Final Evaluation

Reintegrating Nepalese child domestic workers with their families (October 2011 – December 2015)

Funded by: Comic Relief (GR002-04929-HNQC)

Implemented by:

EveryChild UK (grant holder)

CWISH - Children and Women in Social Services and Human Rights (principal local organisation in Nepal)

with district implementing partners in Nepal:
FOWEP (Kavre);
MANK (Sindhupalchowk);
SYS (Ramechhap)

Jonathan Blagbrough and Randini Wanduragala
External Evaluators
April – December 2015

Jonathan Blagbrough: jblagbrough@gmail.com

Randini Wanduragala: randiniw1@gmail.com

Picture: Project activities in pictoral form
Table of Contents

Executive Summary
Acknowledgements
Glossary of Acronyms and Terms

1. Background to the Evaluation

2. Evaluation purpose and design framework
   2.1 Aim of the evaluation
   2.2 Evaluation criteria and learning questions
   2.3 Limitations of the evaluation
   2.4 Evaluation methodology
   2.5 The evaluation team

3. Context – law, policy and practice on CDWs in Nepal

4. Evaluation findings
   4.1 Relevance
   4.2 Effectiveness
      4.2.1 Outcome 1: Reintegration
      4.2.2 Outcome 2: Prevention (livelihoods and awareness)
      4.2.3 Outcome 3: Capacity building
   4.3 Efficiency
      4.3.1 Project design
      4.3.2 Project implementation
      4.3.3 Management, monitoring, financial issues and donor engagement
   4.4 Sustainability
   4.5 Post-earthquake

5. Conclusions

6. Recommendations

Annexes: (separate file)
Annex 1: Evaluation terms of reference
Annex 2: Evaluation design
Annex 3: Evaluation schedule and key informants
Annex 4: Documents reviewed
Annex 5: Project timeline
Annex 6: Numerical achievements against target numbers (summary, as at November 2015)
Annex 7: CWISH organisational organogram and staff changes during the course of the project
Executive Summary

This report represents the final evaluation of a four year project titled *Reintegrating Nepalese child domestic workers with their families* which focused on reintegrating Nepalese child domestic workers living with employers, strengthening families to prevent child separation through income generating support, and invigorating local child protection mechanisms to promote child protection in areas of operation. The project, which began in 2011, has been principally funded by Comic Relief through a grant of £642,302 to UK-based NGO EveryChild, and has been implemented by Nepalese NGO CWISH (Children and Women in Social Services and Human Rights) and three district partners: FOWEP (Kavre); MANK (Sindhupalchowk); SYS (Ramechhap). The evaluation was undertaken by a team of two independent consultants, supported by CWISH and EveryChild staff.

Utilising the OECD DAC criteria of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability, the evaluation has aimed to: (1) Understand what CWISH has achieved in supporting or being a catalyst for change for children, child domestic workers, parents and broader groups of stakeholders affected by this project; (2) Understand the challenges of implementing the project and how these have been dealt with; (3) Identify lessons learned; and (4) Make recommendations for future improvements.

The evaluation design was developed with input from EveryChild and CWISH, and utilised a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods including Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) to enable staff, beneficiaries and other stakeholders to reflect on and analyse what worked well, what had been learned and what could be strengthened. Two participatory methodologies were used extensively with adult and child beneficiaries as well as with staff in the evaluation process, namely the ‘river of life’ and ‘most significant change’ stories. A total of 34 FGDs and 20 KIIs were conducted with 91 reintegrated and supported children, 111 parents and 55 other stakeholders including teachers, local and national officials, adult domestic workers and Children’s Advisory Board members across all of the project sites, as well five additional KIIs with UK-based stakeholders. Following the first of two powerful earthquakes in Nepal on 25 April, the evaluation field visit was moved from May to October 2015 in order for the project partners to provide relief to project beneficiaries. The earthquake also impacted on data collection, as external evaluators were unable to travel to districts outside Kathmandu. This required an evaluation re-design and the deployment of project staff to collect some evaluation data.

Summary of evaluation results

This project has been developed and implemented in the context of a country which is one of the poorest in the world and which is still struggling to overcome the legacy of long-term political unrest. Around a third of Nepal’s children are in child labour – with more girls working than boys, including in hazardous work situations. Despite the existence of legislation and policy to protect children, the systems needed to deliver systematic and consistent protection are still a long way from being fully implemented. As a result this project has been highly relevant to the need of children in domestic work and their families, due to their prevalence; the severity (in many cases) of their exploitation and abuse; the low levels of societal awareness about the practice as a priority child protection issue; the lack of adequate social provision for families living at subsistence levels; and the lack of access to quality free education.

Children targeted across the districts reported that the project has been effective in giving them the opportunity to experience a childhood and family life, including a sense of belonging, stability and continuity. In particular, children were happy about: living with their family; accessing education; being with their friends; being with people whose first priority was them. Children also reported greater personal confidence and increased self-esteem as a result of participating in the project.
This project has also helped change parental attitudes and behaviour towards their children and how they view the practice of child domestic work. Across the districts, parents have reported: a greater understanding of the negative impact of domestic work on their children; wanting to be a better parent to their children, to take responsibility and care for them; and wanting their children to be with them. They have been given opportunities to increase their income through the project’s livelihood support activities which has resulted in their improving economic independence. Linking poorer families with local cooperatives has been critical to their economic well-being and has also played a role in reducing their marginalisation. Increased parental confidence and self-esteem, fostered largely by REFLECT classes, looks to be supporting greater family cohesiveness as well as increasing their involvement in, and influence over, the communities in which they live – supporting them to make the best use of what this project had to offer.

**Teachers** have generally become more willing and capable of supporting working children’s progress at school, and in understanding their difficulties. They have also been crucial to identifying the educational and other support needs of children who are domestic workers, as well as in highlighting issues faced by these children. **Other stakeholders**, including local government and child protection structures, have reported the project’s success in promoting greater coordination, more collaboration and increased cooperation. This has ensured an effective and efficient use of funds and other resources. Many stakeholders have also reported a shift in attitudes amongst parents and within communities towards sending children into domestic work.

The project also looks to have been successful in enabling and motivating those involved in local **child protection structures** to consider and prioritise the situation of child domestic workers, as well as in influencing decision-makers through multiple forms of messaging. The involvement of district partners and a variety of local and national stakeholders is leading to a growing network of influence on the issue and supports a potential multiplier effect within and beyond this project’s focus districts.

However, while legal changes and considerable awareness was achieved at a general level, this project has yet to change the behaviour of employers of child domestic workers. Many employers are still said to be keen to employ children because they are cheaper and more malleable than adult workers. Project gaps in tackling some of the deeper cultural and structural issues which reinforce the continuance of the practice – particularly around social and family hierarchies – remain a significant barrier to changing employer practice in particular, and more intensive work with employers will be needed to overcome this obstacle.

This project has been generally **efficient**. Project finances have been well managed, project monitoring has been systematic and the project itself has provided value for money through partners’ detailed understanding of project contexts, their responsiveness to changing circumstances, and their readiness to innovate. These strengths resulted in a particularly efficient as well as effective response to the 2015 earthquakes.

However, its design may have benefitted from different sequencing, and a more in-depth assessment of the need at an earlier stage in the project development process. Confusion over the data needed for the baseline has left some gaps in evidence about what this project has achieved. Deficits in project planning also resulted in implementation delays which have had knock-on effects for project sustainability. Restructuring and a number of staff changes, particularly at CWISH, have at times led to some (albeit limited) service inconsistencies and apprehension amongst beneficiaries.

The commitment to partnership and collaboration in this project has been critical to its many achievements and, in particular, to the effectiveness, efficiency and potential **sustainability** of this work. However, considerable disquiet and trepidation remains amongst beneficiaries and stakeholders about what will happen after the project ends. For many beneficiaries the reintegration
process looks to be incomplete, giving rise to considerable unease about what will happen to the many children still dependent on educational support, and those families still reliant on project know-how to reinforce the fragility of their businesses, particularly following the earthquakes. Widespread stakeholder concern has also been expressed about the need to embed ownership of child protection work in the project areas, especially given recent changes in local municipal structures.

There is a question mark around why sustainability looks to have been considered comparatively late on in the project, and why the implementation of key activities was not handed over sooner to local authorities and others with a longer term stake in project communities. Of particular concern is the sustainability of reintegration efforts in non-focus project areas, where support to beneficiaries and capacity building of local stakeholders has been less holistic.

**Summary recommendations**

**Reintegration:** CWISH needs to review each stage of its reintegration process in light of current good practice, with a view to: (1) expanding the timeframe for each stage in the process to ensure that adequate time is given to assess individual circumstances and for follow-up; (2) providing closer support to families (including regular face-to-face meetings) to tackle barriers to the safe and sustainable return of children, including issues of violence in the home. It also needs to scale back its ambition in future reintegration work, given the timeframe and the level of resources required to ensure that the wide-ranging needs of individual children and their families are met. Additionally, it will be necessary for the organisation to review how best to target the needs of older children and youth in exploitative working environments – for whom a return to their home and placement into formal education is not suitable to their age or situation.

**Livelihoods:** CWISH needs to examine the impact of one-off livelihoods provision to families living outside of project focus areas, and the need for intensive effort to integrate income generating activities into local business support structures (such as cooperatives and government assistance) to help sustain them. It should also be considered that not everyone is an entrepreneur. Future livelihoods work should, therefore, also consider alternatives to the creation of small businesses – such as helping people to gain skills to increase their chances of securing regular employment.

**Preventing child domestic work through advocacy and awareness raising:** Seeking legislative and policy changes is an important aspect of creating longer term change. Changing adult mindsets is possible given a good understanding of the group’s needs, the right approach and with the right local resources in place. But, awareness raising alone is not enough to change behaviour, particularly the behaviour of employers who will lose out from the return of children back home. CWISH should: engage directly and individually with employers of child domestic workers in empowering (and not just punitive) ways; for example, by involving them in the reintegration process. This implies building longer-term relationships with employers and galvanising the support of former CDW employers to convince their neighbours and peers to think differently about using children as domestic workers. This will also involve looking at and addressing some of the deeper social and cultural issues that are present in Nepal which support the acceptance of child domestic work.

**Capacity building:** In designing and implementing future projects, CWISH should consider how capacity building is planned and monitored, as well as how it is utilised and the changes it leads to. A phased withdrawal of capacity building support earlier in the project cycle, giving way to a focus on monitoring and providing advisory support, may prove more effective and promote stronger ownership. CWISH’s capacity building approaches should be examined with a view to creating a less dependent capacity building model, for example by delivering it through existing professional training.
Organisational Recommendations:

Project design and implementation: The complexity and ambition of this project lends itself to an implementation period of longer than four years. A longer timeframe is especially relevant to a holistic approach to reintegration. Increased project efficiency might be possible with a greater emphasis on project sequencing at design stage, for example in tackling the capacity needs of district partners to ensure the collection of more accurate and comprehensive data. Greater stakeholder engagement in the initial stages of the project may also have led to a deeper analysis of CDW causes and the identification of others with the potential to enhance project sustainability.

Restructuring changes negatively impacted on project implementation at times. Three restructuring processes and the loss of key staff within CWISH indicate the need to improve organisational contingency planning. Careful consideration is also needed about how to retain staff and mitigate handover gaps.

Accountability: CWISH needs to review its systems and to consider in particular whether its ‘accountability hotline’ has been working for its beneficiaries. CWISH should also consider how to share and seek feedback on its monthly, quarterly and annual plans (as is done with its stakeholders) to ensure greater beneficiary input into its projects on an on-going basis. This could also have the dual benefit of managing beneficiary expectations of what the project can achieve and around the level of individual support.

While CWISH works hard to advocate for and support the participation of children, children’s participation in the implementation and monitoring of this project has been limited. Opportunities should be sought to explore ways of engaging child (and adult) beneficiaries not only in the design of projects, but at all stages of project cycle management. Further facilitated discussion with children is also needed around the next steps for Children’s Advisory Boards and Child Clubs, and to consider how children who have been active in these forums can continue to support CWISH and the child labour cause after they leave.

Recommendations for EveryChild and Comic Relief

The risks associated with the ability of this project to fully achieve its proposed outcomes, given its scope and ambitious timeframe, have become strongly apparent. In general, complex projects involving behaviour and practice change require more project time, and therefore it should come as no surprise that aspects of this project have not yet been achieved in full. Several core aspects of this project lend themselves to considerably longer timescales. Comic Relief should recognise and take account of the need to commit longer term support to reintegration projects such as this to maximise their potential and sustain the results. In turn, EveryChild and CWISH should be clear about what can be achieved in shorter time frames and focus on these outcomes.

It would be useful for Comic Relief and ultimately for applicant organisations, to request a draft end of project evaluation plan to be assessed as part of the application process. Comic Relief should also consider asking applicant organisations for a Gantt chart which plots project activities against a timeframe. This would aid Comic Relief’s ability to analyse a project’s feasibility.
Acknowledgements

It has been a real pleasure and a privilege working with CWISH, EveryChild UK and the district implementing partners (FOWEP, MANK and SYS) during the course of this evaluation. Staff of all organisations gave generously of their time and support, and their openness and insights have been critical to our understanding of their work and the context of their activities. We would also like to thank all those who spent time being interviewed and who took part in focus group discussions. We are particularly grateful to those children and young people, parents, officials and others who shared their experiences and perspectives with us, contributing much to our analysis. Thank you!

Jonathan Blagbrough and Randini Wanduragala
External Evaluators, December 2015

Glossary of Acronyms and Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADWs</td>
<td>Adult Domestic Workers</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADWC</td>
<td>Active Domestic Worker Consultancy</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDW(LE)s</td>
<td>Child Domestic Workers (Living with Employers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Advisory Board</td>
<td>Group of working children constituted by CWISH to monitor and evaluate its programmes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Clubs</td>
<td>School or community based clubs of children and young people to learn about their rights and address the problems they face</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPC</td>
<td>Child Protection Committee: an official local structure with responsibility for ensuring child protection in a particular area.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CWISH</td>
<td>Children and Women in Social Services and Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalits</td>
<td>Group of people who fall outside the Hindu caste system. As the lowest rank in Hindu society, Dalits face discrimination in all aspects of life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>DoE</td>
<td>Department of Education (part of the Ministry of Education)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DoL</td>
<td>Department of Labour (part of the Ministry of Labour and Employment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central/District Child Welfare Board</td>
<td>The Child Welfare Board is a statutory body with overall responsibility for the protection of children’s rights. (CCWB/DCWB)</td>
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<tr>
<td>District Implementing Partners</td>
<td>Local project partners; also referred to in the text as local project partners or district partners</td>
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<tr>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussion</td>
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<td>FOWEP</td>
<td>District implementing partner in Kavre</td>
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<tr>
<td>KII</td>
<td>Key Informant Interview</td>
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<tr>
<td>MANK</td>
<td>District implementing partner in Sindhupalchowk</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NFE</td>
<td>Non Formal Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>ORCs</td>
<td>Outreach Centres: providing NFE and counselling services to CDWLEs</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAC</td>
<td>Project Advisory Committee. PACs involving local stakeholders, including local leaders and officials, have been established in all districts</td>
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<tr>
<td>REFLECT</td>
<td>REFLECT (Regenerated Frierean Literacy Education through Community techniques) is an established approach to adult learning and social change utilised by this project (see box in text)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reintegration</td>
<td>Refers to the process of returning children to their biological families or guardians</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reintegrated children</td>
<td>Children who have been returned to their biological families</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supported children</td>
<td>Children supported by the project to go to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLS</td>
<td>Supported Learning Sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYS</td>
<td>District implementing partner in Ramechhap</td>
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<tr>
<td>VDC</td>
<td>Village Development Committee: lowest administrative unit of the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development. Each district has several VDCs.</td>
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1. Background to the evaluation

The project

The focus of this project has been on re-integrating Nepalese child domestic workers living with employers, strengthening families to prevent child separation through income generating support, and invigorating local child protection mechanisms to promote child protection in areas of operation. The project began in October 2011 and was due to run to September 2015, but was granted a three month extension (until the end of December 2015) following the devastating earthquakes of April and May 2015. It is being implemented by Nepalese NGO CWISH with three local partners, in partnership with EveryChild UK. The majority of funds – GBP 642,302 – have been provided by Comic Relief out of a total budget of GBP 762,431 with the remaining £120,129 provided by the Jersey Overseas Aid Commission and EveryChild. The coverage of the project includes three municipalities in the Kathmandu valley area (Central Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur) and the districts of Kavrepalanchowk (Kavre), Sindhupalchowk and Ramechhap (see map).

The project partners

CWISH (Children – Women in Social Service and Human Rights) is a Nepalese NGO focusing on social justice and protecting the rights of children, youth and women. Established in 1993, the organisation works to combat child labour and violence against children and women, with a particular and pioneering emphasis on the rights of child and adult domestic workers. Based in Kathmandu, CWISH works through local partners to work across Nepal. CWISH has recently restructured to focus thematically on education, child protection and family empowerment (the theme in which this project is placed), as well as rescuing and returning children through a ‘Helpline’ team. It is funded through grants from international donors.

EveryChild UK is an international development charity working on a range of child protection issues to stop children growing up vulnerable and alone. The organisation is currently in a phased withdrawal process from all of its international programmes, with a view to transferring its income and assets by the end of 2016 to a new global alliance – Family for Every Child. The new organisation is currently a coalition of 19 organisations in 18 countries working on the issue of children living without families.

District implementing partners involved with CWISH since the start of this project

Founded in 1995, Forum for Wildlife & Environment Preserve (FOWEP) is an established NGO working at district level in Kavre on a range of thematic programme areas, including child rights, good governance and livelihoods.
Mahila Aatma Nirbharta Kendra (MANK) is an NGO operating at district level in Sindhupalchowk. MANK focuses on advocacy and capacity building around child protection, as well as providing direct services including livelihoods support through community mobilisers.

Established in 1993, Shrijanshil Yuba Samaj (SYS) is an NGO serving two municipalities and 45 VDCs in Ramechhap district. SYS targets the very poorest, as well as those communities which are the furthest removed from development support, including indigenous groups and Dalits. SYS works in the fields of community development, local governance, child labour and child protection, amongst other areas.

**Project timeline (highlights)**

The following represent key moments in the history of this project. For a more detailed project timeline, see Annex 5 to this report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Events</th>
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| 2011          | October–December | ● Selection and training of pre-identified district partners;  
                          ● Recruitment of project coordinator, livelihoods specialist and social  
                          mobilisers.                                                   |
| 2012:         | January–March | ● Project set-up meeting with all CWISH and district partner project staff;  
                          ● PACs involving local stakeholders established in all districts;  
                          ● Baseline survey (target group needs assessment);  
                          ● Livelihoods training begins;  
                          Identified 89 children in districts and 150 in Kathmandu (through schools). |
| 2012:         | April–June   | ● Door to door employer visits to identify CDWs;  
                          ● Research to identify livelihoods options;  
                          ● Exit package developed.                                      |
| July–December |             | ● High-level mtg with DoE to tackle barrier to working with school children;  
                          ● CWISH and EveryChild discuss changing indicators and targets;  
                          54 children reintegrated.                                       |
| 2012:         | January–June | ● Livelihood options identified and capacity building on business skills;  
                          ● Work with Child clubs begins; NFE begins for out of school children;  
                          ● Child protection training to Nepal police  
                          ● Match funding provided to cooperatives;  
                          341 children reintegrated (395 in total).                        |
| July–December |             | ● Mid-term review conducted: recommends reduction of target numbers;  
                          introduction of REFLECT groups.                                |
| 2014:         | January–June | ● Revised project plan (target numbers and REFLECT and revised exit package;  
                          ● Sustainability plan developed;  
                          ● Began psychosocial interventions in schools;  
                          ● Training to Nepal police on child protection;  
                          ● MOU with DoL – new legislation and development of process for litigation  
                          ● Advocacy in Lalitpur sub-municipality, leading to declaration of Child Labour  
                          Free Zone (Ward);  
                          ● Training to cooperatives.                                       |
| July–December |             | 706 children reintegrated (311 in the year). Overall, 5% attrition rate.  |
| 2015:         | January–March | ● New municipality structure: CPCs reconstituted;  
                          ● Stakeholder mtgs to support sustainable provision to reintegrated children;  
                          ● ORCs closed down after delivery of most (but not all) of exit package. |
| April–October |             | ● Revision of activities post-earthquake. Funds reoriented;  
                          ● Temporary shelters established for reintegrated children and families; |

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1. See pages 7-8 for use/understanding of the term ‘Baseline study’.
2. Evaluation purpose and design framework

2.1 Aim of the evaluation

This external evaluation sets out to assess what has been achieved and what can be learned from the October 2011 – December 2015 EveryChild/CWISH project to reintegrate Nepalese child domestic workers with their families, against the project’s anticipated outcomes. In particular, the evaluation aims to:

- Identify the impacts of the project and ways that these impacts may be sustained;
- Record and share lessons;
- Account to local stakeholders for the project’s achievements;
- Improve future programme design and management;
- Verify funds were used effectively and efficiently to deliver results.

The primary audience for this evaluation is CWISH, EveryChild and Comic Relief, as well as other organisations working on similar issues. It is also planned that the evaluation findings will also be shared with project participants and key stakeholders. A separate child friendly evaluation summary report has also been prepared to share with children benefitting from this project.

2.2 Evaluation criteria and learning questions

The evaluation criteria that were used in this evaluation follow the DAC criteria of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability.² As part of this study, the following key evaluation questions were developed under these criteria, and adjusted to consider a number of additional issues following the Nepal earthquakes of 25 April and 12 May 2015:

RELEVANCE:
- How well did the project and activities correspond to the needs & priorities?
- What are the emerging factors indicating how well the project re-design (following the earthquakes) met the changed need and priorities?

EFFECTIVENESS:
- To what extent did activities meet the intended purpose?

EFFICIENCY:
- To what degree was adequate support provided for implementation and were activities carried out in a timely manner?

SUSTAINABILITY:
- To what extent can this intervention continue without further support from this donor?

² DAC criteria refers to the Principles for the Evaluation of Development Assistance, developed by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
• How has this project prevented child separation and maintained safe and secure environments for children: (a) before the earthquake; (b) during/after the earthquake?

In addition, several key learning questions relating to both pre- and post-earthquake scenarios were identified by EveryChild and CWISH for consideration in this evaluation. Responses to these questions can be found in relevant sections throughout the text:-

• How have communities changed? What have they learnt?
• What is the tipping point that makes reintegration work? What makes the stakeholders think differently?
• How cost effective is reintegration, which is known to be a resource intensive process?
• What is useful for other organisations to know about reintegration?
• How can reintegration be sustained when faced with ‘shocks’?
• How has the project strengthened the resilience of children, families, local organisations and government bodies to continue gains made by the project when a complex event occurs?
• Which of the activities undertaken by this project have been most important/useful for children?

2.3 Limitations of the evaluation

Logistical issues: The first of two powerful earthquakes struck Nepal on 25 April 2015, one week before the external project evaluators were due to undertake the field visit to Nepal. The key project areas of Kavre, Ramechhap and Sindhupalchowk were particularly affected and the impact of the earthquake on the project was extensive. Almost all supported families in the three districts outside Kathmandu lost their homes and there were 15 deaths – six of whom were children. The livelihoods of all families were also significantly impacted. As a consequence, the field visit was moved from May to October 2015, which also impacted on data collection. The UK's Foreign Office guidance advised against all but essential foreign travel to the project areas outside Kathmandu. This resulted in an evaluation re-design involving the deployment of project staff to collect evaluation data in districts beyond Kathmandu – an approach which was approved by Comic Relief. In-country training was provided by EveryChild to all data collectors on the evaluation methodologies such as ‘river of life stories’, and the questions prepared by the evaluators. An analysis template was developed to ensure the capture of significant data, which can be found in Annex 2. This data was collected during a two-week period towards the end of September and the beginning of October 2015. This had implications regarding the objectivity and quality of data collected in the districts (for example, in some cases project staff asking non-evaluation related questions), an issue which was offset to some extent by the hiring of a local consultant in July 2015 (an ex-CWISH staff member who had left in 2014) to independently collect most significant change stories.

A nationwide fuel shortage during the evaluators’ visit in October made travel around Kathmandu difficult and resulted in smaller groups of reintegrated children, parents and teachers being involved in FGDs than had originally been anticipated. This also resulted in delays to some meetings although evaluators were able, in one way or another, to speak to all of the beneficiaries and stakeholders in Kathmandu as detailed in the evaluation schedule (see Annex 3).

Monitoring data: A different understanding has emerged relating to some key project monitoring terminology. For example the term ‘baseline’ was used by CWISH to indicate a thorough needs assessment i.e. identification of individual beneficiaries who would be involved in the project and their circumstances/personal profiles. Not all relevant baseline data was collected and no baselining

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3 As detailed in an email from Helen Rahman (Programme Manager, Children and Young People at Risk) to Julia Parke (EveryChild), 25 September 2015.
of indicators was carried out. CWISH staff have acknowledged gaps in the collection of baseline information – for example around income levels. This means that, while there is some anecdotal evidence to support claims of increasing family incomes (for example), hard evidence is lacking to prove this. At the time of this evaluation, the latest available beneficiary achievement figures are up to November 2015. These are the figures that have been used in this report.

**Time Constraints:** Some aspects of the external evaluator’s visit itinerary were allocated insufficient time for dialogue, particularly in discussing data collection with the district project partners. Transportation difficulties arising from unforeseeable fuel shortages compounded this, as many district partner staff were understandably concerned about being able to return to their homes. At the same time it should be noted that district partner staff and CWISH personnel remained flexible and generous with their time, avoiding significant curtailment of discussion.

### 2.4 Evaluation methodology

This evaluation process utilised a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods to enable staff, beneficiaries and other stakeholders to reflect on and analyse what has worked well, what has been learned and what could be strengthened. In practical terms, this has meant not only reviewing documents and systems and involving people in discussions and interviews, but also using methods such as focus group discussions to engage children and others more deeply. Two participatory methodologies were used in the evaluation process, namely the ‘river of life’ and ‘most significant change’ stories. These were both used extensively with adult and child beneficiaries as well as with staff to help create and document personal and collective stories of change during the course of the project. Activity cards, spider diagrams and ranking processes were also used to understand which project activities were most useful, and why. Data has been cross checked and verified through data collection from a range of sources, and through a convergence/divergence analysis process. The evaluation design was developed with substantial input from EveryChild and CWISH and is set out in detail in Annex 2.

### Data collection

**Primary data** was collected with the aid of semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The graphic below summarises data collection statistics in Nepal. In addition, five key informant interviews were undertaken from the UK with several current and former staff from EveryChild and Comic Relief, and other stakeholders.

A full list of evaluation informants can be found in Annex 3 to this report.

**Secondary data** consisted of reviewing project documents from EveryChild and CWISH, starting with the original project proposal to Comic Relief. A full list of the documents provided by these organisations can be found in Annex 4. Several additional documents and translations were provided by CWISH during the course of the field visit. A project timeline was also constructed with the help of CWISH staff (using the river of life methodology) and this can be found in Annex 5.
2.5 The evaluation team

The external evaluation team consisted of Jonathan Blagbrough and Randini Wanduragala, two independent consultants. CWISH staff involved in the evaluation included Saroj K.C. (Programme manager), Krishna Subedi (Team Leader), Dhruba Lamichhane (Project Coordinator), Prapti Adhikari (Project Officer), Kshitiz Gurung (Monitoring Officer), Baburam BK (Assistant Documentation Officer) and Pramod Acharya (Admin and Finance Manager). EveryChild UK was represented by Tracey Martin, who was responsible for overseeing the evaluation. An independent translator: T.R; provided translation during most FGDs and KIIs undertaken by the evaluators, in addition to translating documented data collected from outside Kathmandu. Sweta Khadka (an ex-CWISH staff member, now working for Save the Children) was hired as a local consultant to collect change stories from a range of child and adult beneficiaries and other stakeholders in Kathmandu, Kavre and Sindhupalchowk.

3. Context: law, policy and practice on CDWs in Nepal

Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world, and is still struggling to overcome the legacy of a decade-long insurgency against Nepal’s monarchy, which ended in 2006 (the monarchy ended in 2008). It is one of the lowest ranked countries in terms of Human Development, ranking 145 out of 187 in the global Human Development Index (HDI, 2014). Well over one-third (41%) of the country’s 28 million population are in multi-dimensional poverty (consisting of several factors which constitute poor people’s experience of deprivation – such as poor health, lack of education, inadequate living standards, lack of income, disempowerment, poor quality of work and threat from violence). The country has a low rate of adult literacy (57%), with almost five percent of primary school-aged children out of school and well over a third of children not completing their primary education (HDI 2014; ILO 2011). Of those who don’t attend school, two-thirds are girls. The dropout rates for primary education are also high. Although primary schooling is compulsory, the indirect costs of schooling makes it difficult for low income families to support their children in education. The overall government investment in education is also low, constituting just 16% of the national budget. These, along with social and cultural practices including gender-related discrimination, caste and ethnic discrimination and insufficient child protection measures, are amongst the key causal factors in the perpetuation of child labour in general and child domestic work in particular.

Around a third of Nepal’s children between the ages of 5 and 14 are in child labour: in agriculture, industry and the services sector (HDI, 2014; USDOL, 2014). More girls than boys are working, and 60% of children in hazardous work are girls (ILO, 2011). A decline in child labour amongst children under 14 has reportedly been offset by an increase in child labour amongst 15-17 year olds (ILO, 2011). In 2001, ILO estimated that there were 55,655 child domestic workers under the age of 14 in Nepal’s urban areas, also citing earlier estimates of more than 21,000 in the Kathmandu Valley. In a 2009 large-scale household survey conducted by CWISH in nine Wards within Kathmandu, child domestic workers stated poverty, seeking educational opportunities and violence at home as the top three reasons for working. Most adult and child domestic workers were found to be from ethnic communities (three percent were Dalits), with most coming from the relatively nearby districts of...

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4 University of Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative
8 CWISH, Domestic Workers in Kathmandu Survey Report 2009.
Kavre, Dolakha, Dhading, Sindhupalchowk and Ramechhap. Almost 90% were living with their employers, including extended family members and people known to the family. Less than one percent of children were working with people who were completely unknown to them.

In recent years, Nepal’s legal framework surrounding education and child labour issues has been strengthened, including through the school sector reform plan (2009) and the national framework on child friendly schools (2008). The ratification of ILO child labour standards has been bolstered by national legislation including: the Child Labour Prohibition and Regulation Act (2000) which regulates hours of work and restricts hazardous work for under 16s (16 is the age of legal majority in Nepal); the Kamaiya Labour Act (2002), which prohibits bonded child labour; as well as 2007 legislation on human trafficking. Action against child labour has also been prioritised at the policy level, through Nepal’s Poverty Reduction Strategy, national development and education plans, the National Plan of Action on Children, and against trafficking and bonded labour. A specific National Master Plan on the Elimination of Child Labour in Nepal (2011-2020) has been prepared (but is not yet officially endorsed), along with specific budget allocations at district, municipality and VDC levels to create a more enabling environment on child protection and development (ILO, 2011). Nepal’s Poverty Alleviation Fund, chaired by the Prime Minister, provides for support to low income families for income generating activities.

Despite this legislative and policy focus on child labour, several challenges remain, including the absence of coherent legislative and policy implementation strategies, insufficient public awareness of the causes and consequences of child labour, as well as limited human resource and institutional capacity to coordinate and monitor anti child labour efforts.

“CWISH plays a vital role in rescuing and reintegrating child labourers, work which the government should be doing but has been less able to do due to years of political deadlock and government paralysis in implementing child labour policies.” (Government official)

There is also no discernible special focus on child domestic work within these broad policy frameworks. In terms of action, a strong interest in child labour, including on child domestic work during the 2000-2010 decade, looks also to be on the wane amongst UN agencies and larger INGOs, many of which are preoccupied with the connected but tangential issue of trafficking.

4. Evaluation findings

4.1 Relevance

How well did the project and activities correspond to the needs & priorities?

The contextual analysis discussed in section three of this report (above) demonstrates that, while many of the laws and policies required do exist to protect children, prevent their exploitation, allow them to be educated, and provide income support for marginalised families; in actuality the systems needed to deliver systematic and consistent protection are still a long way from being fully implemented. Of particular note is the continuing high rate of poverty in the areas targeted by the project and an education system which, in general, doesn’t cater well to the needs of vulnerable and marginalised children. Even where local child protection structures do exist, these often function poorly and, mirroring societal acceptance of the practice, don’t consider child domestic work to be a worthy concern, or indeed a concern at all. Furthermore, it looks probable that projects like this one are likely to be relevant and needed for some time, given the limited effectiveness of many of the government’s protection and prevention measures, as well as the prevailing lack of access to quality,
genuinely free education and lack of or inefficient delivery of social provision/support and protection measures for marginalised and vulnerable groups.

As a result this project has been highly relevant to the need of these children and their families, due to:

- the continuing prevalence of child domestic workers;
- the severity (in many cases) of their exploitation and abuse;
- the low levels of societal awareness about the practice as a priority child protection issue;
- the lack of adequate social provision for families living at subsistence levels; and
- the lack of access to quality free education.

Targeted parents and children (mostly 10-14 years old) have reported that the main project activities have been relevant to their needs. However, while the focus on returning reintegrated, supported and vulnerable children to school has been relevant for those children under 14 years, this principal project approach appears less relevant for rescued older teenagers whose priorities have shifted towards building skills to earn an income.

It is evident that a number of project activities also remained highly relevant and helpful in responding to the needs of target children and their families in the post-earthquake environment. In particular, cooperatives in most areas have supported the resilience of affected families and helped them to remain connected to mutual support and the financial and material means to rebuild their lives. Pre-existing REFLECT classes in some areas have also been reported to have helped vulnerable and marginalised families to come together and has given them confidence in seeking solutions to the problems facing them.

4.2 Effectiveness

4.2.1 Outcome 1: Reintegration

Outcome as expressed in project proposal (with revised target figures post-mid-term review):
Improved family livelihoods and child protection systems enable 800 CDWLEs (440 girls and 110 boys under 14 years & 150 girls and 100 boys over 14 years) in Kathmandu Valley, who are deprived of their family and other basic rights and permanently living with employers who abuse and exploit them, to return to stable and caring environments with their biological or extended families (approx. 760), or protected independent living (approx. 40), allowing them to enjoy their basic rights in their home community environment over 4 years.

Achievements in numbers (CWISH figures, November 2015; for more details, see Annex 6)
810 former CDWs were reintegrated; 95% of them are still with their families; 88% are regularly attending school;
1,113 parents and guardians have a better understanding of the realities of child domestic work.

Most useful activities:
For children: reintegration; education support; For parents: reintegration
CWISH’s approach to reintegration

CWISH’s approach to reintegration has been to work with CDWs who have contacted them directly through the hotline or with those who have been referred to them through a number of routes e.g. schools. Its primary approach is a process of identification, assessment and pre/post reunification support. The timeframe is anything from one week to a few months. The details of this process are set out in the table later in this section.

**Achievements and strengths**

There is considerable evidence from beneficiaries and stakeholders of this project’s success in the first phase of reintegration, i.e. returning children to their families, and in the provision of several key support services (including education and livelihoods support) to strengthen the initial phase and to limit the likelihood of their return to work in the Kathmandu valley. Children across all of the project areas have placed a high value on being able to be back with their families and what this has meant to them in terms of their emotional well-being.

“This project gave me a chance to live at home with my parents, and to study.” (Girl, 14)

“I returned home and she [mother] started caring for me.” (Boy, 15)

“My parents don’t always get everything right, but I’d rather live with them than with strangers.” (Girl, 13)

They have also appreciated the support they have been given to continue their education, including educational materials and the supported learning sessions which have enabled them to progress their education.

“The best thing about the CWISH support has been the extra classes which have supported my school work. These classes have been very helpful.” (Girl, 13)

Parents from across the project areas have also hugely appreciated the work of the project:

“I was in my village and my son was in Kathmandu. I didn’t know what he was doing, but now we are together, sharing our food and joys and sorrows together.”

“Our children have been badly exploited and have had to do low level and hard work. We were worried if they were eating and whether they were sick, but we feel much better that they are back with us.”

(Parents of reintegrated children)

**Partnerships for reintegration:** The effectiveness of reintegration efforts has been enhanced by the close working relationship between CWISH and the district partners. Coordination has been effective, and each organisation has ‘gone the extra mile’ to support each other in getting children reintegrated.

“Before [the project] all of the local partners were working on different issues. Now we are working with child domestic workers. Together” (District partner)

**Challenges, constraints and gaps**

The following table compares CWISH reintegration methods with current international good practice, and identifies areas of synergy and potential areas for improvement. While there are a number of strong good practice elements that have emerged, it is evident that there are some areas of practice that require strengthening.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identification and Assessment</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Identification</strong></td>
<td>Target children identified through: Outreach Centres (in Kathmandu); Schools (in supply districts); Child Protection Committees and Child Clubs</td>
<td>Use of case management approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopt a case management approach to reintegration: - carefully manage and document each stage in the process using a single file; identify clear objectives.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct more family case conferences to prepare case management plans with clear objectives + strategies for addressing root causes of separation. Share these with/seek input from children and families.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment</strong></td>
<td>Meet child; hold counselling sessions to understand needs and interests; discuss pros and cons of return to families and access to education; if reluctant, discuss kinship care with extended family.</td>
<td>Assessment conducted of both of children and their families to determine child’s best interests.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment of both children and their families to determine whether reintegration is in the best interests of the child. Identify any risks, and resources that children and families can draw on. Consider all areas of child well-being including: full mental health evaluation of the child by trained professionals, identification of any signs of child abuse, violence or neglect. Children should have sufficient information to make informed decisions.</td>
<td>Telephone contact with employers; discuss child’s situation + the law and its implications.</td>
<td>Expand assessments beyond telephone assessments of family situation to ensure full assessment of situation and risks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify alternative care needs (avoiding large scale institutional care and dormitory style transit facilities). Potential for discrimination addressed through work with families and community leaders and groups.</td>
<td>Rescue and legal action taken against employers taken in cases of violence/abuse, in collaboration with District Police and DCWB.</td>
<td>High quality temporary shelter is arranged, avoiding large institutional care facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address root cause of separation and ensure access to all forms of support necessary for safe and effective reintegration.</td>
<td>Prepare case management plan – what course of action to take; identify and manage risks and support required</td>
<td>Consideration given to the need for household economic strengthening and schooling need.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensure that mechanisms are in place to monitor the child’s well-being upon their return.</td>
<td>Temporary shelter for child pending return or case.</td>
<td>Ensure more intensive, on the ground, efforts to address violence, abuse and neglect within families and minimise the risks of placement with extended family; intensify efforts to prepare wider community for child’s return.</td>
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</table>
## PRE-UNIFICATION AND RETURN

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Initial contact with families requires careful handling. Children and families need to be fully prepared and initial contact between child and family should be remote, followed by short supervised face-to-face meetings and then longer supervised visits to the family home.</th>
<th>Parents travel to employers home to meet and retrieve child. CWISH discusses with parents the importance of parental care (either face-to-face or in telephone call) Education support package provided for children; Families receive livelihoods support for their children’s education Local authorities/child protection structures and teachers informed about the child’s return and their support requested.</th>
<th>Identify whether initial remote contact between children and their parents is initiated (reflect this in case notes). Plan for supervised face-to-face meetings and longer supervised visits to the family home. Where resources are limited to hand children over to parents individually, identify suitable alternatives that ensure best interests of child are met. Resource packages (education support and livelihood support) are initiated upon return. Formalise care arrangements with local authorities</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After preparation, children can be returned permanently. The point of reunification involves the formal transfer of guardianship to the family, and the case plan may need to be transferred to another agency or department</td>
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<tr>
<td>TIMEFRAME: No specific timescales, but detailed assessment, pre-reunification and return processes likely to take some time.</td>
<td>CWISH timeframe from assessment to return: from one week to one month.</td>
<td>Extend assessment timeframe beyond one week to ensure detailed assessment, preparation and return</td>
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</table>

## POST-REUNIFICATION SUPPORT

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Reintegrating children will need adequate support upon their return, including children returning without agency interventions. Case worker involvement is crucial even if communities can assist. Careful monitoring is needed through both telephone calls and some face-to-face meetings (which are essential.) Individualised support plans for children and families, depending on their situation. Addressing root causes of separation is vital for preventing re-separation, and can also lead to preventing the separation of</th>
<th>Groups of families with newly reintegrated children in the same area are encouraged to meet to discuss income levels and how the family is managing. (2-3 times; 1st meeting is facilitated) Some individual home visits (if taking place in Kathmandu Valley), otherwise mostly telephone calls. Communities notified and asked to keep an eye on children.</th>
<th>Facilitated group meetings with families and children may provide important mutual support. Prioritise face-to-face and individual family meetings with case workers. In addition to case worker involvement, formalise community assistance with monitoring to ensure proper oversight. Ensure that there is a clear individual and/or group assigned with onsite responsibility for child. Ensure all root causes of</th>
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An important unintended consequence of identifying children to be reintegrated both through the district target ‘sending’ locations as well as through direct referrals in Kathmandu has had significant project implications. Half of all returning children in this project have been reintegrated outside of the project’s focus areas. The resulting consequences to the level of support that could be offered to children and their families through this expansion of the project were not fully considered. While the dilemma facing CWISH of whether to help more people, with fewer support options, is common to many projects; doing so in this context resulted in a broadening of the project’s geographical scope from two VDCs in each district to district-wide activity. This has led to a two-tier system of support: those returning to parents in the focus VDCs have been provided with a full package of education and livelihood services, along with regular monitoring and capacity building of local child protection mechanisms; while children and families living outside of these areas have received a level of support which has been far less holistic and sustainable – usually involving one-off education and livelihoods inputs.

Discussions with CWISH and district partners have confirmed that the reintegration process was slow to get off the ground. This looks to have been for a number of reasons, including, for example: difficulties (reported in Kavre) of identifying where children are working and arranging for their return; delays while the financial concerns of some Kathmandu schools were addressed and relationships were established with key stakeholders in supply districts (for example in Ramechhap); as well as the need for extensive district partner capacity building on collecting baseline data information and in monitoring.
**LEARNING QUESTION:** What makes reintegrated children return to domestic work?

Relatively few children in this project returned to work (representing approximately 5% of those reintegrated). Those who did, did so for a variety of reasons: some older children had reached working age or marriageable age and were not keen to return to an area with limited employment prospects; a few children were not keen to return to homes with fewer facilities (such as their own room) than they had with their employers; some remained attracted to city life and could not assimilate back to a rural environment; the limited contact between some working children and their families had meant that bonds had been lost which created difficulties in fitting back in. The impact of violence or dysfunction at home was a significant reason why some children felt unable to stay at home. Sexual and physical abuse were cited, as was family breakdown and situations where step parents were less supportive and welcoming of the child’s return. The likelihood of a child returning to work was also more noticeable in areas beyond the project’s core focus, where the project had not been able to provide follow-up support. Perceptions surrounding the superior quality of education in Kathmandu and the struggle to make academic progress in their new schools were also factors in children deciding to return to the city and to domestic work.

**Key learning**

- While CWISH has developed areas of good practice over time, a review of its reintegration processes is necessary with a view to bringing its practice closer into line with international good practice standards. Individualised face-to-face support for families and less haste in the reintegration process are two of the key factors to be considered;
- The challenge of supporting a smaller target group more fully, as against assisting larger numbers to a lesser extent, is not unique to this project and remains a perpetual dilemma in work of this kind. Understanding the implications and limitations of each approach has important implications for project design and implementation. Handling, communicating and addressing beneficiary expectations is also critical. From the outset beneficiaries need to be apprised of the realistic level of support that they can expect from their engagement with the project, its duration, and what happens after the project stops;
- On-going livelihood support to families outside project focus areas is a significant success factor in children’s reintegration. In contrast, one-off support has proved to be considerably less effective in ensuring livelihoods which can be sustained, which in turn has anchored families and returnees less well in their communities.
LEARNING QUESTION: What makes reintegration work? / What is the tipping point?

Several individual project elements have been identified as key to making reintegration work, including:

- support to allow children to continue with their education;
- livelihood support that enables families to keep children with them, delivered in a way which supports mutual cooperation;
- parental awareness regarding their responsibilities towards children;
- a close connection with local communities to monitor the situation of returning children; and
- participatory processes for children and adults to vocalise their situation and make good decisions about their lives.

However, it is the integrated nature of the project approach, the inter-connectedness of the activities, and a project framework which allows for flexibility and innovation that is critical to successful reintegration work.

Key features of successful reintegration include:

- **Physical elements**: social support, education, income, other opportunities, community building;
- **Emotional/psychological elements**: feeling welcomed and loved, creating a sense of belonging, independent support mechanisms that support children and parents to voice their views/frustrations/challenges throughout the reintegration process – including through a dedicated social worker and community forums;
- **Inclusive, participatory approaches**: Encouraging and supporting children and adults in **thinking differently**, through participatory approaches which motivate open honest discussions, exploring options and developing skills e.g. problem solving skills.

4.2.2 Outcome 2: Prevention (livelihoods and awareness)

**Outcome as expressed in project proposal**: Strengthened community mechanisms for child protection that are more responsive to the aspirations of local children, along with improved family livelihoods and educational structures, prevent 1,350 children at risk of being separated from 900 vulnerable families in 3 rural districts from entering domestic work over 4 years.

**Achievements and strengths**

- **Achievements in numbers** (for more details, see Annex 6)
  - 1,735 children prevented from separation and entering into domestic work;
  - 897 parents and guardians are willing and able to keep their children at home;
  - 7,846 children, employers and others better understand children’s rights and no longer support CDW.

- **Most useful activities**:
  - For children: livelihoods support; For parents: livelihoods support

**Livelihoods**:

Developing new and strengthening existing savings and loans **cooperatives** to incorporate and support the poorest and most excluded community members has been central to the gains made in this project. Their introduction, superseding original project plans for a cash transfer system, came about following the recruitment of a livelihoods specialist at CWISH to support the project. Not only have the cooperatives proved to be an effective vehicle for the delivery of livelihoods support, but...
have also supported community cohesion through engagement with the poorest families in the community – from where many child domestic workers have traditionally been sourced.

“Now we have become learned. We don’t need to borrow money from others. I had no money before to buy clothes, but now I can. We have no more worries: before we used to work for others and now we have started our own business.” (Recipient of livelihoods support)

In a fresh approach to utilising cooperatives, the project provided them with capital which was earmarked specifically for the poorest families, who, while becoming regular cooperative members, were reportedly charged a lower interest rate (5% instead of the usual 16%). Cooperatives continue to be crucial to the sustainability of the gains made in this project, and have proved to be central to post-earthquake support efforts (see sections 4.4 and 4.5).

“The [cooperatives] approach wasn’t planned at the beginning of the project, but CWISH seized the opportunity they had generated through receptive local government officials.” (EveryChild)

**REFLECT sessions**

REFLECT is an approach to adult learning and social change, combining the theories of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire with participatory learning methodologies. Introduced to Nepal by ActionAid, the REFLECT approach links adult learning to empowerment: in essence functioning on the principle that developing literacy and other communication skills is closely linked to the analysis of power relationships. REFLECT creates a democratic space which strengthens people’s ability to speak for themselves at all levels – focusing on enabling people to articulate their views. CWISH has utilised the REFLECT approach in this project to support parents of working children to strengthen their self-confidence with a view to seeking and sustaining the return of their children from domestic work.

“We felt we were wrong in the past and realised we must work and send our children to school; we were ashamed what others thought of us and we built our confidence to bring our children home.” (REFLECT class member)

**Awareness:**

Child clubs look to have played a significant role in supporting education and awareness raising in some project areas, where they are reported to have boosted children’s engagement in school.

“Being involved in the child club we are able to note what good and bad things are happening in school, and we share information. Last month there was a sanitation problem in school; we talked to the teachers about it and they solved it.” (Girl, 15)

Increasing awareness of children’s rights has also been attributed to the presence of active child clubs. This peer-to-peer knowledge transfer approach is believed to be building children’s capacities and confidence to support their participation, not only in school but in wider community campaigning work.

“CWISH has made children aware and empowered them. The project has realised children’s rights in a number of ways, for example by introducing a complaints box in schools into which children can post their complaints or problems.” (Teacher, Kathmandu)

In addition, anecdotal evidence from Ramechhap indicates, for example, that the increased awareness of children’s rights generated by child clubs has resulted in a decrease in child marriage, as well as greater community support for the return of children in child domestic work.
Parents: Evidence from most project areas indicates that REFLECT sessions, introduced in 2013 following a recommendation from the project’s mid-term review, have been critical in helping parents to understand the real situation faced by their working children.

“The first meeting I participated in made me realise the disadvantages of CDW. So I decided to call my daughter.” (Parent of reintegrated child)

At the same time the sessions have played a pivotal role in increasing parental confidence in seeking the return of their children, and in fostering their commitment to taking children back and sustaining them at home. Another important consequence of the sessions has been in supporting the inclusion of these often marginalised individuals and groups into wider community life. Building their self-confidence, as has been reported from Sindhupalchowk, has been an important pre-requisite to support parental participation in the cooperatives and related livelihoods initiatives which have been critical to project successes.

Teachers and schools: Engaging with teachers for the benefit of identifying and supporting children in domestic work situations has been a strong feature of this project. Indeed, teachers look to have played a critical frontline role in reaching child domestic workers who subsequently returned home, as well as assisting children still in domestic work to progress in school.

“The teacher asked in our class if there was anybody working in others homes? We were asked if we needed help and we said yes. The teacher told CWISH and CWISH organised tuition classes to help us improve our studies.” (Girl, 15)

Schools have also been utilised effectively for awareness raising. For example CWISH has reported that targeting school children who have CDWs at home has been a good access point for CDW employers and has helped to facilitate getting messages to employers about improving the treatment of CDWs in their care. Evidence also indicates that School Management Committees have also been galvanised to intervene to detect and protect vulnerable children, as in this case:

“CWISH asked our SMC to help CDWs in our school. We monitor such children and support them where we can.” (SMC member, Kathmandu)

Promotion of adult domestic work: Adult domestic workers in Kathmandu have reported that project support for the Active Domestic Workers Consultancy – a recruitment agency established by CWISH in 2009 which has grown significantly to 2,400 registrations under the auspices of this project – has improved their working conditions, especially around pay and hours. ADWs have reported, for example, that they are now being paid by the hour and have greater flexibility to adjust their work schedules. Key services provided by the Consultancy, including training, placement and contract negotiation with employers. These have been significant in securing improvements in their work situation, as well as in reducing the shame felt by some in being a domestic worker.

“My daughter informed me about this place and inspired me to act. She said to me ‘You are a domestic worker; you don’t need to feel embarrassed about it’. We got 22 days training from the ADWC. All of us were scared about saying we were domestic workers at first.” (Adult Domestic Worker, Kathmandu)

The Consultancy’s very existence has also facilitated the coming together of domestic workers who would otherwise be isolated, and has – in the form of the Consultancy office – provided a venue to do so. The solidarity created by the ability of domestic workers to associate has provided much needed mutual support, and has also had tangible unintended consequences, for example in their development of a savings and loan cooperative.
“We have formed a cooperative here (amongst ADWC members) and we collect 200 (Nepali Rupees) per month from each member. We gather together once a month and also get together for feasts and festivals.” (Adult Domestic Worker, Kathmandu)

The Green Flag Movement: CWISH initiated the Green Flag Movement in July 2013 as a way of positively reinforcing anti-child labour messages in a Ward of the sub-metropolitan city of Lalitpur, in the Kathmandu Valley. Following house-to-house advocacy, green flags were displayed in homes that did not employ child domestic workers. The idea caught on and, with support from the social welfare division of Lalitpur sub-metropolitan city, in 2014 was expanded to cover businesses in the area including hotels, restaurants and brick kilns. ILO and UNICEF lent their support and the idea gained widespread endorsement, resulting in a mass rally in Lalitpur during World Day Against Child Labour celebrations in June 2014. Simultaneously, Hetauda municipality in southern Nepal joined the campaign – subsequently declaring its Ward 11 as child labour free. This form of positive non-confrontational pressure has reportedly resulted in increased social prestige for those households and businesses displaying the green flag symbol, and has encouraged others towards doing the same. The campaign has led to the declaration of one ward in Hetauda and two wards of Lalitpur as ‘child labour free’, with active interest being shown for the scheme amongst other town and city administrations – including the Melamchi project area in Sindhupalchowk district.

Challenges, constraints and gaps

“We are sad to hear that the project is going to be over; we have just begun our businesses.” (Parent of reintegrated child)

Livelihoods support outside the project focus areas: Mixed results have been reported amongst the recipients of training and in-kind livelihood support in Kathmandu, which was provided by CWISH in 2014 following parental requests, using spare project funds generated from exchange rate gains. While parents have seen their income grow through the one-off support they have received to create their businesses (including mobile stalls and a home-based grocery shop), the businesses themselves were neither established nor sufficiently integrated to provide a secure income – with the mobile stalls in particular subject to the vagaries of the municipal authorities.

“I have got a shop on the street. Sometimes officials from the municipality seize my goods because I am not supposed to be operating on the street. If we could have a permanent shop that would be better.” (Recipient of one-off livelihood support)

This is in sharp contrast to the more solid and stable businesses in areas outside of Kathmandu, where project support to businesses has been on-going for a longer period. Without post-earthquake support to re-establish them, interviewed parents were feeling quite pessimistic about their ability to resurrect their business, with half considering giving them up altogether and seeking alternative employment.

Cultural issues: Elite family syndrome: Children, parents and adult domestic workers have all spoken of the power relations between families and between stratas/classes within society which serve to perpetuate child domestic work – with elite families seen as providing a level of patronage to those related families lower in the social order. This has, in turn, created a sense of entitlement on the part of the elite families and a sense of obligation on the part of those families lower in the social pecking order. The impact of this syndrome remains that elite families are able to ‘request’ other families to send their children to live with them as domestic workers. Such requests are not only difficult to turn down, but can also be seen as a ‘lucky’ opportunity.
**Awareness raising and behaviour change**: Adult domestic workers have reported that, despite greater employer awareness of legal changes surrounding the use of child domestic workers and decreasing public acceptance of the practice, they were still regularly asked by employers to help them to source children to work in their homes. This indicates that while awareness of the practice has indeed been increasing, this has not yet led to systemic change in employer practices. Hard evidence is lacking of a correlation between the increased recruitment of adult domestic workers and any reduction in the numbers of children being used as domestic workers.

**Key learning**

- There is a need to understand and address the cultural issues of entitlement and obligation which underlie and perpetuate the acceptability of child domestic work in Nepalese society. CWISH data, indicating that most CDWs are working with families with whom their family is connected, has important implications for approaches to working with their employers, who are unlikely to be swayed by awareness-raising alone. Thus, engaging directly with employers of CDWs in an empowering (and not just a punitive) way is acknowledged to be key in ensuring behaviour change. CWISH believes that it could be possible in future to involve employers in the reintegration process, while ex-employers could be recruited as advocates for change in their communities;
- Developing sustainable livelihoods is a process requiring on-going support to bed-in businesses and integrate them into local mechanisms (such as cooperatives and government assistance) to sustain them. It is also important to note that not everyone is an entrepreneur and, therefore, alternatives to business creation should also include options for those wishing to opt for greater employment security;
- The Green Flag Movement has been effective in creating greater awareness about the unacceptability of child domestic work (along with other forms of child labour), as well as generating the groundswell for action. At the same time, hard evidence of the success of such campaigns in reducing child labour numbers requires robust monitoring and research – which should be planned for and budgeted as part of campaign design.

### 4.2.3 Outcome 3: Capacity building

**Outcome as expressed in project proposal**: Six local governments and local structures enforce existing protection policies and implement effective child protection policies and mechanisms to make the changes in outcomes 1 and 2 a reality for all children, including 14,000 boys and girls involved in domestic work in Kathmandu Valley over 4 years.

**Achievements and strengths**

**Achievements in numbers** (for more details, see Annex 6)

**1,676** officials and local leaders are better able to advocate against child domestic work, monitor children, and take legal action.

**Partnership**: A key strength of this project has been CWISH’s commitment to building the capacities of other stakeholders in a way that promotes effective partnership. In addition to strengthening the capacity and resolve of the project’s district partners, collaboration with a view to building sustainable government child protection structures is evident at both local and national levels.
CWISH’s efforts to buttress NGO capacity to advocate for and support government efforts are also in evidence, for example through its work as part of the National Child Protection Alliance.

“CWISH is a pioneer on child protection and child domestic work and has helped to build the capacities of other NCPA members. It has strengthened local level child protection mechanisms, especially district and village level CPCs, making sure that the allocated 10% of VDC budgets goes to child welfare.” (NCPA General Secretary)

CWISH’s partnerships have been both strategic and enabling, resulting in the project being able to do more, extend its reach and develop ownership. Local authorities and child protection structures in particular are now more aware of child domestic work as an issue and are more focused on prioritising and protecting these children.

“Some NGOs come and go, but the relationship with CWISH has been constant.” (Department of Labour)

This project has engaged purposefully with teachers and schools to play a frontline role in identifying and supporting children in domestic work situations (see section 4.2.2.1). In doing so, the project has provided training to school management committees and Parent Teacher Associations. In addition, the special emphasis on training on children’s rights, psychosocial-based communication and the provision of psychological counselling in schools has helped teachers to support this vulnerable and marginalised group of children.

“Several children in my class could not speak because of family problems. One boy had problems because his step mother was beating him. After a few counselling sessions he began speaking up, and CWISH called his parents and talked to them.” (Teacher, Kathmandu)

Psychosocial support training was particularly significant in helping teachers to support their students directly and in children being able to handle difficult situations, particularly following the earthquakes. This has also been recognised and acknowledged by the government, which has recently published plans to locate a specialist psychosocial counsellor in each school.

**Challenges, constraints and gaps**

Several issues have impacted on project efforts to build effective local child protection mechanisms for children. In Kathmandu, for example, it took time to get support from some schools and teachers due to fears that reintegrating children from their schools would result in a loss of government funding. In Sindhupalchowk the project faced a significant challenge due to government administrative changes, resulting in the merging of several wards to form a municipality. These changes required additional project time and effort in supporting the formation and development of new Child Protection Committees, with the knock-on effect that local ownership of project interventions are not yet embedded.

The continuing clamour for capacity building was notable amongst local and national stakeholders, who had already received capacity building support. While such requests are not necessarily indicative of gaps in provision, this suggests that capacity building efforts so far may not have been fully successful in promoting local ownership of child protection efforts, and points to potential fragility in the independent functioning of some structures. There also remains an expectation and reliance on CWISH for on-going support. Follow-up monitoring of how capacity building efforts are being utilised is also lacking, which points to the need for a detailed assessment of current capacities and gaps. Tracking how capacity building of local structures was being put into effect may have resulted in support gaps being picked up and plugged earlier, avoiding repetitious training and promoting greater local confidence in their ability, and promoting stronger ownership.
Key learning

- In designing and implementing future projects, CWISH should consider how capacity building is assessed, planned and monitored. A phased withdrawal of capacity building support earlier in the project cycle, giving way to a focus on monitoring its utilisation and providing advisory support, may prove more effective and promote stronger ownership.
- There is a need to examine capacity building approaches within CWISH with a view to creating a less dependent capacity building model, for example by creating specific modules which can be delivered through existing professional training delivered by government entities.
- It would be worthwhile to consider how it might be possible to incentivise government to incorporate capacity building modules prepared by CWISH into their own training schedules (e.g. for police and other front line workers) and to develop methods to monitor changes in practice as a result.

4.3 Efficiency

- To what degree was adequate support provided for implementation and were activities carried out in a timely manner?

Efficient partnerships

Between CWISH and EveryChild
The respectful, appreciative and understanding way in which this project was implemented between EveryChild and CWISH has resulted in it being more responsive to changing circumstances, and more able to integrate innovative solutions. This is evident in the activity changes that took place at the start of the project (e.g. working with cooperatives), following the mid-term review (assimilating the REFLECT approach), and in the post-earthquake redesign work. Good communication flow between the partners was acknowledged to have helped in offsetting the challenges created by key staff changes within EveryChild and CWISH during the course of the project. Partners also recognised the importance of understanding local context as a benefit to supporting partnership.

“EveryChild was directly involved in reporting, visited Nepal regularly, and worked collaboratively. Its approach has been very supportive and communication has been open. Compared to other [international organisations] EveryChild felt like a real partner and its support has been an important factor in achieving project success.” (CWISH)

Between CWISH and district implementing partners
It is evident that working through district implementing partners has brought a number of significant advantages to the implementation of this project, in particular resulting in increased local buy-in to the project, a better understanding of the local context, and the potential for greater sustainability. Tapping into this well of local knowledge and harnessing trusted relationships has also facilitated working with other local stakeholders and has enabled easier identification of target groups, as well as helping to leverage local resources.

“CWISH has good local partnerships. Working with district partners has been a real advantage which has expanded CWISH’s capacity and reach” (EveryChild)

4.3.1 Project design
Outcomes and indicators: It was acknowledged that the original project outcome statements could have been shorter, more focused and less repetitive. The lack of clarity around outcomes has led to interpretation of the focus and activities under each outcome area. Some indicators also required greater precision to ensure a clear understanding of the project focus and data collection needs.

Some confusion emerged during the evaluation around needs assessment and baseline processes, leading to information gaps which have created difficulties in substantiating project gains:

- For example, during the initial needs assessment phase there is doubt about whether sufficient problem analysis and mapping was done to fully understand the informal power structures which underpin the acceptance and perpetuation of child domestic work. Surfacing of these cultural and social factors at the project’s design stage may have helped in the planning of more targeted advocacy activities with employers (beyond legislative change and awareness raising) to change their behaviour (see section 4.2.2).
- In relation to baseline data, gaps in information are evident – leading to difficulties in providing systematic proof of what the project has achieved. For example, it has been acknowledged that family income and spending data was not collected during the project start-up phase, resulting in a reliance on anecdotal information alone regarding the impact of livelihood gains on the families of returned children.
- Additionally, the quality of some of the district monitoring data indicates some initial ambiguity surrounding M&E design, and that M&E capacity building of district implementing partners at the start of the project, in particular around data collection, could have been more robust.

Key learning

- Adjustments to the sequencing of some pre-project activities may have benefitted the design and implementation of this project. For example, a focus on building the capacity of district partners before a detailed needs assessment is likely to have resulted in more accurate, detailed and comprehensive data, and would have contributed to ensuring more accurate target numbers.
- Stakeholder involvement during the initial needs assessment stage may also have contributed to improved assessment of the need, as would have problem tree, context and power analyses to understand in greater detail and in more depth the cultural and social factors reinforcing the practice of child domestic work. Mapping of other service-delivery organisations in the project areas at an earlier stage may also have identified additional potential partners (such as those providing education support) who might also have been convinced to focus on the project target groups.

4.3.2 Project implementation

Partners and collaborators have appreciated CWISH’s flexibility in project implementation as well as their willingness to innovate within the organisation and allow space for innovation amongst target groups. As a result, several significant changes have been made to the scope, direction and components of the original project which have improved its efficiency as well as effectiveness. These include:

- moving from individual cash transfers to cooperative-based loans in delivering livelihoods support;
- shifting teacher training from child friendly education to an emphasis on children’s rights;
- the introduction of REFLECT following the mid-term review, which enhanced reintegration efforts by increasing parental confidence and capacity in maintaining their children at home; and
• building in psychosocial counselling in response to community needs and partner suggestions.

Delays in getting the project off the ground, caused largely by poor project planning, meant that significant project implementation time was lost. There look to have been several reasons for this, including a significant organisational restructure at CWISH, resulting in a number of key staff changes (see also section 4.3.3), as well as wider political instability. CWISH has also pointed to the need to put in place at the start of the project effective mechanisms and structures to support reintegration efforts – which should have been in place earlier. Better target group assessment at an earlier stage (during project design, as mentioned in 4.3.1) could also have avoided the delays caused by their identification only once the project had started. It has been reported that considerable training of district implementing partners was also required in the first year of the project, which also indicates that this project was not in a position to be fully operational until the beginning of year two. This suggests that the project timeframe as initially presented was unrealistic in terms of the preparation needed and the ambition of the project scope (see also section 4.4).

4.3.3 Management, monitoring, financial issues and donor engagement

“EveryChild and CWISH have been open and honest in their reports and feedback, which gives confidence that they know what they are doing and are not hiding any major issues.” (Comic Relief)

Financial management of this project has been good, and CWISH has demonstrated robust and systematic processes for managing funds. The organisation has the requisite checks and verifications in place to ensure good financial stewardship.

“CWISH has been good in financial economy, efficiency and effectiveness. EveryChild hasn’t had to intervene to support them in this.” (EveryChild)

The main reported challenge has been dealing with significant exchange rate gains as a result of transfers in pounds sterling (GBP) being exchanged into Nepalese Rupees (NPR). This has required extra CWISH staff time in planning and re-budgeting to avoid building up a significant underspend. EveryChild has worked closely with CWISH to manage this. Exchange rates are likely to continue to be an issue in the future because of continued fluctuation between GBP and NPR. It has been reported that quarterly budget monitoring between EvC and CWISH (rather than six-monthly or annual) has helped avoid the situation from getting out of control.

Organisational restructuring: CWISH has undergone three organisational restructures and several key staff changes during the course of this project, and despite its efforts, staff changes in particular have been raised as an efficiency issue by some parents as well as by a number of project stakeholders. While CWISH argues that the organisational thematic focus which has resulted now gives more efficient support to projects, it accepts that administrative and staff changes may have created some confusion, including for district implementing partners. CWISH maintains that, as most of the changes were at management level within CWISH and not at district implementation level, the changes would not have affected the target groups. However, some parents of reintegrated and supported children have felt destabilised by these changes, which they consider to have resulted in a lack of consistency, particularly in relation to what benefits they would receive (for example educational support for their children) and the organisational requirements to receive them.

“Before last year CWISH provided our entire educational expenses, but now no longer. We thought that 2014 would be the same as before, but it didn’t happen, and the same problem
Organisational restructuring looks also to have affected project monitoring, with responsibility for project monitoring shifting in 2014 from a specialist M&E department within CWISH to project officers located in the Family Empowerment Theme. Project staff have indicated that more district monitoring visits were needed to keep on top of data monitoring and verification, but that there have been too few staff to make this happen.

“In addition to a number of staffing changes, EveryChild has been restructuring, involving the phasing out of EveryChild UK and the building of Family for EveryChild. CWISH has been very resilient in working with these changes.” (EveryChild)

**Beneficiary engagement in project cycle management:** CWISH has invested in children’s participation at the organisational level – through a Kathmandu-based Children’s Advisory Board which is involved in strategic planning and providing feedback on annual plans. However, there is less evidence of children’s systematic influence over this project, although district Child Advisory Boards were constituted and child club members have been said to have provided some feedback to local level structures including VDCs. In discussing children’s participation in the project, CWISH expressed caution in seeking to avoid raising children’s expectations of their engagement in project cycle management. There is little evidence of beneficiary (adults or children) engagement in project monitoring.

**Project monitoring** has been systematic, and the decision to use a single reporting format based on the donor’s requirements has been helpful, making reporting easier. CWISH has reported EveryChild as being a highly supportive partner, including by helping CWISH with monitoring report writing and through frequent project monitoring and capacity building visits.

“The quarterly partnership calls have been really crucial in ensuring smooth project management and avoiding communication between many different people.” (EveryChild)

However, reports from some districts suggest that many of EveryChild’s monitoring visits have been focused on Kathmandu, with local stakeholders noting that they would have liked to have seen EveryChild more regularly. However, EveryChild indicates that its monitoring visits were not limited to Kathmandu and that visits had been made during the course of the project to all districts.

The instigation of an ‘accountability hotline’ in 2014 has been a commendable effort by CWISH’s Monitoring Department to increase organisational transparency and accountability to its beneficiaries. The hotline – whose number widely shared during project activities – has received no calls relating to this project, a result which CWISH considers to be a mark of beneficiary satisfaction. However, CWISH has reported that reaching the hotline is limited to a single telecom network and is inaccessible to users of other network providers. Some beneficiaries have reported not getting through and staff not returning their calls, indicating that a rethink may be required on the operation of the service.

“Sometimes I have tried to call the toll free number [accountability line] but it is not answered, or the staff to help us are unavailable. It’s not very effective.” (Parent of reintegrated child)

**Comic Relief** has been a supportive and flexible donor, although greater direct engagement with the work in Nepal (prior to the earthquakes) would have been appreciated. It was suggested that the biannual project reviews could have been opportunities for Comic Relief to visit and participate. A particular challenge for the project has been the two periods of filming undertaken by Comic Relief. Of particular concern was the strain that the demands made by the broadcast team put on project staff and resources. Both visits were reportedly characterised by the broadcast team’s unrealistic...
expectations of what was possible to film, and a lack of awareness around what was appropriate and feasible to ask partners to facilitate.

**LEARNING QUESTION: How cost effective has reintegration been?**

Around two-thirds of the project budget has been spent on supporting and sustaining the reintegration of children. In terms of cost effectiveness, CWISH staff noted that transitional care for children prior to their reintegration was particularly expensive, and that better reintegration planning (i.e. by identifying earlier the families of children to be returned – thereby reducing costly temporary shelter) could have reduced this expense. However, it has also been reported that this type of provision is sometimes unavoidable; particularly when it proved impossible to utilise existing government or other NGO facilities due to child protection concerns. EveryChild has reported that follow-up with reintegrated children is also very cost intensive, especially when children have been difficult to track.

“Reintegration work is expensive and labour intensive, and it was important to find strong partners in districts to cover what CWISH couldn’t due to distance and cost.” (EveryChild)

At the same time, connecting families of returning children to existing cooperatives has been cheap and sustainable – enabling their ability, through match funding arrangements, to access more funds to support their businesses than the project would have been able to put in. Working through the cooperative structure has made leveraging additional government resources easier. Working in a loose networking relationship with local stakeholders has also helped to prevent children from being sent or re-sent to work.

**Key learning**

- While organisational staff changes are inevitable, particular effort needs to be made to retain key staff and to minimise the impact to projects of such changes. CWISH managers have acknowledged that the organisation needs to get better at organisational contingency planning. More specifically, they accept that a move towards longer-term staff contracts at CWISH may help to improve staff retention, as well as in the need to plan for better staff remuneration. This is all linked to improvements in financial sustainability. Managers and project staff have also recognised the importance of handovers between departing and newly recruited staff, including greater emphasis on ensuring strong project documentation. Some key staff took several months to recruit, stressing the need for quicker recruitment of replacement staff, as well as requiring departing staff to serve out a notice period, rather than leaving immediately.

**4.4 Sustainability**

- To what extent can this intervention continue without further support from this donor?

**Achievements and strengths**

Sustained engagement and collaboration with government authorities has resulted in respect and support for CWISH’s work in general and project aims in particular. CWISH’s strong reputation in Kathmandu, both within national-level government departments and in parts of the city – especially
the sub-municipality of Lalitpur – has given CWISH status as a trusted partner which has paid dividends in terms of its ability to influence government policy and action on child protection. These relationships have also facilitated project efforts to strengthen statutory child protection mechanisms and in access to and the leveraging of state resources at VDC level to sustain the work.

Livelihood support through cooperatives has also been key to sustainability:

“Before this project we were not trusted with loans. [As low caste groups] we were not given access to certain village circles; we previously tried to get loans from people but were treated differently. We felt humiliated. Now, the seed money and help has really saved us from the indignity” (Members of VDC Cooperative, Sindhupalchowk)

“Although this is a very old cooperative we weren’t previously able to bring the poorest people in. They weren’t interested in a savings culture and managing money and not interested in joining. Now, as part of the cooperative, we have seen a very visible change in them and their status. Since this project the membership has increased and there have been demands from the group to do more.” (VDC Cooperative President)

Sustainable partnership
The sustainability of local partners has been built in a variety of ways, including through capacity building of staff, enhancing organisational management and systems building, including strengthening financial management by introducing accounting software.

“We openly discussed the challenges we had and we worked through these together” (CWISH)

Decentralising project implementation not only had advantages in understanding of and responsiveness to local contexts, but also ensured that CWISH’s national level policy influence was able to have an immediate impact on the ground.

Challenges, constraints and gaps

Sustainability planning: While project sustainability was considered in broad terms during the project’s design phase, detailed sustainability planning was only undertaken in 2014, following the project mid-term review. This was too late and has resulted in question marks over how several of core project activities, including the livelihoods, reintegration and education support work, will be maintained. While CWISH maintains that project activities will be continued by the district partners, these partners have expressed doubts about their capacity and the resources to do so. While project promises to support three years of education for reintegrated and supported children have been largely fulfilled for those children who have been supported by the project during the first two years, it is in doubt for those reintegrated and supported more recently. Beneficiaries and stakeholders in Kathmandu and across the districts remain uniformly concerned about this, as well as how embedded livelihood provision and follow-up support is for reintegrated children.

“We got the message from the CWISH office that we are only being supported for this year, and we are worried about how we will continue.” (Parent of reintegrated child)

“We are concerned about the project ending as we are not fully capable of solving all our issues” (Municipal Child Protection Committee, Ramechhap)

This situation looks to have been avoidable with better project planning: firstly, by ensuring that target groups were already identified, the needs assessment groundwork done and the structures (e.g. for reintegration) in place to allow the project to hit the ground running; and secondly, by focusing on reintegrating children and initiating livelihood support for their families within the first two years of the project.
Fundraising: Despite reported improvements in CWISH’s forward planning and fundraising work, supported by EveryChild, a specific area of weakness has been the inability to find funds for essential follow-on work to secure the futures of returning children – particularly those who returned home later in the project. Concept notes for prolonging and extending the work were prepared and distributed in the early part of 2015 – too late to ensure seamless continuation of this project and resulting in a likely loss of expert staff and a potentially premature end to key project activities. This challenging situation is compounded by CWISH’s total reliance on grant funding from international donors, including international NGOs and foreign embassies. With very little dedicated fundraising capacity within CWISH, there is little evidence of a concerted fundraising effort beyond looking for further international grant funding. This lack of funding diversity represents a significant risk to the organisation.

Integrated planning: A barrier to even more integrated work with government, identified by some government stakeholders, is the need for CWISH to align its plans and planning processes (currently January to December) with the government annual planning cycle (July to June). This, it is argued, would help CWISH to avail of government funding and would help to secure greater synergy with local government child protection mechanisms – making their work more efficient and effective. According to CWISH, its planning cycle is dependent on donor requirements and that government development planning processes are not always consistent.

Capacity building: A range of project stakeholders have remarked on the need for continued capacity building of local child protection structures, particularly in light of personnel changes resulting from administrative changes to a municipal structure. The need to build closer links with VDCs has also been raised and acknowledged by CWISH, as these structures are not only the gatekeepers to working in communities, but with their executive and legislative powers are highly influential. Coordinating with and enhancing VDC capacity to better support child protection is seen as critical to sustaining local change, particularly when it comes to system building and monitoring. Who will be in a position to continue to work with VDCs looks, however, to be debatable. CWISH sees this as the role of the district partners, although issues around the robustness of project capacity building processes (see 4.2.3) and whether district partners are in a position to do this without support may require this position to be reconsidered.

Tackling ingrained social and cultural issues: Project gaps in tackling some of the deeper cultural and structural issues which reinforce the continuance of the practice remain a significant barrier to changing employer practice in particular. This means that despite project gains in awareness about the problem, more work will be needed with employers to tackle their deep-seated views about the practice and the complex hierarchical family ties which perpetuate it.

“Employers still say to us, if you go to your village, please find a small girl or boy and bring them here.”

“Sometimes employers ask us to bring our children to work, or ask if we can bring children from our village.”

(Adult domestic workers)

While the ‘naming and shaming’ legislative approach and the positive reinforcement message of the green flag movement have been significant, direct engagement with employers, possibly using former employers, in a non-confrontational way will also be necessary. Time is also important. Experience from elsewhere indicates that even direct engagement with employers can take up to 10 years to bear fruit. Tackling ingrained cultural and social issues also implies the need to tackle entrenched gender discrimination against girls, which leaves them with far fewer opportunities than
boys for developing skills and securing decent employment. Girls and women interviewed during the course of this project identified domestic work, forms of unskilled labour such as construction work and sales, as amongst the only options for the majority of women seeking paid work in Nepal. Many are pushed to domestic work in particular because of cultural expectations and social norms surrounding domestic work as ‘women’s work’.

**Key learning**

- Individual and collective engagement with employers at a local level will be necessary to develop their ownership over the issue and to support sustainability of the initiatives. Organising former employers as advocates and providing local forums to enable employer discussion in a non-confrontational atmosphere have been important approaches in other countries, followed by participatory development of locally appropriate codes and sanctions governing acceptable and unacceptable community behaviour. This takes time: a 7-10 year timeframe is realistic;
- Before embarking on any livelihoods, CDW reintegration and education work, it is essential to have a clear plan at the beginning of the project for post end of project continuation and sustainability to avoid negating project achievements. This is particularly critical in projects of relatively short duration, such as this one. In the absence of longer-term funding, consideration should be made as to the balance between supporting fewer beneficiaries for a longer period, versus greater numbers to a lesser extent (see also section 4.2.1);
- The desire amongst children for education was consistently their most important priority, and ways to safeguard the continuation of this provision after projects have ended should be a key legacy. Investment to support children’s education should make sure that they leave with a recognised qualification, even if this means that only a smaller number of children can be supported. CWISH has discussed several approaches to strengthen the likelihood of ensuring continuing education for children (while mindful of reducing costs and avoiding dependency), including: focusing greater attention on building the capacity of families to supporting their children’s education, rather than supporting it directly; creating better links to government education support mechanisms, including a more purposeful focus on developing partnerships with VDCs and Child Protection Committees (which hold the purse strings for scholarships); and employing a staggered approach in projects to ensure that livelihoods are built first to build income to support education.

### 4.5 Post-earthquake

- What are the emerging factors indicating how well the project re-design (following the earthquakes) met the changed need and priorities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-earthquake project activities (with ‘most useful’ activities identified in <strong>bold</strong>)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support to reintegrated children and their families</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Support for temporary shelter to the families of reintegrated children;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Matching support in schools to construct Temporary Learning Centres;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Orientation to teachers on trauma counselling and psychosocial support to children;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Orientation to facilitators on trauma counselling;</td>
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<tr>
<td>- <strong>Matching with cooperatives to provide support to families unable to repay loans</strong>;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Supporting families with agriculture inputs (seeds etc).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advocacy/awareness raising</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Leaflet on role of government and parents and community on preventing child separation;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Develop awareness raising materials on preventing child labour and exploitation;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Working with police to establish temporary check posts to avoid unnecessary separation;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Broadcasting public service announcements on radio about the post-earthquake situation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Achievements and strengths

Beneficiaries and stakeholders alike have reported that, following the earthquakes, CWISH and the district partners responded rapidly and appropriately to families involved in the project due to their relative proximity to the affected areas and their knowledge of the local context and communities. Strong appreciation of this support indicates that the organisations were effective in mobilising staff and financial resources to provide the assistance needed. CWISH and its partners look to have struck the right balance between meeting the immediate support needs of families and linking them with available government entitlements to provide longer term support to re-build their lives and livelihoods.

“We [families of reintegrated children] received fertilizers, vegetable seeds, educational material support and CGI sheets from the project. This made us feel really happy.” (Parents of reintegrated children, Sindhupalchowk)

It is also notable that a number of pre-earthquake project activities remained highly relevant and helpful in responding to the needs of target children and their families in the post-earthquake environment. In particular, cooperatives in some areas have supported the resilience of affected families and helped them to remain connected to mutual support and the financial and material means to rebuild their lives. Pre-existing REFLECT classes in Ramechhap particularly have helped vulnerable and marginalised families to come together and have given them confidence in seeking solutions to the problems facing them. Building on pre-existing psychosocial support provision to children in schools following the earthquakes looks also to have played an important role in supporting children’s resilience. While unconfirmed, evidence suggests that these activities have reduced the likelihood of family separation following the earthquakes.9

Challenges, constraints and gaps

Those families receiving one-off livelihood support as a result of being in non-focus project areas, such as in Kathmandu, look to have struggled to re-build their livelihoods following the earthquakes. While there is limited evidence about what has happened beyond Kathmandu, parents have complained that, despite receiving immediate assistance such as tarpaulins and food aid, the lack of on-going livelihood and educational support has had a significant negative impact on their ability to get back on their feet financially. (‘CWISH just left us to our own devices’, parent, Kathmandu.) In some cases this looks to have been because their pre-earthquake businesses were not firmly enough established to survive the disaster, and were not adequately integrated into the communities being served (see also ‘Challenges, constraints and gaps’, section 4.2.2).

“Before the earthquake I was full of confidence that my future was secure, but now I am worried about how we will survive. I had deposited 17,000 [Nepali Rupees] in a local cooperative [NB: not a CWISH supported co-op], but after the earthquake the co-op and the money disappeared.” (Parent of reintegrated child)

Indeed, some businesses were very marginal, for example the operation of mobile shops without the appropriate municipal licences – leaving them at the whim of local officials. Some parents had been

9 A four country external evaluation is currently underway of EveryChild’s responsible exit process, including in Nepal. The study is focused on three key aims: making impact sustainable; doing no harm to children and communities; and keeping knowledge and expertise in country. An initial report was prepared in March 2015, with the potential for further research in Nepal in 2016. For more information on the process and the report, see: http://www.everychild.org.uk/intrac-responsible-exit-report
put off running their own business completely and were looking to give them up and to find paid employment.

**Key learning**

- Although it has not been possible to compare the situation of beneficiaries with those not receiving project support, it is reasonable to assume that several principal pre-earthquake project activities have proven to be integral to the resilience of children and their families in the face of the earthquakes and their aftermath. The support provided to cooperatives has helped them provide collective support and the financial and material means to rebuild their lives. REFLECT groups have underpinned the literacy and confidence of vulnerable parents to seek support and to avoid knee-jerk responses (including sending children back into domestic work). Building teacher capacity to provide support children emotionally has been equally important in bolstering children’s resilience. (See also learning box below);
- The importance of follow-up support to those in receipt of livelihood backing is critical to their success and for their ability to withstand disasters and shocks. More individualised support and mentoring is required to make such businesses work, as well as assistance in rooting the business locally. Also, as has previously been raised, not everyone is an entrepreneur: some people would have preferred getting a job over starting a business;
- In this project, key to the rapidity and strength of the project’s earthquake response was the in-depth local knowledge and proximity of the district partners to the affected areas. At the same time, the earthquakes and flooding which took place during the course of this project demonstrate the need for additional resilience planning when reintegrating children in disaster-prone areas.

**LEARNING QUESTION: How can reintegration be sustained when faced with shocks?**

CWISH has found that the combination of parental education (delivered through REFLECT sessions) and building the capacity of local government structures and mechanisms (be they related to education, child protection, health or governance more generally) are critical to sustaining reintegration. Government structures were made aware of and trained to assess risks and protection measures for children, resulting in the post-earthquake emergency clampdown on children migrating without district council authorisation (although a policy such as this under normal circumstances needs careful consideration). Education for parents helped to convince them of the need to keep their children with them, thus helping to avoid separation and resisting the child traffickers. Ensuring a protective environment for children requires a holistic understanding of how local mechanisms work, which helped CWISH to ensure that children were kept safe when the earthquake came.

**5. Conclusions**

**Relevance:**
The prevalence of child domestic work and the impact it has on children and their families makes this project highly relevant. At the same time, questions remain around how realistic the full achievement of project outcomes was, given the limitations on time and the resources available. While the project targeted younger children, less attention has been given as to the needs of older children in exploitative situations, especially 16-17 year olds who constitute an increasing proportion of child labourers in Nepal.

**Effectiveness:**
Children targeted across the districts reported that the project has given them the opportunity to experience a childhood and family life, including a sense of belonging, stability and continuity. In particular children were happy about: living with their family; accessing education; being with their friends; being with people whose first priority was them. Children also reported greater personal confidence and increased self-esteem as a result of participating in the project.

A key change resulting from this project is in the mindset of targeted parents towards their children and in how they view the practice of child domestic work. Across the districts, parents reported: an understanding the negative impact of domestic work on their children; wanting to be a better parent to their children, to take responsibility and care for them; and wanting their children to be with them. In addition, parents had been given opportunities to increase their income through the project’s livelihood support activities which has resulted in their improving economic independence. Linking poorer families with local cooperatives has been critical to their economic well-being and has also played a role in reducing their marginalisation. Reported increases in parental confidence and self-esteem fostered largely by REFLECT classes looks to be supporting greater family cohesiveness, as well as increasing their involvement in, and influence over, the communities in which they live.

Respondents suggest that teachers are generally more willing and capable of supporting working children’s progress at school, and in understanding the difficulties they face. Other stakeholders, including local government and child protection structures, reported the project’s success in promoting greater coordination, more collaboration and increased cooperation. This ensured an effective and efficient use of funds and other resources. Many stakeholders have also reported a shift in attitudes amongst parents and within communities towards sending children into domestic work.

The project also looks to have been successful in enabling and motivating those involved in local child protection structures to consider and prioritise the situation of child domestic workers, as well as in influencing decision-makers through multiple forms of messaging. The involvement of district partners and a variety of local and national stakeholders is leading to a growing network of influence on the issue and supports a potential multiplier effect within and beyond this project’s focus districts.

Evidence suggests that while legal changes and the considerable awareness raising attributable to this project have made some inroads into the social acceptability of child domestic work, this has yet to translate into practice change. Many employers are still said to be keen to employ children – either through extended family networks or through adult domestic workers – who are perceived to be lower cost and more malleable than adult workers. Project gaps in tackling some of the deeper cultural and structural issues which reinforce the continuance of the practice – particularly around social and family hierarchies – remain a significant barrier to changing employer practice in particular, and more intensive work with employers will be needed to overcome this obstacle.

Efficiency
The design and implementation of this project may have benefitted from adjustments to the sequencing of some pre-project activities, and a more in-depth assessment of the need at an earlier stage in the project development process. Confusion over the data needed for the baseline has left some gaps in evidence about what this project has achieved – especially regarding the impact of livelihoods. Deficits in project planning also resulted in implementation delays which have had knock-on effects for project sustainability. Restructuring and a number of staff changes, particularly at CWISH, have, at times, led to some (albeit limited) service inconsistencies and anxiety amongst beneficiaries.
At the same time, project finances have been well managed, project monitoring has been systematic and the project itself has provided value for money through partners’ detailed understanding of project contexts, their responsiveness to changing circumstances, and their readiness to innovate. These strengths resulted in a particularly efficient as well as effective response to the 2015 earthquakes.

**Sustainability**
Despite much important groundwork having been achieved around sustainability, considerable disquiet and apprehension remains amongst beneficiaries and stakeholders about what will happen next. For many beneficiaries the reintegration process looks to be incomplete, giving rise to considerable unease of what will happen – especially in the absence of continued funding of any kind – to the many children still dependent on educational support, and the families still reliant on project know-how to reinforce the fragility of their businesses, particularly following the 2015 earthquakes. Widespread stakeholder concern has also been expressed about the need to embed ownership of child protection work in the project areas, especially given recent changes in local municipal structures.

There is a question mark around why sustainability looks to have been considered comparatively late on in the project, and why implementation of key activities was not handed over sooner to local authorities and others with a longer term stake in project communities. Of particular concern is the sustainability of reintegration efforts in non-focus project areas, where support to beneficiaries and capacity building of local stakeholders has been less holistic.

Finally, the commitment to partnership and collaboration in this project has been critical to its many achievements and, in particular, to the effectiveness, efficiency and potential sustainability of this work.

### 6. Recommendations

**Recommendations for CWISH**

**Reintegration**
International good practice indicates that effective and sustainable reintegration requires, amongst other things, considerable planning and locally-based expertise to support returning children and their families over a prolonged period. For these reasons CWISH should:

- Carefully review each stage of its reintegration process in light of current good practice, with a view to: (1) expanding the timeframe for each stage in the process to ensure that adequate time is given to assess individual circumstances and for follow-up; (2) providing closer support to families (including regular face-to-face meetings) to tackle barriers to the safe and sustainable return of children, including in relation to violence in the home.
- Consider the ambition of future reintegration work, given the timeframe and the level of resources required to ensure that the wide-ranging needs of individual children and their families are met;
- Re-examine the sustainability of livelihoods provision to those families lying outside project areas, and the impact of the less intensive levels of support that they received;
- Consider how to target the needs of older children and youth in exploitative working environments – for whom this type of reintegration and placement into formal education is not suitable to their age or situation.

**Livelihoods**
Livelihoods provision in this project – particularly to those 50% of families outside the project focus areas – needs careful examination with a view to avoiding providing resources in the absence of on-going follow-up support and advice, and the need for intensive effort to integrate income generating activities into local business support structures (such as cooperatives and government assistance) to help sustain them;

Attention is needed to the fact that not everyone is an entrepreneur. Future livelihoods work should therefore also consider alternatives to the creation of small businesses – such as helping people to gain skills to increase their chances of securing regular employment.

Preventing child domestic work through advocacy and awareness raising

Project activities with parents of working children has shown that changing adult mindsets is possible given a good understanding of their needs, the right approach and with the right local resources in place. At the same time, awareness raising alone is not enough to change behaviour, particular the behaviour of those who will lose out from the return of children to their own homes. For these reasons it is important to:

- Engage directly and individually with employers of child domestic workers in empowering (and not just punitive) ways, for example by involving them in the reintegration process. Avoiding their alienation from the process is likely to benefit the safety of CDWs in their homes and reduce the need for risky and confrontational rescue strategies. It also implies the building of a longer-term relationship;
- Former CDW employers are in a good position to convince their neighbours and peers to think differently about using children as domestic workers, and have successfully been recruited in other countries as advocates for change in their communities.

Capacity building

- In designing and implementing future projects, CWISH should consider how capacity building is planned and monitored. A phased withdrawal of capacity building support earlier in the project cycle, giving way to a focus on monitoring its utilisation and providing advisory support, may prove more effective and promote stronger ownership;
- There is a need to examine capacity building approaches within CWISH with a view to creating a less dependent capacity building model, for example by creating specific modules which can be delivered through existing professional training;
- It would be worthwhile to consider how it might be possible to incentivise government to incorporate CWISH capacity building modules and develop methods to monitor changes in practice as a result.

Organisational Recommendations

Project design and implementation: The complexity and ambition of this project lends itself to an implementation period of longer than four years. A longer timeframe is especially relevant to a holistic approach to reintegration – a relatively new approach for CWISH for which there was limited organisational experience.

Increased project efficiency was possible with a greater emphasis on project sequencing at design stage, for example in tackling the capacity needs of district partners to ensure the collection of more accurate and comprehensive data to inform the project. Greater stakeholder engagement in the initial stages of the project may also have led to a deeper analysis of CDW causal factors and the identification of additional service providers with the potential to enhance project sustainability.

While every effort was made to minimise the considerable organisational upheaval in both CWISH and EveryChild UK, these restructuring changes negatively impacted on project implementation at
times. Changes in staff and project partnership processes in EveryChild UK during the project at times created a degree of uncertainty, although it is not obvious that this could have been any better handled. However, three restructuring processes in four years, and the loss of key staff within CWISH indicates the need to improve organisational contingency planning, and careful consideration is further needed about how to retain staff and mitigate handover gaps.

**Accountability:** CWISH is committed to being accountable to and transparent with its target groups. However, CWISH needs to review its systems and to consider, in particular whether CWISH’s ‘accountability hotline’ has been working for its beneficiaries. CWISH should also consider how to share and seek feedback on monthly, quarterly and annual plans (as is done with stakeholders) to ensure greater beneficiary input into its projects on an on-going basis. This could also have the dual benefit of managing beneficiary expectations of what the project can achieve and around the level of individual support.

While CWISH works hard to advocate for and support the participation of children (for example in this project through child clubs and Children’s Advisory Boards), children’s participation in the implementation and monitoring of this project has been limited. Opportunities should be sought to explore ways of engaging child (and adult) beneficiaries not only in the design of projects, but at all stages of project cycle management. Further facilitated discussion with children is also needed around the next steps for Children’s Advisory Boards and Child Clubs, and to consider how children who have been active in these forums can continue to support CWISH and the child labour cause after they leave.

**Recommendations for EveryChild UK and Comic Relief**

The risks associated with the ability of this project to fully achieve its proposed outcomes, given its scope and ambitious timeframe, have become strongly apparent. In general, complex projects involving behaviour and practice change such as this one require more project time, and therefore it should come as no surprise that aspects of this project have not yet been achieved in full. Several core aspects of this project lend themselves to considerably longer timescales (7-10 years) to embed the work and to support sustainable results. These include advocacy activities with employers, support for livelihoods, and education provision up to the level of a recognised qualification. In particular, donors such as Comic Relief should recognise and take account of the need to commit longer term support to projects such as this one in order to maximise their potential and to sustain the results. In turn organisations like EveryChild and CWISH need to identify what is realistically achievable within shorter time frames and focus on those outcomes.

It would be useful for Comic Relief and ultimately for applicant organisations, to request a draft end of project evaluation plan to be assessed as part of the application process. Comic Relief should also consider asking applicant organisations for a Gantt chart which plots project activities against a timeframe. This would aid Comic Relief’s ability to analyse the project’s feasibility and help project implementers to identify and plan for some of the potential risks at an earlier stage.

REPORT ENDS