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Consultants' Report

September 2016

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## Ending Well

Evaluation of EveryChild's  
Responsible Exit Process –  
Synthesis Report

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# ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Full Title
CAC	Child Activity Centre
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CBCC	Community-based Childcare Centre
CBO	Community-based Organisation
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
CIS	The Commonwealth of Independent States (of former Soviet Union)
CPC	Child Protection Centre
CWISH	Children & Women Social Services & Human Rights
GIZ	German Society for International Cooperation
INTRAC	The International NGO Training and Research Centre
LAC	Legal Aid of Cambodia
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
P4EC	Partnership for EveryChild
PKL	Pedekezo Letu
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
READ	Rural Education and Development
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

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# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EveryChild was a UK international development charity, which closed in September 2016. In 2011, EveryChild played a key role in establishing Family for Every Child; an international alliance of national organisations with a proven track record in child care and protection. In June 2012, EveryChild took the decision to close all of their international programmes through a carefully managed process, and to transfer its income and assets to this new global alliance.

Between 2013 and 2016 EveryChild exited from 18 partners and/or country offices. To mitigate the impact of the exit, EveryChild Programme staff developed a set of [Responsible Exit Principles](#) accompanied by a series of tools. To hold themselves to account for how well they have kept to their own principles, and to share learning with others, EveryChild commissioned an external evaluation of their post-2012 exit process.

The evaluation focuses on the extent to which EveryChild achieved its aim of exiting responsibly from its country offices, and partners, from 2012 onwards. The core questions for this evaluation are:

- 1 Has EveryChild done what they set out to?
- 2 To what extent have EveryChild's principles of responsible exit been achieved?

The evaluation finds that the exit process implemented by EveryChild was impressive. They have managed to close down operations, and end partnerships, in 15 countries. Most partners are fulsome in their praise for the way in which EveryChild went about such a difficult process. Having decided to exit, EveryChild went about it in a considerate and careful way.

This report draws on the findings that emerged from the EveryChild evaluation to make recommendations for others seeking to exit in a responsible way, which promotes sustainability:

- See exit as opportunity to take sustainability seriously. Exit focuses the mind on genuinely sustainable development. Exit can be framed positively as an opportunity to do good development. As one partner said: "Exit promotes sustainability".
- To start now, and take a proactive approach to exit, enables enough time to allow for planning, implementation and capacity. If organisations wait until a funding crisis forces them to address exit, this will be too late. It will mean that exit, by necessity, will be rushed, under-resourced and badly done.
- Allow sufficient time – up to two years. In the EveryChild experience, with partners of more than five years, they estimated two years for exit. The length of partnership and the extent of dependence should affect the length of exit.
- Develop shared principles for exit that build on your core values. Exit principles that highlighted the core values in exit proved very useful for the EveryChild experience. They helped clarify what EveryChild was trying to achieve from exit, creating a common vision and vocabulary. They provided reassurance to a wide variety of stakeholders in the process. The principles were the basis for EveryChild management decisions, and gave strong guidance to the partners' planning processes.
- Let partners lead an inclusive planning process. It was also very important to let partners identify their own strategic priorities and develop their own operational plans for exit (in the light of these underlying principles).
- Be as open as you can about exit. EveryChild found that as they trusted staff with information as soon as possible about what was happening: why and when, this trust was repaid as staff and partners reacted responsibly.
- Increase levels of support to partners during exit. Communicate frequently through Skype, email and best of all face-to-face visits.
- Provide tailored capacity development support to partners and local stakeholders so they can take more responsibility for their future sustainability.

- Relentlessly monitor exit implementation. The EveryChild experience demonstrated the value of keeping on top of the partner's exit plans. They were able to ensure that deadlines were met and maintain healthy pressure to reach milestones. This energised the difficult change process.
- Apply and share learning from experience. EveryChild learned from partners' experiences of exit and consolidated this learning internally every six months. This meant they were able to make constant improvements during the process and modify the plans accordingly.
- Prepare for healthy exit by focusing on developing healthier relationships with partners. The quality of exit will reflect the quality of the pre-existing relationship. Dependent partners will find exit difficult.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

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### 2.1 Background

EveryChild was a UK international development charity formed in 2001 through a merger of two organisations<sup>1</sup>. Initially EveryChild implemented child protection and rights projects through country offices in Eastern Europe CEE/CIS countries. Over time EveryChild's strategy changed and in 2010-2011 EveryChild began to close, or localise, most of its country offices in Eastern Europe, initiating new programmes in partnership with national organisations in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

In 2011 EveryChild played a key role in establishing Family for Every Child: an international alliance of national organisations with a proven track record in child care and protection. In June 2012 EveryChild took the decision to close all of their international programmes through a carefully managed process, and to transfer its income and assets to this new global alliance. The aim was to increase the long-term impact on the lives of children.

Between 2013 and 2016 EveryChild exited from 18 partners and/or country offices in: Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Guyana, Cambodia, India, Nepal, Georgia, Moldova and Russia.

They were concerned to exit well, as one Country Director said: *"I have seen lots of International NGOs leave badly without any sustainability. Two years later there is nothing left. The manner of leaving can destroy years of good work"*. To mitigate the impact of the exit, EveryChild Programme staff developed a set of responsible exit principles accompanied by a series of tools. In order to hold themselves to account for how well they have kept to their own principles, and to share learning with others, EveryChild commissioned an external evaluation of their post-2012 exit process.

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### 2.2 Purpose

The evaluation focuses on the extent to which EveryChild achieved its aim of exiting responsibly from its country offices and partners from 2012 onwards. They wanted to find out:

- 1 Have we done what we set out to do? To what extent have EveryChild's responsible exit principles been achieved?
- 2 If we didn't achieve what we set out to, what were the reasons for this? Is there anything that we could have done differently? To what extent was the learning from earlier EveryChild partner/country office exits incorporated into EveryChild's responsible exit approach?
- 3 What implications do the findings of this research have for others overseeing programme exits in the future?

EveryChild commissioned INTRAC as external evaluators to find out from partners<sup>2</sup>, staff and external stakeholders how closely they had kept to their responsible exit principles and what other international agencies could learn from EveryChild's experience.

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### 2.3 Methods

The detail of methods used can be found in the Inception report, but in broad terms there are four main phases in this assignment:

- 1 Inception
- 2 Phase I Initial data gathering

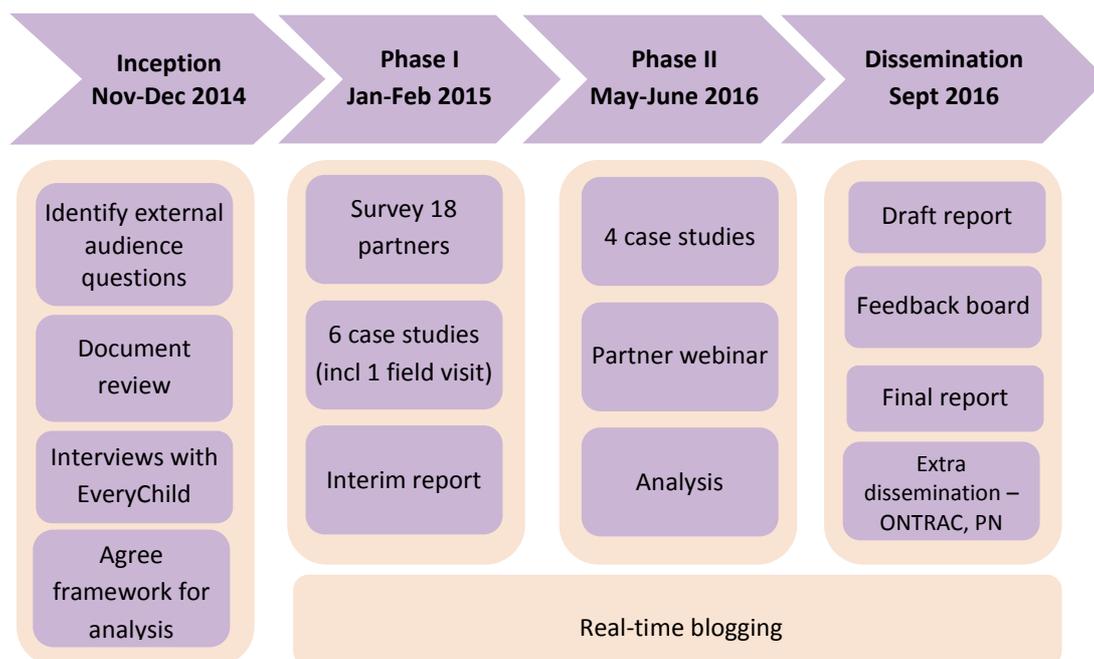
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<sup>1</sup> Christian Children's Fund of Great Britain and European Children's Trust

<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise stated in the report 'Partners' is taken to include Country Offices

3 Phase II Longitudinal data gathering and analysis

4 Dissemination



Following Phase I, some changes were made to the methodology for Phase II. Instead of repeating the six case studies, which were all desk-based with the exception of Malawi, INTRAC decided to commission local consultants to undertake field visits in each of the countries. It was felt that this would improve the depth and validity of the data gathered. All six countries were invited to participate in Phase II, and four countries chose to take part.

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## 2.4 Limitations

There are obvious limitations to the depth and range of local perspectives that can be gathered from the largely desk-based methodology. In Phase I, it was hard to access local stakeholders to get their external perspectives due to constraints in local language and communication technology. Furthermore, because many of the exits were still in process it was not the appropriate time. We tried to mitigate this by undertaking on-site visits from local consultants in Phase II in 2016.

To a considerable degree, whether or not EveryChild managed to keep to its principles of responsible exit was influenced by external factors outside of EveryChild's control; such as whether communities and local government had taken over responsibility, or whether local NGO partners had been able to find new funders and thereby continue to deliver services. EveryChild is aware of this challenge, which is why two of the exit principles begin with the phrase 'as far as possible'.

Phase II of this research took place between April and June 2016. This was still less than 15 months after exit for most of the case studies and in many cases was still too early to say what was genuinely sustainable. EveryChild has commissioned INTRAC to undertake a third phase, which is scheduled for five years after exit, in order to establish what remains, and increase understanding further about sustainability.

## 3 OVERALL SITUATION AT THE END OF PHASE I

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### 3.1 Survey feedback from all countries

Phase I ended in January 2015. The survey of the 18 partners in 15 countries in Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe / Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS) countries, and Latin America found EveryChild worked with a wide variety of organisations; some were local partners, others were localised field offices, and three were still EveryChild Country Offices. There were two broad groups of partners: ones EveryChild had worked with for one to five years, and another group they had partnered with for more than 10 years – and were relatively dependent on EveryChild.

For the shorter relationship group, with less dependence, exit was more straightforward and took between 3-12 months. The older partnerships were more complex, and responsible exit took two to three years; relationships were longer and deeper and the risks were higher. While they are still at different stages, 90 percent of respondents felt that their time scale was about right. Partners were particularly appreciative of the advance warning of closure. Although there were initially some mixed messages, they all found the exit principles helpful and the majority of respondents are either completely, or mostly, satisfied with the EveryChild exit.

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### 3.2 Case studies

From the survey, six countries were selected as case studies to get a more in-depth perspective from diverse contexts and experiences.

- India and Malawi were both long-term country offices closing down as part of exit. India had been working through 10 Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) partners, but Malawi had been working directly with 10 communities. Both Country Offices relied heavily on child sponsorship income. They did not feel there was a genuine opportunity to localise.
- Partnership for EveryChild (P4EC) in Russia was distinct because it was an ex-country office that had started localising from 2009. The 2012 exit decision was part of a much longer process. It was not easy to disentangle the challenges of localisation with the process of exit.
- Pendekezo Letu (PKL) had been a partner since early 2010, and EveryChild managed to hand-over responsibility for the extension and continuation of the Comic Relief grant to another UK NGO, ChildHope.
- Children & Women in Social Service & Human Rights (CWISH) Nepal had only received funding from EveryChild since 2011, so the global decision to exit came in the first year of a four-year programme.
- Legal Aid of Cambodia (LAC) in Cambodia worked hard to help design a new programme with EveryChild, funded by the Big Lottery. Although the project eventually started after the global decision to exit, EveryChild felt they had to honour the work put in by LAC and not simply pull out. This meant the project did not end until mid-2016. This programme was implemented jointly with another NGO, Khemara, but the case study focuses on LAC alone.

Comparing these six case studies with the overall survey, we see that these six represent the longer end of the spectrum in terms of length of exit. This is because the evaluation was specifically asked to focus on the more complex exits from longer partnerships. We intentionally excluded shorter ones, such as Zimbabwe, Uganda or Ghana, that only lasted just over 12 months (and were largely research-focused grants) and were therefore much easier and quicker to leave.

Furthermore, the case studies overly represent those who were later in exiting. Four of the sample case studies were still in the process of exit during the first phase of data gathering in January 2015. In contrast, EveryChild had already all exited from but one of their other partners (those not included in this evaluation as case studies) by the time this evaluation had begun.

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Malawi CO	Funding since 1995							
PKL Kenya		Funding since 2010						
India CO	Funding since 2001							
CWISH Nepal			Funding since 2011					
LAC Cambodia	Funding since 2008							
P4EC Russia	Localisation			Exit				
	<i>Localising decision</i>			<i>Exit decision in UK</i>			<i>Evaluation Phase I</i>	<i>Evaluation Phase II</i>

### 3.3 The Question of Localising

Before 2010, **exit** effectively meant **localising field offices**. EveryChild offices were leaders in the specialised field of reintegration of children, from large institutions, in contexts where there were few, if any, potential local partners. Empirically speaking, EveryChild offices were localised in Albania, Bulgaria, Russia, Ukraine and Romania. However, these were highly resource intensive and challenging processes. A number of mistakes were made, leaving strained relationships, and in some cases, long-standing animosity.

In March 2010, the EveryChild board made a conscious decision not to support further localising processes. They had found them expensive, hard-to-do well, labour and time intensive, and questioned whether it was really necessary, or even supportive, of the development of national civil society. But this decision was not well-communicated to the field. It did mean that when the global exit decision was made in 2012, localising was not considered as a viable option by EveryChild UK for its remaining country offices.

## 4 OVERALL SITUATION AT THE END OF PHASE II

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### 4.1 Case studies

Phase II ended in June 2016. For Phase II, INTRAC decided to commission local consultants to undertake field visits – in order to mitigate some of the limitations associated with conducting desk-based case studies, and improve the depth and validity of the data gathered. Emails were sent to all six countries that participated in Phase I as case studies. Four of these countries agreed to participate in Phase II: Malawi, India, Cambodia and Nepal. The four countries were each at different stages in the exit process:

- **EveryChild India** closed its country office in March 2015 and exited from the country after ten years of working with local NGO partners. Of the ten partners originally supported by EveryChild India, two have closed, three or four have managed to survive or at least maintain the status quo, and four or five are thriving.
- **EveryChild Malawi** also closed down its country office in March 2015, and exited from the country after ten years of working with local community-based organisations (CBOs). Legacy grants were provided to local partners, which lasted up until December 2015. Seven of the ten CBOs supported by EveryChild Malawi continue to be active.
- **EveryChild UK** took the decision to close all of its programmes in Cambodia in June 2012, one month after LAC and another organisation, Khemara, submitted a joint proposal on Justice for Children to Big Lottery for funding. However, the decision was taken to go ahead with the Justice for Children Project as planned and the project exit was set for June 2016.
- **Funding to CWISH in Nepal** ended in December 2015. In October 2011, EveryChild and CWISH started a joint Comic Relief-funded project, but nine months after the project started EveryChild UK decided to close down globally, meaning there would be no more funding for CWISH following the end of the project. The project had been due to end in September 2015, but funding was extended until December 2015, as the communities the project worked with had been badly affected by the 2015 earthquake.
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## 5 EXIT PROCESS FROM 2012 ONWARDS

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### 5.1 Who made the decision to exit and why?

EveryChild's decision to exit was not driven by financial crisis, but was an ideological and strategic one. They believed that with their limited resources they could have more impact on children's lives globally if they supported the development of a global alliance, rather than simply continuing as a medium-sized UK funder.

The decision to exit was made at a senior level, within EveryChild UK, in June 2012. A month later, the EveryChild Programmes team in London developed three principles to define and guide what responsible exit would mean in practice:

- 1 As far as possible, **ensure that the work we have done is sustainable** – this could be a continuation of services or lasting changes in children's lives.
- 2 **Ensure that exit does not have a detrimental effect** on the children and communities where we work.
- 3 As far as possible, **ensure that expertise and momentum** for change in the country is **not lost**.

These decisions were made in the UK. As one Country Director said: *"Although I was consulted, the decision had already been made in London. Our influence was really in 'how' exit should happen, not whether it should happen"*. Partners and Country Offices did feel that they had a meaningful influence on the process of exit. For example, as Country Offices were consulted, they felt they shifted the discussion from *"one about exit, to one about sustainability"*, helping partners to identify the support they needed to become more sustainable. Partners led the process of applying these three principles to their contexts, and prioritising their programmatic response to the challenge of sustainability.

This level of engagement helped partners and Country Offices develop ownership of the process. Some adjusted their thinking remarkably rapidly, developing their own exit and sustainability plans. They quickly rose to the challenge of leading a fundamental change process in their countries. LAC in Cambodia also knew before the project started that EveryChild would be exiting. However, for others, like CWISH in Nepal, it took much longer, with previous leadership slow to address the imminent change.

Of the case studies only P4EC in Russia never really owned the post-2012 exit process, due to the breakdown of trust during the previous localisation process. They saw the exit process as belonging to EveryChild rather than P4EC – it was *"their process"*, *"their milestones"*, *"their agenda"*. P4EC saw the term as one-sided, reflecting EveryChild's agenda rather than their own. As they said, *"one side's 'responsible exit' is the other side's ongoing struggle for survival, sustainability and impact"*. P4EC staff do not use the term 'responsible exit' and claim they are unfamiliar with the Responsible Exit Principles.

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### 5.2 To what extent was the learning from earlier exits incorporated into the responsible exit approach?

EveryChild had difficult past experiences of attempting to exit Country Offices under the guise of localisation. In the CEE/CIS countries like Romania, Bulgaria, Russia, Albania and Ukraine the previous localisation processes had not been smooth. EveryChild *"learnt how incredibly difficult it was to leave and how easy it was to do badly"* according to one staff member.

In Russia, in particular, the localisation process did not go well. P4EC Russia felt subjected to three separate due diligence processes (to take over the EU grant, to become an EveryChild partner, and to join Family for Every Child). While only one of these was required by EveryChild, the processes were time-consuming and left P4EC feeling deeply distrustful. This lack of trust was exacerbated by staff turnover at EveryChild before 2011, confusion about ownership of outputs and poor communications about transfer of assets. Peru also stands out as a painful experience. EveryChild tried to complete the exit from their country office in just two to three months (influenced by financial pressures and the need for budget

cuts). However, because it was rushed and underfinanced, actual exit dragged on and became costlier – with legal fees, tax complications and extra staff time required.

As EveryChild staff themselves admit: *“Through experiences like this, EveryChild has learnt the importance of investing time and resources into exits and planning them thoroughly. We have also learnt to be open and transparent during the exit process. Earlier approaches were more secretive and decisions were made from European offices without much prior notice. Later approaches have been much more collaborative.”*

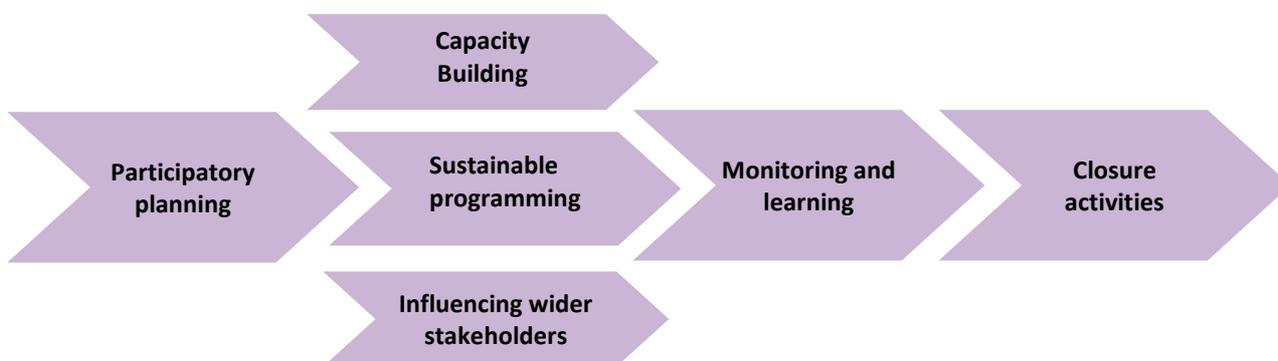
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## 5.3 Core elements to all exits

The case studies illustrate a number of elements common to all exit processes. Clearly each example used different quantities of these ingredients. Not surprisingly these elements reflect the responsible exit principles:

### Elements of exit

- i. Participatory planning for exit
- ii. Rigorously sustainable programming
- iii. Capacity-building of local partners (NGOs, CBOs of local government)
- iv. Influencing wider stakeholders at community, district and national level
- v. Systematic learning, documentation and sharing of good practice.
- vi. Institutional/Partnership closure activities



### 5.3.1 Participatory planning for exit

Having taken the decision to exit, EveryChild faced a huge challenge in getting partners and Country Offices to develop and implement their own strategy and operational plan for exit. They achieved this local ownership remarkably well in most cases.

EveryChild invested considerable time in communicating as openly and honestly as possible why the decision had been made, and what was happening. In the uncertain situation, this initially led to some confused and mixed messages, but what was clear, and repeated again and again, was that exit would be taking place. Furthermore, EveryChild committed to maintain (and in many cases increase) levels of communication and support during the exit process, which mitigated partners’ fears of being abandoned.

The Responsible Exit Principles also helped reassure partners that children’s well-being remained paramount. These principles were not a detailed blueprint plan, but three simple value-based aspirations. These enabled each of the partners to be free to develop their own plans that applied to their specific context.

EveryChild supported partners to develop their plans for exit through staff visits. During these visits EveryChild staff played a facilitative role, asking the difficult questions but leaving it up to partners to make decisions and prioritise. For example, in Malawi, EveryChild UK staff visited the country office in July 2012, and then again in December, to assist them in developing an exit plan. The exit strategy involved a fresh look at outcomes, not just continuing existing activities.

EveryChild Malawi actively engaged local communities. Having informed them about the impending exit, they convened an initial two-day meeting with community members to rank and prioritise activities. The resulting strategy was translated into annual operational plans and budgets split into six-month intervals.

Objectives	Activities	Strategy	Milestones 6 monthly	Extra funding	Justification	Risk	Mitigation

The plans were revisited internally every three months, and updated during the EveryChild UK visit – every six months. EveryChild UK provided oversight to ensure the exit strategy was implemented properly and adjusted in the light of learning.

In other cases, partners were slower to respond. For example, with CWISH in Nepal, throughout 2013 *“EveryChild kept asking us for our post-project plan”*, but it was not until April 2014 CWISH finally developed its own sustainability plan and exit strategy.

Another important element of the planning process was risk assessment. EveryChild facilitated a workshop with each partner to identify the risks that might increase for children once a project ends, and the actions that could be taken to mitigate them.

Risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigating action	Who is responsible	By when

This risk management workshop proved to be a key moment for PKL in Kenya. Not only did it help them adjust their programming, but it gave them confidence to continue without another donor if necessary.

### 5.3.2 Rigorously sustainable programming

The most important element of exit was making the programme work far more sustainable. As one Malawi staff member said: *“Programme work defines responsible exit. It is about what happens in communities when you leave”*. In the planning process partners identified:

- 1 Unsustainable programmes to be stopped
- 2 Sustainable programmes to handover to communities
- 3 Not yet sustainable activities which NGO partners and communities needed to fundraise for

#### 5.3.2.1 Stopping

Most NGO strategies are effective at identifying new activities to start, but notoriously poor at identifying which activities to stop. The exit process forced partners to be rigorous in naming the activities that they would stop doing because they would never be sustainable. For example, in Malawi, this included dropping plans to engage more with children living on the streets, and not implementing one of the ‘Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices’ studies. Some of the past activities, such as providing farm inputs were also discontinued.

#### 5.3.2.2 Handing over

Each of the partners also looked at which of their existing activities could be taken on by local stakeholders. For example, in Kenya, teachers who had already been trained by PKL were encouraged to take the initiative and pass on their knowledge to new teachers. In Malawi, the work on Early Childhood Development focused on catalysing 120 Community-Based Childcare Centres (CBCCs). They also continued

to stimulate and support community-led initiatives such as Children's Corners; Child Rights Clubs in schools, Mothers Groups and HIV support groups. The same has happened in Nepal, where staff believe that sustainable exit: *"is all about coordinating with existing structures"* as one put it. Another said: *"We are making community structures take more responsibility so that results are more sustainable."*

### 5.3.2.3 Fundraising for

Some of the critical activities required further financial inputs if they were going to continue. EveryChild helped partners identify and connect with potential future funding sources. The finest example comes from Kenya, where EveryChild was able to transfer responsibility for the Comic Relief grant to another UK NGO, ChildHope, to ensure no break in funding when EveryChild finished. As well as signposting to other international funders, EveryChild has helped partners identify local sources of funding. In India, rather than look for international funding, EveryChild encouraged and supported partners to seek funding from within communities, and from government authorities, as well as other Indian NGOs. In Malawi, communities have accessed support from the National Aids Commission.

### 5.3.3 Capacity building of key stakeholders

As part of exit and to enable handover of activities, EveryChild has focused even more on capacity building of partners, communities and local stakeholders. EveryChild India, for example, supported all partners to develop specific exit plans tailored to their needs. Partners were invited to participate in a Leadership Training Programme, which focused on areas such as strategic planning, programme management and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). The 12-month programme included monthly modules. Alongside this, EveryChild India helped partners to develop organisational development plans, strategic plans, and fundraising plans. They also supported partners to improve their documentation, and created opportunities for partners to meet with new donors and other local and international agencies.

Similarly, in Malawi, EveryChild provided tailor-made training to community based organisations in:

- Participatory Action Research; so that CBOs could identify priority issues.
- Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation.
- Resource mobilisation; including proposal development and grant management.
- Financial Management.
- Leadership and Management.
- Inclusion/disability.
- Child Protection Policy Development.

The capacity building emphasis has been repeated in other countries. EveryChild has often used Resource Alliance to assist on fundraising. As PKL in Kenya attest: *"Through EveryChild, we were able train in advocacy, research, resource-mobilisation – these are skills that we didn't have before. We can live with these skills for many years."*

### 5.3.4 Collaboration with government and national networks

As part of this focus on more sustainable programming, EveryChild has tried to build broader coalitions for change, with wider stakeholders at community, district and national levels. As one respondent said: *"In exit, external relationships with local stakeholders are key because they are there after you have left"*. For example, in Malawi, at the community level, EveryChild had focused on working with community structures on Child Protection, including a focus on child marriage. At district level, they had cooperated closely with District Councils and District Executive Committees. At national level, EveryChild had sought to maintain the momentum for change by supporting national networks, such as Girls Not Brides and Better Care Network. EveryChild also assisted the government in developing a national policy on street children. Similarly, in Cambodia, LAC lobbied hard with government officials on the Juvenile Justice Act, which was passed by the National Assembly on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2016 and is expected to be ratified by the end of August 2016.

### 5.3.5 Systematic monitoring and learning

A key characteristic of this exit process has been the relentless monitoring and learning that EveryChild has driven. This has happened at all levels; partners monitor their sustainability plans regularly, looking at the activities and milestones. The EveryChild Programmes Team in the UK has had six-monthly team reflection meetings, to review and identify on-going learning about the exit processes globally.

As part of its exit process, EveryChild Malawi has invested considerable time and financial resources in analysing and documenting programme learning. The Malawi office has produced national reports on programme learning about: *'Approach to ending child Marriage'* and *'Voluntary Savings and Loan Associations'*. They have also contracted an external consultant to document the Journey of EveryChild Malawi, highlighting achievements, lessons and best programme practices of working with children without parental care in Malawi. They also commissioned a video documentary for distribution to key government officials and international NGOs.

CWISH Nepal appreciated EveryChild's flexible and open approach to learning. There was a lot of learning from CWISH's beneficiaries, and if this had not been incorporated, it is likely that the project would not have achieved as much as it did. CWISH believes that this approach to learning has enabled interventions to remain sustained. Learning mechanisms throughout the exit process also helped to embed them.

This evaluation itself is a further indication of EveryChild's desire to document and share learning from their experience with a wider audience.

### 5.3.6 Institutional or Partnership Closure activities

A final key element in each of the exits has been the activities specifically relating to the ending of the partnership or the closure of the country office. As well as the expected final reports, EveryChild developed a number of tools to assist them to exit well and capture learning. These included the [Partnership Completion Report](#); [Letter of Recommendation to potential funders](#); Partnership Completion Final Skype Call, and Partnership Completion Six-month Follow-up Call. In particular, partners found that EveryChild's initiative to do a follow-up call six months after exit both unique and helpful for closure.

In both India and Malawi, EveryChild hosted a one-day [Legacy Conference](#) to mark and celebrate the closure of the country office. The aim was also to share learning with local stakeholders from the government and NGOs. Partners and communities had the opportunity to reflect on their progress and take responsibility for next steps.

A learning workshop was also held in Kathmandu in December 2015, with stakeholders from the communities, districts and government, to discuss the project's achievements and learning. During a final visit in June 2016 to Cambodia, a national workshop was held to share experiences and lessons from the project, and challenge stakeholders to think about what needed to happen once ratification of the Juvenile Justice Law was complete.

For country offices such as India and Malawi other institutional closure activities included:

- Final communication with children;
- Destruction of child sponsorship data;
- Handing over documentation to pass onto Family for EveryChild;
- Finalising human resource contracts;
- Disbursing legacy grants to CBOs;
- Finance – valuation and disposal of assets and finally closing bank accounts;
- Legal de-registration;
- Communication to auditors, tax authorities, and the general public;
- Leaving the office and returning the keys to the landlord;

## 6 TO WHAT EXTENT WERE THE THREE PRINCIPLES OF RESPONSIBLE EXIT ACHIEVED?

The core questions for this evaluation are:

- Have EveryChild done what they set out to?
- To what extent have EveryChild's principles of responsible exit been achieved?

Although EveryChild have exited from all the case study countries, it is still too early to answer the latter question in the case of Cambodia and Nepal, where exit has only taken place very recently. However, there are early indications about which activities are likely to survive, and which are less likely to continue in these countries. Even in the cases of India and Malawi, where exit took place over a year ago, it is still too early to fully assess the mid to long term sustainability of EveryChild's interventions – which will be the focus of Phase III that is due to take place five years after exit.

However, whether or not these responsible exit principles<sup>3</sup> are achieved is outside of EveryChild's control. Responsible exit for EveryChild requires 'responsible entry' of others. Local stakeholders will need to step into new levels of responsibility. As the Director of Children's Affairs in Malawi said: *"We have a workable exit strategy, but the challenge is on the government, chiefs, MPs and communities to ensure activities continue"*. Although EveryChild can encourage this, it is not something they can ultimately produce.

Except for P4EC in Russia, all partners were very aware of the three principles. The principles were used to guide decision-making throughout exit. Although sometimes interpreted slightly differently by partners, having just three simple principles was extremely effective. In some places, partners gave more weighting to some over others; for example, in Cambodia, LAC placed more emphasis on principle three.

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### 6.1 As far as possible ensure that the work we have done is sustainable

**Principle 1 'As far as possible ensure that the work we have done is sustainable – this could be a continuation of services or lasting changes in children's lives'** is about long-term sustained impact, where past activities continue to bear fruit beyond exit.

Evidence gathered in Phase II reveals diverse outcomes in different places. While some activities stopped, and others have reduced or changed, many are surviving and even thriving following the exit of EveryChild. A positive example is the expansion of livelihoods activities in Malawi, where there has been a four-fold increase in Village Savings and Loan Associations. Generally speaking, it is those activities that were heavily resource dependent that have done least well, and those activities that the community could easily take on themselves, or those that were focused on advocacy, that have done better. Overall, it was remarkable to see what remained in each of the case study countries, following the exit of EveryChild.

#### 6.1.1 Malawi

In Malawi, there have been particularly positive changes in community attitudes to child marriage, child protection, child abuse and child labour, which have been sustained since exit. Consequently, child marriage and child labour have been almost completely eradicated in the communities in which EveryChild worked. Children continue to be protected and still participate in CBO activities. One Malawian community leader colourfully put it: *"EveryChild's departure is like the end of the tarmac road. The dirt road continues. It will be slower and bumpier, but we will get there all the same"*.

Furthermore, exit has encouraged increasing numbers and activities by community groups like Village Savings and Loan Associations, CBCCs, Children's Corners and Child Rights Clubs in schools. However, the

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<sup>3</sup> 1. As far as possible, ensure that the work we have done is sustainable – this could be a continuation of services or lasting changes in children's lives; 2. Ensure that exit does not have a detrimental effect on the children and communities where we work; 3. As far as possible, ensure that expertise and momentum for change in the country is not lost.

picture differs across the country. In Bulala district, numbers of Village Savings and Loan Associations have increased dramatically, and communities have taken on responsibility both for the CBCCs as well as supporting the sponsored children through secondary school. However, the withdrawal of funding, after EveryChild's departure, had an adverse effect on education in Dowa district. The CBCCs declined, and in some cases no longer provide food for children.

### **6.1.2 India**

In India, sustainability was a challenge, due to the complete dependence of some partners on EveryChild. Yet most programmes and services are continuing, although not all of them, and not necessarily in the same way. Some projects and programmes were only due to run for a limited period, and came to a natural end at the time of exit. Others have been scaled back or are being implemented in different ways either due to a lack of funding or a lack of community support.

Following the exit of EveryChild, 60% of Child Activity Centres (CACs) were closed because of a lack of funding. However, some partners have started new CACs, with greater input from local communities, and in some cases with new funding support. Through grassroots level advocacy and networking, partners were able to influence local government, and have put themselves in a better position to demand support from them.

In the communities where EveryChild partners worked, there has been a positive impact on children and communities; evidenced by increased numbers of children in education, reduced numbers of children engaged in child labour, reductions in school dropout rates, changes in community attitudes to issues such as child marriage and girl-child education, and increased community competence to respond to these issues.

### **6.1.3 Nepal**

In Nepal, the earthquake that struck the country on April 25<sup>th</sup> 2015 had a considerable effect on the exit process; the three districts in which the project was working were among those most affected. The project was extended from September to December 2015, and activities were revised to ensure that the immediate needs of beneficiaries, and stakeholders, were met. The earthquake meant that some parts of the sustainability plan were not completed, but overall there appeared to be a reasonable level of lasting change for children, communities, organisations and government. There are strong indications that EveryChild, CWISH and implementing partners have done a good job in ensuring the majority of reintegrated children have remained with families. There are also changes in attitudes towards child domestic workers and improved relationships. EveryChild feels that feasibly even more impact could have been sustained if it were not for the earthquake.

Since the end of the project, many programme activities have concluded, such as outreach centres, training for police, non-formal education, training labour officials in litigation, and training to savings and credit cooperatives in management and accounting. Except from non-formal education, CWISH did not expect that any of these would continue after the project, as they were finite activities. The reasons cited by CWISH and partners are a lack of financial resources to continue with these activities, and an inability to find replacement funding, despite repeated attempts.

However, a number of activities are continuing even though they are not happening at the same level of intensity, with the same funding support, or depth of monitoring. Livelihoods training to families of reintegrated children will be taken over by cooperatives in different communities. In addition, although Reflect Centres are not running in exactly the same way as they did during the project, families sometimes gather and discuss their own issues in the three districts, and through schools and outreach centres. Finally, lots of learning now sits with CWISH and implementing partners, who are integrating lessons into new or existing projects.

### **6.1.4 Cambodia**

In Cambodia, LAC services to children were reduced without EveryChild funding. They were hoping to secure replacement funding through another funder, though Cambodia is not presently a priority for donors. As the project funding only ended in June 2016, it is too early to assess the sustainability of

EveryChild's work in Cambodia. One of the anticipated legacies is the development and advocacy for the passage of the Juvenile Justice Law. In addition to the law, another aspect of the anticipated legacy of EveryChild is the increased capacity around Juvenile Justice at the sub-national level.

There are also many indications of lasting change. Advocacy for the Juvenile Justice Act will continue from LAC until the act is ratified, and they are deeply committed to this issue. Currently, LAC is in the process of working with Plan International, CARE International, the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to find funding to support some work in the juvenile justice sector and to continue services, particularly representation. Trainings led by LAC on child-friendly practices, legal representation, and others have contributed to changed practices in prisons and courts. These are likely to continue to impact children positively.

As LAC's Executive Director said *"EveryChild will leave a legacy on child friendly procedures in criminal justice for Cambodians to replicate across the country in the future"*. However, from the end of June 2016, LAC stopped taking on new cases for legal support and representation to child victims of crime or children accused of crime.

### 6.1.5 Kenya (Phase I case study only)

PKL, in Kenya, have been the least affected by exit, as ChildHope secured funding for a follow-up grant from Comic Relief (which EveryChild helped draft the proposal for). Therefore up until January 2015, services continued as funding continued. PKL attest that *"So far there have been no negative changes as a result of EveryChild exit."* Reports suggest that child protection structures are already becoming embedded into formal and non-formal schools. Furthermore, cases of child labour are reported and reducing. The community structures are also helping to trace parents who changed locality. The proof of on-going sustainability, however, will only be seen when ChildHope exits too.

### 6.1.6 Russia (Phase I case study only)

EveryChild's exit from P4EC in Russia has reduced the reach of some of their services. While P4EC have found other funders, including St Petersburg City Government, their services are at a reduced level and there are shortfalls in the core budget, which they are meeting through consultancy work. Services developed under the Prevention, Protection and Reintegration Programme continue, but have been scaled back until longer term funding is secured. However, the Loss of Parental Care Index, developed as part of the EveryChild support, is still going strong.

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## 6.2 Ensure that exit does not have a detrimental effect on children and communities

This principle can be **paraphrased as 'do no harm' to children and communities through exit**. One way in which this has been interpreted is through the emphasis on ensuring continued child protection.

In Kenya, the programme is on-going with no adverse effects. Child protection policies in schools have helped retention in education, while PKL provides continuous training to the community-based child protection committees, offering support on issues such as legal representation and capacity building.

In Malawi, child protection activities are continuing post exit. According to ex-EveryChild staff *'the most significant change is in protecting children from abuse and exploitation'*. In the exit process, EveryChild trained all CBOs in child protection, and helped each of them develop their own policy. They helped all ten CBOs to highlight protection risks in exit, and put in place mitigation measures. Furthermore, child protection systems have become strong at community level with Child Protection Committees, by-laws, and government agents. There are now clear procedures for reporting to police any child abuse as a criminal act.

In Nepal, although 30 Child Protection Committees (CPCs) and 45 School Management Committees/Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) received training to develop action plans to protect children in their community. However, CPCs and PTAs, have not taken up the responsibility for protecting children in the community as robustly as hoped. Sensitisation and informal advocacy are going on in

schools, but the village level CPC is not as strong, or active, as it was during project implementation. Expertise have also remained with the NGOs, and government agencies on awareness raising, policy advocacy, child protection and replacing child domestic workers with adult workers.

In addition to continued child protection there is also the question of whether children and communities are adversely affected as programmes are scaled back.

While PKL in Kenya is still unaffected, the other country case studies reveal that exit is likely to diminish services to children in some ways. In Dowa district, in Malawi, the loss of education bursaries means that of the 16 children in secondary school, 14 have been sent to cheaper schools by their parents and two children have dropped out of education. In India, there is likely to be a detrimental impact, because local NGOs are able to support fewer children in the absence of EveryChild support. In Cambodia, it is likely that the children and communities that LAC works with will be affected, but it is not yet clear to what extent. It is unlikely that the government will take over these services as it is not a priority yet.

In Russia, children were affected by EveryChild's exit as P4EC could not carry out the same level of service provision. They believed that, had EveryChild continued funding, they would have not only been able to keep existing systems going, but would have been able to replicate these models elsewhere. But *'do no harm'* is not the same as saying *'you should have done more good'*.

It is difficult to determine the extent of this detrimental impact, especially if you take into account the counter-factual argument above. What is clear is that EveryChild, and partners, have worked extremely hard to minimise adverse impact. For example, in India, although children and communities were initially upset about exit, and struggled to understand it, respondents hope that the actual effect on children and communities will be minimal as the vast majority of child-focused services, particularly the Child Activity Centres (CACs) will continue in some shape or form. In some cases, children and communities have even stepped in to run CACs, increasing their participation and ownership of these activities. Efforts by EveryChild India to link partners, Child Rights and Protection Centres (CRPCs), and individuals within communities, to sources of local government support, alongside work to raise awareness of entitlements, have also helped to reduce the negative effects of exit on children and communities.

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### 6.3 Ensure that expertise and momentum for change in the country is not lost

This third principle **'As far as possible, ensure that expertise and momentum for change in the country is not lost'** focuses on wider changes in society and sectoral change. Once again time will tell whether this principle has been realised.

Many of the case studies have invested time and effort in catalysing, supporting and strengthening local NGO networks, such as Girls Child Network, in Kenya, and Girls Not Brides and Better Care Network, in Malawi. While the Girls Not Brides network remains vibrant and active, one year after exit, it appears that the Better Care network is no longer functioning. In Russia, collaboration between the three networks developed under the EveryChild programme is continuing, although some are more active than others.

In many countries, exit involved a greater focus on advocacy, to broaden the momentum for change, into national and government circles. For example, in Malawi advocacy on child marriage through Girls Not Brides, Better Care Network, and meetings with Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare, contributed to the adoption of the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Bill in February 2015, which increased the minimum age of marriage from 16 to 18 years. EveryChild's work with the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs in developing a National Strategy on Street Children has continued. In India, the advocacy involved strengthening legal frameworks for child rights and had a significant impact on the wider policy environment for children.

In Cambodia, LAC has focused on ensuring that the Juvenile Justice Act was passed, as this put more responsibility on the government for the legal representation of juveniles. Although LAC is worried that they will not have the resources to continue pushing the government, momentum is strong among government and civil society organisations to support this law, alongside the Cambodian government.

In Nepal, the government with active support, lobbying and advocacy of national and international NGOs and development partners, is fairly active and is taking a keen interest in child rights issues. CWISH has also worked closely with Village and Municipal Development Committees, so that no one employs Child Domestic Workers, through what they call the Green Flag Movement for creating child labour-free zones. Although the momentum for Green Flag is on hold at the moment, it has done fairly well in ward no. 14 of Lalitpur municipality, and three wards (16, 20 and 21) have been declared child labour free, as part of the campaign.

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## 6.4 Sustainability of partners

The sustainability of partners was intentionally not mentioned in the responsible exit principles. This was seen as something beyond EveryChild's remit and capability, and secondary to the focus on sustainable services and impact with children.

Nevertheless, there has been some progress towards sustainability of partners. PKL, for example, has been able to diversify its income streams – having talked about it for some time. Other partners too, like CWISH in Nepal, have also been able to develop a resource mobilisation strategy through the exit process.

In Malawi, seven of the ten CBOs supported by EveryChild continue to be active. In India, the impact of exit on the sustainability of partner NGOs is also mixed. Of the ten local partner NGOs, two have closed (FENCE and SGGKK), three or four are managing to survive, and four or five have built on the foundation left by EveryChild to become stronger and more sustainable organisations.

One former partner, Rural Education and Development (READ Nepal), has moved from being a local community organisation, to an NGO fully funded by EveryChild, and is now an independent state-level organisation with a diverse funding base. While they struggled in the first few months following EveryChild's exit, they are now much stronger than they were before. Although many EveryChild partners recognised that they would struggle post-exit, due to their high level of dependency, as one respondent said: *"It is a good struggle"* because they will no longer be dependent on one donor. Many will be partly community funded, they will have become better at fundraising, and they will be in a position to take advantage of government schemes.

# 7 LEARNING CONCLUSIONS FROM EVERYCHILD'S EXIT EXPERIENCES

## 7.1 An impressive exit process encouraging sustainability

This was an extremely impressive exit process by EveryChild. They managed to close down operations and end partnerships in 15 countries. Most former partners were fulsome in their praise for the way in which EveryChild went about such a difficult process.

For example, in Kenya, PKL felt that EveryChild *“did the best they possibly could. They did things that no other donors have previously done”*. They believed that EveryChild went the *“extra mile”*. In Nepal, CWISH staff said: *“They were not interfering. They always respect the group realities. We appreciate this most. They were flexible in response to challenges and learning.”* The LAC respondents from Cambodia also said that *“EveryChild had done all they could”*. Even in Russia, where the relationship was already undermined before the exit process began, they felt EveryChild did what they could from 2012 onwards. When exit did eventually take place, *“the partnership came to an end quietly and smoothly”*, according to EveryChild staff.

While respondents did highlight a few areas for improvement, most echoed the sentiments of the CWISH Programme Manager who, when asked with the benefit of hindsight, what EveryChild could have done better in exit, replied: *“They have done an amazing job. Together we have achieved very significant results.”*

Most encouragingly the exit process shifted EveryChild's partners towards more responsible and sustainable programming. Many now engage more intentionally and productively with government and other NGOs. Ironically, those partners that have struggled most with exit may be in the best long-term position for survival. Partners, like P4EC in Russia, may ultimately be more sustainable because they have had to look locally for support rather than being passed on to another international funder. In India, EveryChild decided not to merely pass on their NGO partners to other international donors, but to actively encourage them to link up with more local government and local fundraising. Consequently, many programmes and activities (such as Child Activity Centres) are at least part funded by local communities. As one respondent said: *“community fundraising was particularly successful and partners came to feel very proud of this”*. Furthermore, this has resulted in increased community ownership. As another respondent said: *“It would have been good to involve the community, and ask for contributions from the beginning of the project. If this had been done, activities would be sustainable by now”*.

Exit encouraged EveryChild to take the capacity building of their partners even more seriously. The emphasis on capacity building was not so that partners could manage the funder's grants more efficiently (as is the case with so much 'compliance-oriented' capacity building) but was genuinely focused on helping partners become more autonomous, and self-sustaining. Thus there was less self-interest in EveryChild's capacity building during exit than tends to be the case in other INGO's<sup>4</sup>.

All partners highlighted a variety of capacity building benefits. P4EC, in Russia, for example, pointed out the experience gained through taking over management of an EU grant. LAC, in Cambodia, found the emphasis on M&E particularly helpful. Others mentioned the value of technical support in fundraising and business planning, while some discussed documentation support – helping partners to record their past work, and communicate it to new funders. In India, partners especially appreciated the leadership training programme, which *“gave partners the opportunity to explore alternatives and take ownership over their organisations and their work. They felt prouder and stronger”*.

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<sup>4</sup> See James and Hailey, 2007, 'Capacity Building for NGOs', INTRAC

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## 7.2 Carefully planned, owned and contextualised change process

The three principles of responsible exit proved invaluable. They created a safe space to discuss exit and understand the underlying reasons behind it. The principles reassured staff, board, partners and communities that this was a considered process, which prioritised children's welfare, and meant that EveryChild would not suddenly walk away. They helped allay any partners' fears that they would be treated differently from others. The three principles were simple, memorable and applicable across all work. They provided a good framework for decision-making. As one staff member also said: *"Having principles helped us to be very conscious and put extra effort into following them."* They were also a motivating force. The overarching principles, however, were not too prescriptive. They allowed the partners the space to identify their own priorities during the detailed planning process.

Initially, the EveryChild programmes team spent a lot of time explaining and listening to partners, encouraging them to give feedback that they took on board. There was considerable up-front preparation: *"Exit was initially a big shock for many, but the Country Director worked closely with them to alleviate fear and see the opportunities within exit"*. The exit planning process in the India and Malawi Country Offices involved staff in a highly participatory process. This was particularly important because country office staff were obviously most affected by the exit decision – essentially, they would be losing their jobs. On the face of it, getting them to own and support a process that would end with their own redundancy was a huge task, but one which they largely achieved.

The participatory planning process involved not only staff, but also local partners, communities and children themselves. This helped each come to terms with the impending exit. Partners were actively encouraged to develop their own measurable exit plans and to seek community participation in the process. For example, in India, staff supported partners to develop a range of tailored plans that enabled partners to identify and articulate the capacity building support required. In turn they began to think carefully and strategically about what they would like to do following exit and how this would be resourced. Exit planning was cascaded down to communities, who also developed their own sustainability plans, which resulted in communities becoming more active in continuing activities through Child Rights Protection Committees, for example.

Some partners took longer to respond to the impending exit. CWISH, in Nepal, were quite reluctant to face the reality of exit. As one staff admitted: *"We should have focused more on sustainability at the start. We only began to take it seriously in Year 3 of the 4-year project. It could have been earlier"*.

An inclusive participatory process was not only essential to promote ownership, but it also enabled partners to develop more contextually appropriate responses. EveryChild found that, *"We need to recognise that although we have certain ideas about how support should be provided, they might want to do things differently and this can work just as well. Need to respect this. Although we had the responsible exit principles, we took a different approach to exit in each context and this worked"*. In Cambodia, for example, LAC were not willing to have their grant transferred to another international NGO as they believed that the different style of grant management from potential funders would not be appropriate to their context.

However, some partners mentioned that EveryChild's exit would have been even better if there had been more contextual nuance. For example, the Malawi office still feel that London did not appreciate the depth of personal cost to staff who chose to stay on in a jobs-scarce economy (only 5% of the population is in formal employment). In Russia, EveryChild failed to understand some of the legal issues surrounding track record and copyright which meant that P4EC had to start from scratch in certain areas.

EveryChild helped partners develop detailed exit and sustainability plans with clear indicators and milestones every six months. Breaking the plan into bite-sized, six-monthly chunks made it less overwhelming, and also helped maintain the urgency (as two years can seem like a long way off). Partners appreciated these plans as it meant none of the important milestones were intentionally missed. *"Exit indicators helped us keep on track both time-wise and to monitor our progress against our responsible exit principles"*.

Yet despite the clear plans, they were not rigid, but were continually adjusted in the light of experience and learning. The plans were flexible in adapting to changing local circumstances, such as PKL's support

through ChildHope, P4EC Moldova's extension of USAID project, and Malawi's support to the government strategy on street children. Whilst pushing deadlines, EveryChild retained some flexibility over final exit dates.

EveryChild was less flexible, however, on the issue of localisation of field offices. After the difficulties of localising in some countries in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union States, EveryChild was unlikely to support the Malawi or India office to localise. As these offices were on the point of closing in early 2015, and EveryChild would lose great staff and effective programmes, some staff questioned the wisdom of that decision. Localising would have been difficult and expensive, but in the long term it may have been a better option. After all, despite the challenges with the others, most localised offices are still functioning five years on.

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### 7.3 Given enough time and money and staff support

EveryChild resourced the exit process generously. In particular, they gave exit enough time. Most exit processes were planned over two years; this meant that partners felt they had enough notice and were not taken by surprise. The long lead gave them enough time to identify and mitigate risks.

Many partners described how other funders suddenly announced that they were ending the relationship, leaving them unprepared and feeling powerless. The long lead time also helped late starters like CWISH to have enough time to be more intentional and focused on responsible exit. Because the process was not rushed, this gave partners sufficient time to genuinely involve their staff and communities. Communities, in particular, needed enough time to prepare for exit, as well as to develop and implement their own plans on how they could sustain the services.

As well as time, EveryChild provided sufficient financial resources. P4EC in Russia for example, particularly appreciated being allowed to use exchange rate gains to cover service provision costs during the exit period. The EveryChild leadership resolutely protected the partner budgets during exit, withstanding the pressure to cut costs and transfer the extra savings to Family for EveryChild.

The financial resources were reduced gradually. P4EC Russia valued that EveryChild tapered out P4EC Russia's funding over 2 years and 8 months rather than stopping it in one go. These 'parachute payments' gave them time, and the incentive, to seek alternative funding, and softened the blow to organisational finances, giving them security over the exit period.

As well as finances, EveryChild provided intensive staff support to the process. They invested considerably in maintaining relationships. According to one partner: *"EveryChild has listened more than of our other donors and have taken on board our suggestions."* During the exit process, EveryChild staff visited partners regularly – at least twice a year. In many cases, they also set up regular Skype calls to check in on progress (every four to six weeks with country offices). As well as frequent visits from the programmes team, EveryChild UK provided high profile leadership support. For example, in Malawi alone, the then Executive Director visited in July 2013 to communicate about exit with Government ministries and community leaders. One of the EveryChild board member's also visited in November 2014, and the current Executive Director attended the Malawi Legacy Conference in January 2015.

Some partners believe that EveryChild could have done even more to support the development of fundraising skills and capacity prior to, and during the exit process. Although some support was provided, one partner would have liked EveryChild to allow them to use funds to pay the salary of a fundraiser. Another mentioned that, *"EveryChild should help us find another donor"*. In one case, however, EveryChild's main concern was that the partner had been too successful at fundraising and might have too much money to absorb.

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## 7.4 Open and honest communications

EveryChild knew from prior exits, and learnt again quickly, the importance of open and honest communications.

Soon after the exit decision in 2012, EveryChild tried to be open with partners, but because of the uncertainty and confusion within EveryChild at that time, this resulted in mixed messages. As one staff member admitted *“It was very difficult as we were not sure what was going to happen. At what stage do you communicate? If you tell people early you risk losing them. Our mixed messages in 2012 caused hiccoughs and awkward moments, but no lasting damage; though we had to spend a lot of time reiterating and rebuilding”*.

The main area of confusion was about Family for Every Child. When initially envisaged it was assumed that most of EveryChild’s partners would become part of the global alliance. CWISH in Nepal understood that they would be part of the founding membership (though this may have been a misunderstanding). But as the concept developed, members of the alliance opted for a more exclusive approach to retain quality and allow for manageable growth. CWISH were not initially invited into the inner circle (as the scoping for Nepal had not yet taken place).

This meant that the incentive of becoming part of a global movement, and also learning from peers, was no longer there for some partners. For countries like Malawi, for example, there is no EveryChild continuity yet as there is no local NGO member of the Family to compensate for the closure of the Country Office and loss of on-going learning.

From 2013 onwards, however, communications improved. EveryChild worked hard to ensure that communication was more consistent, with people sending the same message and documenting what had been said. They tried to explain clearly why decisions were made, and who made them. Drip-feeding information to partners on a regular basis, and providing updates face-to-face, worked well, as messages were not always fully understood the first time round.

LAC in Cambodia for example appreciated that EveryChild *“were clear from the start”* with them and that they always kept LAC informed about the restructure and exit plan. EveryChild staff tried hard to *“get things out on the table and not duck difficult conversations.”*

The trust they placed in partners with their open and honest communication was rewarded. EveryChild feared that partners would not really understand the ideological reason for exit, but in India and Malawi in particular, not only staff, but also partners embraced the reason for change. As one community member in Malawi said: *“I was very happy because EveryChild told us why they were pulling out. Our community had already benefitted. It was high time that other children in the rest of the world benefitted.”*

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## 7.5 Relentless monitoring, evaluation and learning

The constant monitoring is a striking aspect of the exit process. The six-monthly review and update of each partner’s exit plan revealed both partners, and EveryChild areas, where decisions and change were necessary. Frequent monitoring kept the momentum going, meant that plans did not slip unduly and deadlines were met. The monitoring also meant that the exit processes were constantly adapted and improved; they learnt along the way.

This learning from an individual partner level was consolidated within EveryChild through six-monthly reflection sessions, with the whole Programmes team, as well as senior management. These looked at project work, reviewed progress on all the partners plans for sustainability, identified what was going well or not so well, reflected on exit principles and highlighted any learning around exit and closure. In addition, they intentionally tried to learn from others by joining an Action Learning Set of UK NGOs involved in exit.

Within EveryChild, including the Malawi and India offices, the human resource department also conducted regular staff surveys (initially every two years, but from 2014 this was increased to six-

monthly), to check how people were feeling about exit. This helped ensure that staff were able to cope with the considerable changes.

As part of the final stage of exit, EveryChild staff conducted a 'Partnership Completion Final Skype Call' and also wrote up a 'Partnership Completion Report'. Six months after the official exit, EveryChild also did a 'Partnership Completion Follow-up Call' to find out from partners how things were going, and what could have been improved about the exit process. While one partner found all this attention a bit much, the majority found these calls extremely helpful, not only to consolidate learning, but also for healthy closure.

For some of the partners, the Malawi Country Office in particular, analysing, documenting and disseminating learning was a key element in the exit process. Other partners, like PKL in Kenya would have liked more of this. They suggested exit would have been improved if they had *"made a documentary about the exit strategy to have been created, which would celebrate the journey made"*. They would have liked more opportunities for exchanges, and also learning from other EveryChild partners, through more global and some regional meetings.

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## 7.6 Quality of exit depends on the quality of relationship

There is a clear correlation between the quality of exit and the quality of the pre-existing relationship with the partner. EveryChild realised this from their rocky localisation processes. This was why continuity was an accepted principle of exit:

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*"There was another unwritten criterion for exit which was to maintain existing partner management relationships within EveryChild's team wherever possible in order to sustain existing relations between partners and their EveryChild focal points and EveryChild's own institutional memory about projects and to minimise disruption to partners and communities by extension."*

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EveryChild had focused on strengthening its approach to partnership, particularly since 2011. It developed a considered and comprehensive process which allowed for an annual two-way monitoring of the quality of the relationship. PKL, in particular, appreciated the opportunity it allowed for the organisations to evaluate each other and identify agreements and disagreements between the two organisations. Healthy pre-existing relationships and corresponding *"high levels of trust with many partners meant we could address challenges linked to exit constructively"* – according to one staff member.

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## 7.7 Quality of relationship depends on quality of people

The quality of relationship, and quality of exit, was heavily influenced by the particular individuals in each of the organisations. How well partners responded to exit was closely correlated with the leadership, their personalities, and their appetite for managing change. In some countries, like Ethiopia, leadership proved a block to change, whereas in Malawi and India, leadership was particularly forward-thinking. The Country Directors provided exemplary leadership and as one respondent said: *"He got the big picture. He understood the global rationale for EveryChild's exit. He was able to transmit this understanding to staff and them to communities"*. The fact that EveryChild managed to retain his services to the end made a big difference. It contributed to staff remaining motivated and working to the end.

The same is true for EveryChild UK. One of the outstanding aspects of this evaluation has been the quality of EveryChild staff. They have led by example – such as the Programmes Director making herself one of the first people to be made redundant (as she felt strategic work was complete, and numbers of partners had reduced by that point in line with agreed plan). As senior staff have left, others were promoted into greater responsibility, in what appears to have been a relatively seamless process. With fewer staff,

programme exits have continued at the same pace. Staff have risen to the challenge and taken on opportunities for development. What is perhaps even more remarkable is that at a time of closure and ending, EveryChild managed to maintain staff energy and enthusiasm. It is relatively easy to do this at a time of expansion, but much harder at a time of termination. Credit for this must go to the individuals involved. As one staff member admitted: *“It would not have happened a few years ago when the programmes team was very different”*.

## 8 TOP TIPS: IMPLICATIONS FOR OTHER INGOS

### What implications do the findings have for others overseeing programme exits in the future?

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#### 8.1 Clarify purpose – see exit as opportunity for sustainability

EveryChild was unusual in that its exit, from 2012 onwards, was not driven by financial pressures. This is a key factor in enabling them to do it well. A major lesson for others is:

- See exit as an opportunity to take sustainability seriously. Exit focuses the mind on genuinely sustainable development. Exit can be framed positively as an opportunity to do good development. As one partner said: “Exit promotes sustainability”.

Responsible exit forces top-quality development that few have the courage to implement. Exit thinking should be in place from the start, because it is intrinsic to an international NGO’s understanding of, and approach to, development. It should be part of their theory of change: “Exit forces you not to be lazy and just pay lip-service to sustainability” as one respondent said, “It accelerates the process and sharpens the mind”. The thinking is not only addressing exit but also life beyond exit, specifically, how will you work towards creating programmes (and even organisations) that are sustainable?

Exit is likely to focus programmes on improving engagement with local stakeholders. As one respondent said: “Different community structures will be there for ever, and so we have to be responsive and reactive to them, focusing on how to strengthen them.” Development becomes about building better relationships with local communities and government. Exit can encourage partners, and international NGOs, to aim high by including governments in sustainability strategies, and finding ways to work with them.

At a minimum exit helps partners address issues of dependence, and the need to diversify funding sources. Ideally resource mobilisation can be done more from within communities and countries, but it can also help partners develop a more balanced resource mobilisation portfolio; as happened with PKL in Kenya.

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#### 8.2 Start now and give it enough time

Conventional wisdom says plan for exit from the start. However, this is unrealistic in most cases, as the start has already happened some time ago. Conversely, this should not be an excuse to do nothing, but an obligation to start now. The lesson is to:

- **Start now and take a proactive approach to exit** that enables you to allow enough time for planning, implementation and capacity. If you wait until a funding crisis forces you to address exit. This will be too late. It will mean that exit will necessarily be rushed and under-resourced and done badly.

Starting now can give partners time to get used to the idea, as well as sufficient notice to plan for their own exit from communities. It is important to plan in advance how you will successfully exit. Organisations don’t necessarily need to know when the exit will happen from the beginning of the relationship, but they should have an idea of the triggers.

With any new partnerships, programmes or projects, it is possible to be clear from the start, and prepare the partner. Make sure that they are aware that the donor will only be there for a certain time and that they need to plan for their exit.

- **Allow sufficient time** – up to two years. In the EveryChild experience, with partners of more than five years, they estimated two years for exit. The length of partnership and the extent of dependence should affect the length of exit.

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## 8.3 Plan carefully and inclusively

- **Develop shared principles for exit that build on your core values.** Exit principles that highlight the core values in exit proved very useful in the EveryChild experience. They helped clarify what EveryChild was trying to achieve from exit, creating a common vision and vocabulary. In the process, they provided reassurance to a wide variety of stakeholders. They helped shape EveryChild management decisions and gave strong guidance to the partners' planning processes.
- **Let partners lead an inclusive planning process.** It was also very important to let partners identify their own strategic priorities and develop their own operational plans for exit in the light of these underlying principles.

One of the key success factors was developing a participatory, engaging and meaningful management of the change process. Where possible, this should involve communities and beneficiaries (such as children in EveryChild's case). Listen intently to the communities, as they will be the ones to continue the work post-exit, and adapt plans accordingly to respond to the local context.

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## 8.4 Invest in open communication, visits and capacity development

EveryChild found that frequent communication helped considerably in allaying fears and motivating positive responses.

- **Be as open as you can about exit.** EveryChild found that as they trusted staff with information as soon as possible about what was happening, why, and when, this trust was repaid as staff and partners reacted responsibly.
- **Increase levels of support to partners during exit.** Communicate frequently through Skype, email and best of all face-to-face visits.

EveryChild invested considerably in ensuring that there was also continuity in the partner relationship – at times taking back staff, on a consultancy basis, to ensure continuity. Healthy exit needs adequate human and financial resourcing. It is not a way of saving money in the short term.

- **Provide tailored capacity development support to partners** and local stakeholders so they can take more responsibility for their future sustainability.

EveryChild found that capacity building worked better when it was not just about grant management compliance, but responsive to the demands of the partners and focused on the future of their work with communities.

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## 8.5 Push Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

- **Relentlessly monitor exit implementation.** The EveryChild experience demonstrated the value of keeping on top of the partner's exit plans. They were able to ensure that deadlines were met and maintain healthy pressure to reach milestones. This energised the difficult change process.
- **Apply and share learning from experience.** EveryChild learned from partners' experiences of exit and consolidated this learning internally every six months. This meant they were able to make constant improvements during the process and modify the plans accordingly.

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## 8.6 Strengthen existing partnerships

- **Prepare for healthy exit by focusing on developing healthier relationships with partners.** The quality of exit will reflect quality of pre-existing relationship. Dependent partners will find exit difficult.

EveryChild found that the partnership review and self-assessment strengthened relationship between EveryChild and partners, *“so when we did come to communicating exit to them, they trusted us and realised we were doing this for genuine reasons”*.

## 9 CONCLUSIONS

Exit may ultimately be more important to long-term development than entry. Yet most NGOs usually pay greater attention to the latter. EveryChild was exceptional in how much attention they gave to exit. This may be because it decided to [exit for ideological reasons of potential impact](#), rather than due to financial crisis. EveryChild had the commitment, as well as the resources, to do it responsibly.

To a large degree, what happens now is out of EveryChild's hands. It depends on the ability of local stakeholders to step up and take greater responsibility for addressing the needs of children without parental care (or in danger of losing it). As one staff respondent said: *"Ultimately it is not up to us, but we have to give them the best chance of doing it themselves."*

Early indications are that there has been some loss of coverage and services to children as a consequence of EveryChild's decision to exit. There is no escaping the truism that 'exit is exit' after all, and there is likely to be a negative impact in terms of reduced services. That said, many services and activities are continuing, albeit in a different form, and some activities have even been strengthened, or increased, following exit.

More fundamental changes in attitudes amongst children and communities remain strong. Exit has made a [definite positive contribution](#) towards more sustainable programming in communities. In the medium to long-term exit may even be beneficial. There is now greater community ownership and a broader focus on working with others, including local and national government.

The question that EveryChild asked was, how closely they had kept to their principles of responsible exit? Whether or not these exits prove successful, and justify the decision to close down globally, to divert resources to Family for Every Child, is a different question.

Having decided to exit, EveryChild went about it in a considerate and careful way. They applied their learning from their difficult previous experiences with localisation, and although exit was a decision made in the UK, they managed to involve most partners in a meaningful way that encouraged ownership and community engagement. EveryChild clearly tried to do its best for its partners, with a genuine concern that children should not lose out

Overall the exit process is impressive, and it is remarkable to see what is left in countries such as Malawi and India, almost a year and a half after EveryChild's exit. It provides a practical example to other NGOs that, given the right staffing, attitudes and resourcing, exit can be done well, particularly from already healthy partnerships. EveryChild developed a good set of processes to monitor, learn and improve the exit process; they invested heavily in communication and support to partners and most importantly, had high quality staff willing to step down, or step up, to new duties. Ultimately it is the individuals within EveryChild [and within their partners](#) that ensured exit was as responsible as possible.

# APPENDIX 1: PEOPLE CONSULTED

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## Phase I

### EveryChild UK

- Robert Graham-Harrison (Trustee)
- John Bines (Chief Executive)
- Lucy Morris (Head of Programmes + feedback on Cambodia case study)
- Tracey Martin (ex-Programmes Director)
- Maria Tsang (HR adviser)
- Katherine Sargent (former EveryChild Programme Team + feedback on India, Nepal and Russia case studies)
- Laura Fisher (former EveryChild Programme Manager + feedback on India and Russia)

### Malawi

- Brussels Mughogho (Country Director)
- Thomas Moyo (Project Manager)
- Boniface Mandele (Evaluator)
- Aubrey Nyangu (Mndolera CBO Programme Manager)
- McJason Moale (Mndolera CBO Director)
- Village Headman Chikumba
- Samuel Chaola (Kasamba CBO Chairman)
- Yohane Bowa (Kasamba CBO VSL Coordinator)
- Rafael Banda (Kasamba CBO CBCC Coordinator)

### India

- William Gali (Country Director EveryChild India)
- KM Chandramouleswara (HR/Finance Manager EveryChild India)
- Laura Fisher (former EveryChild Programme Manager)

### Kenya

- Sarah Mbira (Executive Director PKL)
- Magdalene Munuku (Social Worker PKL)
- Esther Mwangi (Social Worker PKL)
- Okari Magati (Social Worker PKL)
- Adam Smith (ex-EveryChild Programme Officer)

## **Nepal**

- Saroj KC (Programme Manager CWISH)
- Dhruva Lamichane
- Prapti Adhikari

## **Cambodia**

- Touch Chiva (LAC Project Manager)
- Pav Vannak (LAC Legal Assistant)
- Kong Chhan (Ministry of Social Affairs)
- Soyorn Choun (EveryChild Justice for Children' Project Coordinator)
- Lucy Morris (EveryChild)

## **Russia**

- Jo Rogers (Director P4EC)
- Lyudmila Sorokina (P4EC)

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## **Phase II**

### **EveryChild UK**

- Lucy Morris (Consultant)
- Tracey Martin (Former Programmes Director)

### **Malawi**

- Focus group discussions and participatory activities with 18 CBO leaders and members of two CBOs (Mndolera and Kasamba). Participants included
  - Mndolera CBO: Mc Jason Mwale, Aubrey Nyangu, James Wilford, Goodson Nkhoma Luka Banda, Elisa Yeremiya, Aubrey Nyangu, Goodson Nkhoma, Oswel Molosi, Ethel Gladson, Tamala Chayima, Selina Katentha.
  - Kasamba CBO: Samuel Chaola Matiyasi Singo, Raphael Banda, Goodson Blackson, William Ndakwa, Boston Sayina, Chrissy Jeke, Ntamula Nkhoma, Rute Pambukeni, Jerita Kamanga, Estere Frank, Tamara Chimoka, Yohane Bowa, Sofileti Richard, Mercy Paulo, Mainesi Osimani
- VSL: James Jere, Ethel Baaka, Dorthy Lusiano
- Charles Gwengwe (Chisomo Children's Club)
- Gibozi Mphanzi, Director Youth Care Ministry/member BCN Network
- Boniface Mandere (Eye of the Child)
- Thomas Moyo, Programme Manager (ex-EveryChild Malawi)

### **India**

- READ: Mr Karuppasamy, Director; 8 Staff - Kavitha, Pattammal, Sampurna, Kumuda, Palanichamy, Palaniswamy, Priya, Umamaheswari
- Pattammal and Priya (SAKHIYAR WOMENS SOCIETY)

- Palaniswami, Mrs.maheswari, Ms Gowri and Ms Padmavathy (Vidiyal Society)
- Community visit- Kondamuthanar Village, Erumaikkaran Palayam Village.
- NIMHANS Dr K. Shekhar, Registrar; Dr Kavitha, Programme Manager
- SATHI: Mr Basvaraj, Mr Pramod Kulkarni, S, Ms Divya and Mr Shambu Ling- SAHTI Shelter home
- Mr Khajasaab, (PRERANA)
- Mr Vasu Deva Sharma, Director (CRT)
- Mr Rajendra Meher, Director, (YCDA, Orissa)
- Mr M. A. Britto, Director (Vaan Muhil)
- Ms Sitavva Jodatti, Executive Officer (MASS)
- Mr William Gali, Ex Country Director, EveryChild India.
- Mr Chandramauli, Ex Finance Manager, EveryChild India.
- Ms Payal Saxena, ex Advocacy Manager, EveryChild India.

## **Cambodia**

- Saray Run, LAC Executive Director
- Soyorn Choun, Justice for Children! Project Coordinator
- Respondents at the following levels were also interviewed. The number of respondents is given in brackets.
  - *National level:* Khemara (3), LAC (2), EveryChild (2), Ministry of Justice (1), Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans, and Youth Rehabilitation (1), Cambodia National Council for Children (4), UNICEF (1)
  - *Provincial level:* Prosecutors/Court Assistants (8), Judges/Chief of Court Staff (8), POSAVY (5), Police (4), Prison Officer (3), Child Victims (3), Children in Detention (9), Re-integrated Children (3)
  - *District Level:* DWCCC Members (11)

## **Nepal**

- Saroj KC, Programme Manager (CWISH)
- Prapti Adhikari, Programme officer (CWISH)
- Pradeep Dangol, Child Protection officer (CWISH)
- Sonu Danuwar, General Secretary (HUN)
- Ram Chandra Siwakoti, Section officer, Child labour section (DOL)
- Prem Thapa (LSMC)
- Sarita Maharjan (LSMC)
- Krishna Chandra Acharya (FOWEP)
- Dhruva Sapkota (MANK)
- Laba Shrestha (SYS)
- Prashant Dangol (ADWC)
- Chief District Officer, Lalitpur (DCWC)
- CCWB

# APPENDIX 2: METHODOLOGY

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## Phase I (November 2014 to January 2015)

### Inception

During the inception INTRAC undertook the detailed design of the evaluation. This involved:

- Identifying the key questions about exit from the prospective external audience.
- Reviewing key EveryChild documents,
- Short semi-structured interviews with key EveryChild staff and board members

From this data, INTRAC developed a detailed methodology for the assignment, including:

- Developing criteria for selecting sample case studies.
- Developing a protocol for the data gathering interviews; and
- Presenting these proposals to EveryChild for discussion and approval.

### Rationale for choice of case studies

After discussions with EveryChild staff and board we prioritised the following key criteria for selecting case studies:

- Geographic spread – need CIS; need Africa, Asia
- Country Office (Malawi, India) + localised (Russia) + independent partner
- Balance towards longer term partnerships
- Stage in exit process (Cambodia latest)
- FFEC and not FFEC
- Mix experiences from survey (include negative feedback) and those who gave insightful answers (Russia)

The following were suggested to and agreed by EveryChild:

- Malawi – country office heavy investment and engagement (required by EveryChild)
- Nepal (CWISH) – on-going relationship, significant inputs from EveryChild
- India – country office heavy investment and engagement (required by EveryChild)
- Russia – ex-CO; localised; CIS, FFEC, insightful survey feedback
- Cambodia (LAC) – South East Asia, intermittent partnership, dependent, exit on-going
- Kenya (PKL) – local partner; 4-year engagement, ChildHope model takeover

We tried to contact Ethiopia, by email and phone but EveryChild indicated that as senior management had recently changed, this would not be an appropriate choice.

### Initial data gathering (December and January 2015)

#### Survey of all 18 partners

We undertook a short online survey with all 18 partners to gauge the stage they are at in the exit process and their use and application of the principles and tools. The findings informed the choice of case. Because of the small population (18 partners) and timing we could not pilot the survey, nor could it be anonymous.

## Six case studies

Six case studies were written up by means of:

- Review of partner exit reports
- Semi-structured interview with EveryChild staff (or ex-staff) responsible for exit
- Semi-structured Skype interviews with 3 partner staff from different levels
- Skype interviews with key national stakeholders, ex staff members/partners and community-based organisations (where possible and appropriate)
- Analysis and brief partner report

## Field visit to Malawi

We also undertook a short field visit to Malawi from 21-24<sup>th</sup> January to observe the EveryChild Legacy Conference, and gather data from two communities (Mndolera and Kasamba) using participatory methods (focus group discussion and bus-stop exercise).

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## Phase II (April to June 2016)

At the end of Phase I, INTRAC decided to alter the methodology for Phase II. Local consultants undertook field visits to four countries to interview former partners and establish what remains of EveryChild's presence on the ground following exit. It was felt that this methodology would provide richer and more in depth data, as well as increase the validity of the findings.

The INTRAC team sent emails sent to all six countries that has participated as case studies in Phase II. Of these six countries, four agreed to participate in Phase II – Malawi, India, Nepal and Cambodia.

## Field visits

Field visits took place between April and June 2016. Local consultants used a mix of data collection tools in country, including focus groups, face to face interviews, telephone interviews, and participant observation. A full list of the methods used can be found in the case study reports attached at the end of this synthesis report.

# APPENDIX 3: INDIA CASE STUDY

Case study researched and written by Beena George

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## Executive Summary

More than one year after the exit of EveryChild India, a country-based consultant visited three of the ten partners and spoke to another five on the phone to ascertain EveryChild's on-going legacy. Exit had certainly been a painful process and had led to the closure of two partners and some activities (particularly Child Activity Centres). But overall, four of the ten partners are surviving with some downsizing and at least another four have taken off and even become stronger since the exit.

All respondents agreed that the way exit was managed was highly commendable and was in line with EveryChild's stated three principles of responsible exit. Tapering funding and systematic leadership and strategy development of each partner, not only prepared them for exit, but also played a major role in making them more sustainable.

Many of the benefits of EveryChild's work with children remain. The programmes continue to bear fruits in the country. EveryChild in India left a remarkable and lingering legacy, from impacting the individual lives of children in the village, to influencing the country's child protection policies. In ten years, EveryChild made a lasting mark in the area of child development and protection.

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## Introduction

### Background

In March 2015 EveryChild India closed down its country office and exited from the country<sup>5</sup> after ten years of working with local NGO partners. EveryChild commissioned an external evaluation of their post-2012 exit process. The evaluation focuses on the extent to which EveryChild achieved its aim of exiting responsibly.

Phase I of the evaluation was conducted in January 2015 before the India office had closed. This report is of Phase II, undertaken by a country-based consultant in May 2016, some 14 months after EveryChild had ceased operating in India.

### Aim

The aim of this Phase II is to test out more than one year after closure the extent to which EveryChild's three principles of responsible exit were fulfilled:

- 1 As far as possible ensure that the work we have done is sustainable – this could be a continuation of services or lasting changes in children's lives
- 2 Ensure that exit does not have a detrimental effect on the children and communities where we work
- 3 As far as possible, ensure that expertise and momentum for change in the country is not lost.

### Methods

The main data gathering methods used were:

- Field visits to three of the ten NGO partners (READ in Tamilnadu, SATHI and NIMHANS in Bangalore) with semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with staff, community members and children.
- 

<sup>5</sup> though it did give three 'legacy grants' of 6-12 months to three NGO partners

- Telephone interviews with the Directors of five others NGO partners (MASS, PRERANA, CRT, YCDA and Vaan Muhil).
- Interviews with ex-EveryChild India staff (including the Country Director, Head of Finance, and the Research and Advocacy officer)
- This in-country work was complemented by INTRAC interviews with ex-EveryChild UK staff and a document review

## Findings

### Overall

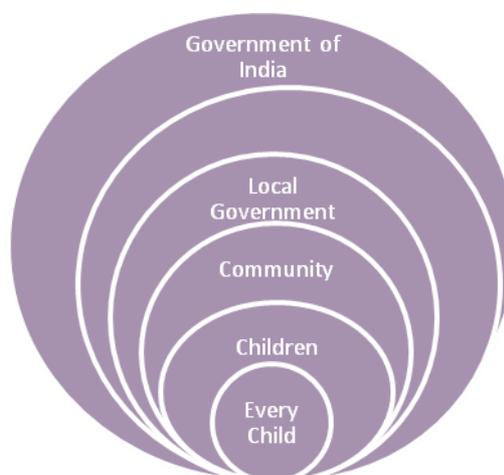
The evaluator was warmly welcomed in all the places. Everyone had great regard and memories to share even after one year. That itself, is a positive indication of the role EveryChild has played in their lives. EveryChild India left a remarkable legacy in the country, from impacting the individual lives of children in the village, to the country's child protection policies. In ten years, EveryChild carved a niche in the child development and protection arena. It was known as an organisation with accountability, transparency and focus. The organisation created unquestionable credibility among the partners and stake holders.

Though the news of EveryChild's exit from India was a shock for many partners, respondents commended EveryChild for the way it managed the exit process. The tapering of funds, and systematic leadership and strategic development of each partner in the context of exit not only prepared them, but also played a major role in making them sustainable. It greatly helped the organisations to overcome dependency on EveryChild.

Of the 10 partners originally supported by EveryChild India only two have not been able to cope with EveryChild's exit. Both organisations FENCE and SGGKK were 100% dependent on EveryChild for funding, found it difficult to accept that EveryChild was leaving until it actually happened. Both have failed to access new funding. There are founder leadership challenges with FENCE, where the leader has significant health issues, but is unwilling to let go. SGGKK did not have its own registration and is folding, though staff said they would continue to work voluntarily with a new initiative called Gowthana Trust (though they have other jobs).

Of the remaining eight partners, four have managed to survive and at least maintain the status quo. While they have had to downsize certain aspects of their work, they have not changed their mission or focus. Most exciting is that a further four partners READ, CRT, YCDA and SATHI have built on the strong foundation left by EveryChild and taken off to a much higher level of performance. To a degree the exit was quite healthy for some as it forced them to reduce dependence – like pushing a baby bird out of the nest.

READ's development is particularly impressive as in just ten years it moved from being a local community organisation, before developing into an NGO, fully funded by EveryChild and now is an independent state-level organisation with a diverse funding base. While they struggled initially for a few months after EveryChild's exit, through their genuine participative work with communities and local government they are much stronger than before. They now have a significant influence with the local government district headquarters, as evidenced by government appointing two staff to deal with bonded labour and girl child marriage after advocacy by READ. As Mr Swamy, Director, READ, said, *"Beyond the projects, we want to see communities changed. Projects will come and go, but the change should go on."*



Yet more important than the sustainability of partners is the impact EveryChild has had with children, communities and society as a whole. It can be viewed as a ripple that slowly in a subtle way has even reached the apex level of the country.

**Principle 1 As far as possible ensure that the work we have done is sustainable – this could be a continuation of services or lasting changes in children’s lives**

The table below analyses the impact of EveryChild’s exit on partner’s programmes:

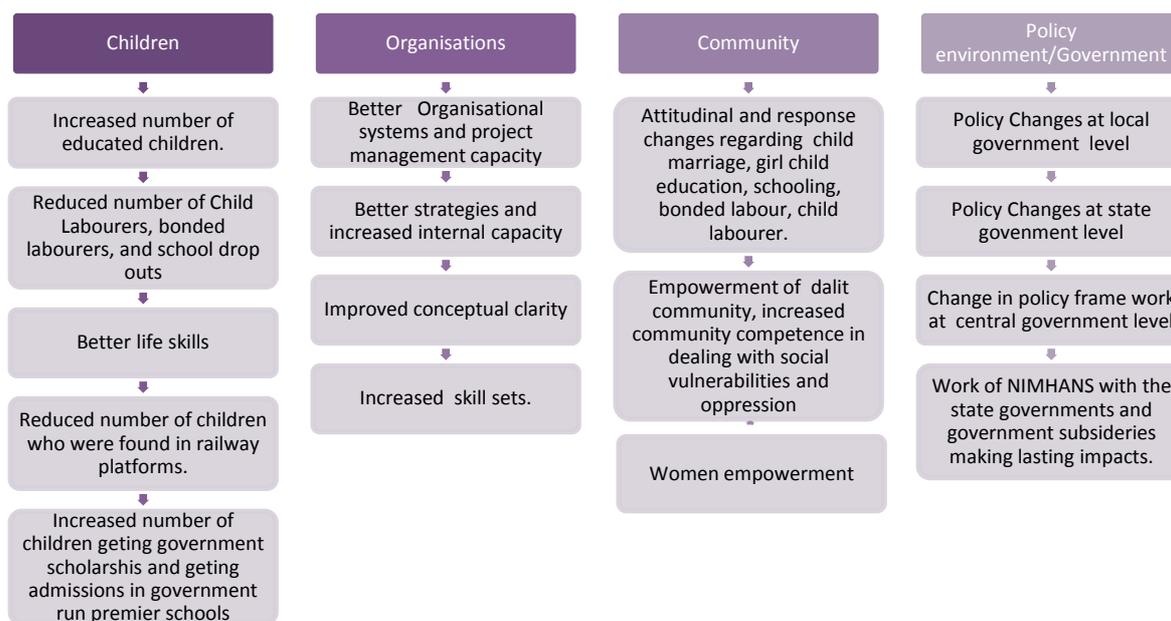
<i>Partner</i>	<i>Programmes that has stopped</i>	<i>Programmes that remains</i>	<i>Current funding</i>
<i>SGGKK</i>	<i>Organisation closed down</i>		
<i>FENCE</i>	<i>Organisation almost closed down.</i>	<i>Though the staff tried to keep it afloat, they could not, and it’s on the verge of closing down.</i>	<i>Local Community support was mobilised.</i>
<i>YCDI</i>	<i>Child right programming support</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. Income generation activities for children and care givers</i></li> <li><i>2. Need based support for children</i></li> <li><i>3. Capacity building of children and care givers</i></li> <li><i>4. Apex level advocacy</i></li> </ol>	<i>Some of the components are linked with Government. Trying to cover the activities with another donor</i>
<i>CRT</i>	<i>Direct work with the Gram Panchayats (Local Government) is phased out.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. Advocacy, capacity building and lobbying on child rights issues.</i></li> <li><i>2. Software project-Our Children Our Progress- is still alive.</i></li> <li><i>3. Networking with more partners now.</i></li> </ol>	
<i>MASS</i>	<i>15 CACs are closed down.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. Running 25 child activity centres in 25 villages</i></li> <li><i>2. Coaching for competitive exams</i></li> </ol>	<i>Funds mobilised through local organisations like Janshakti Foundation &amp; local villagers</i>
<i>READ</i>	<p><i>27 CACs are closed down</i></p> <p><i>Children Parliament is closed down.</i></p> <p><i>40 CACs from Salem were taken over by READ and they stopped it once EveryChild exited from the county.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. Out of 40 CACs functioned during EveryChild’s period, 13 are still functioning.</i></li> <li><i>2. Totally 35 CACs are functioning.</i></li> <li><i>3. Even though there is no formal Children’s parliament, children are actively involved in the legislative advocacy at local government level.</i></li> </ol>	<p><i>The CACs were survived through remarkable community participation. They started collecting certain amount from EveryChild right from the time they were told about exit. By the time EveryChild exited they had mobilised an amount that helped them to survive few months.</i></p> <p><i>Children camps were sponsored by Community.</i></p> <p><i>Now the organisation has partnership with Geneva Global, Symphony Netherlands, Janvikas, Gujarat, Britannia foundation.</i></p>

Vaan Muhil	Regular follow up of the current and former mil workers and psycho – social support is missing now.  Tailoring Unit in one of the villages	Vaan Muhil continues to work in the three blocks (Mannur, Alangulam and Kalakkadu blocks in Tirunelveli district).  Career guidance for school going children remain active in villages.  In addition Vaan Muhil also organizes Life Skill Training for current mill workers in three blocks.  Vaan Muhil staff are engaged in making linkages with Govt. agencies. Explaining to the community members about the available government. Schemes and linking them with various government departments has been one of the main areas of work for the staff this year.	Geneva Global / Freedom Fund
SATHI	Home orientation camp for plat form children,  De-addiction camp for slum children	Shelter home for children who land up in Railway stations  Reuniting them to families  Capacity building of other NGOs  Advocacy efforts.	Yeshwanthapura Railway station, Railway kids UK, Ministry of Women and Child Welfare, Local organisations.
NIMHANS	Hand holding support to the other partners of EveryChild.	Psycho social lab,  Work with NGOs, state governments	State and central governments.
PRERANA	Down sized the number of CACs, only 10 are functioning	30 were closed down.  The frequency of Child led Village Parliaments were reduced.	Local community support.

One of the most obvious losses since EveryChild’s exit is that a 60% of EveryChild’s Child Activity Centre’s have closed (MASS have closed 15 out of 40, leaving 25 still running and READ have closed 27, but started a further 22. Prerana has closed 30 out of 40). The volunteers needed regular payments. Other funders have not sensed the value of providing more holistic support.

However, some partners, such as READ in Tamil Nadu and MASS, have started new CACs with greater input from the communities and in some cases with new funding support (from Janashaki Foundation for example). So in reality only 40% of CACs have closed. Through the grass root level advocacy and net work, partners were able to influence the local body of Government of India’s Integrated Child Development Scheme, that is “Angavadis”. As a result of EveryChild’s work, their partner NGOs and communities are in a much better position to demand this support from government.

The on-going impact of EveryChild’s work can be illustrated in the following diagram with the key findings described in the text below:



### Impact on children

Every Child’s intervention saved a generation’s education in the project areas. When organisations like READ and SGGKK started working, in several villages there was not even a single child who completed 10th grade. Now there are several post-graduates in the same communities. Many of the students who were benefited through the CACs became volunteers and staff. Manjula Telagade was once a child who was badly affected by the devadasi system, today she is a trained social worker, who worked for SGGKK also.

Child labour was a rampant practice across the communities (see extract from [The Hindu](#), daily newspaper) mainly because of ignorance and poverty. Due to the intervention of EveryChild’s partners, communities better understand the implications, and now there is nearly no child labourer in the communities. The local government has become more competent to address the child labour issues. They have introduced a bridge programme to help child labourers to reintegrate with regular schooling.

The number of school dropout also had reduced to nil. There is a committee at local government level that monitor school dropout and they address this issue at the community level. Children are given special attention through life skills programme, in many places this is been continued. Several bonded child labourers and girls were rescued and given a rehabilitation grant from government. These programmes are still continuing.

### Impact on community

The community is more empowered to address the issues of child labour, child marriage, and bonded labourer. There is particularly visible in the Arundhadhiyar community - known as the ‘Dalits among the Dalits’. The community has been sensitised and organised in such a way that they are in a position to fight against discrimination in the form of bonded labour, child sexual abuse, and untouchability.

Attitudinal change that took place due to the intervention of EveryChild through partners is still continuing. Parents sending their daughters to schools and not to the mills. Many of the community members have come to know about various government schemes and avail these benefits. Others have been linked to different welfare boards.

## Impact on gender

Though EveryChild focus was on children, the organisation had a brief intervention with women development as well. As a result, several women's cooperatives were formed in Tamilnadu and Karnataka. Though EveryChild could not hand hold them for long, the initial support and mentoring given by EveryChild is considered as the sole reason for their existence and vibrant interventions in the community now.

Sakkiyar Women Society Federation and Vidiyal society were formed by READ. When Sakkiyar is a federation of Arundhadhiyar women, Vidiyal is exclusively working among manual scavengers. The kind of leadership development and empowerment the women got through the exposure visits and trainings organised by EveryChild is making a difference to these women. They came to a position where they voice out their rights to the government and they became politically empowered enough to contest in the local elections. These women groups are actively involved in the community to work against child marriage, sumangali scheme, and even alcoholism among men. They are able to bring economic empowerment through small credits, and home based business, also provide education loan for the members.

## Impact on partner organisations

Organisational systems like programmes, project management, and financial management were strengthened in several cases. Many of them still follow the same pattern of Project Cycle Management that they have learned from EveryChild. EveryChild positively influenced partners in:

- Increasing capacity of care givers on family based care;
- Activating various service delivery structures;
- Strengthening organisation perspective on family based care;
- Strategic planning.
- Thinking through ideas to implementable projects;
- Handholding in developing some systems;
- Showcasing ideas in larger forums;
- Producing materials;
- Developing resource mobilisation strategies;
- Building capacity in advocacy, financial management, resource mobilisation.

## Impact on Policy environment/Government

The relationship with the local government has improved tremendously for most of the partners. For example: READ trained and continue to train several Panchayat members (Local Government) and Anganvadi teachers (Integrated Child Development Scheme of Government of India) about child rights and the right to education. As a result of their work a Child Labour officer and a Counsellor to deal with the child marriage issues are placed in Erode district head quarter. They have put 200 cases against bonded labourers. All of them were rescued and rehabilitation support has been given to all 25,000 of them.

Vaan Muhil also work very closely with the local government to fight against oppressive systems like Sumangali Schemes. MASS continue their work with the gram panchayat and developed Child Right Prevention committees at local government level. They are also connected with the Child Welfare Department to start grants to orphan and semi-orphan children. This is an amazing impact that continues in several villages in Tamilnadu and Karnataka.

For SATHI, it was difficult to get the support of the Indian Railways when they started in Bangalore with the sole support of EveryChild. Now, they provide training for railway and railway police staff two times in a year. After the exit of EveryChild, for the first time in the history of Indian Railway, the Railway provided a generous space for the shelter home. They have received in principle permission for four other shelter

homes in other stations. There is a Child Welfare Committee exclusively for the railway kids. SATHI has also started receiving funds from government, including the Ministry of Women and Child Welfare.

NIMHANS had a different role altogether. NIMHANS's role was to build the local capacity to address the psychosocial issues of children in difficult situation. They developed and standardised a package of programme that address 24 issues into eight modules, which has been diversified and intensely integrated with other programmes as well. NIMHANS organised a workshop in partnership with EveryChild, on Psychosocial Care for children in difficult situations and in conflict with Law. As a result, the Social Justice Department of Government of Kerala has adopted the psychosocial care aspect into their policy. NIMHANS is currently working with several state governments including the Government of Kerala.

How much of these changes can be attributed to EveryChild? Because EveryChild was the sole partner for several years for many partners, the changes can be attributed significantly to EveryChild. Most of the organisations continue their work and in fact some of them are excelling. This should be read as an impact of EveryChild, as one partner rightly said, *"We just took off from the platform they have provided"*. EveryChild's exit alone did not directly cause an improved relationship between partners and local government, these improvements were a natural progression from the foundation EveryChild had set in place with partners. In some cases, exit gave it greater impetus. For example with READ the exit process forced them to become more self-reliant and therefore encouraged them to improve their advocacy efforts and relationships with the local government.

## **Principle 2: Ensure that exit does not have a detrimental effect on the children and communities where we work**

### **Impact of exit on children**

The transformation EveryChild partners brought in the lives of children in the villages during a decade, doubtlessly continues. Many grew up into educated and responsible adults who give back to society. But in some places, the exit of EveryChild left the children in a vulnerable situation (as many partners downsized their programmes and closed down several CACs.) But on the other side, since the community and local government has been empowered, one can have hope that the eco system around them will keep the momentum of change that has been started in their little life intact.

In Erumaikkaran Palayam and Kondamuthannur village near Sathyamangalam where READ is working, CACs had been stopped for seven months, and the mothers were so anxious and were kept asking the volunteers about the possibility of restarting CACs. They said that they were worried about the future of the children, as the centre had great impact on the children's study habits, and behaviour. In the same way, Vaan Muhil organized few programs for the school children. Finding the programmes very useful, the managements started asking for more programs, which they could not organize after exit.

### **Impact of exit on community**

EveryChild has substantially contributed in building the approach and strategies of the organisations. As a result, increased community engagement and competence were ensured. The exit seemed to have negatively impacted this momentum in certain areas. For example, in YCDA, the frequency of monitoring by community (PAR team) had been reduced. There was a very structured monthly monitoring of the process, when the project was active. The team used to visit each individual child, review their care plan and take suitable action. Now there is no structured monitoring happening. Where the communities were benefitting, they keep asking for village level programs and regular field visits, according to READ and Vaan Muhil staff.

### **Impact of exit on partner organisation**

The impact of exit of EveryChild from India created both positive and negative impacts on the partner organisations. When it strengthened fund mobilisation strategy of YCDA, READ became a completely independent and sustainable organisation. A year-long leadership and strategy development programme that was conducted as part of the responsible exit plan, equipped the organisation to find other avenues. Some organisation like SGGKK and FENCE could not survive though.

Undoubtedly many had to reduce their programmes. For example, YCDA reduced the apex level advocacy on family based care, others reduces staff numbers. Vaan Muhil still feel the loss of the psychosocial counsellor role. Even though all of them were shocked initially, exit also gave them the confidence to raise funds locally. *“The techniques that were taught by EveryChild have brought a permanent change in the lives and the organisation”* said Mr Vasudeva Sharma, of CRT.

### **Principle 3 As far as possible, ensure that expertise and momentum for change in the country is not lost**

It appears that the momentum for change in the country has not been lost through EveryChild’s exit. The programmes that EveryChild had developed during the eventful one decade continue to bear fruit in the country. For example, Dr Shekhar and Dr Kavitha of NIMHANS mentioned that it’s through the initial funds of EveryChild they could establish the psychosocial Lab that later became an agent of change in the Psycho social well-being of children in the country. Though later several partners came into the scene, the initial funds provided by EveryChild are considered crucial.

EveryChild and its partners has also had a significant impact on the wider policy environment. Partner NGOs were unanimous in stating that their advocacy efforts together with EveryChild’s, had contributed heavily to create a favourable policy atmosphere in the country. It is natural for many of them to think that EveryChild could have done more at a national level, but that does not minimise the contribution of the organisation that fuelled legislative changes in rights-based child welfare and alternative care for children in difficult situations.

The Government of India is now more active on child rights issues. With specific legislations, schemes and provisions it is trying to create a conducive environment for children. The Integrated Child Protection Schemes is one such example, where government is trying to address the issues in a more systematic way.

#### **Child-friendly local government**

EveryChild provided support to local capacity building in Child rights and Child protection. For example EveryChild was actively involved with Child Friendly Grama Sabha (Local Government) through CRT and KCRO (Karnataka Child Rights Observatory). The contribution of EveryChild was significant. The very concept of Child Friendly Grama Sabha has brought in a sea change in the child rights perspective in Karnataka. The government of Karnataka issued a circular directing the local governments with regards to Child friendly local government. Ms Payal Saksena, the then Advocacy Manager at EveryChild, mentioned that the chief minister of the state is attending the children’s Grama Sabhas and have dialogues with children. This circular also gave children an opportunity to attend parliamentary meetings and have legislative advocacy dialogues with the policy makers. Child Friendly Local Government is now a major advocacy agenda of UNICEF.

EveryChild has made a mark in the principle of Child Participation in India. Even though it cannot be fully attributed to the work of EveryChild, the contribution is unquestionable.

#### **Alternative care for children in difficult situation**

EveryChild was an active member of the task force to redraft the policy and legislative frame wok of alternative care of children in difficult situation in Karnataka in 2012. The daft was approved by the Ministry of Women and Child Welfare.

Another advocacy agenda during the latter period was family-based child protection, or kinship care. Even though kinship care is a natural phenomenon for Indian community, the quality of care in most cases is mixed. EveryChild built an evidence base, using Participatory Action Research (PAR) through YCDA in Orissa. The important milestone in this venture is that foster-care came into existence as part of the country’s policy in 2015. So the momentum for change that EveryChild initiated, continues vigorously, making a favourable shift in the policy atmosphere of the country.

## Local Networks

The taskforce on non-institutional forms of child care is continuing the advocacy activity of EveryChild in Karnataka. Vaan Muhil formed a state level campaign to highlight Sumangali issue. The Campaign against Camp Coolie System has lobbied against the Sumangali issue. Now Geneva Global with its 13 partner organizations in four districts in Tamil Nadu is planning to take up the campaign activities to certain extent. READ formed a Girl Child Forum in Erode to protect the rights of girl children.

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## Learning

### What worked well in the exit process?

This study confirms the three findings to this question from Phase I, Respondents again highlighted the value of:

- Leadership course
- Linking with local government
- Emphasis on seeking support from local communities

Engaging with local government and genuine community ownership and participation made all the difference. Partners have experienced huge benefits from much stronger external relationships (though it does obviously make them more vulnerable to changes in Government funding and policies as YCDA has found)

EveryChild had the courage to let go of partners, yet still have the commitment to walk alongside them during the transition – indeed providing more support in this exit phase than before. EveryChild was consistent in its messaging (after some initial confusion) and while they were firm about exit, did provide some flexibility with their three short-term legacy grants.

### What could have been done differently?

#### Stay longer

Many respondents would like EveryChild to have stayed on even longer. Even though they understood the reason behind exit, most of them felt that EveryChild could have done lot more in the country.

*“EveryChild might have believed the Government’s big cry that India is developed! We are working with the communities and children who are highly vulnerable and such pockets are aplenty in the country. There are still lots to be done to bring positive change and sustainable measures”* Another said: *“EveryChild withdrew from the country, where the family based care was about to get momentum. There is no substitute for organisations like EveryChild who has expertise and great focus on the subject. It was a big loss to the issue”*.

Others also said: *“If EveryChild could have extended the support to the Women cooperative for few more years, they could have been developed into such great grass root organisations.”* Some even believe that delaying the exit might have saved organisations like FENCE, though this is unsure. What is clear is that exit is always a difficult process. While EveryChild went a long way, some partners still feel they could have been even more understanding of the challenges in the local context.

#### Foster sustainability from the beginning

A number of respondents said that EveryChild should have pushed sustainability from much earlier. They tolerated dependent partners too much. Not only would this have contributed to better programming, but it would have made exit easier.

## Consolidate and disseminate learning

EveryChild has made efforts to analyse and highlight partners' learning. For example, at the Closure Conference Bidugade and Engalkural partners wrote up stories of change and made presentations about best practices. Yet there is still a sense that more could have been done. According to one respondent: *'The collective knowledge, experience is of course lost as it is not recorded by experts. EveryChild had asked the partners to write from our perspective which would have been a fantastic contribution if it was evaluated by experts.'* Furthermore, EveryChild might have done even more dissemination through partners like NIMHANS.

It appears that Family for EveryChild is focusing their learning on programmatic areas of working with children. They may be missing the opportunities to share vital lessons about sustainability and funder exit that have emerged from EveryChild's exit process.

## Advocate more

EveryChild India focused more on advocacy in its last years. More might have been done with the partnership they established with NIMHANS - an institution with strong credibility and influence with national government. The long standing relationship with NIMHANS, might even have enabled EveryChild to do legislative advocacy more meaningfully.

## What is key learning for others?

### 100% funding makes healthy exit almost impossible (FENCE and SGGKK)

EveryChild's unconscious strategy of working with organisations like READ from being a CBO to a formalised NGO and then a state-level actor has worked well. *"One best thing EveryChild did, that, they have not selected established or branded NGOs as partners, instead they developed just community based organisations into NGOs and them into credible state level organisations."* This point was mentioned by both partners and ex-EveryChild staff. Where EveryChild supported already strong NGOs like SATHI, EveryChild has had less influence with their programming approach.

# APPENDIX 4: MALAWI CASE STUDY

Phase II case study researched and written by Cuthbert Gondwe

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## Executive Summary

The review of the Malawi programme 14 months after closure reveals that community attitudes have remained changed since exit. Child marriage and child labour are almost completely eradicated in the communities in which EveryChild worked. Children continue to be protected and still participate in CBO activities.

Seven of the ten CBOs supported by EveryChild continue to be active. They are doing especially well in Bulala. While their real sustainability may be masked to some extent by the legacy grants (which continued up to December 2015) there has been an indisputable expansion of livelihoods activities (in particular a four-fold increase in Village Savings and Loan Associations). EveryChild has left a legacy of relatively resilient community organisations, who are able to plan and carry out child-focused development in a challenging local context.

The withdrawal of funding after EveryChild's departure has had an adverse effect on education with CBOs in Dowa district. The Community Based Child Care Centres have declined and in some cases no longer provide food for children. Of the 16 children in secondary school, 14 have been sent to cheaper schools by their parents. However, in Bulala the communities have taken on responsibility for supporting the sponsored children through secondary school. This is especially impressive given the current food crisis. While the CBCCs and Children's Corners have declined they have continued albeit at a reduced level.

The child protection work in communities has continued. Important progress has been made in the policy arena, particularly as regards child marriage and the passing of the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Bill. The campaign against child marriage in Malawi appears to be gaining momentum as other NGOs get more involved and the Girls Not Brides chapter continues to operate.

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## Introduction

### Background

In March 2015 EveryChild Malawi closed down its country office and exited from the country after ten years of working with local community-based organisations (CBOs). EveryChild (EveryChild) commissioned an external evaluation of their post-2012 exit process. The evaluation focuses on the extent to which EveryChild achieved its aim of exiting responsibly.

Phase I of the evaluation was conducted in January 2015 before the Malawi office had closed. This report is of Phase II, undertaken by a country-based consultant in May 2016, some 14 months after EveryChild had ceased operating in Malawi.

### Aim

The aim of this Phase II is to test out more than one year after closure the extent to which EveryChild's three principles of responsible exit were fulfilled:

- 1 As far as possible ensure that the work we have done is sustainable – this could be a continuation of services or lasting changes in children's lives
- 2 Ensure that exit does not have a detrimental effect on the children and communities where we work
- 3 As far as possible, ensure that expertise and momentum for change in the country is not lost.

## Methods

The main data gathering methods used were:

- 1 Field visits to two community based organisations (Mndolera and Kasamba) with focus group discussions and participatory activities with a total of 18 CBO leaders and members. The same communities were visited during Phase I.
- 2 Some semi-structured interviews with Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) members too.
- 3 Telephone interviews with the leadership of CBOs in the other district, Bulala, again followed-up from Phase I meeting.
- 4 Interviews with key informants from the Malawi Child Development sector from Chisomo Children’s Club and Director Youth Care Ministry/member BCN Network
- 5 Interviews with ex-EveryChild Malawi staff (Thomas Moyo Programme Manager)
- 6 This in-country work was complemented by INTRAC interviews with ex-EveryChild UK staff and a document review

It is important to point out that the study sites are not necessarily representative of all 10 CBOs. The data gathering has been done with only two of ten in Dowa district. The ones in Bulala may have been more successful in sustaining services. But the study has focused on those still existing and functioning, rather than with the three that have effectively closed down. While it has not been possible to verify the feedback from all respondents, the consultant is convinced that the individual responses are genuine due to the depth of explanation and knowledge. The participatory activities with the communities meant that they reached consensus on progress or otherwise, rather than simply hearing one person’s perspective.

In the data gathering it has proved difficult to access responses from the Malawi Government as the key person involved in Dowa District has moved on and declined to be interviewed. Obviously the death of Brussels Mughogho also means the loss of a key EveryChild informant.

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## Findings

### Overall

Seven of the ten CBOs supported by EveryChild up to March 2015 (and then with a small legacy grant to December 2015), are still doing well. In Dowa District, Mndolera and Mdwala both accessed NAC grant funding and Kasamba continues to be active. In Mzimba District, four of the CBOs continue to be active: three of them have accessed further funding (Malinyeti from NAC, Bulala CBO from US Embassy, Chanyama a \$7000 (USD) grant from Firelight). Chisenyezi CBO is also doing well.

The research found that since EveryChild’s exit, communities have learned to work more on their own without depending on international funding. The exit has helped to change the community attitudes from being dependent to realising that they can do things on their own. While some education activities (particularly those requiring outside funding) have declined since exit, livelihood related activities, such as Village Savings and Loan Associations have almost quadrupled in number.

During the research, respondents from the three CBOs highlighted how each of their activities was doing post-exit. The CBOs, ranked the programs into four categories, the ones that are thriving without problems, the ones that are struggling yet managing, the ones that are near death and the ones that are no longer in existence.

### Mndolera CBO

Thriving	Struggling	Near death	Dead programs
Village savings and loan associations	Child care centres	School support	

Child protection programs	HIV program	Forestry administration
Gender programs		Income Generating Activities(IGA) program
		Climate change.

**Kasamba CBO**

Thriving	Struggling	Near death	Dead programs
Village savings and Loans associations	Child care centres	Forestry administration	School support
Mothers groups	HIV program	Income Generating Activities(IGA) program	
Child protection programmes (Child marriage, Child labour and		Climate change	
Training the community members in making cheap fertiliser from manure.			
Gender programs			
Goat pass on project			
Construction of a school block			

**Bulala CBO**

Thriving	Struggling	Near death	Dead programs
Village savings and Loans associations	School support	HIV open days	
Mothers groups			
Child protection programmes (Child marriage, Child labour and			
Training the community members in making cheap fertiliser from manure.			
Re-uniting families by providing counselling to the family members.			
Goat pass on project			
Referral program where they refer different cases to other stake holders			

**Principle 1 As far as possible ensure that the work we have done is sustainable – this could be a continuation of services or lasting changes in children’s lives**

	CBCCs		VSLAs		Children’s corners	
	EVERYCHILD	Surviving	EVERYCHILD	Surviving	EVERYCHILD	Surviving
Kasamba	No info	No info	No info	No info	No info	No info
Mndolera	8	No info	28	23	6	No info
Mdwala	4	No info	10	No info	No info	No info
Chefu	6	No info	16	No info	No info	No info
Mtisunge	No info	No info	No info	No info	No info	No info
Nalikonda	No info	No info	16	No info	No info	No info
Bulala	21	14	10	15	21	7
Malinyeti	38	7	10	35	38	3
Chisenyezi	21	14	10	54	21	4
Chanyama	44	16	10	51	44	4

**Community attitudes**

One of the most encouraging findings is that community attitudes towards child marriages and child labour have remained changed. Child marriage prevalence reduced from 5% (EveryChild KAP Survey, September 2014) to 4% for Bulala and Mndolera (EveryChild KAP Survey, February 2015). As one CBO leader said, *“We are very proud we no longer get many reports of early marriage”*. But parents still come and report to the CBO when they hear that their child is intending to marry or when they see someone making advances towards their daughter who is not yet of the marriage age (this has been reinforced by the Bill on Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations as we shall see later). The only challenge is that, whereas before, when they heard of a girl being married off they could use EveryChild’s car to go and rescue her, but now they do not have this possibility which worries some CBO members.

Furthermore, communities in Kasamba and Mndolera, say ‘child labour has been eliminated’. The women’s group in Mndolera go into schools to teach children about their rights. People used to employ children as cattle headers and now since the establishment of the bylaws and the community sensitisation about the issue. The people herding cattle there days are grown men not children.

Furthermore, in some communities EveryChild has left a legacy of positively influencing gender relationships. In Mndolera, the CBO continues to teach the community about gender roles. They emphasise at every opportunity (funerals, VSLA meetings) that girls are as important as boys and should be educated. The CBO committees try to model gender balance.

Such changes of attitude do not require outside resources, so are completely self-sustaining. Activities like Child Rights Committees and Children’s Corners are also still functioning, but at a much lower level than before.

**Community structures**

Since exit, the livelihoods oriented community structures, like VSLA groups, have not only survived but grown. In Bulala, EveryChild left each CBO with only 10 VSLAs but now they have 51 associations at Chanyama CBO, 54 at Chisenyezi CBO, 35 at Malinyeti CBO and 15 at Bulala CBO. This represents a 400% growth in just one year. In Mndolera too, the CBO still has 23 VSLA groups still active.

These groups play a major influence on economic empowerment, particularly for women left behind by migration. The VSLA groups are helping the women generate income to take care of children.

The ‘goat pass-on’ scheme is also still working in many communities. For example, in Kasamba. EveryChild gave four goats initially. The CBO has now given goats to eight households and they have 12 goats that are ready for dispatching to others.

The CBCCs, however, have tended to decline since exit. This is partly because of the financial resources required to keep them active with support needed both for volunteer teachers and also for providing a

meal for the children. This is especially challenging now as Malawi is in the midst of a severe food crisis with more than 3 million people needing food relief for the next year. In most communities in Malawi, the current focus is on survival. People are trying to make sure their own families have food first, so the commitment to voluntary community activities like CBCCs is going down. Not surprisingly then, in Kasamba only two of the original four CBCCs are still functioning and in Mndolera the communities are no longer able to provide porridge to the children, though the teaching continues.

In Bulala, however, respondents report that the projects they started with EveryChild are still thriving. They have 16 child care centres where the children are still receiving teaching support and also porridge on daily basis. The community used the fertiliser that they were given by EveryChild and they grew maize. They used some of the maize in the child care centre but they saved some which they sold to buy fertiliser for the next growing season. Each year, they grow maize and when they harvest, they sale some to buy fertiliser (in contrast in Kasamba and Mndolera they did not sell or save any money for next year's fertilizer). Furthermore, in Bulala, members pay a MK1000 subscription fees that the members pay, helps to buy sugar and other needs.

### Funding for services

One of the major concerns about EveryChild's exit was the impact on education as EveryChild had sponsored a number of children through secondary school. The hoped-for government bursaries have not materialised. In Kasamba and Mndolera the CBOs have not been able to pay the school fees of the 16 children in secondary schools. So parents have moved 14 to cheaper schools, but two have dropped out altogether as parents could not even afford the cheaper schools.

In Bulala community, however, the CBO has amazingly been able to maintain the education support. The 155 Village Savings and Loan Associations, each contribute K2000 to the CBOs. This money is used to pay school fees for the children without parental care.

Raising local funding for services continues to be extremely difficult in Malawi. Due to the 'Cashgate' corruption scandal, aid funders continue to withhold financial support. Malawi is operating a 'Zero Aid Budget'. So there is very little government money for key education and health services. Furthermore, more institutions like National AIDS Commission, a potential source of CBO funding, has had corruption issues and financial problems of its own. NAC disbursed grants to Beautify Malawi – a charity run by the First Lady, Her Excellency Gertrude Mutharika and the ethnic grouping Mulhako wa Alomwe – whose patron is the incumbent President Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika. These scandals have resulted in the Global Fund changing the grant policy and now these funds will be disbursed through Action Aid and another partner. It is not certain that CBOs which were already approved by NAC will still qualify under the new arrangements. In addition, the hoped-for arrival of NGOs such as Centre for Community and Youth Development into EveryChild-supported communities has not materialised.

### Legacy grants

As part of its exit process, EveryChild gave each of the ten CBOs a small 'legacy grant' in conjunction with the local government's development committee and disbursed by a commercial bank. The idea was that these micro-grants would give CBOs experience of managing small grants. It was also hoped that it would actively encourage the good practice of communities engaging directly with government. It was intended to cover the costs of CBCCs, child marriage activities, VSLA and school retention. District Councils monitored and provided back-up support during legacy grants.

At Mndolera, the legacy grant was used for training people in the community on how to make manure. Most of it was used for paying government staffs allowances for the trainings, monitoring and other expenses.

At Kasamba, the legacy grant was shared among different projects. They were given MK 1000,000 and they spent K195, 000 on the government staff for allowances. They remained with 805,000. Part of this money was also given to the government staff for trainings and monitoring as allowances and transport. They used part of the grant to conduct VSLA training and manure making training. The community then had to ask that they use some of the money for the construction of a school block for the primary school

in their community. This was done although the community feels that the government staffs was not in agreement with the idea.

At Bulala, the legacy grant was used for briefing meetings with sub ADC members; they also used it for engagement meetings where they were engaging the VSLA groups and traditional leaders to support the plight of children without parental care. The CBO also used the grant for review meetings where they invited other stakeholders to come and help to evaluate their program. They did two evaluation meetings and ten engagement meetings. The grant was also used for training VSLAs and training for children's board in group dynamics and other important topics. The grant was also used for buying materials for the VSLAs like the boxes and other materials. The materials were bought for five VSLAs only.

Some of the CBOs have been able to access other funding post-legacy grants.

- Mdwala CBO in Dowa was able to access funds from National AIDS Commission (NAC)
- Chanyama CBO in Bulala has managed to get \$7000 funding with the Firelight Foundation and they are in a seven year agreement.
- Bulala CBO has been able to acquire funding from the American Embassy amounting to MK 2,000,000. As a sustainability measure, they are processing peanut butter, peanut oil and they will soon start processing juice. The machines are installed and power connected. NAC also approved a MK1 200 000 funding for the CBO but they have only disbursed MK 250,000 and they are not explaining why the delay of the rest of the funds.
- Malinyeti CBO had an agreement with NAC over a project funding of MK 1,200,000 but they have also been given only MK 250,000 and they are not sending any more money

## **Principle 2: Ensure that exit does not have a detrimental effect on the children and communities where we work**

According to ex-EveryChild staff *"the most significant change is in protecting children from abuse and exploitation"*. When EveryChild started there were lots of cases of abuse, but now, even after EveryChild's exit that number has dramatically reduced. EveryChild KAP Surveys (February, 2015) revealed that most communities registered 3 cases when compared to 24 cases at the start of the projects. As a result of the reduction in child abuse cases, 96% of children interviewed reporting that they lived in safe and caring communities. The attitudes of guardians and parents has shifted. The Child Protection committees are still working well in partnership with police. Each was each given a bicycle by the government to monitor their work.

All 10 CBOs developed and disseminated locally-based child protection policies during EveryChild's time. Since exit, however, Mndolera community has gone further by translating the policy into Chichewa.

The child re-integration program component of child protection is facing a transport challenge. The CBO has no car. In the past, if they heard that one of the children was to be married off in a distant village, EveryChild would take the community leaders by car so that the girl would be taken back home and sent to school. They still handle cases where the girl is married off close to their community but not those that go out of the district.

EveryChild's KAP Surveys (February, 2015) showed an increase in level of child participation in programme delivery with 45% of the children rating the Malawi programme as child led from 28% captured in September 2014. Even after exit, child participation still evident in the CBOs. *"They have still maintained participation of children in governance"* according to the ex-EveryChild Programme Manager. As the Bulala Village Head said: *"The activities you left we are still continuing on our own. We still protect our children"*.

### **Principle 3: As far as possible, ensure that expertise and momentum for change in the country is not lost**

Following advocacy on child marriage through Girls Not Brides, Better Care Network, interface meetings with Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare, Malawi Parliament finally passed the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Bill in February 2015. The minimum age of marriage has increased from 16 to 18 years.

This policy has helped maintain the momentum for change in child marriage that EveryChild helped catalyse. It is a lasting legacy in the EveryChild communities. But it is also a legacy that is gaining momentum as NGOs like ActionAid, Plan, and MAICC taking on board the issue and scaling it up across the country.

According to other NGOs: *“EveryChild was instrumental in developing the National Strategic Plan for working with children without parental care and children on the streets”*. This work with the Ministry of Women and Children’s Affairs in developing a National Strategy on Street Children has continued. According to ex-EveryChild staff *“they have become more targeted and we feel that EveryChild made a contribution to this”*. Others observe: *“The government has not shown seriousness in implementing the Strategic Plan. Where EveryChild left it, is where it is now.”*

While the connection with the Ministry of Gender and Social Welfare continued with the legacy grants and the provision of bicycles for child protection work, it remains quite limited. There is stronger linkage with the local police. For example, in Bulala traditional leaders requested EveryChild Malawi to handover Bulala office to Malawi Police Service in order to continue managing cases of abuse involving children.

The Girls Not Brides (GNB) network appears to be still functioning, although it has been quieter since EveryChild’s departure. Four CBOs from Mndolera are still part of it. Leadership of GNB has been handed over to the Firelight Foundation/AGANet, and the secretariat is hosted by GNet (Girls Empowerment Network).

EveryChild was also instrumental in forming the Consortium of NGOs working with children, which is still operating, albeit at a regional, rather than national level. EveryChild also helped establish and house the Better Care Network in 2011. Respondents in communities had heard little since EveryChild’s departure. According to all NGO respondents: *“Since transition from EveryChild to SOS Children’s Village the network is not as effective as it was. The members no longer meet regularly”*. Indeed respondents had not heard of any BCN meeting since EveryChild’s departure. SOS has been too caught up with their own programmes.

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## **Learning**

### **What worked well in the exit process?**

#### **Capacity building**

Community respondents affirm that EveryChild’s capacity building work has been done well. EveryChild trained them in the following areas:

- CBO (Community Based Organisation) Management.
- Grant management
- Proposal writing
- Problem identification
- Child participation.

This has enabled CBOs to be able to run their own programs using their own resources, getting funding from other organisations and to connect to other stakeholders and operate like a strong CBO. All 10 CBOs successfully implemented micro grant projects with funding from EveryChild Malawi. Micro grant evaluations showed that CBOs had grown in most of CBO development areas such as grant management,

financial management and resource mobilisation among others. Micro grant evaluation showed that most of the CBOs were managing grants for their first time and the grants provided learning opportunity on how grants are managed to meet the expectation of funding institutions as well as local stakeholders

## Sharing Learning

EveryChild did well at collating and sharing experiences of good practice through the narrative Journey of EveryChild Malawi and the video documentary. The ten CBOs had organised annual review meetings which helped them to document their experiences, case stories of change and best practices. Through the Legacy Conference in January 2015 and TV Malawi features, members of GNB Malawi Chapter such as Church and Society of Livingstonia, Girls Empowerment Network and Youth Net and Counselling Organisations have adapted the multi-prolonged model of ending early and forced child marriage, Village Savings and Loan Associations and child participation model.

Furthermore, EveryChild Malawi shared lessons, experiences and good practices of working with Children without Parental Care with Girls Not Brides, Government and other CSOs through GNB Regional Meetings and partner conferences. EveryChild Malawi presented papers during the International Conference on using Child Centred Community Development Approach

## EveryChild support

The flexible structure of the Country Programme and support from EveryChild UK on redeployment of temporary Community Development Facilitators improved the delivery of the Responsible Exit. It was also helped by the engaging leadership exercised by the Country Programme Management team. This helped to motivate and retain staff with relevant skills which maintained quality standards in the delivery of the Final Annual Operational Plan. EveryChild continued providing regular updates on transition through internal communications and country visits by senior staff and trustees. These visits provided moral support to the Country team and heightened the drive to work up to the end of their contracts.

## What could have been done differently?

The CBOs regret the missed opportunity to form an umbrella NGO to continue the support to local CBOs. Such 'localisation' was the initial intention of the EveryChild Malawi staff, but the proposal EveryChild in the UK refused (once the decision to exit was taken). From previous experiences, EveryChild UK knew how complex and resource intensive the process was. But the lack of on-going local NGO support meant that communities perceive that government staff have been taking advantage of them forcing them to use much of their legacy grants on paying government allowances. If there had been a formal NGO coordinating all the 10 CBOs they believe this would not have happened.

These well-intentioned legacy grants (which aimed to strengthen community contact and relationships with local government) did not work as well as they hoped because the government did not have the resources to pay for themselves, so instead redirected the money to cover their own costs. The money was left in the hands of the Social Welfare department for use with communities. The CBOs believe it would have also been much better if they had been given early experience in managing grants during EveryChild's presence in country. They felt EveryChild left this element too late. As separate communities, they are trying to take the steps to raise funding, but it is taking too long now as they try to do it by themselves.

The CBO respondents also wish that EveryChild had left them better equipped to survive on their own. They would have liked EveryChild to provide them with computers (which they say they were promised). This would have helped with their reporting and record keeping. As of now, they have to carry a lot of papers for them to be able to present or to show the records of their work. They also feel that if they had better access to transport, such as motorbikes, this would have eased their work, enabling them to respond when they hear of a child from their community being married off far away.

They also wished the legacy grant was given to them rather than through government. They could have planned their expenditure, rather than be taken advantage of by the government staff, who insisted on being paid allowances.

## What is key learning for others?

- 1 Disbursement of grants to CBOs requires enough time to allow CBO learn from the processes of implementing the grants. Initial grants require at least over 6 months.
- 2 Community participation through-out the programme cycle processes enhances project ownership and improves sustainability of interventions. CBOs fully engaged traditional leaders and community members and this led increased mobilization of local based resources for implementation of grant projects.
- 3 The engagement of traditional leaders in ending child marriage is critical as traditional leaders are highly esteemed and whatever they say is like a law. As a result of engaging traditional leaders in programme delivery, child marriage prevalence continued to decline in the last 6 months.
- 4 Community Based Organizations need more time to understand and some of the planning tools including scenario planning. These CBOs perform much better after internalizing issues. Therefore, development partners working with CBOs should consider time as one of the key programme variable.

Funding opportunities for Community Based Organizations in Malawi are few and CBOs should be supported to develop feasible and plausible plans through scenario planning processes. Scenario plans help CBOs to have readily available plans which suit the current financial situation of a CBO.

# APPENDIX 5: NEPAL CASE STUDY

Phase II case study researched and written by Deepak D. Tamang

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## Acknowledgments

The EveryChild project undertaken by CWISH named Reintegration of Nepalese Child Domestic Workers Living with Employers (CDWLEs) was evaluated as a second phase longitudinal evaluation during May-June, 2016 in Kathmandu, with field visits to Melamchi, Sindupalchowk and Dhulikhel, Kavrepalanchowk. Altogether, seven institutions and 10 key informants were visited and interviewed in the process.

I would like to thank them all for their gracious patience and help in completing the interviews and answering all the questions and curiosities put before them. They include: Mr Saroj KC, Ms Prapti Adhikari and Mr Pradeep Dangol from CWISH; Ms Sonu Danuwar from HUN; Ms Sarita Maharjan and Mr Prem Bahadur Thapa from Lalitpur sub metropolitan city; Mr Prashant Dangol from ADWC; Mr Krishna Chandra Acharya from FOWEP; and Mr Dhurba Gautam from MANK.

I would also like to appreciate the confidence and support provided by Ms Sarah Lewis and Dr Rick James from INTRAC in assigning and helping to complete this evaluation.

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## Executive Summary

Five months after the Reintegration of Nepalese Child Domestic Workers Living with Employers (CDWLEs) project ended, a country-based consultant visited seven institutions and interviewed 10 key informants to ascertain EveryChild's legacy.

The earthquake which struck Nepal on April 25<sup>th</sup> 2015 had a considerable effect on the exit process - the three districts in which the project was working were among those most affected. The project was extended from September to December 2015, and activities were revised to ensure that the immediate needs of beneficiaries and stakeholders were met.

Some parts of the sustainability plan were not completed, but overall there does appear to be a reasonable level of lasting change for children, communities, organisations and government. There are strong indications that EveryChild, CWISH and implementing partners (MANK, FOWEP and SYS) have done a good job in ensuring the majority of reintegrated children have remained with families. There are also changes in attitudes towards child domestic workers, and expertise has remained with the government and NGOs.

Lots of learning now sits with CWISH and implementing partners, who are integrating lessons from the EveryChild project into new or existing projects. EveryChild's approach to partnership is also a lasting legacy. CWISH have appreciated their approach to capacity building, and report that they have developed into a professional and competent organisation.

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## Introduction

### Background

In October 2011, EveryChild and CWISH (Children – Women in Social Service and Human Rights) started a joint Comic Relief-funded project focused on reintegrating Nepalese Child Domestic Workers with their families (or into independent living). Nine months after the project started, EveryChild UK decided to close

down globally. This meant there would be no further funding for CWISH after the end of the project in December 2015.<sup>6</sup>

EveryChild commissioned an external longitudinal evaluation of their exit process. Phase I was conducted in January 2015 before the project had finished. Phase II of the evaluation took place in April – June 2016, some four-six months after the project ended.

## Aim

The aim of this Phase II evaluation is to test five months after the project ended, the extent to which EveryChild's three principles of responsible exit were fulfilled:

- 1 As far as possible ensure that the work we have done is sustainable – this could be a continuation of services or lasting changes in children's lives
- 2 Ensure that exit does not have a detrimental effect on the children and communities where we work
- 3 As far as possible, ensure that expertise and momentum for change in the country is not lost

The evaluation looked into the exit process since January 2015; what remains behind in communities; what impacts are being seen already (if any); and what the anticipated legacy will be. A key element was to find out what communities, key national informants and local government representatives believe the long-term legacy of EveryChild will be.

## Methods

The main data gathering methods used were:

- Interviews with three CWISH Nepal staff in Buddhanagar, Kathmandu and other locations in the Kathmandu Valley.
- Interviews with external stakeholders, including local government officials in Lalitpur Municipality, staff of Home Workers Union (HUN), staff of Adult Domestic Workers Consultancy (ADWC).
- Interviews with Executive Officer, staff and secretary of Ward no. 25 in Lalitpur Municipality.
- One day visit to a benefiting community (MANK and FOWEP).
- Phone interviews with community NGO, Sirjansil Yuva Samaj (SYS), District Education Officer, Lalitpur and District Labour Welfare Officer, Kathmandu.

A semi-structured checklist questionnaire assisted the consultant to conduct these interviews. Both women and men were represented. No direct engagement with children was undertaken due to time and resource constraints in the community.

This in-country work was complemented by INTRAC interviews with ex-EveryChild UK staff, a staff member of CWISH Nepal, and a document review (see Annex 2).

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## Findings

### The exit process since January 2015

A number of activities have taken place since January 2015. These include:

- Partnership review meetings in September 2015 and December 2015.
- A reference letter provided by EveryChild to CWISH.
- The transfer of some files to Family for Every Child.

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<sup>6</sup> The project was originally due to end in September 2015. However, the decision was taken to extend by three months to December 2015 as the communities the project worked with had been badly affected by the 2015 earthquake.

- EveryChild held fundraising workshops with CWISH, and have provided support on concept notes and one-page advertisements.
- A learning workshop was held in Kathmandu in December 2015 with stakeholders from the communities, districts and government to discuss the project's achievements and learning. CWISH also shared their reintegration model during the workshop.
- A final Skype call between EveryChild and CWISH Nepal in February 2016.

The exit process had a major focus on capacity building of local structures, which was regarded by CWISH's Programme Manager as one of the most important activities CWISH and EveryChild conducted.

A number of informal activities have also taken place since January 2015. These have included letting every stakeholder and partner know through word of mouth that there will be no further funding by the end of December 2015. The primary stakeholders such as children, teachers, facilitators and volunteers were also informed about the exit process through REFLECT classes, outreach centres and during regular monthly meetings of Savings and Credit Cooperative meetings. Furthermore, the field level partner NGOs (MANK, FOWEP and SYS), local government officials (VDC, ward and municipality officials) and relevant stakeholders such as Home Workers Union (HUN), Adult Domestic Workers Consultancy (ADWC) and government officials such as the District Education Officers (DEOs) and Department of Labour Officers (DOLOs) were verbally informed about the exit process.

This also entailed ironing out relevant roles and responsibilities during and after the exit process with each stakeholder, i.e. which of the activities would be terminated immediately, which would come to an end after the project period, and which of the activities would continue (even if on reduced self-reliant basis) after the project came to an end.

The stakeholders at Kathmandu, district and community level were thus well acquainted with the exit process; and these activities were helpful in letting the partners know that there would be no further commitment from either Every Child or CWISH. As such, there were **no major issues involved with the process of exit** with CWISH's collaborating partners after the project ended. Disappointments, confusion or expectations were clarified, and these informal initiatives helped to maintain cordial and functional working relationships with the partners. They were satisfied with the process, except the fact that they would have liked to continue with some of the activities CWISH and EveryChild were supporting (see section 2.7).

## Overall

In the case of Nepal, it was not a very happy situation immediately after the exit. The devastating earthquakes of 25 April, 2015 and 12 May, 2015 and subsequent frequent tremors and aftershocks had traumatised the nation and the communities in the villages. Normal life and activities were thrown out of gear and most government, INGO, NGO and community-based programme activities were either dysfunctional or directed towards relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction of earthquake damage and supporting earthquake victims

The Kathmandu valley, Lalitpur, Kavrepalanchowk, Sindupalchowk, and Ramechaap were all severely affected and finding resources to channel to the regular programme or the ones just concluded from this project were, therefore, all the more difficult. Funding support from donors was also directed to this purpose rather than social development programs such as the one initiated by the EveryChild project.

The legacy of EveryChild's work in the communities, therefore, is limited. The trauma left behind by the earthquake was more palpable than the child rights and reintegration issues, per se. It is possible, however, that more of the impact might have continued if it had not been for the earthquake.

The implementing NGOs such as MANK and FOWEP claim that they have managed to utilise the know-how and experience from this project and integrate it into their existing or pipeline projects with other funding partners and donors. However, they report that the activities related to integration and monitoring of the status of children integrated thus far; the livelihoods support; work with the village level Child Protection Committee; and lobbying with the schools and local government institutions have either come to an end or have been reduced drastically in intensity compared to the heyday of project

implementation. Even the activities of CWISH, as the main partner, have been reduced drastically after the funding support from EveryChild came to an end at the end of December 2015.

The silver lining is that one of the implementing partners, FOWEP, has managed to launch a similar child rights programme in another remote community (Dandapari geographical area of Kavrepalanchowk) for two years with the support of an INGO from Switzerland called Terre des Hommes (TDH). Likewise, HUN reported that their cooperation with the larger labour union, the GeFONT, has enabled them to continue their educative and awareness work with child domestic workers in a wider community. Similarly, the Village Development Committees (VDCs) and municipalities are obtaining 10-15 per cent budget allocation for Child Rights work from central government; and the Child Clubs and Child Protection Committees (CPCs) are utilising this government allocated budget for the work of sensitizing the community members, parents and children regarding prevention of abuse and vulnerable situation related to child domestic workers (CDW) through awareness programmes, including lobby and advocacy work for child rights issues.

### **Principle 1 As far as possible ensure that the work we have done is sustainable – this could be a continuation of services or lasting changes in children’s lives**

#### **Which activities have stopped and which remain active?**

The management and handover of implementation by CWISH to local institutions and NGOs was informal. CWISH attempted their level best to explain the funding situation and exit strategy to the local partners (MANK, FOWEP and SYS). In the absence of funding support the results were mixed, and the effect varied. In this section we look at which activities have stopped, and which remain active.

Since the end of the project, many programme activities have come to an end (**Box 1**). The reasons cited by CWISH and partners are a lack of financial resources to continue with these activities, and an inability to find replacement funding despite repeated attempts.

#### **BOX 1: PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES THAT HAVE ENDED**

- Activities which have ended include:
- Outreach centres
- Training for police
- Non-formal education
- Training labour officials in litigation
- Training to savings and credit cooperatives in management and accounting

In addition, the District Education Office is not able to provide ongoing education support to reintegrated children at the same, or reasonable, level as during the project period. The state structures such as the District Child Welfare Board that have taken on responsibility for monitoring and supporting reintegrated children are also minimal.

Reportedly the CPC has not managed to successfully take on the case management responsibility as hoped. The weak governance and accountability mechanism makes this task difficult. The local bodies are largely dysfunctional due to inefficiency and a lack of local elections for the past 14 years. Hence, the bureaucracy managed VDCs are not in the best position to manage these activities currently.

It should be noted that except for non-formal education, these were finite activities and would not have been expected to continue after the project.

However, a number of activities are continuing even though they are not happening at the same level of intensity, with the same funding support, or depth of monitoring (**Box 2**).

The post-earthquake scenario has created a situation where local level NGOs are receiving substantial grants and support for post-disaster management. These NGOs are reportedly integrating the lessons learned from the EveryChild project into their child rights projects, or components of child rights into their newly acquired projects.

MANK reports that they have a number of post-earthquake projects related to child rights and child welfare, which allows them to continue with some of the activities begun with EveryChild and CWISH. In this manner, MANK reportedly has been able to continue some of the child protection educative campaigns begun earlier with the project. This has been possible due to ongoing activities as well as post-earthquake projects supported by other donors such as Save the Children Fund, Oxfam and Plan International.

FOWEP obtained two-year funding support (up to NRs, 20,000,000) from a Swiss NGO, Terre des Hommes (TDS) to continue their programme in one remote geographical site covering a number of VDCs and, therefore, a lot of residual learning is put to good use in the new projects.

## **BOX 2: PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES THAT REMAIN ACTIVE**

Activities which are still continuing include:

- Monitoring and follow up for case management
- Advocacy and lobbying through partners and stakeholders related to reintegration and through the impetus provided by ILO Convention Article 189
- Coordination of technical and financial assistance from government agencies and local government mechanisms
- Building the capacity of primary stakeholders, especially Child Clubs and Child Protection Committees
- Integration of Child Rights activities in other projects of CWISH and partner NGOs in the communities
- Continued advocacy and lobbying for the Green Flag movement in Lalitpur and other Municipalities such as Dhading
- Exit package for CDWs for one more year where feasible
- Livelihoods training to families of reintegrated children will be taken over by cooperatives in different communities (they have MOUs in place)

In addition, although REFLECT centres are not running in exactly the same way as they did during the project, families sometimes gather and discuss their own issues in the three districts; and through schools and outreach centres.

From April 2015, the Home Workers' Union (HUN) took over running awareness raising activities with employers. This appears to be the most successful and sustained activity because it is supported by the national level trade union, GeFONT, and the national campaign is backed by the current ruling political party.

Cooperatives are managing livelihoods training and support to families of reintegrated children, related to credit use and loans such as for pig raising, cows, goats and buffaloes which were originally initiated by the project.

Teachers trained will be able to provide on-going psychosocial support. However, although they are reportedly providing some psychosocial support to children as and when needed, this is not in a structured or continuous manner.

Awareness raising in communities, the adult domestic worker initiative, and case management activities are also continuing through different projects.

## Changes for children, communities, organisations and government

Discussions with CWISH and community level NGOs such as MANK and FOWEP revealed that thus far around 80 per cent of the reintegrated children have remained with their families. However, the earthquake has created a vulnerable situation where a number of children have left their families in search of jobs in urban areas such as Kathmandu. The case management and monitoring mechanisms at the community level have also come to an end. Thus, at this stage in the post-project period, it is not possible to come to definite conclusion as to whether reintegration of children is likely to be sustained at the optimal level.

Overall, there does appear to be a reasonable level of lasting change for children, communities, organisations, and government. These include changes in attitudes and improved relationships so that child domestic workers should have better conditions, education, development and family lives.

The changes in mind-set which are taking place gradually can be attributed to many factors, including the EveryChild project inputs during its active phase. The innovative approaches and numerous creative awareness and education activities initiated, along with processes such as case monitoring, CPC, lobbying with the Village Child Protection Committees (VCPCs), and District Child Welfare Boards (DCWBs), Green Flag movement, and replacement of child domestic workers with adult domestic workers cooperatives are note-worthy. Their residual effects continue, or will continue in the communities, either through tangible efforts or in a sub-conscious manner. Examples include:

- The 10 – 15 per cent budget allocation for child rights work from central government to VDCs and municipalities.
- The local and national trend of sending boys and girls to school, and rising statistics on enrolment and retention of children in schools.
- Changing mind-sets of government and political parties, NGOs and international communities, and policy, advocacy and lobbying child based networks that have sprung up in Nepal in the past decades.
- The language of change (lingo) is also evident at the community level where parents, teachers and community leaders voice their aspirations to stop child labour and work towards the development of children's scholastic career and life skills opportunities. This is optimistically aspired for despite the lack of livelihoods opportunities, poverty and unemployment, stagnant economy after the earthquakes, and the political chaos prevailing in Nepal.

### **Principle 2 Ensure that exit does not have a detrimental effect on the children and communities where we work**

#### Impact of exit on children

##### Reintegration

As previously mentioned, there are strong indications from local NGOs that a majority of reintegrated children have stayed with their families back in Sindupalchowk, Kavrepalanchowk and Ramechaap; and, according to CWISH's records 80 per cent of the 810 children reintegrated into families have been retained in the first six months after the project came to an end. The rest of the remaining 20 per cent that have not been retained sustainably with their families are mainly due to the effect of earthquake when families had difficult economic circumstances. MANK reported that out of 110 children reintegrated, around 15 of them have gone back to the Kathmandu valley after the earthquake. FOWEP reports that 3 out of 96 reintegrated children have gone back to the Kathmandu valley.

However, in the absence of pro-active case management monitoring in all of the NGOs after the handover of the EveryChild project, it is not certain if all these numbers are accurate. The practice of only two years' time allotted for case monitoring of each child reintegrated with their family is, in many cases, inadequate to ensure sustained reintegration of children. This short time span for case monitoring after reintegration is inadequate for ensuring sustained long term impact.

## Child protection committees and school committees

During the country-level data collection, respondents reported that child protection committees and school committees have not taken up the responsibility for protecting children in the community as robustly as hoped. Sensitisation and informal advocacy are going on in schools but the village level CPC is not as strong or active as it was during project implementation. The DCWB, the local and state mechanisms and structures are also currently weak in ensuring sustained lobby and advocacy work for reintegration of children or protection of vulnerable children in a substantive manner.

Continued policy, advocacy, and lobbying work, and support from national and international NGOs and partners over the longer term may yield better results through collaborative efforts, coalition and working hand-in-hand together.

## Impact of exit on communities

There have been considerable changes in attitudes in the communities. Community members have become more aware of child rights and protection issues, and livelihoods projects have helped the targeted communities, especially in income generation activities. The case of pig raising with Danuwar community members in Melamchi was cited as something exceptionally good in terms of return on investment to these Dalit (socially disadvantaged) families. As detailed in the final evaluation report for this project,<sup>7</sup> changes in parental attitudes have been fostered largely by REFLECT classes. It is likely that this knowledge and understanding with stay will the communities.

## Impact of exit on partner organisations

The impact of exit on each of the organisations, from CWISH to community level NGOs and other stakeholders has been fairly substantial as they are unable to carry out many of the activities started during the project period. However, there are also encouraging signs of lasting impact.

A lot of learning now sits with CWISH, and they are committed to using this in the future. CWISH has also approached Antislavery International to work together on child domestic workers' issues.

Partner organisations of CWISH that are based in the districts have also gained a lot of experience, and as outlined in the final evaluation report, their sustainability has been built in various ways. They have good knowledge of the vulnerabilities of families, reintegration and prevention work and this can be used in the future.

## **Principle 3 As far as possible, ensure that expertise and momentum for change in the country is not lost**

CWISH's Programme Manager reported that there has been a big change in the perception of child domestic workers. It used to be a matter of pride to have child domestic workers in the family but it is now considered illegal and he believes there have been changes in the attitudes of government officials.

A fair bit of expertise has remained with the NGOs and government agencies on awareness raising, policy advocacy, child protection and replacing child domestic workers with adult workers. They are attempting their level best to continue them in their regular or future programmes. Yet in the absence of regular funding, many of these activities, good intentions and wishes remain as future aspirations.

## Local networks

A number of local child protection and child-focussed networks have sprung up in the capital, Kathmandu and the districts. They are often supported by child-focused NGOs, who in turn are supported by INGOs such as UNICEF, Save the Children, ActionAid, Plan International, Lutheran World Federation, and so on. These local NGO networks are active and carry out lobby work for children. Although not direct replicas of the project initiated by EveryChild and CWISH, many of the activities and lobby work are similar. As a

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<sup>7</sup> Blagbrough, J. and Wanduragala, R. (2015, December) 'Final Evaluation: Reintegrating Nepalese child domestic workers with their families October 2011 – December 2015.'

result, there are tangible improvements in the life of Child Domestic Workers in Nepal. Proxy indicators suggest the 'supply' and subsequent 'demand' of CDW are gradually decreasing. For example:

- The school enrolment and retention rates of girls and boys in rural areas are one such robust indicator.
- The mind-set change of parents in rural areas to educate girls and boys is another.
- The mind-set change taking place with employers of CDWs to have adult domestic workers in urban areas is one more.
- Likewise, the government's allocation of increased budget for primary, secondary and tertiary education is another important indicator.

These impetuses, combined with the efforts of labour unions and political parties to ensure child friendly local governance and allocation of adequate resources, indicate that lobby work for child rights continues in many forms – dispersed as it may appear currently.

### Government support for child rights issues

The government with the active support, lobbying and advocacy of national and international NGOs and development partners are fairly active and are taking a keen interest in child rights issues. The allocation of 10 - 15 percent of the development budget in VDCs and municipalities demonstrates the fact that it intends to continue with such activities. The current government budget has continued with this trend and its social development budget together with social sector security budget is increasing substantially.

### Green Flag Movement

The Green Flag momentum for creating child labour free zones is on the hold at the moment. However, it has done fairly well in ward no. 14 of Lalitpur municipality, and three wards (16, 20 and 21) have been declared child labour free as part of the campaign. In addition, 15 wards of Hetauda have been declared child labour free. The local village or municipal government can emulate such noteworthy examples and replicate them in wider scale.<sup>8</sup>

The member secretary of ward no. 15 says they will continue to strive for reviving this movement in that particular ward in the future. He and other responsible local government officials such as the Community Development Officer placed in Lalitpur sub metropolitan city emphasised the fact that Child Friendly Local Governance (CFLG) is gaining momentum in Nepal and up to 15 per cent budget is being allocated for children to be aware, plan, prioritise, access and make use of it in child friendly development activities. There is also potential for CWISH's learning on reintegration to be incorporated into government practices.

### Prosecuting employers of children

This adversarial approach to prosecuting employers of children was not taken up by the Department of Labour and CWISH now believes, through learning and experience, that such work is not feasible. This is due to the level of attrition it will create, and the lack of clout on the part of the State to enforce and make employers of children comply with children's rights. Hence, a softer approach to persuasion, awareness and educative initiatives is being taken.

HUN reports that employers are currently more amenable to sit with such lobby and child rights networks in an atmosphere of harmony and discuss these issues positively. Likewise, CWISH reports that 25 per cent of the CDW cases have a fair to intense level of adversarial element, which is normally resolved through a consensual approach.

At the moment, all relevant stakeholders report that there is no clear or robust legislation or law to persecute employers of CDWs and even ensure fair compensation. Hence, in future a "win-win" approach based on "carrot and stick" policy and regulatory framework needs to emerge through stronger

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<sup>8</sup> There are good examples of such campaigns going viral and having reasonable success elsewhere since 'open defecation free village' and 'illiteracy free village' campaigns are growing rapidly in Nepal.

legislation, enforcement and compliance mechanisms led by the State as a proactive actor. CWISH claims that it is working towards that end including a more robust baseline survey and database at the national level. The organisation has also worked with the Department of Labour to prepare litigation procedures for inspection and prosecution. These have been forwarded to the Ministry of Labour and Employment for endorsement.

### Village Development Committees

As mentioned above, VDCs are actively budgeting 10-15 percent of the budget for children and are allowing child clubs to actively participate and play a role in how it is to be used for children's rights and welfare. This is an encouraging trend.

### Risks to sustaining momentum for change

The perception that reintegration of child domestic workers is possible has weakened considerably post-project as the priorities of the State and NGOs have changed - first to earthquake response and now to rehabilitation and reconstruction. This ground reality has created fair bit of a vacuum in the child rights movement in the country. There is also a growing belief that the CDW employment sector in cities such as the Kathmandu Valley has swelled substantially. Reintegration would require a whole new approach that will involve not only NGOs and the State but also the private sector.

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## Learning

### What worked well in the exit process?

#### EveryChild's approach to partnership, capacity building

CWISH's Programme Manager shared that EveryChild's partnership approach is a major legacy. Throughout the partnership, EveryChild had been concerned with capacity building, and CWISH have developed to be a very professional and competent organisation. EveryChild were cited as being a great partner throughout the exit process, and the fact they were systematic was appreciated.

CWISH also appreciated the support EveryChild gave in organising a fundraising workshop, providing input on fundraising ideas, and supporting them in developing concept notes. The Programme Manager expressed that *"if it was just CWISH, it would have been harder to raise funds."*

#### Being open to learning

EveryChild were flexible and open to learning. There was a lot of learning from CWISH's beneficiaries, and if this had not been incorporated it is likely that the project would not have achieved as much as it did. CWISH appreciated EveryChild's approach to this, believing that it helps interventions to be sustained. Learning mechanisms throughout the exit process also helped to embed it.

#### Communication and continuity

Planning was done very well and CWISH had a good understanding of the exit process – there were no surprises. Continuity of staff also worked well.

#### Consultation with communities

Consultation with community structures was one of the most important elements of the exit process. CWISH went to the districts and communities to ask questions such as "what have we achieved together?" and "what might be the implications if we exit from the community?" REFLECT Centres also helped to assess the important issues to consider in the exit process.

## Principles

Principles and other commitments were extremely useful. It is possible that EveryChild would have extended anyway when the earthquake happened. However, using the responsible exit principles, it was a “no-brainer” that the partnership would be extended for three months.

### What could have been done differently?

CWISH expressed that it would have been better if there had been some prioritisation. Project activities, responsible exit and the final evaluation had to be completed in the last three to four months. However, CWISH’s Programme Manager recognised that this could not be helped because of external factors such as the earthquake and fuel crisis, and reported that aside from that the exit process was perfect.

Managing cases was quite problematic. The idea was that CWISH would not take on any new cases, but during the exit process issues came up and they had to take them on. They managed by referring cases to other organisations but faced major time, human resource and budget constraints. Not having adequate resources but having to respond anyway was a bit contradictory.

Looking back, and according to the stakeholders involved, EveryChild could have made more effort to ensure that the last two batches of children reintegrated during the last two years of the project were supported better. FOWEP reported that it would have been satisfactory if the last batch of children under integration would have received full two years of support including livelihoods initiatives, psychosocial counselling and continuing handling of case management.

Furthermore, CWISH could have had timelier funding to continue and expand work. EveryChild could have started “joint programming of resources” with other child rights development funding partners in Nepal right from the beginning when it was known that its funding support to CWISH would end in four years’ time.<sup>9</sup> This would have allowed CWISH and many of its stakeholders to align their future programmes with other funding partners. It is apparent that after the earthquake there has been a glut of funding partners running into the communities to support these local NGOs. Such an approach would have allowed an improved exit strategy in a sliding scale over the four year period.

The partners would have liked to continue some activities, for example HUNs child awareness classes; Lalitpur municipality’s Green Flag movement or the ADWC’s replacement of child domestic workers with adult domestic workers in a phased and smooth manner.

### What is key learning for others?

Learning and recommendations from CWISH and EveryChild staff for others involved in exit include:

- 1 *Clear exit plan*: Having a plan is important so that exit can be considered from the outset.
- 2 *Community participation*: Incorporate community participation into the exit process, for example review and plan the exit together. Communities should be considered equal.
- 3 *Follow-up resources*: Ensure there are some follow-up resources for a certain amount of time after the project ends. For example, while dealing with sensitive issues on child domestic workers it would have been beneficial for CWISH to have had resources for six months or so after the project ended so that they could follow-up in the community.
- 4 *Communicate, communicate, communicate*: Don’t assume people have really understood you or believe you will exit. Clear communication throughout is important.
- 5 *Flexibility*: It is good to have a plan, but if organisations also have ethical bases such as principles then there is a need to be flexible in order to stick to them.

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<sup>9</sup> In Nepal, there are a number of child-centred INGOs with a similar rights-based approach. The consultant reflects that EveryChild and CWISH could have mapped these organisations and their work, and attempted to work more closely with them in terms of developing a continued strategy.

# APPENDIX 6: CAMBODIA CASE STUDY

Phase II case study researched and written by Robin Mauney and Gabrielle Grant

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

CCWC	Commune Committee for Women and Children
CIP	Commune Investment Plan
DWCCC	District Women’s and Children’s Consultative Committee
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
JFC!	Justice For Children!
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
LAC	Legal Aid of Cambodia
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoSAVY	Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation
PoSAVY	Provincial Department of Social Affairs, Veterans, and Youth Rehabilitation
PVAC	Prevention of Violence Against Children
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia

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## Executive Summary

Legal Aid of Cambodia, in partnership with Khemara and EveryChild, implemented a three-year (July 2013 – June 2016) project titled ‘Justice for Children!’ This Phase II review took place in April-May 2016. It looked at the exit process since January 2015, any lasting impact, and the project’s anticipated legacy.

Respondents agreed that the exit process was smooth and well communicated, and there are many indications of lasting change. A key legacy is the integral role EveryChild has played in support and advocacy for the ratification of the Juvenile Justice Law in Cambodia, which was passed by the National Assembly on May 30 2016 and is expected to be ratified by the end of August 2016. Although there will still be a need for support to the government to implement and uphold the law, EveryChild and LAC have set a good foundation for this in the target provinces.

Trainings led by LAC on child-friendly practices, legal representation, and others have contributed to changed practices in prisons and courts. These are likely to continue to impact children positively. As LAC’s Executive Director said *“EveryChild will leave a legacy on child friendly procedures in criminal justice for Cambodians to replicate across the country in the future”*.

One area of concern is that new cases among children in contact with the law will not have the option of free legal representation after exit; and legal representation to all existing cases will only be available to children that are accused - not victims - of crime after the project ends. In addition, the organisation faces financial difficulties in the current challenging funding environment in Cambodia, and the future is uncertain.

Organisationally, LAC reported that EveryChild has built their capacity in various areas and has assisted in learning about true partnership. EveryChild’s role has been extremely influential and exit will be felt not just monetarily but through technical support.

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## Introduction

### Background

From 2012, EveryChild has operated in Cambodia by working directly through local partners - Legal Aid of Cambodia (LAC) and Khemara. In May 2012, they submitted a joint proposal on Justice for Children to Big Lottery for funding.

One month later, in June 2012, EveryChild UK took the decision to close all of its programmes. However, the decision was taken to go ahead with the Justice for Children! Project as planned (funding was approved in February 2013 and the project began in June 2013 for three years), with project exit set for June 2016.

### Aim

In 2014, EveryChild commissioned an external longitudinal evaluation of their exit process. The evaluation focuses on the extent to which EveryChild achieved its aim of exiting responsibly in line with these three principles:

- 1 As far as possible ensure that the work we have done is sustainable – this could be a continuation of services or lasting changes in children’s lives
- 2 Ensure that exit does not have a detrimental effect on the children and communities where we work
- 3 As far as possible, ensure that expertise and momentum for change in the country is not lost

Phase I of the evaluation was conducted in January 2015 before the Justice for Children! project had closed. Phase II of the evaluation took place in April – May 2016. Since Phase II occurred before the project has closed, the aim was to find out what impacts are being seen already (if any) and the anticipated legacy.

### Methods

The methodology was qualitative in nature, using a summative framework. The primary methods used were key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs), which were conducted during the final evaluation of the project. During this final evaluation, 88 relevant stakeholders to Phase II from the national, subnational, and project partners were interviewed (see table in Appendix 1). Follow-up interviews were conducted with LAC staff following the final evaluation to gain more insight regarding the Phase II evaluation.

These interviews focused on feedback regarding the project and project partners like LAC but also looked to understand the impact and legacy of EveryChild in Cambodia, get a description of exit strategies, and receive recommendations.

Data was also reviewed from secondary sources like programme documents. This in-country work was complemented by INTRAC interviews with ex-EveryChild UK staff, LAC’s Executive Director, the Justice for Children! Project Coordinator, and a document review (Appendix 2).

Overall, the data gained from the secondary sources, relevant stakeholders from the final evaluation, and follow up interviews with LAC staff provided the information needed to fully address the aims of Phase II.

### Limitations

The primary limitation of the final evaluation for the Justice for Children! project and the Phase II evaluation was the type of data collected. Data collection from key informants and the information provided were taken at face value. Triangulation was employed through a large sample size to ensure data validity and follow up interviews were conducted to member check findings.

This also resulted in challenges with collecting a large sample. There were many different levels of participants to interview resulting in a large sample size. The evaluators split into two different teams to ensure all levels were interviewed.

Building rapport among children in any type of interviewing context can be somewhat of a challenge, especially among children in prisons and child victims. All interviewers had been trained in children friendly procedures and child protection strategies, so building rapport was easily addressed.

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## Findings

### Overall

#### How did the exit process take place?

Since January 2015, LAC has been carrying out various exit activities. The mid-term reflection ended in January 2015 and under the guidance of EveryChild, LAC updated their child protection policy in March 2015.

In April 2015, during project partner meetings, LAC and Khemara began formalising an exit plan to implement with project stakeholders to prepare for the end of the project. A number of consultative meetings on how to implement and plan with project staff and stakeholders were then held.

The exit plan has since been implemented and was referenced in interviews during the final project evaluation and also confirmed by LAC. Included in this plan was the continued use of the reintegration procedures and checklists implemented by LAC.

In October 2015, the chair of EveryChild's board and International Programmes consultant visited Cambodia. This visit was used as an opportunity to provide encouragement to LAC and Khemara, and as a chance to advocate with the government around the ratification of the Juvenile Justice Law.

During the exit process, it became apparent that LAC were experiencing funding constraints. EveryChild took the decision to provide a core costs grant from January – July 2016 to ensure there was no negative impact on the delivery of the project, final reporting, and momentum for change around the Juvenile Justice Law. They also gave additional general funds for national dialogue meetings, which would bring stakeholders together to debate the law. EveryChild tried to link LAC to potential donors, and provided input to funding applications.

Other activities have included ongoing monitoring of responsible exit processes and plans. A final reflection meeting took place in May 2016. During a final visit in June 2016, a national workshop was held to share experiences and lessons from the project, and challenge stakeholders to think about what needs to happen once ratification of the Juvenile Justice Law is complete. The project will come to an end at the end of June 2016.

Out of respect for the children and families, all cases given representation during the project cycle are either finished or LAC has assured continued representation until the case is closed. LAC has committed to continuing representation to all cases for both accused children and child victims still open even after the project ends.

Other activities have included working with the provincial courts and lower courts in the project target areas to understand the new Ministry of Justice (MOJ) guidelines regarding criminal justice system. The quarterly prosecutor meetings among court officials that LAC helped to organise as part of the project will continue. These meetings have served, and will continue to serve, as a mechanism for court officer and officials to come together for trainings and discussion around certain issues like juvenile justice.

All of these activities were described by court officials and local duty bearers as extremely helpful and have provided a sustainable way to end the project. They have helped to ensure many of the procedures and processes established during the project will continue.

## **Principle 1 As far as possible ensure that the work we have done is sustainable – this could be a continuation of services or lasting changes in children’s lives**

### **Support for the development of the Juvenile Justice Law**

An anticipated legacy of EveryChild revealed as a major theme in the evaluation is the development and advocacy for the passage of the Juvenile Justice Law. Over the years, LAC and EveryChild have engaged in technical support, advocacy, and coaching to key government authorities at the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSAVY) to support the development and passage of this law. It has been approved and is due to be debated by the Senate on 29<sup>th</sup> June before being signed by the King.

The support and development from EveryChild with LAC has really worked to advocate for this law and invigorate critical mass from many stakeholders. Both the Ministry of Justice and MoSAVY identified EveryChild’s support as critical to this work and something positive that EveryChild will be remembered as leading the effort on. In fact, key leaders at the Ministry of Social Affairs and LAC will continue to be leaders in the implementation of this law when it passes – both gained capacity on these issues through EveryChild, as well as other organisations like UNICEF and Plan International.

### **Increased capacity around Juvenile Justice at the sub-national level**

In addition to the law, another aspect of the anticipated legacy of EveryChild is the increased capacity around Juvenile Justice at the sub-national level. Both projects Ending Violence Against Children (EVAC) and Justice for Children! have strengthened capacity greatly on juvenile justice and child protection issues. Key informants such as the court officials and POSAVY members at the sub-national level reported an increase in knowledge of, and focus on, juvenile justice issues – changing practices as a result of the training and coaching they had received.

There are many indications of lasting change as a result of EveryChild and LAC. Advocacy for the Juvenile Justice Act will continue from LAC until the act is ratified. There is a deep commitment from LAC on this issue. Currently, LAC is the process of working with Plan International, CARE, GIZ, and UNICEF to find funding to support some work in the juvenile justice sector and to continue services, particularly representation.

The emphasis and role LAC has played on a national and sub-national level with the support of EveryChild on advocacy for the juvenile justice law is enormous. LAC has been integral in the ratification process thus far.

### **Changes in communities, courts and prisons**

During the final evaluation, many duty bearers, court officials, prison/police officials, and community leaders were interviewed around the Justice for Children! project and many referenced the role LAC has played in the promotion of juvenile justice in Cambodia. As well as advocacy, these participants also referenced trainings led by LAC on child-friendly court practices, legal representation, and others which have changed court practices and prison practices. There is an awareness that children have different needs and rights. For example, some courts in these four provinces reference using partitions during the interviewing of child victims and children accused, creating separate spaces for victims and accused to occupy while waiting for hearings. Also LAC attorneys were identified as sources of support and technical advice. The research team observed that LAC attorneys were well known in the provinces and highly respected. The work with children was highly appreciated as prior, prosecutors had not known how to work with children.

Judges and prosecutors also specifically mentioned using appropriate language and tone when working with children in contact with the law. These types of trainings although not instituted Cambodia-wide have had, and will continue, to impact children positively in the project target provinces.

LAC is now known in Cambodia as a champion for advocacy for juvenile justice and has represented many vulnerable children in contact with the law.

## Continued representation

From the end of July 2016, LAC will stop taking on new cases for legal support and representation to child victims of crime/children accused of crime.

The original exit strategy was to transfer ongoing cases to the Bar Association or other NGOs. However, the final Justice for Children! trip report shows that 40 children's court cases will still be in progress at the end of this project, and it has not been possible to link these children to legal support. Three LAC lawyers have offered to provide pro bono support over the next year to see cases through. EveryChild's International Programmes consultant has therefore recommended that EveryChild gives LAC a one-off 'legacy' grant payment to cover their expenses.

This could also change since the Juvenile Justice Act is in the final stages of ratification, after which the government will be responsible for offering representation to all juveniles in contact with the law.

## Reintegration checklist

In addition, the reintegration checklist created by LAC in cooperation with MoSAVY has set up a process for stakeholders to manage and monitor reintegration in four provinces of Cambodia. This process was seen in use in these four provinces and referenced not only by Provincial Social Affairs, Veterans, and Youth (POSAVY) but also the District Women's and Children's Consultative Committee (DWCCC) and Commune Committee for Women and Children (CCWC) members interviewed. This is a change in practice for this population and duty bearers.

## Strengthened organisational capacity

Organisationally, LAC reported the legacy of EveryChild has been the building of their capacity around juvenile justice, child protection policies, fundraising capabilities, and a stronger organisational structure. After the partnership with EveryChild, LAC feels better equipped to problem solve, fill gaps in service, and think about the future. LAC is now seen as a leader on juvenile justice and this role will continue past the end of the project.

LAC also expressed that EveryChild really assisted them in learning how to work in true partnership with other organisations. They report a deeper understanding of developing an agreement with a partner(s), monitoring and following up, and developing/implementing projects in true tandem. LAC highly appreciated the time that was spent by EveryChild to bring them together with Khemara and EveryChild and develop cooperative actions. They have reported they will apply this model in other work.

Ultimately, much evidence was given from many national, sub-national, and community level stakeholders on the impact of LAC in the target provinces.

In addition, an interview with EveryChild's International Programmes consultant revealed that it is hoped alternative dispute resolution will continue as a lot of work has been done with communities in this area. Likewise, funding through Commune Investment Plans, and the strong role that local councils take at community level should also continue.

## **Principle 2 Ensure that exit does not have a detrimental effect on the children and communities where we work**

Overall, there are no specific detrimental effects on children and communities where LAC has worked. However, there will be consequences from some of the activities ending in the communities.

## Free legal representation

The direct impact of the exit in relation to LAC will be any new cases among children in contact with the law will have no option for free legal representation. Previously, this was readily available in the project target provinces.

Legal representation is a big part of juvenile justice and many children who come into contact with the law cannot afford this service. It is difficult to define the detrimental effects as only free legal representation and advocacy will no longer be provided to any new cases among children in conflict with the law in the

target provinces unless Bar Association Lawyers can be found. The ultimate results will be on a case by case basis.

This lack of service will also impact communities because there are 'at-risk' or vulnerable children living in many of the villages in the target areas. Although many villages, commune, and district leaders indicated support for prevention activities in Commune Investment Plans (CIP), the quality will not be as high as provided by Khemara and LAC. Additionally, CWCC members and village leaders made no mention of support for free legal services.

Ultimately, this impact on LAC was described as troublesome and difficult. The lack of funding provided by the project is seen as a negative impact because children will not have representation as easily, especially those that are victims.

### **Principle 3 As far as possible, ensure that expertise and momentum for change in the country is not lost**

Overall, expertise and momentum for change has been maintained since the exit process. The Juvenile Justice Act has passed the Council of Ministers and was passed by the National Assembly on May 30, 2016. Momentum is strong among government and civil society organisations to support this law alongside the Cambodian Government.

Although there are currently no other formal lobbying networks since EveryChild's exit, other national and international NGOs are championing the cause of juvenile justice and have been advocating with the government for passage and implementation.

Generally, the government – through both the MoSAVY, the Cambodia National Council for Children and the Ministry of Justice – are championing the promotion of the Juvenile Justice Law. Most recently, a joint study tour with government and NGOs visited Australia to see how the juvenile justice system worked. Upon return the authorities reported learning that could be applied in Cambodia once the law passed. The reality is that since the law has taken more than 10 years to pass, a cadre of key people in NGOs and in government have developed strong working relationships and are committed to its passage and implementation. Much of this work was supported by EveryChild and it is a strong legacy for the organisation.

However, there is still concern and a need for strong support to the government to uphold the law. EveryChild and LAC set a good foundation for the law in the target provinces during the project cycle but much more support assistance will be needed for implementation if the law receives final approval. A key priority after the law is passed will be training on its implementation and LAC is seeking support for this work from the UN and other CSOs and NGOs like UNICEF and Plan International. There is momentum among many to not only pass the law but focus on implementation and provide technical support as needed.

Additionally, through other donors, the Cambodia National Council for Children is leading on the development of a Child Protection System with clear policies at the national and subnational level and has developed a National Plan of Action for Children. The child protection system also is inclusive of prevention efforts, reporting and much of the work that EveryChild was promoting. While others are leading on this work, EveryChild can be seen as a strong contributor to this, and can be given credit for raising the profile of the issue of children in contact with the law.

LAC's existence will be important in sustaining momentum for change. They have a key role to play as very few organisations are working on juvenile justice in Cambodia.

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## Learning

### What worked well in the exit process?

Overall, there is little EveryChild could have done differently according to LAC. They learned a great deal from EveryChild in many different capacities. Aspects of the exit process that worked well were cited by key informants as:

#### Communication and collaboration

The exit process has gone smoothly and under the guidance of EveryChild, LAC developed an exit plan to transition out of the target provinces. LAC reported no problem with the exit strategy and many of court officials and local duty bearers referenced knowing about this.

LAC found that working together with EveryChild to prepare the exit strategy to be very valuable. As LAC's Executive Director said, *"some NGOs exit quickly without an exit plan, but EveryChild have tried to work together with their partners."* LAC reported that having a clear end-point to the project has been good, and that EveryChild were very clear from the start that this was a time bound project.

#### Ongoing monitoring

**Skype calls to monitor the exit plan and follow-up on progress were helpful.**

#### Principles

Revisiting the responsible exit principles have been useful for partners and EveryChild, and provided reassurance during the exit process.

#### Approach to partnership

What was reported time and time again by LAC and stakeholders was that the exit itself will have an impact as there will no longer be funding and guidance from EveryChild. LAC reported the role EveryChild has played in their organisation through both project cycles as extremely influential and the exit will be felt not just monetarily but through technical support. They acknowledged that EveryChild treats partners equally, with common goals and joint ownership. As LAC's Executive Director said, *"EveryChild is different to other partners that just provide funds but not training or coaching"*.

### What could have been done differently?

Suggestions made during the in-country research were to focus on identifying vulnerable and 'at-risk' children sooner, and give more attention to advocacy at grassroots level. Although a great deal has been done at the national and sub-national level on juvenile justice and the passing of the Juvenile Justice Law, more focus could have been given to linking this to grassroots input. LAC mentioned focusing on building stronger connections between national and grassroots advocacy to further support goals in future projects. This would particularly be around taking lessons or issues identified at the grassroots level up – instead of bring lessons or good practices down.

LAC's Executive Director and International Programmes consultant shared that it has been difficult to find alternative funding support to continue the project. EveryChild's efforts to link LAC to other donors and to increase its capacity to fundraise were appreciated. However there is a serious concern that despite this, chances may be low. As Cambodia is now classified as a middle-income country, many donors are withdrawing meaning that numerous organisations are applying for the same funds. A key learning is that exit never happens in a vacuum – it has been more challenging for EveryChild to exit responsibly in this context in Cambodia than in other countries.

## What is key learning for others?

Learning and recommendations from LAC and EveryChild staff for others involved in exit include:

- 1 **Donors and partners should work together on exit strategies:** With other donors that LAC has worked with, they did not work together on the exit plan. They did not see exit as their responsibility. It felt to LAC as though *“they are the funders and we are the implementers”*. With EveryChild, they worked together.
- 2 **Properly inform beneficiaries and other stakeholders about the plan to exit:** It is important that all the partners understand that the project will end. Stakeholders and beneficiaries should be properly informed about the exit plan. Having a clear message is important.
- 3 **Providing lots of support and investing is important:** It is likely that organisations will need to provide more, not less, resources in the lead up to exit.
- 4 **Provide benefits to staff:** Donors should discuss policies in advance of starting projects because staff turnover really impacts project implementation. A suggestion to other organisations is to encourage the partner to provide incentives such as redundancy benefits so that project staff are willing to stay until the project ends.
- 5 **Connect to potential donors:** There should be a clear, systematic plan to connect NGOs to other potential donors.
- 6 **Give exit plenty of time:** In this instance EveryChild were able to be clear right from the beginning that the project was time-bound, and this was beneficial.
- 7 **Context:** Sustainability really depends on Government’s capacity and resource mobilisation plans, sustainability plans and local political will.



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