

ANNEXE 8.12

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE EVALUATION



ACRONYMS LIST

AFD	Agence Française de Développement
CB	Capacity building
CSOs	Civil social organisations
EF	ECPAT France (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of children for sexual purposes)
EI	ECPAT International
EL	ECPAT Luxembourg
F3E	French plateforme of CSOs
PACTES	Africa Programme Against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation
PARLE	Participation of children in Africa for a Network to Fight against the Sexual Exploitation of Children
REPERES	Reinforcement of the Protection of Child Victims or Children at Risk of Sexual Exploitation
SEC	Sexual exploitation of Children

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With its considerable expertise in the fight against sexual exploitation of children (SEC) both in France and internationally, the NGO ECPAT France (EF) set up, with the support of the French Development Agency (AFD), the first convention programme (CP) to fight against child trafficking and SEC.

Entitled PACTES¹, this CP aimed to strengthen the capacities of local civil society organisations (CSOs) to take care of SEC victims. Following on from PACTES, EF has continued its efforts to build the capacity of actors through two new successive CPs:

- REPERES² between 2015 and 2017, focusing on the creation of synergies between care and advocacy organisations;
- PARLE³ between 2018 and 2020, consolidating expertise and partnerships developed to integrate child participation in advocacy.

After ten years of interventions which strengthened capacity building on the African continent, the EF and AFD wished to assess the strategy and effects of the three CP cycles from a dual perspective, that is, retrospective and prospective. The evaluation was coordinated and monitored by a steering committee made up of the EF, including its regional coordination office in Burkina Faso, F3E, ECPAT Luxembourg (EL) and ECPAT International (EI); and entrusted to the Luxembourg company, Artemis Information Management SA. The work was carried out between March and October 2020, by a team of six experts including two European evaluators employed full-time by Artemis and four regional and local consultants for field collection. This approach had to be readjusted somewhat to cope with constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, but steps were taken to ensure it remained participatory throughout the entire work period. The evaluation was based on: a document review; remote (and to a lesser extent) face-to-face interviews; analysis of questionnaires sent to the CSOs; and an extensive iterative process. Despite the pandemic, the evaluation benefited from the availability and openness of the stakeholders, with 147 people being interviewed, 43% of whom were women. The objectives set out were achieved and led to the following conclusions.

Concerning the analysis of the implementation strategy

The cycle of the three CPs was developed according to a **highly-participative and bottom-up design** which facilitated partner adhesion. On the one hand, the partnership arrangement between EF, EL and EI proved to be relevant, both in terms of complementarity and expertise, as well as the use of ad hoc

¹ Africa Programme Against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation

² Reinforcement of the Protection of Child Victims or Children at Risk of Sexual Exploitation

³ Participation of children in Africa for a Network to Fight against the Sexual Exploitation of Children

partners. On the other, the arrangement with local partners suffered from a lack of coherence and legibility, especially concerning the status of the associated partners.

The documents relating to the CPs highlight the **networking** dynamic: EF has definitely taken steps in networking initiatives which have enabled exchanges and sharing of tools between certain partners, but the network still has a somewhat sluggish approach to running activities and to facilitating the exchanges. There is no theory of change for the network as such and some partners did not feel they belonged to a network. The creation of new coalitions in Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has not been successful and not really found its place in the overall coherence of the network.


The CP cycle, according to its title, is **built around the central theme of capacity building**. All of the associations were able to benefit from technical, organisational or advocacy capacity building (CB) although there is no CB strategy as such. The CPs' capacity building interventions are judged to be efficient; the added value of EF's offices in terms of monitoring, technical capacity building and advocacy can be acknowledged. However, discontinuity of partnerships (there are few historical partners and a discontinuity in the partnership status of CSOs) does not facilitate stabilisation achievements. Needs have been expressed at this level.


The second focus of this evaluation, which is at the heart of the CPs' implementation strategy, is **to increase the visibility and integration of SEC in child-protection systems**. This dimension constitutes **the major added value of PARLE** compared to the two previous CPs.

Finally, the PARLE CP has planned an **exit strategy from East Africa** but the methodological and operational aspects of this strategy have not yet been identified.

Concerning the retrospective analysis:

1. *The capacity building (CB) component according to the criteria of relevance and effectiveness.*

 **The relevance of the CB component is judged satisfactory.** The CPs respond to a real need of operational partners (OPs) and beneficiaries, although these needs are not clearly diagnosed or expressed in programme documents and/or in a CB plan. The CB axis at the heart of the three CPs responds to **obvious needs to improve the quality of the child-protection system**, including at CSOs' child-protection level, which are not necessarily equipped to prevent and respond to specific risks of SEC. The support provided is valued, whether in terms of the tools transferred, sharing of experiences or results of capitalisation efforts. The level of ownership at this level is considered strong. However, some limitations to its relevance were noted in the evaluation. These are: (i) the absence of a detailed analysis of needs; (ii) the integration of EI still appears to be half-hearted; and (iii) the discontinuity of operational partnerships.

 **Effectiveness**, in the sense of a satisfactory degree of achieving results **is not measurable as such**, due to the lack of monitoring data, a focus on outputs and sometimes a break in the logical chain of indicators, which blocks the analysis of results/outcomes. However, the evaluation does confirm the **high level of implementation of activities** planned by the CPs and focuses on the measured effects (the high level of activities implemented does not inform on the degree of achievement of results). Among these, **effects are confirmed** on improving the living conditions of children who have completed their education, the strengthening of various skills at their level (teamwork, self-esteem, rights, health, SEC), all of which contribute to improving self-protection. Programme activities respond to the needs expressed by the children in their testimonies. The evaluation also warns about the obstacles to confront when implementing activities and the increase in the SEC phenomenon during a health crisis.

2. The impact and sustainability of the component of the programme enhancing the visibility and integration of SEC in child-protection systems.

The cycle of the three CPs and the PARLE programme in particular, have had an undeniable effect on improving the level of knowledge of children, parents, communities and child-protection actors at all levels; **increasing the capacity to integrate SEC and the means of preventing and dealing with it; increasing the visibility** of the issue among these actors and its **integration into legislative and policy texts** relating to child-protection. By extension, the programmes have also contributed to increased and intensified collaboration between child-protection CSOs and between civil society and national institutions. However, **these effects are not uniform** across countries and partners, due to the different inherent capacities and national contexts. This renders it difficult to assess the extent to which these intermediate effects have impacted on the quality of child-care provision and of the child-protection system.

The issue of sustainability has been well understood and anticipated by EF and its partners in designing and implementing the CP cycle. However, it is limited, on the one hand, by the lack of historical continuity of partnerships, and on the other, by financial constraints faced by actors in the field, be it implementing partners or regional and national actors and institutions in the target countries. Although EF is not in a position to meet these needs alone, **formalising strategies to support structures in this field could be an additional factor in favour of sustaining the programmes' achievements.**

Concerning the prospective analysis

Five lessons were learned that emerged from this evaluation:

1. The transfer of tools to/among partners is an approach that works and generates effects in terms of capacity building and developing new approaches, but under certain conditions.
2. Long-term partnerships and long-term work on the same theme help to generate greater effects.
3. To ensure coherence of such programmes and the visibility of the effects they generate, partners need to unite and share a common vision and objectives, and to avoid resources and means being too thinly spread.
4. The lack of a shared and consolidated monitoring evaluation mechanism is detrimental to EF and the communication on the CPs' successes.
5. Ownership of the advocacy approach and mechanisms is dependent on the organisations' strategy and their willingness or not to embark on this path; their expertise on, and legitimacy for the SEC theme; the recognition of this legitimacy and access to key actors/decision-makers.

The evaluation **highlighted six CB good practices and added value on which to build and capitalise:**

- A flexible CB strategy
- The effectiveness of using peer educators
- The combination of CB and mainstreaming as a double lever for strengthening the child-protection system
- A continuous capitalisation process
- A bottom-up approach
- A programme oriented towards change of behaviour (but whose assessability has not been taken into account).

Regarding partnership, target and network-based logics for better integration and visibility of the theme:

In the future, it would be interesting to **intensify initiatives for motivating and facilitating the network made by CP partners** in order to stimulate more exchanges of experience and to multiply expertise within this network. EF has a leading role to play here. Several tools could be envisaged for this

purpose, especially digital, to encourage remote exchanges and capitalise on innovations brought to light during the first months of the Covid period.

Pooling resources and developing alliances with other actors active in child-protection, whether local or international, would seem to be a great way of multiplying the efforts made by EF and its partners and multiplying their effects tenfold.

The presence of EF inside certain platforms for coordinating and sharing experiences in northern countries can be not only another opportunity to develop new partnerships, but also to share its experiences and expertise and thus increase the visibility of SEC through these networks. While the initiative of building coalitions of CSOs active in SEC inspired and supported by EI is an interesting strategy in view of the above-mentioned elements, there would not appear to be a need to systematically create new coalitions.

To facilitate the extension of protection against SEC and thus improve its geographical coverage, it would be appropriate to continue to popularise the theme; train more associations and child-protection actors; and to pursue the implementation of replication mechanisms (tools, training of trainers, alliances, etc.).

The child rights-based approach is **very much integrated by EF and its partners**, both in the DNA of the organisations and in implementing interventions in the field. This could be strengthened by an analysis and intervention strategy on the root causes of SEC and child-rights violations, which are barely addressed in these CPs. Such an approach would further help to ensure children's rights are effectively protected in the long term.

The gender-based approach was also **taken into account** in EF's CPs. If SEC mainly affects girls and gender discrimination needs to be deconstructed, it might be useful in the future to pay more attention to the specific needs related to caring for boys and to involve men/boys more in the awareness-raising process.

The evaluation has made 21 recommendations

The recommendations proposed cover eight main themes: formulation and clarification of the programme(s), monitoring and valorisation of programme results, strategy and terms of the partnership, the animation of the network, capacity building, visibility and advocacy, strengthening the effectiveness of the programme's interventions and sustainability of its achievements, and the impact and scaling up of the PC(s). They are grouped as follows:

Methodological & conceptual recommendations		
To clarify	To anticipate	To change
<p>R1: Improve the intervention logic of the programme(s).</p> <p>R2: Formulate and clarify the strategic dimensions of the programme(s).</p>	<p>R3: Anticipate and prepare the exit strategy</p>	<p>R4: Strengthen the theory of change.</p> <p>R5: Address further the/some root causes of SEC in order to effectively enhance children's rights protection.</p>
Operational recommendations		
To formalise & structure	To reinforce	To measure & enhance
<p>R6: Pursue the bottom-up partnership approach.</p> <p>R7: Restructure the approach towards associate partners, if this status is to continue in the future.</p> <p>R8: Formalise the division of roles between EF, EL and EI.</p>	<p>R9: Define the targets for capacity building in clear way.</p> <p>R10: Structure the organisational and technical approach for the CB.</p> <p>R11: Work on a long-term basis with the same partner organisations.</p>	<p>R12: Set up an integrated monitoring and evaluation system.</p> <p>R13: Communicate the project results and further enhance the programmes' capitalisation efforts.</p>

Prospective recommendations		
To animate	To develop & promote	To impact
<p>R14: Develop a real dynamic for the partners' network activities' strategy in the programmes.</p> <p>R15: Formalise the network's facilitation strategy when drafting the next CP</p> <p>R16: Move from 'getting things done' to 'doing things together' and thus give the network its full dimension within the programme's framework.</p>	<p>R17: Formulate a clear strategy to enable visibility and integration of SEC.</p> <p>R18: Develop initiatives with regional organisations.</p>	<p>R19: Concentrate interventions on a more limited geographical perimeter.</p> <p>R20: Continue and expand training of child-protection actors to increase the visibility and recognition of SEC in their professional (or voluntary) practice.</p> <p>R21: Continue and increase efforts to monitor the enforcement of child-protection legislation.</p>