



Evaluation Report

Mid-Term Evaluation of the project

Dialogue Works

“Anchoring working children’s participation in societal and political processes (2020-2024)”

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| **Terre des Hommes**
International Federation

main
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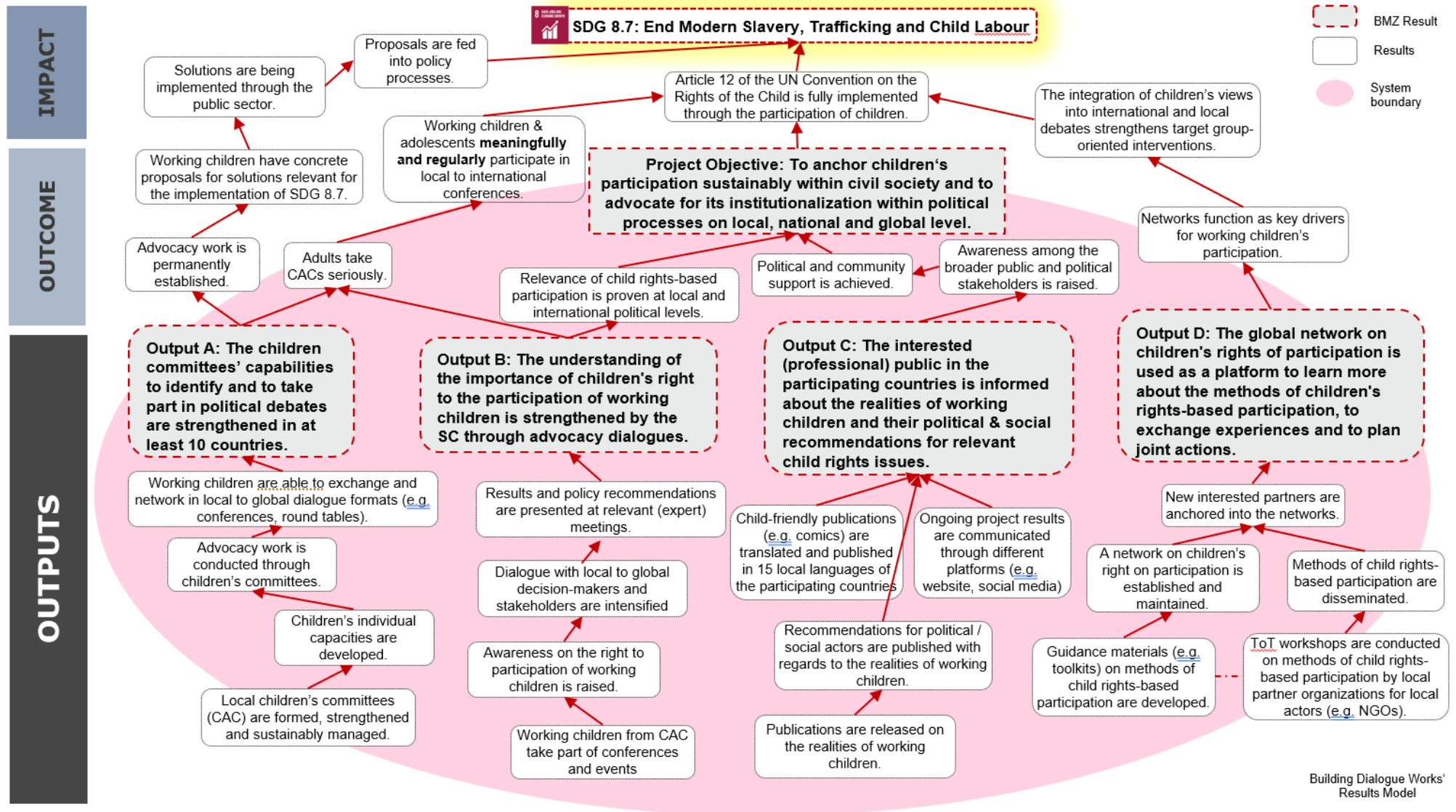
Abbreviations

BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CACs	Children's Advisory Committees
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DW	Dialogue Works
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
ILO	International Labour Organisation
KNH	Kindernothilfe
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RBM	Results-based monitoring system
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMART	Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound
T2T	Time to Talk
TdH	Terre des Hommes
ToC	Theory of Change

The project at a glance

Project name	Dialogue Works Anchoring working children's participation in societal and political processes (2020-2024)
Overall objective (impact)	The project contributes to the full implementation of Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child for working children in all matters concerning them on local to global level.
Project objective (outcome)	Working Children use the integration of the children's committee model in civil society on local to national level as well as a regionally to globally formed network of diverse supporters to enforce their right to participation.
Project term	15.10.2020 – 30.04.2024
Total project value	EUR 2.168.118
Geographical delimitation	Ethiopia, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Philippines, Peru, Bolivia, Guatemala, Lebanon (total 15 countries).
Target group(s)	<p>Direct target group: 450 – 600 working children and young people worldwide who are organized in Children's Advisory Committees (CACs). In addition, 14 local child rights organizations in the partner countries, which received training on child rights-based participation.</p> <p>Indirect target group: Social and political actors at national and global level identified as decision makers for the implementation of the right to participation of working children. In addition, at local level 2,000 – 2,500 children and young people in the vicinity of the Children's Advisory Committees who are reached through peer-to-peer communication. At global level, the press and publicity actors, e.g. representatives from academia.</p>

Figure 1: Constructed Theory of Change of the project (Status: 10/2022)



1. Introduction

Global figures by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and UNICEF show that worldwide 160 million children aged 5-17 years in 2020 were engaged in some form of work and the global COVID-19 pandemic is expected to have forced many more children to take up work. The experience of working children shows that many work in an unsafe and unhealthy environment, with little or no pay, where they are unable to pursue their education and other rights or even experience severe harm. Others however, work in dignified situations that are neither harmful nor exploitative, where they are able to learn technical, business and life skills, earn an income and realize their citizenship as active members of their community.

Co-funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, **“Dialogue Works – Anchoring working children’s participation sustainably in societal and political processes”** is a joint campaign led by Kindernothilfe e.V. and Terre des Hommes International Federation (represented by terre des hommes Germany) (the so called “Steering Committee”) initiated in October 2020, dedicated to creating spaces for meaningful participation of working children and youth in local to global policy debates. The core of the campaign is the **Children’s Advisory Committees (CACs)** that have been formed in 15 countries worldwide supervised and supported by 20 partner organisations and that serve as a platform for working children to plan and implement advocacy dialogues with key stakeholders, thereby realising their right to be heard.

1.1 Evaluation objectives

Functions and objective of the evaluation:

Mainlevel Consulting was commissioned by the Dialogue Works’ Steering Committee with the task of conducting a **Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE)** of the selected project. Project evaluations fulfil three basic functions: (i) support evidence-based decisions, (ii) promote transparency and accountability, and (iii) foster organisational learning at project and programme level. In line with the Terms of References, the specific aim of Dialogue Works’ MTE is to (i) provide an external and strategic analysis of outcome and output achievement so far, (ii) examine the extent to which the project’s intended results and implemented measures were coherently and efficiently implemented, and most importantly, (iii) analyse the extent to which the created structures for working children’s participation are sustainable. Lastly, the MTE results will, where needed, be used to specify and further strengthen measures for the continuation of the project, as well as provide suggestions for improvements in the institutional and goal setting for achieving sustainability of the project. To this end, the objectives of the evaluation can be summarised as below:

- ☑ Assessment of the performance and progress made towards the achievement of the planned objectives so far to derive lessons learned and potential course corrective actions
- ☑ Assessment of effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability of all project components up to the date of evaluation
- ☑ Assessment of the targeted impact of the project with a focus on the three main target groups – working children, partner organisations and international policy makers
- ☑ Provision of insights and recommendations for project steering and adaptation of the overall design, direction, specific activities, aspects of project management as well as capacity building if needed for the remaining project runtime and beyond.
- ☑ Organisational learning from mistakes and successes

- ☑ Accountability for results to the project's co-financiers, stakeholders, and beneficiaries.

Evaluation object: The main object of evaluation is the project “Dialogue Works – Anchoring working children's participation sustainably in societal and political processes” launched by Kindernothilfe and Terre des Hommes, co-funded by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The MTE focuses on analysing what has been achieved during the project's lifetime so far – from 15/10/2020 to 20/01/2023 – and what are the most important lessons learned. Further, the assessment aims to provide recommendations for the remaining duration of the project (until 30 April 2024). It is important to mention that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the MTE was not able to take place at an earlier stage as several activities were postponed. Yet, the evaluators assessed the period in which the evaluation took place as highly efficient as it coincided with the Global Gathering in Kigali, giving them the opportunity to interact with the direct and indirect target groups (unintended positive result) and gain first-hand information from them.

Financial delineation: The project is financed by the German Ministry of Economic and Development Cooperation (BMZ), Kindernothilfe e.V. Germany (KNH) and Terre des Hommes (TdH). The total project budget sums to EUR 2.168.118, of which EUR 1.626.088 were financed by the BMZ. KNH and TdH shared the amount of EUR 542.000 EUR, corresponding to 25% of total amount.

Geographical delineation: The project is being implemented in **15 countries** namely: Ethiopia, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Philippines, Peru, Bolivia, Guatemala, Lebanon.

The project in a nutshell: Originated from the BMZ project “Time to Talk! (2016-2019)”, Dialogue Works applies a participatory and rights-based approach to collaborate with working children from diverse backgrounds. The project rationale was derived from the following identified problem – *“working children are the main actors during child labour debates, but usually not the one present in the global conferences to make their voices heard. Their ideas are neglected, hence their views, perspectives and demands are usually not heard at global and national levels”*. To this end, the Dialogue Works campaign aims at functioning as a neutral platform to create spaces and opportunities for working children to have their experiences and perspectives included in debates related to children's work at international organisations such as ILO, as well as at governmental and local levels in a way that their views are respected, heard, and considered (as much as possible). In addition, the Dialogue Works campaign aims towards the normalisation and institutionalisation of the participation of working children. It further aims at creating a network of organisations that promote working children's meaningful participation in finding measures to improve their situation and to ensure a better future for working children (DW Advocacy Strategy).

Findings derived from the **inception phase** revealed that Dialogue Works built on the key findings and lessons learned acquired through evaluation from the predecessor's phase (Time to Talk, T2T). Findings revealed that DW ensures to (i) widen the variety of partners outside the NGO structure, (ii) increase the quality of partner collaborations through the natural decrease in the quantity of partners from the previous phase, and to effectively implement the project's objective. In addition, it also ensured to (iii) establish the **Children's Advisory Committees (CACs)** that function as a neutral platform in which the diversity of opinions with regards to child labour can be displayed – all based on UN CRC Art. 12, ILO 138 and 182. The CACs are supported by 20 partner organizations that ensure a bottom-up approach. Each CAC consists of about 10-15 children with different educational levels and different working backgrounds (e.g. some working in agriculture, others working with family business, a few working in the context of supply chains). In all, the CACs are the place in which working children come together to exchange, learn and plan their advocacy activities. As the CACs are formed at very local level in a homogenous setting, it is expected that the views of children on their work are rather similar than diverse. The local CACs thus do not display the diversity of views on children's work that exists at global level.

Lastly, the project focuses on bridging processes and finding a common ground for adults (partners) involved in the project. Based on the explorative interviews conducted during the inception phase, the focus during T2T was about children's work, i.e. focus on the issue faced by children. According to the project team, T2T had i) a research component to explore children's views on children's work and ii) an advocacy component focusing particularly on the global level (IV Global Conference). Although the focus has always been on children, Dialogue Works rather concentrates on advocacy from local to global level incentivizing partners to diversify their approach, shifting away from the research component that existed in T2T. The aim is therefore to provide spaces

that give children the chance to analyse their work conditions and hear children's voices – “*Dialogue Works has a broader approach that focuses on children*”.

Contextual factors: The first common existing issue that led to the creation of T2T, and consequently Dialogue Works, is the reality of child labour, presented in different forms (formal and informally). A second common issue is, despite international discourse on child labour, the voices of working child and young people themselves are hardly heard.

Based on interview findings and observations during Dialogue Works Global Gathering in Rwanda, the evaluators concluded that government failure to i) provide decent socioeconomic conditions for parents and ii) protect the rights of the child are perceived as key root causes for child labour. In addition to lack of governmental support, the **normalization of child labour** is an aggravating factor. Interview partners conveyed how resources are not prioritized or are not enough to attend the causes of children in their countries, where public expenditure is mostly for defence and infrastructure (INT_6, 22). Evaluation findings reveal that the eradication of child labour is a process that involves diminishing the impact of government failures not only focusing on children, but also on the education of parents. Interview statements showed how parents are the main players to break the so-called child labour cycle; “*We need to raise awareness and teach them the consequences of child labour in the future in terms of health, socialization process and children's future career – make a cost benefit analysis against child labour. We need to support parents to bring alliances in the community*” (INT_17).

With respect to letting children's voices be heard, not much attention is given either; “*We once experienced a child speaking and a local authority got angry. There are municipalities that even prohibits children to get together*” (INT_6). Similarly, the private sector is often not involved in such matters as they do not want to have issues with organizations; “*For them, working children are also not their main interest*” (INT_6).

Key project determinants

Dialogue Works as a neutral platform: DW follows a neutral approach with regard to the different positions around the issue of child labour, yet its main objective is to realise the **right to participation of working children**.

“The DW agenda does not criminalize work; work is appropriate when is not forced, fair, protects and allows the child to go to school” (INT_2).

“The entire focus must be on the right of the child, to ensure that they enjoy their rights. Working is an economic condition; therefore, it is not natural to have children working. The same way that it is not natural that a child gives birth or marry, children should not work. Child labour topic is not cultural dependent!” (INT_17).

Diversity of project partners' opinions: Dialogue Works consists of a wide diversity of project partners, from secular and faith-based believes, as well as with clashing opinions with regards to children's right to work. Throughout the evaluation process, it was observed inter-country opposing opinions (e.g. Philippines and Peru) as well as intra-country clashing between different CACs (e.g. Peru).

The Peruvian Law 27337¹ (Chapter 2 and 4), on the Children's and Adolescents' Rights determines the condition in which youth, depending on their age and physical conditions, are allowed to work. While CESIP is for the eradication of child labour (under the age of 14, as per law), IFEJANT advocates the valuing of working children. Their common ground agreement is only when it comes to the protection of kids, but diverging with regards to their working conditions. It is therefore highly recommended to foster communication among in-country CACs to enable exchange of synergies and discuss diverging points. It should be a project priority for the next two years. “*The aim is not to change their views but understand and find common grounds to work together*”.

Child labour vs. child work: Different views also exist with respect to the different terminologies relating to activities conducted by children. In Zambia for instance, the term *child labour* is not accepted by government and community / district levels. Child work on the other hand has diverging views at community level; some think children should only be in schools (it is not children's responsibility to work) whereas others accept that economic conditions require them to work.

¹ For more details see: <https://www.mimp.gob.pe/files/direcciones/dga/nuevo-codigo-ninos-adolescentes.pdf>.

Different country / regional contexts: Throughout the evaluation process, three common factors were identified as root cause for child labour: i) poverty, ii) poor provision of education / government failure and iii) corruption. Nevertheless, understanding the advocacy context and rationale in the different CACs in all 15 countries requires an in-depth analysis on the causal links that leads to the issue of child labour. To this end, as country contexts are not aligned, there is no one-fitting solution to the issues of child labour. Example follows:

Zimbabwe	Philippines
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key issue (micro level): Corrupted system to access jobs, and therefore income. Urgency to solve short-term problems. • Key issue (macro level): Strong donor dependencies, without project M&E follow-ups to control effectiveness and impact of programmes. • Possible solution: Community awareness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key issue (micro level): Income is not sufficient to accompany high commodity prices, leading to food insecurity. • Key issue (macro level): Need of more governmental programmes to protect children. • Possible solution: Provide paperwork for parents to participate in social welfare programmes, therefore support with access to food.

Cross-cutting issues: The evaluation object involves a number of cross-cutting issues that need to be taken into account when analysing the contexts of different CACs. These involve children with special needs (e.g. Bangladesh), children involved in sexual exploitation conditions and children from ethnic minorities (e.g. indigenous groups from Bolivia).

2. Evaluation methodology

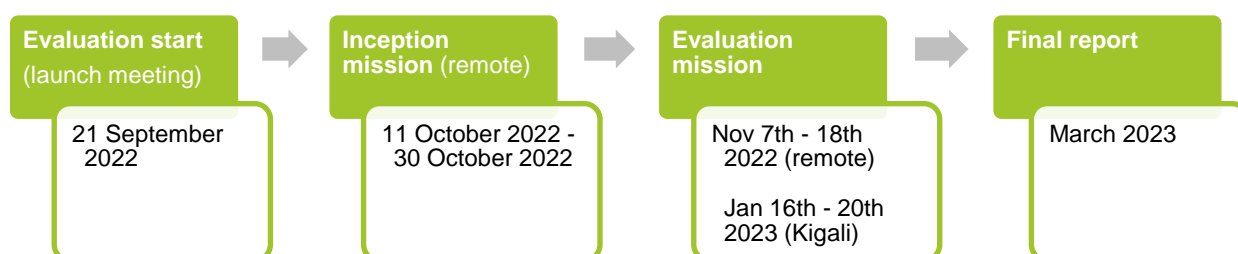
2.1 Evaluation approach

Evaluation design: The evaluation team used both participatory approach and mixed-methods approach to conduct the mid-term review. Throughout the different stages of the evaluation process, **participation** of the Steering Committee and the stakeholders at different levels were taken into consideration. Prior to the data collection phase, qualitative instruments were designed in a way to promote meaningful, inclusive, **child-friendly** and gender-sensitive participation of the target group and beneficiaries.

In addition, a **mixed-method approach** was applied. The evaluators used both secondary data (documents, reports, financial data etc.) and primary data retrieved from relevant accessible stakeholder groups. This allowed for data and method triangulation and hence ensured the validity and robustness of results. The data collection process was oriented by the evaluation matrix, thus covering all evaluation criteria and results dimensions in a systematic way.

2.2 Data collection

Evaluation process:



Primary data sources: Primary data sources consist of explorative interviews, key informant interviews with key and primary stakeholders of the evaluation, as well as focus group discussions with the target group (children).

Selection of interviewees

The involvement of various stakeholders in the evaluation is key to useful and robust evaluations. It strongly determines the success of the evaluation and acceptance of the evaluation findings and recommendations. During the inception phase, the evaluation team closely collaborated with Kindernothilfe and Terre des Hommes Steering Committee to map crucial stakeholders of the project and discuss their involvement in the evaluation (see Figure 2). At least **36 interview partners** were expected to be involved in the evaluation.

During the remote and on-site evaluation period, **30 partners** were interviewed; these included social and political actors at national to global level, as well as local implementing NGOs partners (both on BMZ budget and from different budgets).

The **remote data collection** phase comprised of interviews with members of the partner organizations in the different countries. The evaluation team set up processes for virtual data collection, in which the consultants used online communication software such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom to conduct the interviews. Although remote data collection can usually incur limitations (harder to reach specific interview partners, occasional online technical failures / delays), no major issues were encountered during the remote evaluation phase.

The **on-site data collection** in Kigali (January 16th – 20th 2023) comprised of interviews with a few project partners and most specifically, direct interactions with children who attended the Global Gathering, particularly through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). The evaluators **directly** interacted with at least **30 children**, which represented fifty per cent of the children present in the conference (total of 61). The stakeholders marked in red were not involved in the evaluation process due to non-availability.

Figure 2: Map of project stakeholders

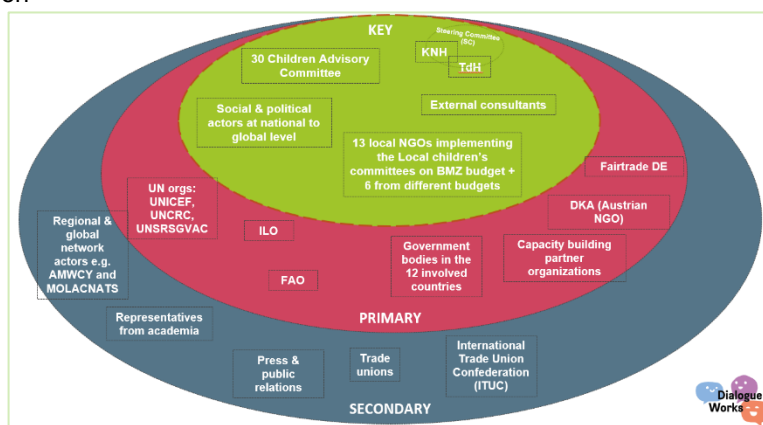


Table 1: List of expected evaluation stakeholders and selected participants

Organisation/company/target group	Overall number of persons involved in evaluation (including gender disaggregation)	No. of interview participants	No. of focus group participants	No. of workshop participants	No. of survey participants
Steering Committee	5 (5f)	5		2	
Kindernothilfe / Terre des Hommes project team					
Key Stakeholders	29f, 26m	19	30		
30 working children from 30 CACs (14f, 16m)					
External consultant Facilitator for Change (FC) Action for Children in Conflict (AfCiC) Welfare for Children and Youth (WCY) Coalition against Child Labour in Zimbabwe (CACLAZ) Jesus Cares Ministries (JCM)* Tanzania Women Leaders in Agriculture and Environment (TAWLAE)* Children's Voice Today (CVT) Centre for Services and Information on Disability (CSID) National Institute of Women, Child and Youth Development (NIWCYD) Pusat Kajian dan Perlindungan Anak (PKPA)* Kaugmaon Christian Advocates for Justice and Development – Negros (CAJDEN)* Pastoral Social Caritas Potosí (PASOCAP) Centro Ecueménico de Integración Pastoral (CEIPA) Centro de Estudios Sociales e Publicaciones (CESIP) Instituto de Formación para Educadores de Jóvenes, Adolescentes y Niños, Niñas Trabajadores de América Latina y el Caribe (IFEJANT) Nabaa - Development action without border					

Terre des Hommes Lausanne Children-Women in Social Service and Human Rights (CWISH) Vigyan Vijay Foundation (VIGYAN) DKA (Austrian NGO)						
Primary Stakeholders	Project	3 (2f, 1m)	3			
UN Special Representative on Violence against Children (SRSG VAC) International Labour Organization (ILO) Child Rights Connect						
Secondary Stakeholders	Project	2 (1f, 1m)	2			
African Movement of Working Children and Youth Movimiento Latinoamericano y del Caribe de los Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes Trabajadores (MOLACNATS) Concerned for Working Children / Bhima Sangha						
Note: f = female; m = male * Dialogue Works partners who are self/externally funded.						

Secondary data sources: Relevant project documents (primarily progress and evaluation reports, advocacy specific documents, the toolkit materials) were available to the evaluation team. Specific references to documents are made throughout this evaluation report and listed under references.

2.3 Data analysis

For efficient data management and analysis, the evaluation team compiled all qualitative and quantitative findings from the documents and interviews by employing a qualitative data analysis methodology. In a first step, notes were taken during the interviews and FGDs. It is important to mention that the evaluators used individual codes for each child when documenting the findings to ensure anonymity right from the start. At a second stage, further notes were added by the evaluation team to identify first insights and recommendations. To analyse different data sources, a category system of the evaluation questions, as per the evaluation matrix, were developed. By doing so, information comprised from several data sources regarding a certain evaluation dimension were retrieved, contrasted and findings were summarized. Preliminary findings were then discussed during a validation workshop with the Steering Committee after the evaluation phase.

3. Assessment according to OECD/DAC criteria

3.1 Relevance

This section assesses the relevance of the project “Anchoring working children’s participation in societal and political processes (2020-2024)”.

Analysis and assessment of relevance

The relevance criterion focuses on the design of the project. It refers to the extent to which the objectives and the design of a project are aligned with global, country and institution-specific requirements. To this end, an assessment is conducted, to which extent the project is aligned with policies and priorities regarding sector concepts. In addition, it also looks at needs, priorities and policies of beneficiaries and stakeholders (individuals, groups, organisations, and development partners). Lastly, it identifies the ability of the project’s design to adapt to a change in circumstances, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Project’s alignment with policies and priorities

This dimension analyses whether the aspired results of the project are in line with the political priorities, relevant policies and priorities, both at national and international level, and with partner organisation’s interests and strategies. The relevance criterion was assessed through analysis of secondary data and triangulated with interview findings.

At national level, an initial situation and problem analysis in the project’s involved countries shows that there is lack of ideas and approaches on how ethical participation of working children and youth can be integrated into social and political social decision-making processes. Decision-makers at the local, national and global level often question the relevance of child and youth participation and its feasibility. On a similar note, the right of working children and young people to participate in social and political processes that affect them is violated, and the significant contribution they can make in defining and solving problems is affected. National laws and policies around **child protection** exist across countries, however, there is a weak implementation owing to varying degrees of awareness around these laws and policies among the concerned stakeholders. Other challenges include inadequate resources to monitor (or poor monitoring), implement and enforce existing laws and policies, existence of poor or no guidelines on roles and responsibilities of the state institutions in protecting-working children. By **encouraging child-led advocacy**, the project contributes to bring attention to local, national and global decision makers the neglected perspective of working children. Furthermore, it also supports countries and stakeholders involved in their work towards strengthening the implementation of national laws and policies around children’s rights and child labour (Project Proposal 2020, Annual Report 2021, Evaluation interviews). With regards to the project’s alignment to partner’s priorities and strategies, interviews revealed that the project is closely aligned to the partner organisations’ own strategies and policies relating to child rights and protection.

“Our work complements TdH’s strategy on child labour and also country level priority; strategy on social behaviour change, role model, Ministry of Social Affairs in Lebanon.” (INT_13)

“Dialogue Works helps communities to know about the importance of children’s education and to reach to law makers. Our advocacy plans help to reach more communities, labour free zone. We do awareness raising of child rights, for lawmakers to listen to us. With KNH’s budget, we did a roadshow, we went to the communities highlighting the issue of child labour, raising awareness on the World Day Against Child labour.” (INT_12)

It is important to mention that, although the topic of child labour brings a wide range of different views and positions (absolute prohibition of work by children vs. acceptance of the necessity of work) among the local partner organisations involved, the **project follows a neutral approach** to contribute to the full implementation of Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Project Proposal 2020). The evaluators assess it as one of the key points of strength of the project, as comprehension on the different partner organizations' opinions exist despite their different positions and attitudes towards the topic. To this end, at the global level, the project primarily aims to contribute to the full implementation of **Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** for working children in all matters concerning them on local to global level. The UN Article 12 declares that:

1. State parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views, the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

In addition, the project presents explicit commitment to deal with challenge of child labour embodied under **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 8**, which seeks to 'promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all'. **Target 8.7** under this goal states that member states of the UN should: Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the **prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour**, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.

Although eradication of child labour is not in Dialogue Works' mandate, the project directly contributes to the discussion and advocacy around the topics of i) child's protection, ii) decent conditions of labour and iii) inclusion (e.g. children with disability).

Alignment with the needs and capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders

This dimension of the relevance criterion analyses whether the project's concept is aligned with the needs and capacities of beneficiaries and stakeholders.

The **direct target group** of the project includes i) working children and young people worldwide who are organised in children's committees and ii) local child rights organisations in the partner countries which received training on child rights-based participation. The indirect target group includes social and political actors at national and global level identified as decision makers for the implementation of the right to participation of working children. In addition, at local level, children and young people in the vicinity of the children's committees who are reached through peer-to-peer communication are also included as target group. At global level, the press and publicity actors e.g., representatives from academia are part of the indirect target audience.

The interviews conducted throughout this evaluation suggest that the main priority needs of working children and young people are being addressed. Firstly, the project provides them access to i) a safe and healthy environment in which they can voice out their experiences and perspectives, ii) a space where children's rights are respected, and iii) where decent child work is recognised and accepted. In addition, the priority needs of the local child rights organisations (NGOs) among many include local to global level advocacy of the rights of the children, outreach, scaling-up their work and capacity building to effectively be able to create opportunities for children to participate.

In all, the evaluators assess the project to be highly aligned with the abovementioned needs of the target groups based on the interview findings with the local partners and children.

At **CAC representative level**, findings show that Dialogue Works is a platform that:

- **Functions as a platform for advocacy work at both local and global level:** All interview partners shared that the project provides scope for partner organizations in the selected countries to continue and expand their advocacy work which is very relevant for the work they do.

"We find advocacy very important, not only for ground level but also relevant at the global level. Our CAC makes a big difference as it gives us leverage to act within the local level organisations, helps us as an organisation, and gives us a certain level of respect. Children also feel proud to be associated with CACs." (INT_22)

- **Gives visibility and improves outreach of the partner organizations:** The project provides visibility to the organisations and to the work that they do. As a result, it helps to increase the leverage and outreach of the partner organisations.

"In all aspects, the DW campaign increased the visibility of our agenda. The financial cooperation, materials, mobilizations also help. If the project was not there, we would have done much less." (INT_16)

"We have been working since 2002 on advocating child rights. DW has increased our outreach to other districts, to grassroots work which are representing CACs from those areas." (INT_3)

- **Create opportunities for child participation:** The project supports training of trainers (ToT) which has resulted in enhanced skill, knowledge and capacities to create opportunities for children to participate (INT_1, 4, 21, 22).

At **CAC participant level**, clear evidence was found through exchange with the youth during the Global Gathering in Kigali (GG) regarding the alignment of the project with their needs and capacities. The following statements were made with regards to the relevance of the project to address the need for their voices to be heard. The DW project is therefore regarded as important to children as it:



The interviews with partner organisations also show that, although there are other projects running in the partner countries that focus on the topic of child labour and other related thematic areas, **there is no other organization / initiative** that focuses on creating a safe, healthy environment where children can voice their views and articulate their feelings as working children.

"They can speak their mind without outside interference, manipulation. They are able to plan and set their own agenda." (INT_2)

In all, the evaluators assess the project being a relevant tool to ensure that working children have the space to create concrete proposals for solutions that are highly relevant for the successful implementation of their needs. Through Dialogue Works, the integration of their views into debates and processes strengthens target-group oriented interventions, programmes and projects that are particularly geared towards the best interest of the child. Ultimately, the project expects to integrate concrete suggestions made by the (targeted) children to help improve policy measures, as children are closely related to the context and living/working conditions in which they live in.

Appropriateness of the design

This dimension of the relevance criterion analyses whether the project's design (objectives, indicators and activities) is appropriate to ensure impact orientation and an effective implementation. Overall, the evaluation finds the project activities as logical and coherent towards the achievement of the project objective "Working children use the integration of the children's committee model in civil society on local to national level as well as a regionally to globally formed network of diverse supporters to enforce their right of participation".

Learnings from predecessor Time to Talk (T2T): Most of the interview partners shared as being involved with the project since T2T, and revealed that the design of the project builds on the experiences, learnings and recommendations from the predecessor.

"DW builds on T2T; it is much more focused on child labour advocacy. Before I had training, but now we focus on issues, e.g. access to education and the chance to work." (INT_2)

"We are involved since T2T; modules of Dialogue Works were designed based on consultation and recommendations taken from Time to Talk." (INT_3)

Participatory approach: Most partners reported the process of the project designing as being collaborative and based in participatory approach. Partners were consulted during the design and inception phase (INT_11).

"Were consulted on the views on DW and how it should look like." (INT_7)

Context-based adaptation: The project design offers flexibility and can be adapted based on the local context/needs. *"Strategically flexible design of the programme, we consult KNH if any context-based adaptation is needed"* (INT_3). However, it was shared during one of the interviews that there is a further need for identifying and adapting to the local needs and solutions.

"We focus on what the children in Kenya are advocating for, their needs are at focus. We try getting local solutions identified and proposed by children themselves." (INT_2)

Methodology used by CACs: Dialogue Works embraces the exchange of methodologies between different partner organisations used by CACs in different countries. Nevertheless, it was highlighted during the interviews that more exchange between the different methodologies would add value to the project.

"Different CACs do not necessarily share the same methodology as used in other organizations. It would be helpful if we could exchange these methodologies with the other NGOs from the 14 countries to improve the work we do." (INT_17)

Further, the need for more workshops for CAC members at regular and shorter intervals to ensure continuity and interest of the partners was shared by the project partners. *"The number of workshops were not enough, without mentioning the gap between one workshop to the next. In 2021, some took place only in the first half of the year; the distancing between session is not good. There is a need to strengthen that. The programme of KNH was designed this way"* (INT_17). Based on information provided by the project team, re-scheduling sessions' timeline were necessary for face-to-face workshops due to Covid-19.

It was also shared that the project should include some sessions and activities exclusively for the parents/caregivers especially in the context of differently abled children as they always need an accompanying adult/parent/caregiver to attend the CAC meetings. Therefore, some sessions to educate and encourage more parents to bring the differently abled children to the CAC meetings should be designed under the project (INT_19).

Adaptability to changes

This dimension of the relevance criterion analyses the adaptability to changes. The starting year of the project (2020) witnessed the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic across the globe. The global pandemic did not have significant negative effects on the implementation of the project in the selected countries. However, the annual report and the interviews suggest that it did lead to postponement and cancellation of certain project activities

which were meant to be conducted face-to-face e.g. body mapping. Eventually, these activities were virtually implemented at a later point. In addition, the delivery process of information that the children needed to receive was delayed. It also meant limited number of children participating in the CAC meetings at the start of the pandemic (INT_17). Still, the engagement level of members was perceived as “not changed” throughout the pandemic period (INT_5). The representatives of the partner organisations also shared that, as a result of the lockdown restrictions, the activities conducted by CACs shifted to virtual mode. Digital challenges faced by the children were also shared with the evaluators; for instance, tools such as the body mapping exercise are not meant to work on online platforms (e.g. Zoom) (INT_20). Interviewees further shared that the project provided for several measures during the pandemic to overcome some of the challenges faced by children. These included:

- Lebanon: Provision of internet data packages to attend CAC meetings and school classes.
- Indonesia: Provision of either financial support for the school fee or internet data packages through external / self-financed funds to children in specific cases as part of the emergency program within the DW project. This support was perceived as very useful by the children and their families.
- Overall, the CACs also received masks, hand sanitizers in their rooms and dining tables (INT_4, 7, 12, 14).

Challenges were nevertheless encountered due to external factors such as no/weak signal connections in the CACs in Lebanon, Peru, Bolivia. As a result, print out materials were provided to children in specific case, e.g. in Peru. *“We produced printed worksheets, both on the protection of children’s rights and on their health. We went from house to house (51 in total) every two months, sometimes 5-6 times. Human resources were not sufficient, but we did it anyways”* (INT_17). *“There was no signal in the camp, internet cards were given out, but we couldn’t use them so we stopped. There was no implementation of activities between Feb 2020- June 2020”* (INT_21). Also, only a limited number of CACs could continue with face-to-face sessions (INT_4).

3.2 Coherence

This section analyses and assesses the coherence of the project. It is structured according to the assessment dimensions in the evaluation matrix (see annex 1). This criterion refers to the intervention’s compatibility with other interventions in a country, sector or institution as well as with international norms and standards, looking at how well the project fits in the existing environment. **Internal coherence** addresses the synergies and division of tasks between the project and other interventions of German development cooperation. In addition, it also looks at the project’s consistency with the relevant international norms and standards to which German development cooperation adheres. **External coherence** considers the project’s complementarity, harmonisation and coordination with the interventions of other partners, donors and international organisations, above all with the actors within the different partner countries.

Concerning **synergies with internal partners**, all local project executing agencies are long-standing partners of the German executing agency, the consortium partner or long-standing partners in the predecessor project “Time to Talk! – Children’s Views on Children’s Work”. Within the framework of the long-standing partnerships, different projects were carried out in diverse areas of impact (education/community development/self-help groups, etc). The cooperation with the selected or targeted local project executing agencies is based on **mutual trust and common objectives**, focused on child rights’ approaches. The cooperation in previous project went smoothly and the interviews with the partner organisations show that the synergies have further intensified in the present project. The present DW project partners with 20 organisations which includes a network of self-funded and

project-funded partners. These organisations have a facilitating role in opening doors and creating safe spaces for working children to exchange with key decision-makers at local to national level. The project brings all the partners together to collaborate, share experiences and learnings.

“DW complements our work as it operates in different intervention areas; it helps us to understand the rights of children and how to improve the participation of children, how to connect with service providers, and to create awareness in different activities (e.g. mother groups, farmers working groups). We use DW materials / tools to facilitate the engagement of parents towards children and how to engage trainings.” (INT_4)

Apart from synergies with its predecessor phase, DW ensured to partner with organizations that were already working on the cause. For instance, Children’s Voice Today (Rwanda) is an organization that is part of movements such as Coalition Umwana ku Isonga based in Kigali, member of the African Movement of Working Children and Youth (AMWCY) based in Dakar – Senegal, and a member of a Consortium of Street Children Network, based in UK (INT_15).

Overall, the internal coherence is assessed as good as the project is embedded in partner organisations’ focus areas in the 15 countries, most importantly children’s rights. The cooperation between the partner organisations also contributes to increased coherence and mutual learning.

Regarding **coherence with external organizations**, the interview partners shared that even though there are projects in their respective countries that focus on elimination of child labour and related thematic areas, no other project focuses on children in working situations and on advocacy both at the local and the global level.

“DW overlaps with other organisations working with children on the streets; but nothing like an initiative where the focus is children in working situations. It has a long-term approach, build their capacities over time, no other project gives that.” (INT_5)

The interview findings revealed synergies with the work of Save the Children, UN Special Representative on Violence against Children (SRSG VAC), UNICEF, ILO, Break the Silence Network, Violence and Sexual Abuse Prevention, Red Cross, and Department of Labour and Employment in different countries (INT_3, 22). Interviews with the UN SRSG VAC office revealed that synergies are shared with respect to i) protection of children and ii) advocacy on children’s constructive participation in different countries, mostly interacting with actors at national level (INT_5).

Nevertheless, some conflicting points are highlighted below with regards to opinions of supporting actors, such as the ILO.

The International Labour Organization (ILO)

In the context of the Dialogue Works project, the ILO is seen as a supporting player (no formal partnership with DW) as well as a major actor on the topic of child labour. Based on evaluation findings, the organization oversees fundamental principles of work, focusing on the prevention and **elimination** of child labour. Although the ILO seems to be in line with DW’s aim to give children the right of expression and work on solutions to empower and educate them, the approaches that DW and ILO use are quite different. One can argue that despite having an objective in common – the protection of children – their work modalities are quite different to approach the issue of child labour. In all, DW aims to enable working children’s right to participate – independent from which their position on child labour –, through the realization Art. 12 UNCR. In addition, DW aims to ensure that policy measures take individual contexts and experience of these children into account. ILO, on the other hand, focuses on the elimination of child labour, where child participation does not play a major role.

“For the ILO, children should not work under the age of 15 years. They have the right to finalize their education,

not work. We work with the governments and the private sector to stop child work, to ensure that they are not working. We do not subscribe to the approach that addresses protective ways of child labour”.

“DW’s approach does not end child labour, it just prolongs the issue. In the long run, it is hazardous for the children – they miss out education”.

Partner organizations however voice that working with ILO is a challenge as it is difficult to establish a common ground with respect to working children. It was further shared that ILO members work on their own in silos. Efforts are needed to establish more dialogues at local to global levels, with more attempts to reach out to the regional ILO offices (INT_22). Small steps evidence towards joint collaboration with the ILO was observed in the course of the Children's Forum at the V Global Conference in Durban. It was perceived as *“a good example that advocacy takes long, but seems to make progress”.*

Interview partners also reflected upon the synergies with the local government officials/departments and highlighted the need for more engagement and integration of the programme with the local organisational support system and partners such as the anti-trafficking committee, immigration office, district officers, child officers (INT_11). Sustainable relationships with the local government officials/departments needs to be built. *“We align with the Child Protection Commission and Department of Labour; they participate in our advocacy programmes. The State is taking up some initiatives but if their contact person changes, then the whole process goes for a toss, becomes very difficult to repeat the process with the new state representative”* (INT_3).

Overall, the external coherence of the project is assessed as good. However, the interviews revealed that the project should build formalised and effective collaborations and exchanges with the government bodies.

3.3 Effectiveness

Corroborated under the “effectiveness” criterion, the evaluation aims to analyse the extent to which the project has achieved its desired objectives so far, and the degree to which all its measures have contributed to its objectives based on the project indicators. The latter will majorly be based on a transmission channels analysis, for which key pathways of change will be selected from the project’s Theory of Change to be scrutinised in-depth. Eventually, the evaluation of the effectiveness will also cover unintended results.

Overall, interviewed stakeholders identified DW campaign as being an important tool that focuses on the opinion of children; it is a facilitator that enables working children to join forces to voice against their working conditions. Dialogues Works provides a space for them to improve their capacities and develop themselves. *“It’s a huge added value to have children being able to express themselves”* (INT_6).

Analysis and assessment of effectiveness

Achievement of the (Intended) Objectives

The first dimension of the effectiveness criterion analyses whether objectives measured by the project’s indicators were achieved.

The assessment is based on the indicator achievement monitoring data provided by the project team and data from the interviews conducted with the adults and the children. Through the interviews, the evaluation team conducted a rating exercise with the partner organisations and asked them to rate the four key intended results of the project to understand the project’s potential contribution to its overall objective. The rating was done on a scale of 1 (low contribution) to 5 (high contribution). A total of 23 representatives from the partner organisations

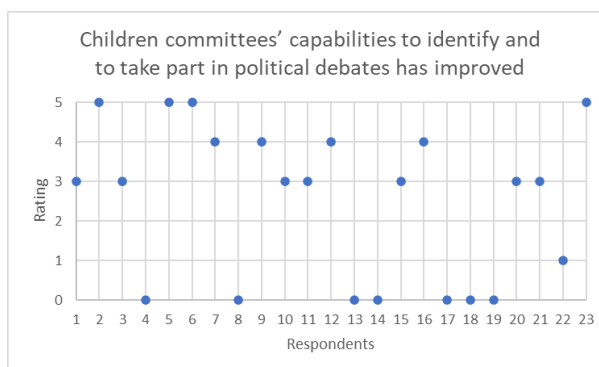
participated in the rating exercise. For those participants who did not answer the question, no rating was given and therefore were scaled as 0.

Project objective indicator 1: *The children committees' capabilities to identify and to take part in political debates are strengthened in at least 10 countries.*

Based on project monitoring data, not all Children's Advisory Committees were able to use an advocacy tool in 2021. With regards to local/national advocacy dialogues, they took place in 12 out of 15 countries in 2021, reaching completeness in 2022, where all 15 countries were able to conduct local/national advocacy dialogues.

Results of the rating exercise

Overall, most respondents agreed that the capabilities of the CACs to identify and to take part in political debates have improved as a result of the project. It is important to note that interview partners raised the point that such capabilities of CACs are quite dependent on whether they were involved in the predecessor project, "Time to Talk". Some partners also shared that not all CAC members are at the same level of knowledge and skills, and thus are not able to share their concerns in the same extent. Although steps in the right direction have been taken and children are able to participate and share in political debates, however, there is still a need for further strengthening of the space to interact with the government officials. Implementation partners suggested the need for a Children Participation Guideline and capacity building of local government officials in charge of children participation.



Children's understanding on their rights to protection and participation: The evaluation team also asked the children during the Global Gathering in Rwanda whether they were aware of national laws on child labour/child protection in their respective countries. These were aimed to assess their level of awareness around child led advocacy work that is needed to be continued and strengthened. The results show that most children are aware of the laws around child protection in their countries and the status of implementation.

Question: Are you aware of the local/national laws around child labour/child protection that exist in your country?

- "Yes, we are aware but can't name them"
- "We know about the convention, but Lebanon does not put it into practice" (Children from Lebanon)
- "We know about child labour elimination policy, disability rights, violence against women and children" (children from Bangladesh).

Participation in political debates at the local level: The interview findings show that the working children have been capacitated through CACs, which enables them to talk to the local authorities. In specific cases, children also had the opportunity to meet with the political candidate at local level. "It became possible to work with these national leaders" (INT_1). However, the NGO partners also shared the difficulties in reaching out to the local level governments and leaders. "Political leaders are more likely to listen when solutions are provided, not only with problems (INT_7). Overall, despite the remaining difficulties to reach actors in the public sector, evaluation findings show that, due to capacity building of the CACs and pro-active advocacy efforts, the participation in political debates at the local level has increased.

Participation in international conferences: The findings show that partners' view on the participation of children in international events such as the Durban Conference (2020) created very positive results. Firstly, it provided a platform to further build on and to also improve relationships and partnerships with international bodies such as the ILO. Secondly, the conference served as a platform for children to be seen and heard. Based on children's testimony, despite being initially intimidated by the act of speaking in front of the esteemed public, the

Durban Conference served as an opportunity to show courage and get out of their comfort zone. Even for those children who did not give a speech, seeing their peers at the spotlight was very encouraging.

“For the first time, children of DW could participate in the ILO conference in South Africa. Previous experience was that the children could not attend at all. Considering the background and tensions ILO had with KNH and TdH, the result was extremely positive and something we can build on. The Child-friendly (outcome) document discussion with ILO was also very useful.” (INT_9)

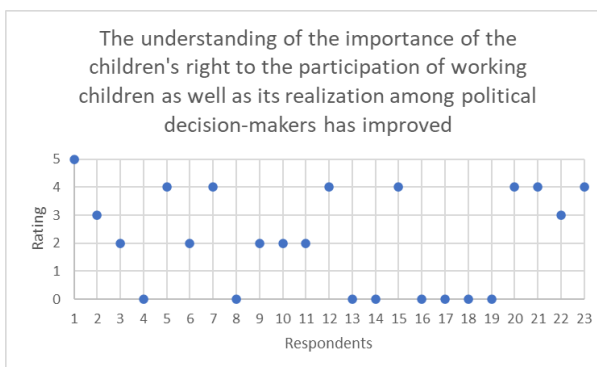
Overall, although children committees’ capabilities to identify and to take part in political debates are perceived as improved, some interview discussions argued that real changes cannot yet be measured (INT_16). There is need for further strengthening of skills and knowledge of the CACs. Some interview partners also shared instability of the political situation in their countries as an external risk for the achievement of this indicator. *“There are too many political changes in our countries; change in ministries bring external risks”.*

Project objective indicator 2: *The understanding of the importance of children's right to the participation of working children is strengthened by the SC through advocacy dialogues.*

The project aimed to achieve this target through, firstly, by increasing the number of advocacy dialogues conducted by the Steering Committee; in the second project year by 15%, in the third project year by 35% and by 50% in the last project year. Secondly, the goal is also to increase the involvement of the Children's Advisory Committees in national processes in 11 countries prior to the V Global Conference on Child Labour in 2022. According to the monitoring data, there was an increase of 136% in the policy dialogues at the global and the regional level with different stakeholders compared to 2021. A total of 45 policy dialogues, among others with the ILO, the South African government, and the African, Indian and Latin American movements of working children. In addition, the Chairperson of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child Mikiko Otani, the BMZ, the BMAS and the GIZ, as well as national and international NGOs dialogues took place in 2022. The representatives of working children and young people participated in the regional consultations in Asia and Africa, whereas consultations took place without child participation in Europe, Latin America and the Middle East.

Results of the rating exercise

While many respondents shared that the understanding of the importance of children's right with respect to the participation of working children among the political decision makers in their countries has slightly improved, statements revealed that there is **still much to be achieved** in terms of influencing political leaders and parties about the right to participation of working children. Participation in global conferences is seen as very important by the respondents as a platform for creating awareness and knowledge regarding children's rights and working conditions.



The understanding of the importance of children's right to participation: Evidence shows that, through Dialogue Works, a first-time recognition of child participation by some organizations (e.g. the ILO) was necessary. This is seen as a positive milestone towards advocacy development. However, partners also recognise that, putting these (theoretical) realizations into practice would require i) more effort and dialogues by the project and ii) a shift in the paradigm that *“children do not belong in political spaces”* among political decision makers. Partners further shared that it is often the case that the coordination between local departments and ministries in charge of social and child affairs is missing, leading to weak implementation to address issues. For that, joint advocacy meetings at local level could be helpful, following a **bottom-up approach**. *“The Department of Social Services and Child Labour Ministry are never coordinated; they always say go to the other ministry”.* The implementation of the laws by authorities in charge is also made weak as a result of high-level bureaucracy and corruption (FGD_2).

During the Global Gathering in Rwanda, working children were asked their opinions with respect to how the state / governmental organizations view their rights to participation. Statements provided are as follows:

- “We now understand that it is the state’s obligation to protect the rights of children and adolescents”
- “We understand that there are laws and normative that determine the rights of the child, as well as the right age and amount of hours we are allowed to work” (FGD_2).

Interview statements revealed concerns with regards to resistance of members states. Relevant supporting stakeholders such as the UN Special Representative on Violence against Children (SRSG VAC) emphasized the importance of sensitizing countries. “There is fear of changing the status quo. By default, states think that children cannot do much; it is a historical lack of trust towards children. The generational aspect should also be taken into account, as adult / parents (authority) vs. the child as decision maker for themselves can lead to clashing situations” (INT_5). In all, long-term efforts are needed to strengthen advocacy campaign over time to reach local and national institutions (INT_2). Sensitization at different levels – from household to community to national levels – are necessary to ensure a well-established understanding on the rights of participation of children in advocacy spaces.

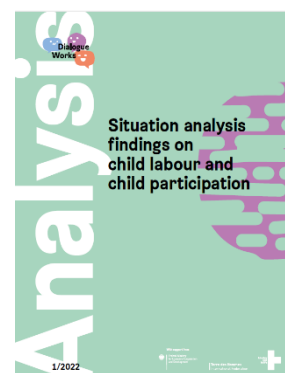
“Children do not vote, thus there is no motivation for decisions makers to include them in their agenda. It is a protection umbrella used as an obstacle (excuse) for adults to not include children in the “adult’s world”.” (INT_5)

Project objective indicator 3: The interested (professional) public in the participating countries is informed about the realities of working children and their political & social recommendations for relevant child rights issues.

The third project objective indicator concerns the role the press and public relations work has towards reporting on the project, raising public awareness of the voices of working children and corresponding different approaches to solutions, based on their different experiences and contexts. For that to happen, the project relies on three main activities: i) the publication of at least three publications on the realities of working children and their recommendations for political/social actors, ii) produce at least two publications in child-friendly language and translate them into the local language of participating countries, and iii) have accompanying press work by the steering committee at national and international level.

Based on the project’s monitoring data, there were a number of external publications in the year 2021 and 2022 reflecting the political and social recommendations of working children. These include the “Children as agents of positive change” by the UN Special Representative on Violence against Children, Centre for Global Cooperation Research, University of Duisburg-Essen; International Conference: Disputing Child Labour Globally: Legitimation Struggles in the Past and Present (9-10 November 2022). The SC also prepared (technical) publications displaying the lived experience of working children and/or their political and social recommendations. Two publications were identified in 2021 (Briefing Paper on Children’s Participation, Protection and Resilience and child-friendly: Interview with partner organisation CESIP in the KNH children’s magazine Checky!). However, due to the global pandemic, the chances to realise more publications were limited. The updated version of the children’s advocacy messages (“Let our voices be heard”) was completed in 2022. Currently, the project is in the process of preparing a child-friendly version of the Durban Call to Action, i.e., the final declaration of the Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour and the outcome document of the Dialogue Works Global Gathering in Rwanda 2023, i.e., the Kigali Declaration are being produced.

Monitoring data also shows that, in 2021 and 2022, the target was met to inform the public – through Print/Online/TV/Radio/Media – about the lived experience of working children and their political and social



recommendations in at least 30% of the participating partner countries. Several advocacy activities and dialogues of the partners were published on radio/online/print in the countries Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Indonesia, India, Peru, Philippines, Guatemala and Nepal.

The evaluators had access to materials produced so far by the project, both in online and printed formats. The materials were indeed prepared in a child-friendly manner, very illustrative and disseminated in different languages. These are being disseminated through websites, newsletters, workshops, ILO Global Conference, as well as events, such as the Global Gathering in Kigali. Based on observations during the GG, accompanying press is also active to cover what happens during events, also involving working children as protagonists. Findings for this specific indicator were assessed by the evaluators mostly based on the materials and monitoring data shared by the project team and observations during the GG. Not enough information was gathered through interviews or other types of primary data.

The Kigali Declaration *Our World, Our Voice*, January 2023

Supported by the DW campaign, representatives of committees and associations of working children from 16 countries across the world have used the GG opportunity not only exchange and to learn with each other, but also to develop and discuss their suggestions and demands for policymaking and practice from local to global level. The following points were addressed in the declaration:

- Address poverty, provide decent jobs for our parents and ensure our basic needs are met
- Take our education seriously and provide quality education and skill training
- Protect us from labour exploitation, harsh conditions and risks, and allow children to do suitable dignified work
- Listen to us, understand us and implement laws that respect our rights
- Prevent and protect working children from violence and discrimination

Through the declaration, children call on stakeholders from local to global level whose decisions influence their lives to take these views and demands into account and to collaborate with us on their implementation. The prevention of child labour exploitation and the promotion of children's rights, at its roots, requires recognition of a deeply intertwined relationship between children's rights and environmental protection and development.

The Kigali Declaration is another material expected to be disseminated to raise awareness of public sector actors as well as share children's social recommendations regarding their realities.

Project objective indicator 4: *The global network on children's rights of participation is used as a platform to learn more about the methods of children's rights-based participation, to exchange experiences and to plan joint actions.*

According to the monitoring data, guidelines were prepared for partners to conduct the annual five Children's Advisory Committee meetings. In addition, Training Module I was developed on embedding and institutionalising children's participation, and another module was developed on self-care, risk and disappointment management in 2021. Only virtual trainings workshops could be conducted due to the Covid pandemic. In 2022, 3 regional training workshops (Kenya, Nepal, Peru) were conducted to share and deepen the handouts and modules developed so far. A new module on "Self-care, risk and disappointment management" was also developed and published for implementation in the local Children's Advisory Committees. Further modules and trainings are planned for 2023.

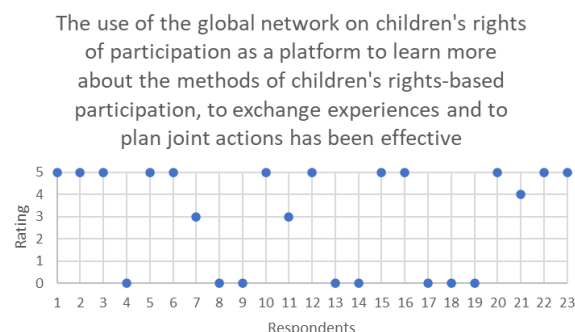
Activities such as multiplier workshops where the participants of the training sessions are enabled to pass on their acquired knowledge to third parties are planned for 2023.

With regards to participation by interested and former partner organisations in the network, so far, a total of 3 network partners / former partner organizations of Time to Talk!, Children's Advisory Committees from their own financial resources have participated in the network.

Results of the rating exercise

All respondents shared that the global network provided by the project to learn more about the methods of children's rights-based participation, for exchange of experiences and to plan joint actions on children's rights of participation has been effective.

The partners shared that the global meetings provide the opportunity for children from different countries to share experiences and problems. These meetings encourage them and give them confidence to exchange and find joint solutions to their problems.



Overall, global gathering / network formats are perceived as essential (INT_1, 16). Interview statements suggest that it enables pre-existing organized children's groups (at the village and city level) to widen its scope and sphere of influence to national and to the global level. Through global networks, working children are then aware that the CAC local committees are not alone but there are other children's committees globally. In addition, global CAC meetings with children from different countries allow them to see that their problems are not unique; *"they merge their local solutions to global scenarios"* (INT_2). They build confidence, courage from meetings like that. *"They are able to learn about the perspective of children of other countries"* (INT_6). *"This project provides a platform for common understanding, learning, sharing, interacting and building synergies. It brings a global type of mindset, what problems children face globally. The children might hear what other children in Guatemala are doing or their challenges"* (INT_11).

"There is no other project that focuses on advocacy and aims to hear the voices of children, also at global level. I never saw working children participating in global conferences, being directly involved, expressing their challenges" (INT_6).

However, interview statements also presented some challenges to effective exchange and provided recommendations to further strengthen the global exchange platform. In some cases, the children found it difficult to access information and needed to get permission from their parents. The different time zones in different countries and weak exposure to online activities were cited as problems to effective knowledge sharing. They further added that there is a need for creation and strengthening of spaces where children and adults can share knowledge. The need for more global virtual meetings between CACs for constant exchange was cited as essential for knowledge sharing and also at the regional level, more exchanges were viewed as important to widen the scope for mutual understanding for CACs who do not share the same opinions yet (e.g. Peru).

Dialogue Works Global Gathering in Kigali (January 2023)

The Global Gathering (GG) in Kigali took place from the 16.01 – 21.01.2023. 61 participants from 36 CACs attended the event, representing 14 countries in total². The gathering aimed at addressing the five main topics:

Theme 1: Address poverty and provide decent work to parents.

Theme 2: Ensure quality education and skill training.

Theme 3: Protecting children from labour exploitation and allowing suitable dignified work.

Theme 4: Listening to working children's views and implement laws that respect our rights.

Theme 5: Preventing and protecting working children from violence and discrimination.

The GG comprised a wide variety of formal sessions (Community Groups, Together Time (P&P), Creative workshops) and informal sessions (Discovery Time, CAC marketplace, dance, talent & cultural nights). Formal sessions allowed children to openly verbalize their issues and advocate for solutions in the context of their CACs and respective countries.

² In addition, two children from the *African Movement of Working Children and Youth* also participated, therefore 2 additional countries (16 countries in total).

The evaluators were able to collect direct opinions from the youth during the GG, including aspects they like and dislike about the project:

Positive points about DW

- Regular CAC meetings
- Advocacy between government and children; “we share stories with the government”.
- Connection to local authorities who protect children
- Activities such as body map and problem tree
- Outdoor implementation of the activities
- Awareness sessions such as child rights, protection at workplace
- CAC is considered as second family/friends.

Negative points about DW

- Distance from the CAC centre, thus transportation needs
- Meetings always in the same place
- Difficult to arrange meeting time
- Challenge with employer (Lebanon)
- Not so much attention from care givers
- Sometimes no response from the government.

A **Likert smiley scale exercise** was conducted during the Global Gathering, where the evaluation team prepared a set of statements (6 in total) and asked children to stick a smiley face based on what and how they think about the statement. The exercise included faces with options of **very happy**, **happy**, **neutral**, **sad** or **very sad**. A total of 18 children participated in the exercise.

Some reflections from the exercise:

1. All children perceive that, as a result of the project, their family respects their right to participate in local and global dialogues;
2. The majority of children still feel that employers do not fully consider their views and respect their rights; no extended improvements on their working conditions;
3. All children agree that their participation and networking in local and global dialogue formats have improved
4. While some children stated that adults recognise and take CACs seriously, the majority believe that there is still much to be done to improve the situation;
5. All children believe that, as a result of the project, their knowledge on right to participation has increased/improved.

Please refer to **Annex 2** for detailed results of the exercise.



Transmission channels (Pathways of Change)

The second dimension of the effectiveness criterion analyses the pathways of change and looks at factors of success and weaknesses. These change paths were extracted from the project's Theory Change, and assessed to what extent they contribute to the project's intended objectives / results.

Transmission channel 1: Working children's capacities are developed in order to advocate in dialogue formats at local and global levels.

A first pre-requisite for the effectiveness of the project is to ensure that children participate and are capacitated through the activities of their CACs. *"Children are not victims of their realities; they rather have the right to be recognized, they are transforming subjects of society (sujetos transformadores)"* (INT_16). During the GG in Rwanda, the evaluators aimed to i) understand why working children participate in CACs and ii) evaluate the effect CACs have in different aspects of their lives. Overall, evaluation findings revealed that being part of CACs is perceived as joyful (FGD_4) and cultivates fellowship habits (FGD_2). *"I was positively surprised by DW's methodologies, staff commitment, diversity and the sense of fellowship"* (FGD_2). It is important to mention that the means through which children were motivated to join CACs were very distinct; some through school programmes (FGD_4), others motivated by friends / relatives.



During FGDs, the evaluators used colourful cards which aimed to capture changes / developed capacities as a result of the project with respect to six different aspects: **Yourself, Family, Employer, the State, Unexpected changes** as well as **Challenging aspects**. Some of the findings are stated below.

Yourself

Based on the observations during the GG in Kigali, the first changes observed in children's advocacy engagement were with themselves. On several occasions, children were previously perceived as shy (FGD_1, 4), not outspoken. Some used to experience bullying, both in school and work environments (FGD_2, 4). Statements showed that only after joining the DW CACs, they were encouraged and capacitated to speak up. *"Since I started participating in my CAC, I learned more and empowered myself"* (Male CAC member, Guatemala). Since DW, children were also able to improve their participation and decision making within their CACs – *"that is the added value of the project"* (INT_15). Changes were also extended outside the household in some cases, where CAC members reported being respected in their local community and at school (FGD_4). Significant change stories were shared by CAC representatives during on-site and remote interviews, such as the story from an 18-year-old girl (who uses a wheelchair) from Bangladesh. *"Before joining the CAC, she used to work with home-handicrafts. Her parents didn't like her, considered her a burden for the family, so she stayed at home. But when she joined our team, she was motivated, understood her fundamental rights of the children with disabilities, she also motivated her family members. Now she is a small businesswoman, a toys and cosmetics vendor. Protection issues before the project were never given importance. Our children complain and report abuses"* (INT_19).

Weakening factors

Despite the clear development of children with respect to their ability to advocate and speak up in public, this fact is not true for all CAC members. Specific CAC representatives voiced the need to further strengthen working children's participation; *"some are not as outspoken in comparison to the others"* (INT_17). Particularly those who did not participate in T2T; *"Our today's adolescents who were part of T2T are the most outspoken ones; the younger ones now in DW are not as outspoken"*. The current younger generations who were not part of T2T need to create new strategies. An aggravating factor is that, due to the global pandemic and lockdown restrictions, human contact was missing, which led to loss of confidence to communicate with other kids. *"It was two years of not socializing; we need to strengthen these gaps"* (INT_17).

The evaluators would also like to point out the **natural bias** involved in the selection of children chosen to participate of the Global Gathering. It is assumed that, for obvious purposes, the most outspoken children were

selected in the local CACs to travel to Rwanda. Therefore, the evaluators were mostly exposed to those who could communicate and advocate without any problem.

Family

By default, the *participation culture* among parents within this project's context is very low (INT_6), as they are not used to having their children participating in dialogue-related environments. These parents usually have incomplete schooling and are undocumented / not registered in social welfare system (INT_22). Still, the evaluators concluded – based on interview statements – that projects such as Dialogue Works are needed to break paradigms and create new thinking habits, not only among children but also among parents / adults. Although opinions diverged with respect to CAC children's' relationship with their parents, most statements were positive with respect to i) their voices being heard in the household and ii) increased tendency of parents to send their children to school (along with working). *"It is hard to have parents listening to our voices, but now it got a lot better"* (FGD_4). *"It is good that children know about their rights; they can participate in the decisions at home"* (female parent). *In the beginning is hard to allow children to speak up, but now she feels she became a better parent"* (INT_1).

"Families of the CAC members used to think we are wasting their time. We then invited the parents as well. After some parents attended the meetings, it changed their thoughts, started sending them to school now." (INT_3)

"When my family knew that I would participate in the project they supported me, told me to enjoy the most of it because they knew it would generate positive results." (FGD_2)

Interviews also revealed that while some families accept and are more aware about the campaign (some even volunteer to collaborate with project activities, such as cooking), others victimize their children, apart from not exercising their role as parents (INT_16). *"My dad used to drink a lot and did not want me to study, but mom wanted me to study. My CAC visited my house to have my parents' consent to study. I did not know about my rights back then"* (Female CAC member, Guatemala).

"Parents who used to be unaware of child labour issues have written note to us on how effective our CAC is, that what different forms of child labour are, about child's right to participate. A parent followed us for every meeting and now shares/educates everyone about the dangers of child labour" (INT_12).

Most Significant Change Stories – Zambia

"When he joined CAC, he was all over the place, difficult for the parents to contain / discipline him. Due to the nature of the CAC meetings, e.g. giving him homework, he started focusing more and attending the meetings, reading. His parents were not optimistic at the beginning" (male CAC member).

"When she joined the CAC, she was shy, not really speaking. Engaging with stakeholders made her open up and speak up. The cultural background influenced her to not speak much" (female CAC member).

Employer

Some children revealed how, before Dialogue Works, they were unaware of their rights with respect to work (e.g. working hours, salary) as well as to what extent their employers should support their presence in school (FGD_2). After joining the project, working children were able and more empowered to claim for their rights.

Most Significant Change Stories – Lebanon

"Through our advocacy, the employer became more careful as they recognize that someone is responsible in the camp for children's rights. Children work in the coffee shops, in mechanical shops, plumbing, painting, etc inside the camp. The employers also provide them with safety tools and other protection at work. Children also find us as their resort now. Mentalities can't change overnight, but we are trying. We are also educating parents; we have separate sessions with them. It will be nice if the parents accompanied us to the employers to support their children's rights".

– Kenya, Zimbabwe

“I used to work for long hours, sold many things but was paid very little. I played in many tournaments but paid very little. I was taken advantage of as I could not speak up. I did not know my rights as a working child. Working time reduced after talking to my employer; I got the allowance raised. Also, talked to a coach who now trains us. I am now able to speak up for myself and other working children”.

“Before the project, I used to work for long hours, the farm owners used to harass me, even now they harass me because of my age. They used me for nothing at times, and sometimes for a plate of food only. After the project that farm owners are giving me money, clothes and books and that is much better than before.”

The State

Based on interview statements and working sessions during the GG in Kigali, it was clearly observed that, prior to DW, challenges were encountered to attain government's / authorities' attention on child labour advocacy and have children's voice to be heard. Since the project, success stories revealed, such as the one in Nepal: *“We did not know what the state is doing for us, they keep avoiding child-related issues. Now, we know the head of the state is also listening to the voices raised by us, giving attention, and also trying to solve the problems of the children. We learned a lot, e.g. what are the plans of the state for helping us. It is easier to raise our voices in front of the state now.”* Nevertheless, it is important to mention that, although it is easier to reach out to state authorities, the changes (impact) still have a long way to go.

Hidden Factors

Through the project, and particularly through the Global Gathering, children are able to share their issues with children from different country-contexts, thus having the chance to find common solutions to similar problems in their environments. Working children stated that, they could have not imagined being so enlightened by talking to other children (positive hidden factor).

Challenges

No major challenges were identified by children during the focus group discussions or bilateral talks. The only difficulty stated was to manage time between school, work and being part of CACs (FGD_2).

Transmission channel 2: Working children from CAC take part in conferences and events in local to global levels.

Evaluation findings revealed that the format in which children do advocacy through Dialogue Works is perceived as one of the main added values of the project. At local level, where problems are identified in their community, the format in which DW is implemented allows for CAC members to organize interface meetings and take action to address the individual as well as general issues together. *“The challenge is to try a balance where these meetings are not affecting their school calendar, to ensure that kids have enough time to study and participate in the CAC's”* (INT_7). At regional and international levels, advocacy participation takes place particularly where policy gaps are identified, where they use UNCRC and the African Charter on the Right and Welfare of the Child to address their issues. *“These are used from village, to national to international level”* (INT_15). As a result, dialogue with local to global decision-makers and stakeholders are intensified.

Weakening factors

Interviews revealed three key challenges that hampered the actual / constant participation of children in their CACs: i) parent's averse mentality to let their children participate (INT_11), ii) distance and insufficient transportation costs (INT_11, FGD_2, 4) and iii) security issues, particularly the fear of kidnappings (INT_6). *“At CACs, we do not have enough HR people to accompany children to where the CAC happen; the family also needs to work sometimes, they don't have the time to bring them there. But we make efforts to coordinate among ourselves to pick them up”.*

Transmission channel 3: Guidance materials (e.g. toolkits) on methods of child rights-based participation are developed.

Based on interview findings, guidance materials produced through Dialogue Works facilitated implementing partners' work related to DW activities as well as to other projects (INT_1, 2, 11, 15, 16). Stakeholders' statements revealed that new child-friendly methodologies were learnt through, for instance, trainings and teaching materials. Materials were also used to train adults e.g., schoolteachers taught how to use the body map. *"These tools are available and useful to be re-used; there is no need to create new materials again, since there is no harm as it is not being used in a commercial way"* (INT_2).

"DW learning and training tools / modules made advocacy more child-friendly, more sensitive to children's needs and more participative" (INT_1).

"We use the Global Paper 'Let Voices be Heard' as an advocacy tool and the toolkits during the CAC meeting" (INT_7).

"We use very useful tools such as the body mapping and water balloon; through them, children are able to understand what they like and don't like, unique things. Some of the communities are also using these tools for advocacy and for engaging children" (INT_11).

Success Factors – Guatemala

In the case of CEIPA:

Toolkit 1: Extensively used, particularly to share techniques that could be used in other projects and locations. In some cases, the techniques were even adapted. At times, representatives would also use the methodologies with non-working children and parents in other conditions / realities.

Toolkit 2: Had a great impact in their organization; it was used to build offers and shape the conditions of child's rights. The organization learned how to i) deal with risks, ii) deal with children's insecurities, iii) use their resources.

The interview partners also shared that the DW tools are adjusted and used based on the needs of the other programmes. *"From an organisational point of view, we learnt a lot about the tools, we adjust the tools to the needs of other programmes These tools are really adjustable, e.g. we can identify negative effect of sexual- any other thematic areas. We created different courses with the help of the toolkit. It is a living document"* (INT_20).

Unintended results

Positive unintended results:

- ☑ Timing of the global gathering: The original project plan was to conduct a kick-off in Kigali, however, owing to Covid-19, it was called off. As a result, it was decided to hold a Global Gathering at the start of 2023, halfway through the project, also, coinciding with the mid-term evaluation of the project. The event brought together children, partner organisations and all other relevant stakeholders from all 15 countries. This worked in favour of the project as the project team could brainstorm with all relevant stakeholders on important areas to be focused on, and on how to utilize the unspent funds for the remaining duration of the project. The sustainability aspect of the project and the ways forward were discussed with all relevant stakeholders during the event.
- ☑ Increase in the number CAC participants going to school: *"We, as NGO partners, are able to influence children by advocating that going to school is also an option to have a better future"* (INT_1).
- ☑ Greater outreach (number of CAC children) than expected as parents are raising awareness in specific communities. *"Project officer was contacted by parents if they could bring their children"* (INT_12).
- ☑ During the global pandemic period, moving to online formats allowed more children to be part of the assembly. Before the global pandemic, meetings were mainly in person, and only funded children were able to participate. *"Covid-19 opened up the hybrid methodology, allowing more children to part of it"* (INT_5).
- ☑ Integration of the activities and materials of DW/CAC into local schools (INT_11) and churches (INT_16).
- ☑ Learning other ways to address issues, for instance, that reaching out to local radio stations are possible instead of creating their own podcasts / radio channels.

"The school has been able to integrate our activities. We have initiated clubs in schools" (CAC member, Kenya).

Success stories from Peru

Positive findings were identified as a result of DW methodologies being used in other contexts (e.g. other projects, schools, communities, churches). Furthermore, existing methodologies were also identified which can potentially add value to Dialogue works. A potential example is the use of the APTIGAR methodology – *Aprendiendo a Pensar el Trabajo Infantil en Grupos de Aprendizaje Reflexivas* (Learning to think about children's work in reflective learning groups). The aim is to invite parents who were child labourers themselves and their kids. The ultimate goal is to make them reflect and revise their personal stories, their rights and these were violated, how they were exploited, and make them realize (by themselves) that their children should not be exposed to similar environments. The methodology also encourages that, in cases where parents are allowing kids to work, they should accompany children to see their working conditions. CESIP uses this method since 2019, perceived as very successful. The evaluators highly recommend the methodology to be shared among like-minded CACs from different countries.

Negative unintended results:

- ⊗ Although Zoom online platform assisted to conduct the online meetings, it was challenging to call participants attention during the sessions. *“Mental health deprived participants had difficulties to understand the classes virtually. There was no direct interaction with the teachers”* (INT_16).
- ⊗ By providing a **neutral** space to discuss to advocate on the topic of child labour, isolated cases revealed confusion with regards to the role of DW on the cause. Organizations which advocate for the complete eradication of child labour revealed not understanding the clear position of DW. *“We need to stop telling the success stories of child labour; they are the minority – it is not representative. We need to stop romanticizing child labour”* (INT_17).



3.4 Impact

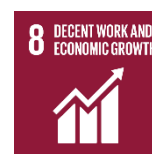
This section briefly analyses and assesses the impact of the project to the extent that this evaluation allows to. Actual evidence for the occurrence and contribution to higher outcome-level effects can only be identified during an ex-post evaluation. Nevertheless, the *potential* to contribute to these higher outcomes is reflected upon in the following. It is structured according to the assessment dimensions in the evaluation matrix (see Annex 1). The assessment is based on whether the project contributes to the achievement of overall objectives which are not directly (at least not solely) attributable to the project. As a basis, the situation prior to Kindernothilfe / Terre des Hommes engagement in the project's niche is established through recall questions during interviews and discussions and compared with the actual situation and expected impacts.

Analysis and assessment of impact

Contribution to higher-level development results/changes

This dimension of the impact criterion analyses whether the project contributed to higher-level results such as the sustainable development goals (SDGs). As per project proposal and contract, the DW campaign aims to specifically contribute to full implementation of Article 12 of the UN Convention on the rights of the Child for working children and to indirectly contribute to the SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth.

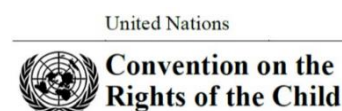
Contribution to impact on SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth and on SDG 16.2- End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children.



While **SDG 8** calls for sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all by 2030 and underpins the commitment to eliminate child labour, the **SDG 16.2** aims at ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children. In this regard, the project sought to increase knowledge around rights of working children and decent work. The partner organisations and the children shared change stories during the evaluation phase where, due to increase in knowledge and understanding as a result of the project, the children could distinguish between child exploitative work and decent work for children, as well as aspects where children could raise their voice against child exploitative work.

“When I used to collect firewood, I would get small payments, but after I realised my rights as a working child, I understand now whether the working environment is proper for me, whether I am being mentally and physically not abused. Because I learnt all this, I started looking for more decent jobs. Now I work as a cashier at a supermarket. Once I knew my rights, the adults changed their approach towards me” (Global Gathering, exchange with children).

Contribution to impact on the full implementation of Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC Art. 12) for working children.



The project envisages full implementation of **Article 12** of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child for working children in all matters concerning them on local to global level. The Dialogue Works campaign advocates for the participation of working children through support provided for opportunities of meaningful participation enhances their protection, wellbeing and resilience, and results in more relevant and effective policies and practices guided by their best interests (DW Advocacy Strategy, Article 12 UN Convention).

Article 12 establishes the right of every child to freely express her or his views, in all matters affecting her or him, and the subsequent right for those views to be given due weight, according to the child's age and maturity. Further, for this purpose the child shall, in particular, be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and

administrative proceedings affecting the him or her, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law (Article 12 UN Convention).

In this regard, the project has worked towards providing a platform for working children where they can voice out their perspectives and opinions both locally and globally. Before DW, several children were involved in the belief that children should not work; now, as a result of the project, they have the opportunity to see other perspective on the topic as well. Targeted children now recognise and understand the difference between child labour and child work. Both adults and children interviewed during the evaluation shared that the platform provided by the project has enabled an increase in knowledge on the rights of working children. In addition, increase in the level of confidence to voice out their opinions in front of adults is also seen as a positive impact. Further, it stimulates the local community members – such as the caregivers, parents, schools – to understand and respect the views of children and take action to protect them against any forms of discrimination.

“The project’s contribution is significant. One of the CAC members attended the conference in South Africa, it was the first time sitting in high level meetings and having their voices heard. Local / regional level, through CAC meetings, when calling stakeholders, they are able to echo out their opinions about different stakeholders and bring their opinions towards solution” (INT_7).

As outlined in the effectiveness chapter, the project continues to achieve and contribute to the achievement of several positive outcomes such as i) positive change in the mindset and outlook of the local community members with regards to their views on working children and their rights (INT_11), ii) increase in the awareness level of the children with respect to rights of working children and in the level of confidence to speak up for their rights and find amicable solutions to their problem.

However, the interviews revealed that even though the project contributes to Art. 12 and helps bring structural changes to enable children’s participation among the adults, there is still much to be achieved at impact level. The interview partners believe that for a higher-level change to occur, the mindset of societal actors **must change**, which is a gradual process. Furthermore, there is also the need for more children to be involved in the campaign; despite very effective, DW is still a small-scale project. Structural change and long-term engagement are necessary for sustainable involvement of important actors in the advocacy process, such as the local governments, schools, NGOs already involved in the campaign.

“Changing a legislation is easy; changing the mindset is slow. Here we are dealing with mindset change. It is a way for long term impact” (INT_5).

Recommendations from interview partners to reach higher impact levels included dissemination of good practices and positive results via CAC-based handbooks. These can potentially be used by local schools and other partner institutions. The need for setting up a regional CAC for greater coordination and efficiency was also identified, along with the need to scale up the number of CACs to include more children for greater outreach (and potentially impact) of the project (INT_11, 12, 21).

“Set up a regional CAC, dealing with people in defined time space (Kenya, Zambia etc). Things you hear, you tend to forget. What you hear, see and do you never forget - regional coordinator office will have greater impact, will synergise our work, through a regional newsletter, paper etc. Regional coordinator can also do capacity building- in person sessions. Scaling up CACs will also have greater impact.” (INT_11)

Local partners and children also shared that strengthening the social media campaigns and reach should be carried out by the project to present the DW platform not only locally, but also globally for greater impact of the project (INT_21, 22).

3.5 Efficiency

The criterion efficiency looks at how well resources were being used. This criterion describes the extent to which the intervention delivers results in an economic and timely way (relationship between input and output, outcome and impact level). The evaluation dimension “production efficiency” refers to the appropriateness of the relationship between inputs and outputs, whereas “allocation efficiency” refers to the appropriateness of the relationship between the inputs and the results achieved (project/development objective; outcome/impact level) by the intervention.

Production Efficiency

The evaluation dimension production efficiency refers to the appropriateness of the relationship between inputs and outputs. Based on the project offer and current financial monitoring sheets, the budget of the project is 2.168.118 EUR, of which 75% is co-funded through BMZ. As seen in Table 2, based on the latest available figures as of 01/02/2023, current project expenditure is 826.366,61 EUR and is thus responsible for 38,11% of the total expenditure to date. It is important to note that expenditure related to the Global Gathering are **not** included in these calculations.

Table 2. Planned distribution of project contribution

Contributors	Planned project Contribution	Actual project contribution	Actual Distribution	Remaining funds
BMZ/KNH/TdH	2.168.118 EUR	826.366,61 EUR (01.02.2023)	38.11%	1.341.751,39 EUR

The following tables show in more details the current budget expenditure with respect to i) different budget lines (Table 3) and ii) output expenses:

Table 3. Budget lines current expenditure

	Current project contribution	Budget utilization (%)	Remaining funds
Investment costs - Procurement - Overarching costs	15.423,68 €	53,65%	13.324,32 €
Operational costs - Project management - Output & partners - Admin & transportation	486.751,91 €	34,63%	918.872,09 €
Staff costs	207.643,05 €	54,23%	175.278,95 €

Based on financial monitoring data, most project expenses were allocated to the execution of Output A until now (as planned in the project offer), which concerns strengthening the children CACs' capabilities. Output D comprises the second largest output-related budget expenditure pot, accounting for almost 20% of total costs planned for output expenditure. Monitoring sheets show that, while Output B expenditure is almost exhausted, scope for diversified spending under Outputs A, C and D are in order.

Table 4. Expected vs. actual (%) output expenditure

	Output A	Output B	Output C	Output D
Planned budget	846.190 €	96.024 €	128.100 €	267.280 €

	Output A	Output B	Output C	Output D
Actual current expenditure (%)	504.093,32 (58,33%)	89.390,73 (93,09%)	23.896,27 (18,65%)	105.136,20 (39,34%)

With regards to budget allocation towards the project CAC partner, interview findings revealed that budget is generally enough to implement activities (INT_1,7). The chosen project approach is assessed by some partners as a good way to drive change in society, where, with minimum amount of money a lot of activities can be implemented. *“Activities are very simple and straightforward, using the existing environment. Not much needed to implement it”* (INT_4). Some of the activities (e.g. meetings) are actually not resources dependent. *“We are enthusiastic to do things”* (INT_2). *“We implement many activities because of our commitment and passion.”* (INT_22).

Nevertheless, scaling up activities to other CACs or increasing the number of CAC members is a challenge (INT_2, 6). Partners’ statements indicated that, from its design phase (e.g. number of meetings, coordinator resources), more resources could have been planned. The basket of resources can only serve the basic. *“If there were more resources, we could do more – e.g. meeting the demand, make more (advocacy) noise, create more CAC in other regions. There is a high demand from schools for CACs”* (INT_15).

“Financial resources for basic activities are generally enough at local community level. But as we move forward to advocacy engagement at national level, we would need more resources” (INT_7).

Weakening factors

Project implementation partners revealed the following shortcomings:

- ⊗ **Costs during the global pandemic:** CAC representatives/coordinators needed to compensate for the lack of in person meetings, therefore needed to visit CAC members in their home. *“Human and financial resources were not enough. The allocated 13 hours per week were not enough, it requires more time to do this kind of work. It’s a full-time job. We had to ask permission from the community to use public spaces to bring together the kids who were living close by, or to use common eating spaces (comedor popular) – logistics was a lot”* (INT_17).
- ⊗ **High transportation costs to reach the CAC meeting locations** (INT_11,19). Although Dialogue Works covers the transport cost to the meetings, some interviews with the facilitators and coordinators suggest that often the CAC situated in the rural areas are diverse and far away making coordination and bringing children a challenge (INT_11). In addition, *“children live in the surrounding areas, budget is a problem; it is different from other countries where children are living in towns; we have no roads to bring children from these areas, they live far away from the centre”* (INT_10).
- ⊗ Costs for accompanying parents / caregivers / adults for children with special needs are too high.
- ⊗ Monetary support is not sufficient to visit / monitor the workplace, to ensure that they are disabled friendly (INT_19).
- ⊗ Phycologist for differently abled children and the displaced children in the camps (INT_19, 21).

“We are very much motivated; we do voluntary work because we love it. But people who work with us need money; we don’t receive any support from the government” (INT_6).

Allocation Efficiency

The evaluation dimension allocation efficiency refers to the appropriateness of the relationship between the inputs and the results achieved (outcome/impact level) by the project. The assessment of allocative efficiency is very much influenced by the contribution to the achievement of outcome and impact goals described above. Nevertheless, further criteria were identified that had a positive or negative influence on the preconditions for efficiency.

Usage of results-based monitoring for steering: Overall, the project is being well monitored through the milestones and activities in the progress reports. It is relevant to mention that these milestones are being monitored as it gives sense of project steering; nevertheless it is not sufficient to measure the intended impact of the project, particularly at global level.

Human resources and responsibilities: Roles and responsibilities among the project key partners were perceived to be clear. Regular steering committee meetings between SC and the NGO partners were conducted to define these roles. Nevertheless, some implementing partners identified the need of additional positions in their organizations to better conduct the planned activities. *“It would be helpful if the budget could cover a full-time coordinator”* (INT_3, 11). As previously stated in the production efficiency chapter, resources fell short to cover staffing costs of the local partners.

“Human resources are very limited to achieve better results. One person per CAC is not enough, and this person only work part-time. It is a limited number of hours to be shared to all partners they have locally. In addition, capacities are also not limited; they are usually people without university degree, so work is at times conducted at low level” (INT_6).

“Transportation and salaries of the staff is a concern; we are only 5 full-time staff and 23 youth volunteers and some of them are also members of the CACs” (INT_22).

Participation and process management: The project team’s motivation and commitment with Dialogue Works was mentioned in several interviews (INT_17, FGD_2), by both adults and children. The evaluators assessed as one of the **greatest attributes of the project**. *“Their commitment and quality of their work is exceptional. They sacrifice time from their other work to add here”* (INT_17). Nevertheless, flaws were also observed among specific local implementation partners.

Use of learning experiences: As previously indicated, DW toolkits created throughout the project lifetime are also being used not only for partners’ organizational process (INT_3), but also as materials in local schools (INT_11) and churches (INT_16). These materials are very adaptable to external situations, not budget intensive.

Success factor – Location of the Global Gathering (GG)

The choice of having Rwanda as hosting location to the GG was also assessed as highly efficient. Based on interview statements, facilitators and different project partners held online meetings and proposed different countries to host the event. Rwanda – which is currently promoting its Tourism Strategy (e.g. through hosting international events) – is assessed as budget-friendly country as it i) offers easy visa application process (e.g. visa upon arrival) and ii) waives visa entry costs for AU members, citizens of the Commonwealth, and some members of francophone region (INT_15).

3.6 Sustainability

The sustainability criterion analyses whether prerequisites for sustainability are in place that corroborate the pathways of change outlined in the effectiveness and impact chapters. **Factors that support the sustainability** of project results will also be pointed out, along with embedded **recommendations**.

In line with its initial project offer and predecessors’ phase, DW aims to bring about long-term and sustainable change for both direct and indirect target groups. Ideally, the members of the children’s committees (**micro level**) experience personal growth, empowerment and training through the project. The partner organizations and other

civil society actors in the project countries (**meso level**) are empowered to effectively involve children in planning and decision-making processes, and to carry out their own advocacy activities. Lastly, international organizations and/or politicians (**macro level**) benefit in their work from the knowledge generated about child labour and learn how ethical child participation works can be realized at different political levels.

Evaluation findings show that the project already (partly) achieved some of these goals – particularly at **micro** and **meso level** – and thus corroborates to the different project's pathways of change.

Macro level (public sector / policy makers)

At macro level, the project aims (as per offer) to make a targeted contribution to demonstrate the relevance and feasibility of child rights-based participation at the level of international politics, and thus to work towards the institutionalisation of ethical participation of working children and adolescents. This includes the regular participation of working children and adolescents in international conferences and their consultation by national government delegations for the preparation and follow-up of such of such conferences. A wide range of actors are involved, from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to national governments and the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Examining the project's ToC, macro level changes can be directly related to the project's intended changes at impact level, for instance the integration of solutions in policy at national and international levels. Evaluation findings show nevertheless that such changes **require continuous work and persistency** to reach the public and policy sphere. Youth presence in global conferences such as Durban (South Africa) are already an important milestone to shape the long-term acceptance of children's participation in such environments. In addition, the **dissemination of statements and strategies** – such as the Kigali Declaration – are also relevant to continue making their voices be heard. Further evidence has also shown that child delegates from DW African partners have been invited to present the results of the Kigali Declaration in a 2-hour session in the main programme of the African Children Summit – a child-led event including 700 child participations. DW appears to be the only actor bringing the child labour topic in the summit. The event is expected to take place from 10-12 April 2023 in Nairobi, involving the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child as well as the UNSRSG VAC.

Meso level (institutions)

At the meso level, national and regional exchange between partner organisations and children's committees is deliberately promoted through the project activities, and sustained through the transfer of knowledge (e.g. methods, materials) of child rights-based participation among members and other institutions. Evaluation findings show that the majority of NGO partners are motivated and committed to ensure the sustainability of their CACs, even within those where financial resources fell short.

“Sustainability is dependent on our networks, interactions and visibility; I am sure we will be able to continue with the project.” (INT_11).

Nevertheless, a few factors were identified as crucial points to support the project's sustainability, as follows:

- ☑ **Develop child participatory policies within partner organizations:** The establishment of internal child participation policies within the NGOs has the potential to sustain active participation of children withing organizations (INT_15), even once the project fades out. For effective policy-related material, it must have children as target group readers, not adults. Child-friendly versions should be then released (INT_16).
- ☑ **Staff ownership & capacity building:** Ensure ownership levels of partners whenever necessary and possibly offer regular capacity building of the staff on relevant topics should be encouraged (INT_13). Intra-staff training is highly encouraged to disseminate child-friendly methods which were acquired prior to the project lifetime that can be used to engage with the target groups (e.g. psychology methods).
- ☑ **Encourage private sector engagement:** Not only should the public sector ensure the protection of working children and their rights to participation, but also the private sector must be aware of their actions that directly

and indirectly affect the children. This is particularly relevant for children working in the supply chain sector as well as informal sectors (INT_20).

Micro level (CAC individuals)

Similar to the evaluation results of the predecessor project *Time to Talk*, the evaluators assess Dialogue Works to have an impressively positive influence over its activities on personality development, social skills, self-confidence and self-efficacy of the children's committees' members. Up until this point, evaluation evidence showed that the joint work on actively shaping children's own circumstances and the experience of being recognised as a rights bearer contribute to their **long-term ability** to improve their relationships with parents, siblings, teachers and the community. Most importantly, they are able to formulate their own needs and become involved in political and social change in their environment.

Inherited from its predecessor, Dialogue Works children's committees dynamically shaped the transition between generations – when a member came of age, a younger child took his place (peer-to-peer approach). This is an important determinant of sustainability. Evaluation findings on children's views on sustainability shows that, during the GG in Kigali, they revealed their motivation to continue participating in CACs and their wish for the project to continue in the long-term. Similarly, NGO members and other partner organizations were unanimous in their wish to have the continuation of CACs, beyond DW's lifetime.

"This project gives us a feeling of hope"

"If the project continues, I can share with my friends and invite them to join"

"I want to support the project; I can share it on social media"

"Even if the project stops, we will continue sharing our experiences e.g. create a podcast"

"To continue, we need to reach more governmental bodies to support us"

"From Time to Talk to Dialogue Works, this is half of my childhood (11 to 16 years). How can you stop the project now?" (Female, 16-years old).

To ensure sustainability at micro level, the following points were identified:

- ☑ **Foster peer-to-peer approach:** CAC organisations need to continue providing opportunities for children to participate and make them duty bearers to offer opportunities for other children to participate. An identified risk is that, as children run out of childhood, CAC organizations run out of children (INT_5). It is recommended to use a peer-to-peer approach, where children who have participated in trainings can build the next generation of children. This strategy should follow the most successful Child Participation Method, where older children teach younger ones, as they are likely to trust each other (INT_5, 16).

"I want to continue participating; one day I will be the one creating new processes. We take step by step to improve the situation of children that work. We need to support other kids informing them about their rights". (Male CAC participant, Guatemala)

"CAC reunions should take place more often / be more constant; for now, it is only one per month. It should be at least two times a month" (FGD_4).

- ☑ **Adult / Parental engagement:** Parents need to understand about child advocacy to (indirectly) support sustainable participation of children in the CACs. Training of parents is important to ensure their readiness to promoting child's participation and improving child advocacy. Development of activities to interact with parents of children are recommended. *"Sometimes children refuse doing things as they understand that is harmful; parents go against it. We need to capacitate parents"* (INT_15). New methods such as APTIGAR (see page 28) can be used in order to incentivize parents to reflect on the working conditions and situation of their children. DW can also adapt their current methodology for larger community groups and make use visual materials (e.g. photos, videos) to mobilize parents (INT_17).

Success factors – Positive Spillovers

Success stories in the Philippines presented a case where the local NGO does not only oversee the CAC, but also provides trainings to improve skills of parents. The so-called *Self-Help Groups* (SHG) for instance – not part of DW activity but supported by the project – is an alternative programme for uneducated parents who did not attend school. Parents are taught specific skills and oriented on simple saving mechanisms. Out of the saved amount, they give each other loans to start small businesses. In specific cases, parents can also get a loan from the local NGO. A similar approach of SHG were also observed in Ethiopia.

Lastly, as adults are perceived as gate keepers of decision making, organizations need to compensate it by empowering children through: i) amplifying child led participation, ii) open up spaces for children to speak up, iii) create child friendly assets to empower children with the same information adults receive; iii) create a child friendly version of all documents sent to public officials and high-end stakeholders, and iv) create guidelines for adults for being accountable to children. In all, rising the civic space to have children to work with other stakeholders is key, also by involving them in cross-cutting issues – gender, environmental (INT_15).

Project level

- ☑ **Further clarify the role of Dialogue Works as a neutral platform:** Singular interviews statements revealed a certain degree of confusion with regards to the topic of child labour and DW role. *“There is no clear position from KNH/TdH with regards to child labour; we received guidance from ILO through KNH that were against child labour. But at the same time, DW argues for the decent work for children – which is not feasible in our opinion. How to make it fair?”* (INT_17). It is important to note that despite providing a neutral dialogue platform, both KNH and TDH have an official position on the topic of child labour. However, due to the character of the project, both organizations did not proactively share it with partners to not influence the debate and their positioning. DW clearly focuses on the implementation of working children's right to be heard and thus implements a neutral approach in between the variety of positions on child labour.
- ☑ **Establish an agenda with direct and indirect partners:** It is essential to establish a clear agenda with DW partners, containing their role and expectations for the remaining project lifetime. The project has a long-standing relationship with a wide range of partners. In addition to that, DW also receives the support of regional movements such as the *African Movement of Working Children and Youth* and the *Movimiento Latinoamericano y del Caribe de los Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes Trabajadores (MOLACNATS)*. An established agenda with such partners will be able to determine their scope of action.
- ☑ **Another financing round:** Although very effective, DW is still a small-scale project, and that limits the scope in which kids can participate. Interviews revealed that budgets are currently limited, therefore restricting i) individual follow ups with the children and ii) the increase in number of CAC members (INT_4). Another project (budget) extension will allow for continuation and potential scale up CAC to other parts in the selected countries. To have effective and sustainable results, partners need ongoing support (INT_2, 5).

“Dialogue Works is a baby idea in Ethiopia; it is a green light to scale up for the future, also in other projects”
(INT_4).

In addition, further financial support would also be needed to support additional implementation ideas; *“at times, children come up with their own plan, but we do not have the budget to support the child's initiatives. We can only support planned activities through DW. Children end up feeling discouraged”* (INT_15).

In case a further financing round is not possible, local organizations need to find their own financing mechanisms in their partner countries. Ideas provided through interviews suggest that schools can be used as permanent platforms to install and execute CACs within communities. It can start as a pilot case and be replicated in different set ups in case it works. Child Protection Committees can play an assisting role, where CACs can be potentially self-sustained by the municipality. For that to happen, a long-term and well-established connection with the community is needed.

- ☑ **Monitoring follow-ups:** Monitoring and reporting on the realization of children's rights and advocacy are needed. *“We urgently need to follow up with the relevant authorities, so that we are able to give suggestions*

to DW on how to continue. But for that they need resources" (INT_7). The same is true for tools that monitors children (outside CACs) who are capacitated through the fellow friends and their community. *"The existing tools of DW are mostly for adults only"* (INT_15).

- ☑ **Establishing links/ networks with the local authorities, government and schools:** Some interview partners stated not having established links with other organizations (e.g. local schools, nutrition support centres) and local authorities, claiming that these still do not understand what CACs are. School teachers and state leaders also still do not understand CACs. *"Schools have their own system for child participation. Child cabinet and groups within schools can be linked to Dialogue Works. We can think of whole agenda of child participation to connect these different agendas"*. Models of child participation such as Bal Panchayat can support child leaders to work as advocates for right to child participation through these groups participation (INT_3).

"We have very good linkages with the local government and our CAC members are invited whenever there are some important meetings. There is a community-based led by local government representatives, where child protection is very effective. Our 3 CAC members are part of it. They are open to our suggestions" (INT_19).

- ☑ **Online storage/exchange tool:** During the Global Gathering, children stated not having any sort of communication with children of other CACs. To this end, it is recommended to create a child-friendly and protective communication platform for children to communicate with each other at regional and global level. A shared interactive platform which gives the option to share documents was suggested by project partners. *"It will help to improve ownership and social presence with regards to the project"* (INT_13).

4. Conclusions & Recommendations

4.1 Key findings and factors of success/failure

To facilitate learning from the results and conclusions of this evaluation, this section corroborates **key factors of success and central weaknesses of the project**. Efforts and positive achievements in the key factors of success (which sometimes overlap) have the potential to leverage current achievements, mitigate current or future risks, or be applied to other similar projects.

Key Success Factors:

- ☑ The project is built on **success factors** of its predecessor, which generated efficiency gains.
- ☑ The project follows a **neutral approach** to contribute to the full implementation of Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Projects such as Dialogue Works are needed to **break paradigms** and create new thinking habits, not only among children but also among parents / adults.
- ☑ **Children are the protagonist** of the project; they are the ones to i) identify their issues, ii) bring these to the dialogue spaces and iii) advocate based on their local context to find solutions with implementation partners.
- ☑ Dialogue Works encouraged and capacitated working children to speak up which leads to self-confidence, empowerment feelings and skills (e.g. communication, self-organization and negotiation).
- ☑ Positive spill overs are perceived by external NGO projects / institutions, through the use of DW materials for instance.

Weakening factors:

- ⊗ By providing a **neutral** space to discuss to advocate on the topic of child labour, isolated cases revealed confusion with regards to the role of Dialogue Work on the cause. Organizations which advocate for the complete eradication of child labour revealed not understanding the clear position of DW.
- ⊗ Limited financial and human resources at CAC partners, which at times leads to limited scope of action.
- ⊗ Institutional loss as CAC members (both adults and children) leave the committees. Mechanism to keep institutional knowledge is needed.
- ⊗ Risks:
 - CAC meetings will most likely not survive on a long-term if there is no sustainable funding system (INT_12, 19).
 - Children have been the supporters of the idea of CACs, and if the project ends, they might be disappointed and demotivated (INT_21).

4.2 Recommendations

The following table summarises the set of recommendations suggested by the evaluation team. These are based on the analysis derived from primary and secondary data collected during the evaluation phase. Overall, as the MTE assessed the project's outcomes as "mostly successful" / "on track", the recommendations drawn reflect i) the needs of direct beneficiaries and ii) particular aspects identified by the evaluators.

Macro Level

Continuous work and persistency to mobilize the public sector and policy sphere on the topic of child participation in order to achieve macro level sustainability goals.

Meso Level

Foster communication among in-country CACs to enable exchange of synergies and discuss diverging points.

Develop child participatory policies within partner organizations in order to potentialize (sustainable) active participation of children withing organizations in the long-term.

Build on staff capacity to ensure ownership levels of partners.

Encourage private sector engagement and promote awareness of their actions that directly and indirectly affect working children.

Micro Level

Foster peer-to-peer approach, where children who have participated in trainings can build the next generation of children.

Focus on adult / parental engagement to ensure their understanding on the importance of child-led advocacy in order to support long-term participation of children in the CACs.

Project Level

Further clarify the role of Dialogue Works as a neutral dialogue / advocacy platform.

Establish an agenda with direct and indirect partners containing their role and expectations for the remaining project lifetime. It is suggested to conduct a **survey** and, if needed, bilateral talks with the CAC partners to identify specific needs, (re)set goals and responsibilities that should be targeted until the rest of the project.

Encourage donors to provide for a project (budget) extension, which will potentially allow for continuation and scale up of CACs to other parts in the selected countries.

Monitoring and reporting on the realization of children's rights and advocacy.

Establishing links/ networks with the local authorities, government and schools in order to make CAC well-known in their selected communities.

Create a child-friendly and protective online communication platform for children to communicate with each other at regional and global level.

Annex 1: Evaluation matrix

Relevance		
Evaluation question	Reasoning	Source
<p>To what extent is the project problem statement in line with relevant global and national priorities / strategies?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Is the programmatic focus on (advocacy) child labour relevant in the partner organization? What level of advocacy? How is advocacy relevant for the work these organisations do in their country? ➤ Does the project complement partner organization's own strategies / priorities / needs? How? 	Core question to understand relevance of the project	<p>Project offer</p> <p>Annual Reports</p>
<p>To what extent is the intervention's design appropriate and realistic</p> <p>(in terms of technical, organizational and financial aspects)?</p>	Realistic assessment of effectiveness, impact and sustainability	<p>Interview with project partner</p> <p>Budget analysis</p> <p>Staff setup / number of staff</p> <p>Management requirements</p> <p>Outreach / indicators / target values</p>
<p>Have there been any relevant changes in the project environment? How has the project managed to react to them?</p> <p>(Probe: Covid-19)</p>	Lessons learned	<p>Interviews</p> <p>Project documents</p>
Coherence		
Evaluation question (aligned to GIZ CPEs)	Reasoning	Source

To what extent does the project fit with other (existing) stakeholder initiatives in the country/sector?	Analyses how harmonized the activities are, if the interventions complement each other, if any duplication of effort and activities occurs	Interviews: project partner Project reports
Were there any efficient partnerships which your organization was able to create in your country as a result of the DW project (e.g. local schools)? How did it happen? Was there a previous existing relationship?	Analyses the efficiency of partnerships	Interviews: project partner Project reports

Effectiveness

Evaluation question	Reasoning	Source
Will the project achieve its intended objectives? What are the most relevant results / changes that the project has achieved? What are the challenges and bottlenecks for the achievement of the project objective and intended results?	High relevance	Project reports Monitoring data (+ supporting docs)
What are positive and negative unintended results? Were the negative unintended results responded to?	Identification of additional results that contribute to the (non-) achievement of objectives	Project reports Interview with partners

Impact

Evaluation question	Reasoning	Source
Is it anticipated that the project will help achieve overarching long-term objectives? Can the project be a good role model for scaling up?	Potentially transformative effects of the intervention, any scalable or replicable results	Project reports Monitoring data Interviews with project partners FGD with target groups

Does the project help achieve broad impact?	Potentially transformative effects of the intervention	Project reports Monitoring data Interviews with project partners FGD with target groups
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Efficiency

Evaluation question	Reasoning	Source
How efficient do you think is the project structure – i.e. the partnerships between global actors (=SC) and local actors (partners).? What are the key challenges? What can be improved?	High Significance	Interviews
Were there enough resources to implement the DW intended activities? How can the resources be used for the remaining time of the project?	High Significance	Interviews

Sustainability

Evaluation question	Reasoning	Source
Will project activities be continued in the future after the project ends (no funding)? (How? Which ones? Why not?)	Examination of relevant factors for sustainability	Interviews with project partners
Does the project take into account possible risk factors that could influence the longer-term sustainability of results?	Likelihood for impact to be maintained	Interviews with project partners
What are the aspects or developments that could endanger the sustainability of the project results in the long run? (If so, which are they? What has the project done to reduce these risks?)	Risks associated with sustainability	Interviews

Annex 2: Likert smiley scale exercise

Statement	Very Happy	Happy	Neutral	Sad	Very Sad
1. My Knowledge on right to participation has increased/improved	9	9			
2. Adults recognize and take CACs seriously	2	6	10		
3. My participation and networking in local dialogue formats has improved/increased	5	13			
4. My participation and networking in global dialogue formats has improved/increased	11	7			
5. My employers consider my views/interests and respect my rights as a child and have improved my working conditions	2	2	7	6	1
6. My family respects my right to participate in local and global dialogues	18				

