evidence that most learning was triggered by learning from the programme.

The strong tendency of having one partner per pathway, per country, and the fragmentation this induced, have been partially mitigated through learning. On a few occasions, learning has brought opportunities to bring the partners together to reflect on joint efforts and improve synergies between their contributions. However, the MTR team has not seen much evidence of cross-pathway learning. Given that partners (mostly) implement their own pathways, there is need for more structural in-country dialogue and communication. Country reports note a high number of participants confirming they adapt and innovate in the context of project implementation. The observed **discrepancies in presenting results on adaptation** may be caused by confusion on the level of adaptation. Programme staff likely adapted and innovated at the tactical level and daily implementation of the programme, but evidence of adaptation at strategic level is scarce, including vis-a-vis the programme ToC or implementation strategy.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Opportunities and challenges for scaling-up

All MTR participants reflected on opportunities to scale up the WNCB for it to have more impact. As presented in the figure below, MTR participants mostly recommend extending the scope (timeframe, areas, sectors, targets), to ensure more involvement and ownership by governments and by the private sector, and to work more on L&A and effective communication.

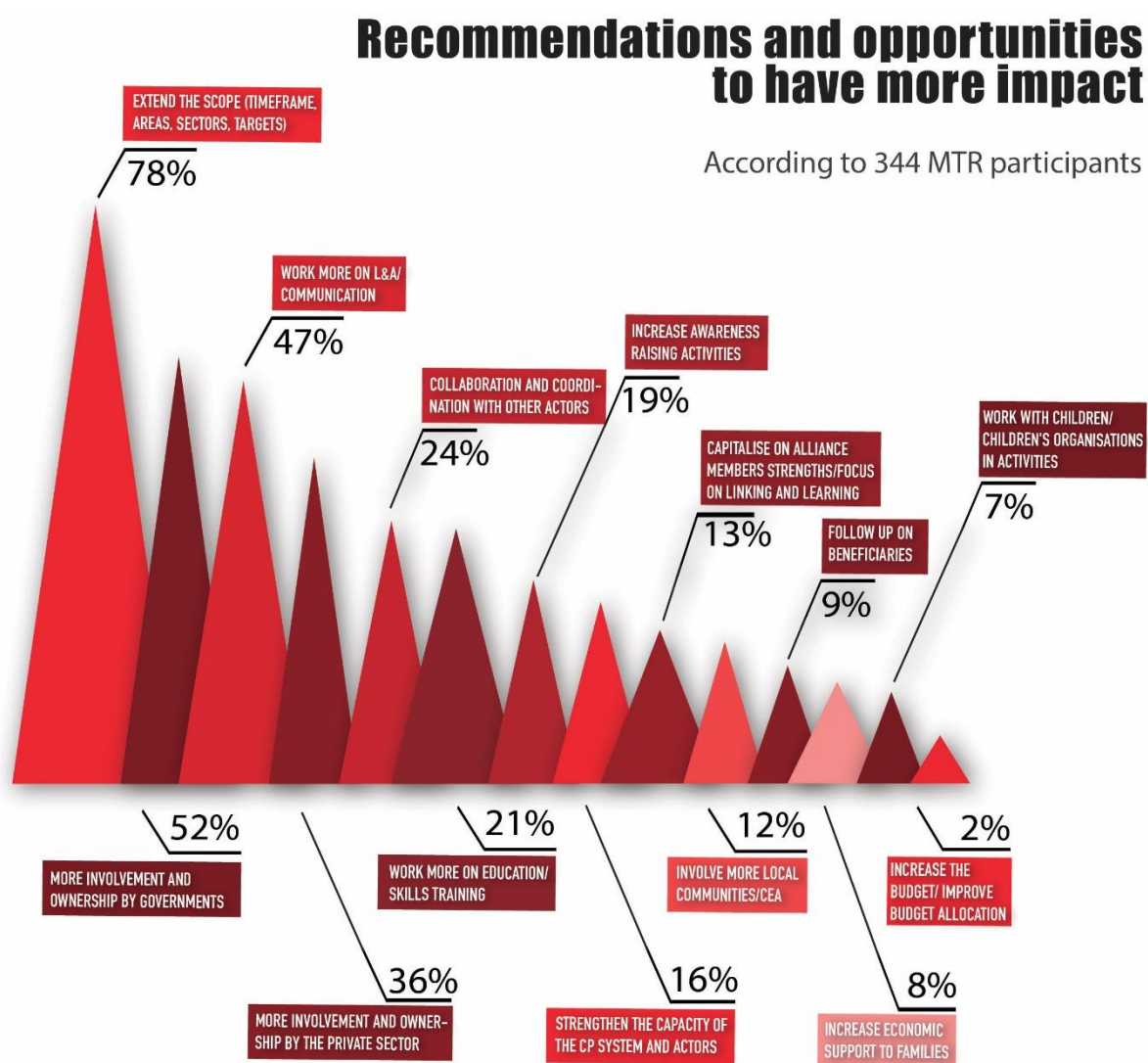


Figure 57: Recommendations and opportunities to scale-up

Interestingly, recommendations vary per country but also have many similarities, as presented below.

| Recommendations and opportunities to bring the programme to scale-up and have more impact According to 385 MTR participants, in survey, interviews and workshops | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|-------|--------|------|-----|--------|---------|--------|
| | Côte d'Ivoire | India | Jordan | Mali | NL | Uganda | Vietnam | Global |
| Extend the scope (timeframe, areas, sectors, targets) | 81% | 91% | 53% | 84% | 50% | 85% | 87% | 78% |
| More involvement and ownership by governments | 56% | 61% | 58% | 60% | 44% | 47% | 16% | 52% |
| Work more on L&A and communication | 54% | 56% | 40% | 33% | 32% | 55% | 45% | 47% |
| More involvement and ownership by the private sector | 27% | 67% | 25% | 23% | 50% | 34% | 45% | 36% |
| Collaboration and coordination with other actors | 40% | 48% | 39% | 4% | 15% | 0% | 35% | 24% |
| Work more on education/skills training | 8% | 4% | 46% | 35% | 9% | 23% | 26% | 21% |
| Increase awareness raising activities | 37% | 4% | 2% | 16% | 0% | 32% | 6% | 19% |
| Strengthen the capacity of the CP system and actors | 18% | 0% | 5% | 53% | 3% | 6% | 32% | 16% |
| Capitalise on Alliance members strengths and focus on L&L | 28% | 0% | 4% | 2% | 18% | 7% | 32% | 13% |
| Involve more local communities and CEA | 31% | 0% | 5% | 4% | 3% | 14% | 0% | 12% |
| Follow up on beneficiaries | 27% | 0% | 4% | 0% | 0% | 8% | 0% | 9% |
| Increase economic support to families | 5% | 7% | 14% | 5% | 0% | 13% | 6% | 8% |
| Work with children and children's organisations in activities | 28% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 7% |
| Increase the budget and improve allocation | 0% | 0% | 9% | 4% | 0% | 1% | 0% | 2% |
| Focus on the informal sector | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 9% | 0% | 3% | 1% |
| Specific attention to gender issues | 0% | 4% | 0% | 0% | 3% | 1% | 0% | 1% |
| Work on addressing the root causes and external factors (insecurity, drought etc) | 0% | 0% | 2% | 0% | 0% | 1% | 0% | 1% |

As per the figure below, lack of funding is seen as the biggest challenge to scale up the programme. However, others express that the capacities of the Alliance itself present a limiting factor as do problems related to organisational and management hurdles. External factors such as lack of political space (especially in India and Côte d'Ivoire), and conflict and security are also challenging efforts to scale up.

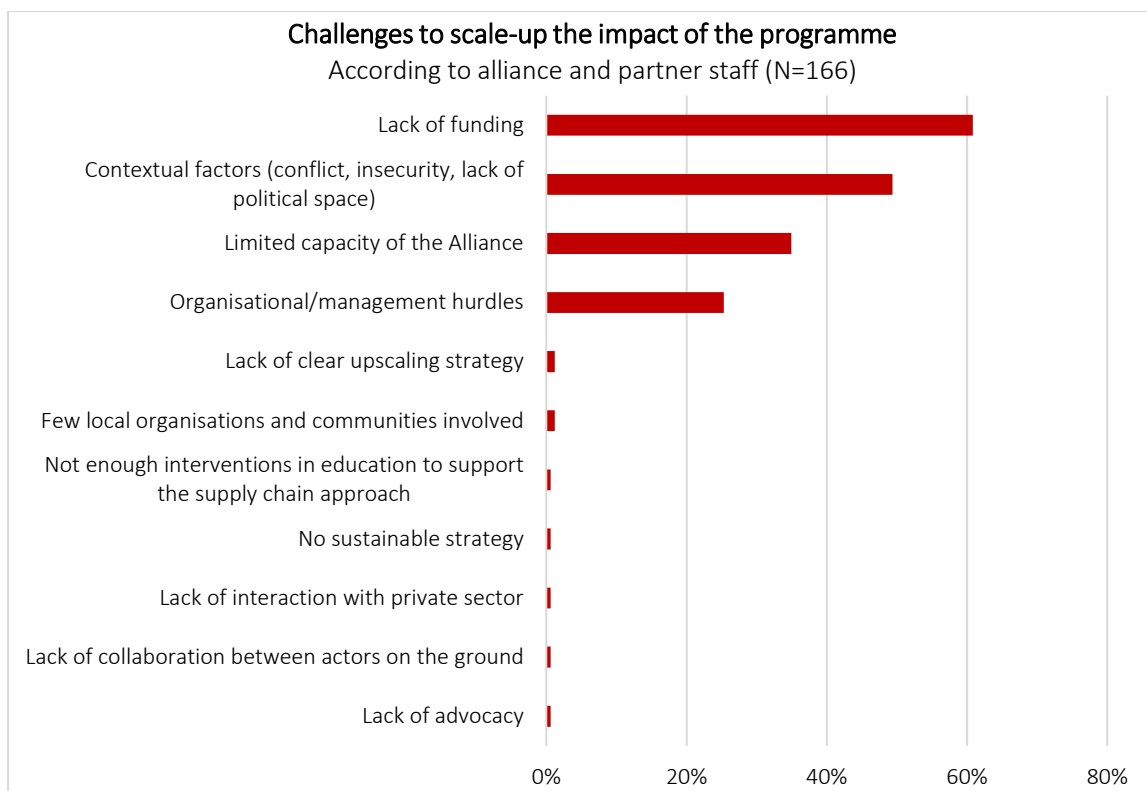


Figure 58: Challenges to scale-up the impact of the programme

In addition, the MTR team makes the following recommendations per MTR topic:

Recommendations on increasing context responsiveness

- Develop mechanisms to identify, report and mitigate unintended consequences of the programme (e.g. contributions to conflict drivers, Do No Harm). Possibly put in place a light community-based monitoring mechanism to capture and correct negative impacts of the programme and to report on them to bring the issues to Alliance members in other countries.
- Strengthen partnerships with actors working on poverty reduction, employment etc. to better address poverty, identified by MTR participants as the main root cause of child labour across all countries
- Strengthen the youth empowerment components to become more market responsive

Recommendations on approaches

- Develop a sustainability (and exit) strategy involving a broad set of stakeholders in the reflection process and in its implementation.
- Further align, combine and integrate the programme's area-based approach, CP-system strengthening, the supply-chain approach and L&A. Revisit the practice of providing funding to individual partners per approach, which compromises integration and cross-fertilisation of the approaches amongst partners.
- Strengthen linkages between L&A efforts in NL and at international level, and L&A at national level, especially in targeting the private sector. Build on partners' overarching systems, and in NL and EU map the supply chain actors on the high-end in the sectors targeted in country.
- Strengthen partnerships with the private sector (especially higher in the supply chains) to meet the objective of making the private sector act. Invest in mapping the relevant private sector actors and directly engage with them, including providing them with support to act. Partner

with the chambers and ministries of commerce, and possibly with the upcoming RVO one-stop-shop and where needed recruit additional expertise to boost progress on Pathway 3.

- Further expand the programme to other sectors, including the informal sector.
- Strengthen L&A work on gender and on conflict sensitivity (including in relation to displacement and migration).
- Explicitly aim and document measure efforts at fostering gender transformative change. In doing so, capitalise on the Alliance and partner staffs' experiences and knowledge of local realities to allow them to develop and/or finetune context-specific gender approaches to their projects.

Recommendations on partnerships

The table below presents the recommendations by staff on how to improve collaboration. While the most mentioned one is to improve communication, the differences per country are, as noted, significant.

| What would be needed to improve this? According to alliance and partners staff, interviews and workshops (N=83) | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------|------|-------|--------|------|-----|--------|---------|--------|
| | d'Ivoire | Côte | India | Jordan | Mali | NL | Uganda | Vietnam | Global |
| Improve communication and give feedback to each other | 0% | 14% | 0% | 0% | 93% | 75% | 90% | 0% | 48% |
| Improve coordination and leadership: NL with country offices, and among local partners | 91% | 0% | 50% | 86% | 38% | 5% | 0% | 0% | 45% |
| Ensure a more concerted vision, and a common understanding of concepts | 91% | 0% | 0% | 86% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 39% |
| Regular meetings, timely reporting | 0% | 71% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 95% | 0% | 0% | 36% |
| Increase synergy and joint activities | 0% | 71% | 0% | 86% | 0% | 14% | 100% | 33% | 33% |
| Work more with governments | 95% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 50% | 27% | 27% |
| Set clear responsibilities and better use of local partners' expertise | 0% | 14% | 0% | 7% | 13% | 0% | 0% | 5% | 5% |
| Improve staffing, increase involvement of all | 0% | 0% | 50% | 0% | 13% | 0% | 0% | 2% | 2% |
| Strengthen advocacy activities at national level | 5% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 5% | 0% | 2% | 2% |
| Work as an alliance and build trust | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 25% | 0% | 0% | 2% | 2% |
| Improve partnership with the private sector | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 50% | 1% | 1% |
| Link the interventions of each pathway between them | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 50% | 1% | 1% |

Figure 59: Recommendations on how to improve collaboration

- Ensure further linkages with all important stakeholders and other programmes and initiatives, leading to prevention of overlapping support, gaps in support and joint advocacy.
- Strengthen direct partnerships with the private sector, and related ministries and chambers of commerce, ministries of labour, agriculture, mining etc.
- Strengthen coordination, collaboration, and communication internally and with other programmes in the different zones of intervention. Improve information sharing between partners to increase efficiency and to avoid overlap and improve synergies.
- Determine whether WNCB should be further developed as a fund, or as a programme, and adapt the structure, approaches and branding/visibility accordingly.
- Consider replacing WGs with a team of experts on the various topics. This team could both support the countries, and implement the activities on influencing the Government, EU and multilateral organisations, as well as investors and companies in NL and the EU. Not only will

this be more cost effective, but may also simplify and streamline communication, reduce burden on country teams, and maximise cross-fertilisation and catalytic effects.

- Decentralise resources to increase management capacities (and responsibilities) in the countries, and enable required expertise and manpower for private sector engagement and L&A.

Recommendations on Learning

- Prioritise engaging country teams to ensure a more in-depth understanding of the OH method, its objectives, roles and responsibilities and usage. Important limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic have been lifted, and the programme should now significantly scale up its support to teams in the field to ensure that the MEAL strategy can be fully implemented so that the programme can collect data and knowledge required for final evaluation.
- Improve the knowledge of the programme staff beyond the MEAL focal points on OH methodology and usage. Provide the team with clarity on the delivery that is expected from them. Institute a systematic (e.g., yearly) workshop for the Alliance and implementing partners, with the purpose of strengthening the learning focus of the program.
- Ensure the MEAL process also leads to learning and adaptive programming. To do so, unfold the limited OH approach to the full one, including formulating outcomes with the change agents, and not only internally. Invest in substantiating the outcomes harvested with a broader set of stakeholders to increase their credibility and robustness. Report only on validated and substantiated outcomes, work on outcomes cumulatively over the years, and regularly analyse and use the OH for programme adaptation and adjustment.
- Undertake a (retroactive) baseline for Pathways 3 and 4 in NL/EU, and consequently measure and report on change, as is done for the other countries.
- Report only on validated and substantiated outcomes, at least confirmed by the change agents. Work and report on outcomes cumulatively over the years, and regularly analyse and use the OH for programme adaptation. Each year, confirm and validate the relevance of previously identified outcomes in earlier annual reports.
- During the second half of the programme, and in order to capture best practices and lessons learned, invest in learning through targeted research and dedicated learning events with the external stakeholders and disseminate findings across in country amongst stakeholders (including other programmes) and between countries.

Potential research areas

The MTR recommends investments in research in all countries with regards to:

- Market assessments to inform market-responsive and certified vocational trainings.
- Mapping of private sector actors, private sector supply chains, including stakeholder analyses and actor mappings (notably in Uganda and NL).
- Identify best practices and innovations to ensure sustainability of community-based CP committees.

The WNCB decided to decentralise the research agenda and during the workshops, Alliance and partner staff identified the following research areas:

- Collect statistics on the overall situation of child labour state and nationwide (Jordan and India).
- Focus on areas where children work, instead of where they live (Jordan).

- Focus on overall school enrolment and educational system weaknesses (Jordan and India).
- Address COVID-19 impacts on child labour, notably in the informal sector (India and Vietnam).
- Create retroactive baselines on Pathways 3 and 4 in NL/EU.
- Review Private sector involvement, obligations and needs (Jordan & Cote D'Ivoire)
- Assess the impact of the mining sector on education (Mali)
- Improve understanding on teenage pregnancies (Uganda)
- Analyse the observed gap in the enforcement of existing CP laws (Uganda)
- Assess and analyse social protection schemes in the communities (Uganda)
- Collect and analyse data on complementarity of used approaches / child labour free zones (Cote D'Ivoire & NL)
- Assess the impact of climate change on child labour (NL)
- Assess and analyse the collaboration between the different interventions and actors of the sector, to better target the supply chain actors (Cote D'Ivoire)
- Study the potential for advocacy and communication on child labour (Cote D'Ivoire & Mali)
- Assess the technicalities and opportunities on implementing gender sensitive interventions (Mali)

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ANNEXES

ANNEX A. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND MASTERLIST OF TOOL QUESTIONS

The MTR is responding to the following research questions, as presented in the approved MTR inception report.⁵³ Furthermore, based on these general questions, the MTR team has expanded the set of questions to deepen these areas of research and analysis.

| Objective | Research question(s) | Quality Criteria link |
|---|---|---|
| 1. To review the response and identify inspiring practises of Alliance partners to arising child labour risks because of the COVID-19 pandemic in the context of each WNCB focus country. | What significant outcomes have been reported and how do these outcomes relate to the programmes ToC? | By reviewing the harvested outcomes, understand how effective the programme is towards the ToC, and if the programme will have sustainable results in the target communities. |
| 2. To assess the relevance and the scale of the programme's interventions in each focus country in pursuit of contributing to WNCB programme-wide objectives. | To what extent are plans sufficiently context specific? Have assumptions on root causes been assessed adequately? How appropriate are country plans to address problems in each context? What are opportunities and challenges to bring the project to scale? What are good practices and challenges in combining our programme approaches (Area based approach, CP system strengthening, supply chain approach and L&A)? | By assessing in what way, the plans and reported outcomes are relevant for the communities and national stakeholders, we can better understand the complete scope of our strategies and assess if our strategies are sufficiently efficient . |
| 3. To assess the complementary nature of the in-country collaboration of Alliance partners in sustainably supporting vertical (intensification) and horizontal (replication) scaling efforts. | To what extent are partners working coherently towards the ToC objectives? Do partners align their work, and is the project brought into line with ongoing work of key stakeholders? What have been bottlenecks to coherently implement our project and how have these been overcome? Are project partners learning and adapting? Is MEAL data from baselines, and reports used to finetune and/or adapt the project strategies? Are partners changing or innovating the way they work? How and what are they innovating? Have they been using examples from each other, or other programme contexts? | By assessing if partners work in coherence and in collaboration with key stakeholders assess if our strategies are efficient and sustainable . |
| 4. To establish a benchmark and identify opportunities for in-country teams in their efforts to meet minimum quality standards and indicators in CEA. | Is the alliance adhering to minimum standards of CEA? | By understanding if we adequately engage with communities and are accountable to them about project achievements, learn how the work can remain relevant towards the second phase of the programme. |

The MTR used a large set of tools and maximised triangulation. The master list below presents the overview of all tool questions and types of respondents per question.

⁵³ WNCB/TI, Inception report: Mid-Term Review of the WNCB Programme, July 2022.

Master list of tool-questions

| # | Questions | Tools | | | | | |
|------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| | | Tool 1: Survey progr. Staff and partners | Tool 2: KIIs Senior Prog. staff | Tool 3a: KIIs Local | Tool 3b: KIIs National | Tool 4: Private sector | Tool 5: Workshop |
| Profile | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Country of work | X | X | X | X | X | |
| 2 | Number of hours a week that I work on the programme | X | | | | | |
| 3 | Sex | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| 4 | Number of workers in the enterprise | | | | | X | |
| 5 | Sector of operation | | | | | X | |
| 6 | Type of respondent (Government, civil society or other) | | | X | X | | |
| 7 | Name of ministry/organisation | | | | X | | |
| 8 | Location | | | X | | X | |
| Relevance | | | | | | | |
| 9 | According to you, what are the underlying causes of child labour? | | | X | X | X | |
| 10.a | Do you think the WNCB interventions are addressing the root causes of child labour? | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| 10.b | If yes how? If not/somehow, what is lacking? | X | X | X | X | X | |
| 10.c | What are the remaining challenges for combatting child labour? | | | X | X | X | |
| 11 | Are the programme interventions based on an accurate (and up-to-date) analysis of the situation of child labour in the areas where its being implemented? | | | | | | X |
| 12 | Are the stated goals and objectives still relevant to issues central to child labour? Do the activities and strategies fit the objectives? | | | | | | X |
| 13.a | Are the WNCB programme and projects sufficiently coordinated and in line with ongoing work of national, provincial/local government, including the policy context? | X | X | | X | | X |
| 13.b | If not, why not? | X | X | | X | | X |
| 14 | To what extent was your ministry/institution/organisation/company involved with the design of the programme, and the identification of how to reduce child labour? | | | X | X | X | |
| 15 | How has the programme adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic? | | | | | | X |

| # | Questions | Tools | | | | | |
|------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| | | Tool 1: Survey progr. Staff and partners | Tool 2: KIIs Senior Prog. staff | Tool 3a: KIIs Local | Tool 3b: KIIs National | Tool 4: Private sector | Tool 5: Workshop |
| 16.a | To what extent do you feel that WNCB-interventions are responsive to the contexts? | X | X | | | | X |
| 16.b | What would be needed to improve this (more context responsive)? | | X | | | | X |
| 17.a | Has the programme responded with flexibility to changing circumstances over time? | | | | | | X |
| 17.b | How much has the programme adapted to increase alignment with the interventions of other programmes in the areas of intervention or working on similar thematic? | | | | | | X |
| 18 | Are you changing or innovating the way you work? How and what are you innovating? | | | | | | X |
| 19 | What research areas can you identify for where more understanding is needed, or as an input to L&A? | | | | | | X |
| Coherence | | | | | | | |
| 20.a | How would you rank the collaboration between the partners in WNCB? | X | X | | | | X |
| 20.b | What would be needed to improve this? | | X | | | | X |
| 21.a | What are the main successes to implement the WNCB programme together? | X | | | | | |
| 21.b | What are the main challenges in terms of collaboration? | X | | | | | |
| 22. | Have you been using examples from each other, or other programme contexts? | | | | | | X |
| 23.a | Has your ministry/institution/organisation/you been partnering or engaged with the programme/organisation? | | | | X | X | |
| 23.b | If so in which way? | | | | X | X | |
| 24. | How do you see the linkages between efforts in the Netherlands in L&A at International level, and L&A at national level? Do they support each other? | | X | | | | X |
| 25.a | Are you aware of any type of support that country projects receive from the Netherlands-based working groups? | X | | | | | X |
| 25.b | If yes or somehow, from which of the working groups have you received support? | X | | | | | X |
| 25.c | What are the missing support areas you can identify? | X | | | | | X |
| 26.a | Is the programme applying an area-based approach? | X | X | | | | X |
| 26.b | What would be needed to improve this? | | X | | | | X |

| # | Questions | Tools | | | | | |
|----------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| | | Tool 1: Survey progr. Staff and partners | Tool 2: KIIs Senior Prog. staff | Tool 3a: KIIs Local | Tool 3b: KIIs National | Tool 4: Private sector | Tool 5: Workshop |
| 27.a | Is the programme working on child protection system strengthening? | X | X | | | | X |
| 27.b | What would be needed to improve this? | | X | | | | X |
| 28.a | Is the programme (effectively)working on the supply chain approach – working with the private sector? | X | X | X | | X | X |
| 28.b | What would be needed to improve this? | | X | X | | X | X |
| 29. | In the country where you work, does the programme work L&A? | X (only first one) | | | | | |
| 30. | How efficient is the general management of the intervention (steering, management, organisational and governance structures and procedures)? | | X | | | | X |
| Effectiveness | | | | | | | |
| 31.a | To what extent did the outcome harvesting exercise led to the definition of good practices to combat child labour? | X | | | | | |
| 31.b | If no good practices were generated, please describe why not? | X | | | | | |
| 31.c | If (some) good practices were generated, were these shared with any of the working groups in the Netherlands? | X | | | | | |
| 32 | How were the OH used to adapt the programme? | | | | | | X |
| 33.a | How would you rate the programme’s effectiveness in communication and L&A? | | X | X | X | X | X |
| 33.b | Are we reaching the right people and what would be needed to improve this? | | | | | | X |
| 34 | Do you know the developed website and tools of the WNCB on the identification of child labour in specific value chains? | | | | X | X | |
| 35 | What do you know about the WNCB programme? | | | X | X | X | |
| 36 | What do you know about the role of the private sector in the programme? | | | | | X | |
| 37 | Do you know which organisations are implementing the programme? (if not tell them) | | | X | X | X | |
| 38.a | Did you see any evidence that lessons learned and/or the MEAL data were used to finetune and/or adapt the project strategies? | X | | | | | |

| # | Questions | Tools | | | | | |
|-------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| | | Tool 1: Survey progr. Staff and partners | Tool 2: KIIs Senior Prog. staff | Tool 3a: KIIs Local | Tool 3b: KIIs National | Tool 4: Private sector | Tool 5: Workshop |
| 38.b | If not, why not? If yes, do you have an example of this? | X | | | | | |
| 39 | What changes would you propose for more effective engagement of the private sector in the programme? | | | | | X | |
| 40 | Has the programme achieved its stated objective, or can it reasonably be expected to do so on the basis of its outputs? | | | | | | X |
| 41 | What major factors are contributing to achievement or non-achievement of the objectives of the programme? | | X | | | | X |
| 42.a | Does the effort result in broader awareness on the issues of child labour? | | | | | | X |
| Efficiency | | | | | | | |
| 43 | On the scale of 1 to 5, in your view, to what extent the WNCB programme has contributed to: 1) the understanding by private sector of the decent work conditions, including remediation measures for former child labourers, fair wages for adults and youth and fair prices for goods; (1-5) 2) the private sector providing skills training and apprenticeship opportunities for adolescents and youth; (1-5) 3) the private sector implementing measures to address child labour in their supply chain; (1-5) 4) the integration of child protection policies and mechanisms to prevent, mitigate and remediate cases of child labour in their business activities and throughout their supply chain? (1-5) | | | | X | X | |
| 44 | Does the intervention deliver its outputs and outcomes in an efficient manner (value for money)? | | X | | | | X |
| 45 | How does The WNCB approach compare in costs to other options for achieving the same goals? | | X | | | | X |
| 46 | Do certain pathways achieve more results versus the resources they are spending? | | | | | | X |
| 47 | Difficulties or feedback on the methodology of OH | | | | | | X |
| 48 | Professionalism of validation by external actors | | | | | | X |
| 49 | Inclusivity of the OH process | | | | | | X |

| # | Questions | Tools | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| | | Tool 1: Survey progr. Staff and partners | Tool 2: KIIs Senior Prog. staff | Tool 3a: KIIs Local | Tool 3b: KIIs National | Tool 4: Private sector | Tool 5: Workshop |
| 50 | Updates and validation of the quantitative updates done on the outcomes | | | | | | X |
| 51 | Possible new outcomes | | | | | | X |
| 52 | Outcomes clustered per pathway | | | | | | X |
| 53 | Narratives per pathway | | | | | | X |
| 54 | The interlinkages between the pathways | | | | | | X |
| Likely impact and sustainability | | | | | | | |
| 55 | Which steps have been taken or are planned to create long-term processes, structures and institutions to prevent child labour? | | | | | | X |
| 56 | Will the institutions, organisations and the private sector supported continue after the end of project to address child labour? | | X | | | | X |
| 57 | Will there be effective mechanisms and incentives in place to continue advocacy and other activities of the programme? | | | | | | X |
| 58 | Do you think that the Government/private sector has the capacities, willingness, and responsibilities to carry on the fight against Child Labour? | | | X | X | X | |
| 59.a | Are more children enrolled in school in the area compared to last year? | | | X | | | X |
| 59.b | If yes, has the programme played a role in this? (Are more children enrolled in school in the area compared to last year?) | | | X | | | X |
| 60.a | Are less children working in the area compared to last year? | | | X | | | X |
| 60.b | If yes, has the programme played a role in this? (Are less children enrolled in school in the area compared to last year?) | | | X | | | X |
| 61.a | What is the Most Significant (positive) Change you saw as a result of the WNCB interventions so far? | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| 61.b | How could these MSCs could be scaled-up? | | | | | | X |
| 62.a | What is your biggest disappointment with the programme so far? | X | X | X | X | X | |

| # | Questions | Tools | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| | | Tool 1: Survey progr. Staff and partners | Tool 2: KIIs Senior Prog. staff | Tool 3a: KIIs Local | Tool 3b: KIIs National | Tool 4: Private sector | Tool 5: Workshop |
| 62.b | Why have these disappointments happened? What are the recommendations on how to address these dissapointments? | | | | | | X |
| 63 | To what extent has the programme enhanced your knowledge and understanding of key issues on child labour and your role in eradicating Child Labour in all its forms? | | | X | X | X | |
| 64 | Did the increase in know-how led to behaviour change on addressing child labour within the private sector? | | | | | X | |
| 65 | How is the due diligence process of your company, in terms of Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) and respect for children's rights in your supply chain? | | | | | X | |
| 66 | What recommendations do you have to increase the impacts and or scope of the programme? What opportunities do you see to bring the project to scale-up/have more impact? | X | X | X | X | | X |
| 67 | What challenges do you see to scale up the impact of the programme? | X | | | | | |
| 68 | Do you feel that local and national authorities develop and enforce relevant laws, make sufficient budget provisions for education for all and child protection systems, expand social services and make them more child friendly? | | | | X | | |
| 69.a | Is the private sector appropriately regulated to enhance the fight against child labour? Did the programme contribute to any changes in this? | | | | X | X | |
| 69.b | What additional regulations may be required to strengthen the policy and legal environment? | | | | X | X | |
| Cross cutting issues | | | | | | | |
| 70.a | Did the interventions create any unintended and/or unexpected outcomes? | | X | | | | X |
| 70.b | How did the programme respond to this? | | X | | | | X |
| 71.a | How gender responsive is the programme, is any gender transformative change achieved? | | | | | | X |
| 71.b | What would be needed to improve this? | | | | | | X |
| 72 | Were relevant horizontal inequalities (ethnic, religious, geographical, etc.) taken into consideration? | | | X | | | X |
| 73 | Are you aware of any feedback and complaints system in place and functioning for WNCB? | X | | X | | | X |

| # | Questions | Tools | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| | | Tool 1: Survey progr. Staff and partners | Tool 2: KIIs Senior Prog. staff | Tool 3a: KIIs Local | Tool 3b: KIIs National | Tool 4: Private sector | Tool 5: Workshop |
| 74 | In your experience, are communities able to influence design and adaptations in project plans? | X | | X | | | X |

Summary

Assignment: Facilitate a **participative mid-term review** of the Work No Child's Business Programme and provide the Alliance Members an 'outsiders perspective' on achievements, the quality of our work, and the way we collaborate, and learn.

Key Stakeholder of the Mid Term Review: WNCB Alliance Partners, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Commissioner: This assignment is commissioned & managed by the MEAL expert of the WNCB programme: Reinout van Santen who works for Hivos. **Profile: Who are we looking for?** The assignment will be contracted to an institution (consulting firm, research institute, university, a vendor with similar capacities) which will offer a core team of evaluators.

Timeframe: start End of May – till final report end of August.

Methodology summary: Theory of Change, Outcome Harvesting, Interviews, Focus Group Discussions and Desk Research.

Location: A visit to each partner country by a member of the consultancy team is required.

1. Background

The Work: No Child's Business (WNCB) Alliance is seeking to hire an international consultancy team to facilitate a **participative mid-term review** of its WNCB programme.

The WNCB programme aims to ensure *that children and youth are free from child labour and enjoy their rights to quality education and (future) decent work, hereby contributing to Sustainable Development Goal 8.7*. Project teams from various WNCB Alliance members collaborate in **Côte d'Ivoire, India, Jordan, Mali, Uganda and Vietnam, and the Netherlands**, to address root causes of child labour through an integrated approach; they support children to stop working and empower them to pursue an education in a supportive environment with quality formal education and, if relevant, bridge schooling. The main project partners are the Stop Child Labour Coalition, UNICEF Netherlands and Save the Children Netherlands¹. It is funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).

Our integrated approach combines the **supply chain approach** with an **area-based approach** and/or strengthening of **child protection systems** and **lobby and advocacy (L&A)** at local, national and international level. We thereby target the entire community including children, parents, teachers, and the private sector, as well as governments.

The Theory of Change² of the programme contains four 'strategic pathways which are:

1. Child empowerment and Community-based approach: *Empower children, communities, and families to prevent and address child labour*
2. Lobby, Advocacy and System strengthening in partner countries: *Local and national authorities to enforce relevant laws and to implement relevant policies and social services*
3. Supply chain approach: *work with private sector to create responsible companies in (inter)national supply chains*
4. Lobby and Advocacy at International level: *EU/Dutch government and international/multilateral organisations to act in support of the elimination of child labour and full-fill their duty to protect*

2. Rationale, Purpose, and Scope

We have planned three MTR's which will be conducted in parallel. This commissioned **MTR** will review the process of the implementation of the programme in the **six partner countries**. It will also review the work that is conducted by WGs in the Netherlands. The review is foreseen to be mostly participative in nature.

The purpose of this participative MTR is to facilitate a discussion among local and international partners and collaboratively review how we can:

- *remain accountable towards communities we aim to serve (beneficiaries);*
- *reinforce collaboration between partners to achieve planned outcomes effectively and efficiently (at local level and internationally);*
- *Identify opportunities for replication and up-scaling during and after the programme has ended;*
- *Consider the effects of the COVID19 pandemic on child labour and mitigate its effects.*

The scope of the MTR is to zoom in on implemented plans and reported outcomes of the six implementation countries as well as the WGs in the Netherlands. More specifically, the review will facilitate a discussion among partners about: *reported outcomes to date, observed emerging/heightened child labour risks due to the pandemic (e.g., reduced access to Education), the scale of implementation in relation to identified problems in the communities, the link between field practices and the international strategy and the level to which we succeed in (collaboratively) strengthening our approaches.*

This **participative MTR** aims to complement the two other MTRs. These two MTRs (already being executed by other consultants) focus on the existing toolsets and methods which are part in the WNCB MEAL protocol. As part of these MTRs, our country project partners will receive support from an international consultant to conduct qualitative research in their target communities through the **SenseMaker** methodology. In addition, local consultants are being hired to measure a set of 'Key Performance Indicators' through **household surveys** and **tracer studies**.

3. Objectives and Evaluation Questions

Our overall objective is to improve our programme implementation by identifying good practices and lessons through participative review process in which specific attention is given to the specific objectives in the table below:

| Objective | Suggested research question(s) | Quality Criteria link |
|--|---|--|
| <p>1. To review the response and identify inspiring practices of Alliance partners to arising child labour risks because of the COVID-19 pandemic in the context of each WNCB focus country.</p> | <p>What part of the implementation are partners proud of? What significant outcomes have been reported and how do these outcomes relate to the programmes Theory of Change?</p> | <p>By reviewing our harvested outcomes collaboratively, we aim to understand how effective we are towards our theory of change, and if we will have sustainable impact in our target communities.</p> |
| <p>2. To assess the relevance and the scale of the programme’s interventions in each focus country in pursuit of contributing to WNCB programme-wide objectives.</p> | <p>To what extent are plans sufficiently context specific? Have assumptions on root causes been assessed adequately? How appropriate are country plans to address problems in each context? Has the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic been sufficiently considered?</p> <p>What are opportunities and challenges to bring the project to scale? What are good practices and challenges in combining our programme approaches (Area based approach, child protection system strengthening, supply chain approach and L&A)?</p> | <p>By assessing in what way our plans and reported outcomes are relevant for the communities, we can better understand the complete scope of our strategies and assess if our strategies are sufficiently efficient.</p> |
| <p>3. To assess (in a participatory manner) the complementary nature of the in-country collaboration of Alliance partners in sustainably supporting vertical (intensification) and horizontal (replication) scaling efforts.</p> | <p>To what extent are partners working coherently towards the ToC objectives? Do partners align their work, and is the project brought into line with ongoing work of key stakeholders? What have been bottlenecks to coherently implement our project and how have these been overcome?</p> <p>Are project partners learning and adapting? Is MEAL data from baselines, and reports used to finetune and/or adapt the project strategies? Are partners changing or innovating the way they work? How and what are they innovating? Have they been using examples from each other, or other programme contexts?</p> | <p>By assessing if partners work in coherence and in collaboration with key stakeholders we assess if our strategies are efficient and sustainable.</p> |
| <p>4. To establish a benchmark and identify opportunities for in-country teams in their efforts to meet minimum quality standards and indicators in CEA.</p> | <p>Are we adhering to minimum standards of Community Engagement and Accountability? What have project teams done to make communities aware about the project objective and strategies? How are communities able to influence project design/planning? How are partners accountable to communities (by informing them about project progress)? Is there a feedback and complaints system in place, and how is this used?</p> | <p>By understanding if we adequately engage with communities and are accountable to them about project achievements, we can learn how our work can remain relevant towards the second phase of the programme.</p> |

4. Methodology & Approach

As mentioned, this participative MTR is part of a set of programmatic MTR activities and will strongly focus on the implementation process, and the extent to which we are accountable towards communities. The suggested methodologies to fit the existing MEAL methodological framework are:

- A **desk review** of all existing plans, reports, baselines, and key documents to understand the current context of implementation in each country.
- Review **harvested outcomes** (possibly through **focused group discussions (FGD's)** with project and programme staff and understand which outcomes need to be further substantiated and thus studied. Further assess and understand to what extent **harvested outcomes** show progress towards our **Theory of Change** (possibly through a participative **mapping** of harvested outcomes).
- In collaboration with our country team assess to what extent we adhere to the **core Community Engagement Standards** as set by UNICEF 4 and Save the Children by analysing, discussing and assessing practices in service of CEA with project teams.

Consultants are asked to **propose an approach** in their application in which they take note of the following guiding principles/suggestions:

- Short field visits to understand the context and possibly speak to several project stakeholders are useful. However, in some countries this will lead to long travel times. In these countries we suggest a longer online preparation in which interviews are done online to ensure sufficient time for travel. We also suggest that not all project locations are visited in these countries.
- Aim to have country visits that last for a maximum of one working week.
- Limit collecting additional data within the communities to a minimum due to the already ongoing data collection in the field.
- An approach which requires a limited time investment from country teams.
- At least include a two-to-three-day workshop in which harvested outcomes are discussed.
- In some countries it might be useful to facilitate the harvesting of additional outcomes, as a limited number of outcomes have been reported.
- In some countries (with shorter travel times), it might be possible to validate outcomes harvested with key stakeholders through either interviews or FGD's. Options to do this can be further discussed in the inception phase.
- The approach in the Netherlands will revolve around the work towards strategic pathways 3&4 which is mainly done through the communication and L&A working groups.

5. Planning, Roles, and Responsibilities

This assignment is commissioned by the WNCB programme manager and will be managed by the WNCB MEAL expert. The responsibilities of the various parties involved are:

| Activity | Responsible | Consulted | Informed | Planned |
|----------------------------------|---|-------------------|--|---------------------------|
| Selection of external consultant | MEAL Working Group (WG), Linking & Learning (L&L) coordinator | Programme Manager | MoFA, Alliance Coordination Team (ACT) & Country Leads | 16th till 20th of May |
| Inception period Develop draft | Consultant / consultancy team | MEAL WG | L&L coordinator | 23rd of May till June 3rd |

| | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| methodology and draft data collection tools | | | | |
| Finalise the methodology and the data collection tools (Inception report) | Consultant / consultancy team | MEAL Expert | L&L coordinator | June 6th till 10th of June |
| Review and approval of inception report | MEAL WG & MoFA | L&L coordinator, Programme Manager | ACT | 12th of June |
| Facilitation of workshops / data collection | Consultant / consultancy team | (In-)Country Leads & Meal Expert | MEAL WG & L&L coordinator | 12th of June till 9th July |
| Data analysis | Consultant / consultancy team | MEAL Expert | MEAL WG | 11th of July 25th of July |
| Draft report | Consultant / consultancy team | MEAL WG | L&L coordinator | 25th of July |
| Presentation of draft results | Consultant / consultancy team | L&L coordinator | MEAL WG | 28th of July |
| Review and approval draft report | MEAL WG & L&L coordination | Programme Manager | ACT | 1st of August |
| Final report | External consultant | MEAL WG & L&L coordinator | ACT | 3rd of August |

6. Deliverables

MTR Inception report in English of maximum 10 pages (annexes excluded), which should highlight: Objectives and key questions (including additional issues arising from the preliminary desk review), Methodology, Data collection methods, timeline and logistics. The data collection tools should be part of the inception report as annexes.

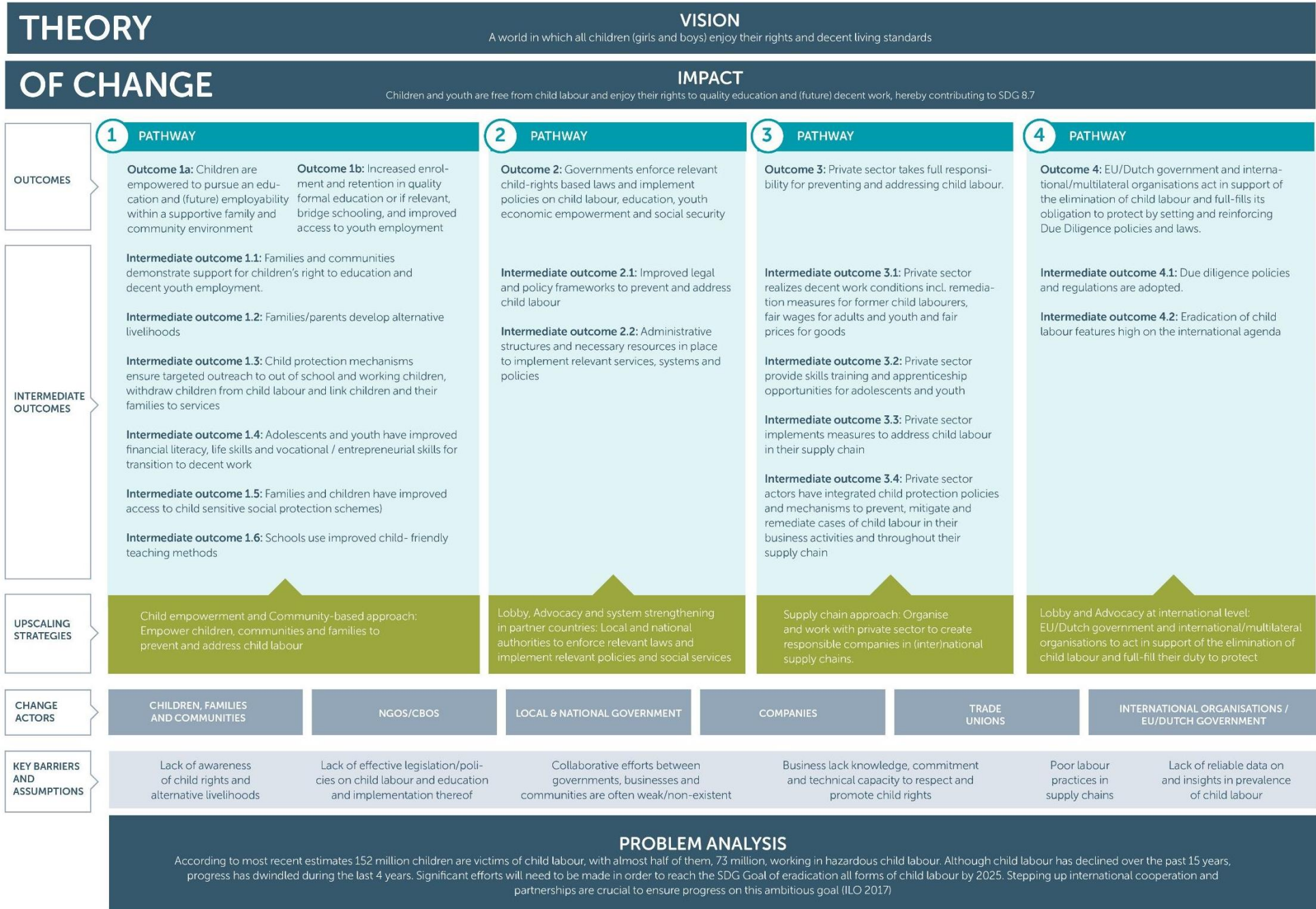
MTR Final Report in English and French

- Table of Contents
- List of Acronyms
- List of Tables
- Executive Summary
- Background
- Scope of MTR
- Methodology
- Main Findings
- Conclusions and Recommendations

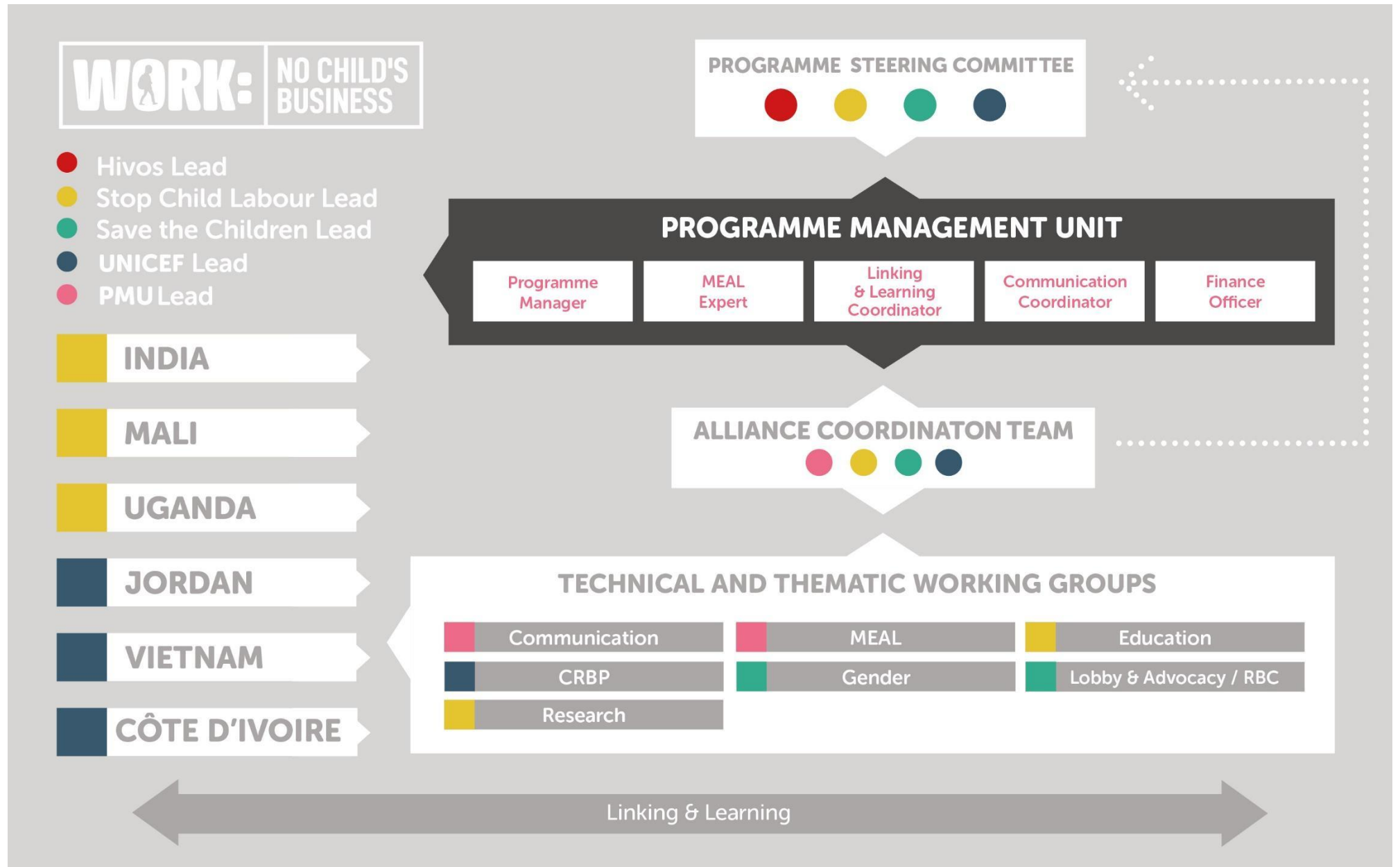
- Annexes

A summary power point presentation (in English and French) of maximum 20 slides describing the methodology, main findings, and recommendations.

A final generic online discussion workshop with break out groups to discuss findings and recommendations.



Programme structure



ANNEX D. COUNTRY REPORTS

See separate documents.