



# Building the Future with Working Children

**A Systematization of Promising Approaches in the Field of Education and Protection for Working Children and Adolescents**

Children Lead the Way Program - Save the Children

Save the Children works in more than 120 countries. We save children's lives. We fight for their rights. We help them fulfill their potential.

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Foreign Affairs, Trade and  
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et Développement Canada

## Summary

This systematization is an analysis of five promising approaches that Save the Children's *Children Lead the Way* Program (CLW) is developing in Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Peru and Nicaragua, in processes that brings together education and the protection of children and adolescents who work.

The CLW Program, supported by the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Development (DFATD), has the objective of empowering working children and adolescents so that they become committed citizens with access to dignified work through three fundamental strategies: (i) quality education and job preparation; (ii) protection against exploitation through the participation of governments, employers and communities; and (iii) participation of working children in public life and in the decisions that affect their lives.

This systematization contributes to the knowledge of education's role as an alternative form of protection for working children and adolescents and has been developed through the collection of document information, interviews, and focus groups with different people who participate in the implementation of the approaches (Save the Children staff, partner organizations, families and children). It analyzes how CLW's strategies are strengthened through work with partner organizations and stakeholders, and how the intersection between education and protection is put into practice in the five countries where this Program is implemented.

*Work with partner organizations and stakeholders* is considered one of the Program's strengths, as each of the five approaches mobilizes different organizations and key actors, giving them different roles and responsibilities to advocate for the guarantee of rights of working children. The approaches have created inter-institutional programming with partners and stakeholders that fulfill the Program's objectives through the development of collaborative work and capacity building.

With respect to the *intersection between education and protection*, it has been observed that the approaches redefine the limits between formal and non-formal education, integrating them into a holistic approach where the *participation* and *empowerment* of working children and adolescents are two important areas.

A comprehensive vision of working children and adolescents' *empowerment* and *the promotion of their rights* is demonstrated through cross-sector training in *life skills*, which strengthens the improvement of different abilities that they have developed as a product of their prior experiences in the work world. Within that same framework, the approaches have made efforts to adopt a *gender perspective* across the board, which makes the existing inequality between men

and women visible, both among working children and adolescents, as well as with adults, and reflects on how to contribute towards transforming these inequalities.

The challenges identified are related to the same areas in which advances have been made:

1. To affect strongly rooted cultural, social, and ideological concepts about working children;
2. To promote the sustainable improvement of educational quality in schools, making them inclusive spaces for working children;
3. To bring about changes in the availability and creation of dignified jobs for working children and adolescents;
4. To generate knowledge and conditions so that working children and adolescents can have a greater level of participation in the decisions that affect their lives;
5. To establish continuous documentation processes on the lessons learned from the different areas related to working children and adolescents.

The systematization's recommendations focus on three main aspects: (i) the need to guarantee quality in the formal and non-formal education programs for working children which includes safe, healthy and inclusive environments; (ii) to strengthen the abilities of adults who surround working children to guarantee their rights and (iii) to support the development of public policies to guarantee working children's access to dignified work and their participation in the decision-making that affects their lives.



## Terminology used

**Approaches:** Promising practices under implementation in the framework of broad projects in countries where the Children Lead the Way Program operates.

**Child Participation:** Children have the right to participate, express their opinions and become involved in the decisions that impact their lives. All children and adolescents have the right to participate in political, economic and cultural life. Therefore, they and their families need to be informed about their rights and in addition, have opportunities to express their viewpoints. Children and adolescents are recognized as social actors (for example, movements of working children and adolescents) within their own lives and their daily participation in the different areas in which they interact.

**Child work:** All economic activities undertaken by children. It includes all kinds of productive or domestic work, paid or unpaid, in their own family's home or in the homes of others.

**Exploitative / harmful work:** Engagement of girls, boys and adolescents in any kind of work that could be dangerous or interfere with their education, whether it be damaging to their health, physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

**Gender equality:** Gender equality refers to the absence of discrimination on the basis of sex. For Save the Children, gender equality is when one sex is not routinely privileged or prioritized over the other, and all people are recognized, respected, and valued for their capacities and potential as individuals and members of society. Further, gender equality is when girls, boys, women, and men have equal rights, obligations and opportunities to:

- Security and good health;
- A viable livelihood and dignified work;
- Participate in the care of home and dependent family members;
- Take active part in public and political life;
- Learn and participate in relevant education; and
- Live a life free from violence

**Life skills:** An ample set of psychosocial skills and interpersonal competencies that can help children make informed decisions to communicate effectively and navigate their surroundings. Included in these different skills are: communication and interaction with others, active listening, assertiveness, presentation skills, organization, planning, resource management, critical-analytical thinking, conflict resolution, handling emotions and stress, development of empathy, self-informed decision-making, self-confidence, self-esteem and resilience.

**Protection:** The fulfillment of all children's right to be safe from any harm (violence, abuse, exploitation and abandonment) so that they can survive and prosper, with opportunities to learn, participate, play and develop as empowered citizens.

**Dignified work:** It's the work that respects the rights of children as delineated by the Convention of the Rights of the Child, particularly Article 32. Briefly, this requires that: work is decent and safe; allows for trade unions; exists concomitantly with other rights, (e.g. education, by allowing time for schooling); enlarges upon learning by imparting knowledge and technical skills but also social, cultural, political and life skills (e.g. resilience, self-esteem); instills a positive mindset and responsibility towards society.

**Training for work:** Refers to the different education strategies and mechanisms used to increase the employability of working children in formal and non-formal settings. This includes productive project development at schools, vocational training, professional training, entrepreneurship and productive education.

**Working children and adolescents:** These are girls and boys and adolescents, who are involved in some kind of labour, paid or unpaid, and performed within or outside the home.



## Introduction

“To construct a world where all human beings enjoy the ability to live a dignified life  
— Amartya Sen

This document systematizes the lessons learned during the implementation of the *Children Lead the Way* (CLW) Program in the overlapping fields of education and protection for working children. It focuses on specific approaches that are developed within the framework of wider projects in five countries. It is important to clarify this limitation from the beginning, since the Program offers a holistic response, while this systematization only highlights one part of the larger Program in each country.

Children Lead the Way is a five year program (2011-2016) supported in partnership between the Government of Canada (DFATD) and Save the Children Canada. The Program’s overall objective is to empower working children to become committed citizens with access to dignified work in Peru, Kenya, Nicaragua, Burkina Faso and Bolivia. It works in three areas: (i) providing quality education (formal and non-formal) and job preparation; (ii) facilitating protection against exploitation through government, employer and community participation; and (iii) fostering the participation of working children in public life and in the decisions that affect their lives.

The Program’s main objectives are:

1. To help marginalized children survive and become healthy, educated and productive;
2. To increase the promotion and protection of children’s rights in civil society, government, children’s groups and the private sector;
3. To improve gender equality among children ensuring that they have equal access to the rights to health, education, protection, participation and survival;
4. To increase the expertise and exchange of knowledge of SCC in regards to working children and gender perspectives through knowledge management.

These objectives are organized into three components: *Children and Work* (implemented in the five countries); *Children’s Health* (in Kenya and Burkina Faso); and *Intra, Inter and Pluri-lingual Education* (in Bolivia). The approaches selected for the systematization come from the *Children and Work* component. This component is the Program’s main programmatic focus, involving activities in the thematic areas of education, protection and participation.

The *Education* thematic area seeks to ensure that children who work and are under the age of 12, have access to basic quality education and that working adolescents have access to non-formal basic or secondary education and/or training for work (formal and/or non-formal). This takes into consideration the demands of the labour market, training in companies, the development of an entrepreneurial spirit, financial abilities, and in some cases, access to credit.

The *Child Protection* thematic area works to raise awareness and develop the capacity of civil society, employers, government and schools to ensure that working children and adolescents are not exploited or in danger; as well as to strengthen protection systems at local and national levels.

The Program also strengthens the *participation* of children that work in public and private sectors so that they are able to defend their rights and express their needs and desires. This is promoted through the establishment and strengthening of working children and adolescents movements and clubs, as well as supporting the national, regional and international child worker's movements.

More than 50,000 individuals benefit from the Children and Work component of the Program, including more than 30,000 children (about 15,000 girls and 15,000 boys) between the ages of six to 18 years.

The CLW Program is inspired by a holistic vision focused on children that is promoted by SCC, which includes an intersection between education and child protection (SCC, 2012). It emphasizes the participation and the development of the capacity of children, families and communities to support significant transformation to guarantee children's rights, as well as to obtain resources that allow them to be protected and have access to quality education.

## Save the Children Canada's governing principles

SCC considers that children's education and protection are deeply interconnected. Education is a fundamental right for children's development, while child protection is a condition that guarantees their well-being.

*Education* plays an important role in the continuous process of helping children develop, and enabling them to actively participate in the decisions that affect their lives and increase their resilience. It contributes to their empowerment in building their life plans - based on their own culture, interests and necessities - as a way to reach their goals and realize their potential. It requires a suitable and inclusive atmosphere to protect all children and young people regardless of race, gender or ethnic origin.

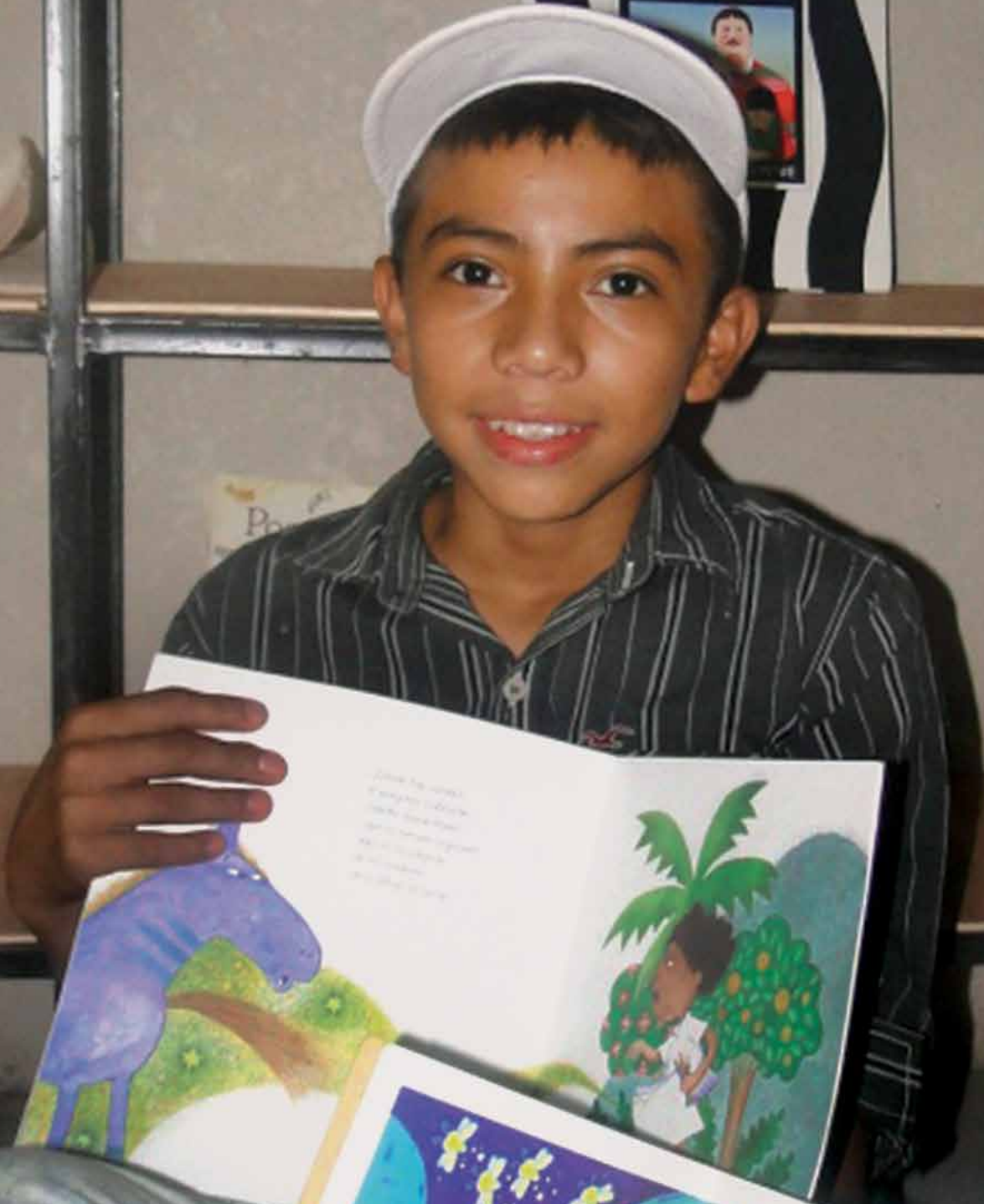
*Protection* is the fulfillment of all children's right to be safe from any harm (violence, abuse, exploitation and abandonment) so that they can survive and prosper, with opportunities to learn, participate, play and develop themselves as empowered citizens. This vision of the protection of children who work is a continuous process, beginning with a minimum goal of protection from harm and working towards the full participation of boys, girls and adolescents as political, social and economic actors.

*Participation* is as much an objective as a means for protection; through greater participation, children learn to develop their capacity to protect themselves. In order to guarantee the protection of working children and adolescents from labour exploitation, SCC promotes the concept of dignified work, which is work that respects children's rights and does not jeopardize their health, education, development or their right to participate. Along with fulfilling children's rights, dignified work provides learning through the transmission of knowledge and technical abilities, such as social, cultural, political and life skills (e.g., resilience, self-esteem, self-confidence) and instills a positive mentality of dignity and responsibility within society.

ZOOLOGICO

Rubén Darío  
Del Trópi

La Horda de todos los Gatos



¿Cómo se ven  
los animales  
de la selva?  
¿Qué comen?  
¿Dónde viven?  
¿Por qué?  
¿Cómo se reproducen?



Siempre por ti estrellas la luna y yo

Cuando el jambo tiene hambre

## I. The Systematization

### I.1 Objectives

From SCC's perspective, the CLW Program addresses the complex subject of working children through a comprehensive approach that combines protection, economic development, participation and leadership of working children and adolescents, health, education and a cross-cutting gender perspective to create opportunities so that children become healthy, educated and capable citizens (SCC, 2013).

The systematization's specific objectives reflect this perspective:

1. Identify the contribution in securing working children and adolescents' rights that is occurring in the five approaches selected through SCC's conceptual and operative model, specifically with respect to the concepts and practices related to:
  - a. Working children and adolescents, their rights, and empowerment;
  - b. The quality of education, job training and learning
  - c. Gender equality and specifically the mainstreaming of this approach with respect to education, training for work, learning and life skills.
2. Understand how SCC contributes to making change (in the focus areas proposed in Objective 1) through:
  - a. Planned activities of institutional development in each approach, involving partners and local and national stakeholders.
  - b. Activities in the areas of education, participation and access for working children and adolescents to dignified work.
3. Analyze the conditions that facilitate or create obstacles in achieving changes in the lives of working children.

The report's structure responds to the questions and objectives established for the systematization. The information is organized in three areas: (i) the impact of SCC's view in changing the understanding and strategies towards working children and adolescents; (ii) strategies to support working children and adolescents' right to education and protection (iii) gender equality strategies. With respect to each level of analysis, categories were established based on the data, and illustrated with numerous examples extracted from each country.

## **1.2 Methodology**

The methodology used was based on a participatory reflective process involving the country offices and their partners about their own practices and perceptions. Data was collected through the following instruments:

- a. two questionnaires filled out by the country offices with help from their partners,
- b. focus groups organized in the countries with working children and adolescents, partners and stakeholders; and
- c. *online* interview with the approach coordinators.

The systematization aimed to make the process itself empowering for the participants, so as to create spaces for shared reflection, allow for systematic thinking about ongoing practices, and give voice to the children and young people themselves as beneficiaries of the Program.

The information collected was focused on understanding how SCC enhances its strategies by working through partners, and how the intersection between working children and adolescents' education and protection in different countries is put into practice.

In this sense it is hoped that the systematization will help bolster the evidence that education is a form of protection for working children, with the ultimate objective of improving their life conditions. It is also hoped that this document is a source of new reflections on the daily and strategic development of these ongoing approaches.

## **1.3 General Approach**

The systematization's general objective was to identify SCC's contribution to understanding the issues faced by working children, and to learn more about the development of innovative approaches that brings together education and child protection in order to guarantee children's rights.

SCC's intention was to analyze how five approaches in Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Nicaragua and Peru have been implemented, their current achievements, and the challenges faced.

The main questions addressed throughout the process were: *"How is SCC's approach put into practice?"* and *"What achievements have been obtained and through what processes?"*

It is important to keep the following considerations in mind:

- The approaches systematized are part of larger projects, and must be understood within that bigger framework.
- Data collection for this systematization took place at the mid-point of the CLW Program. Therefore, promising approaches and ongoing learning have been emphasized, but should not be interpreted as final results or lessons learned.
- The systematization is not research that has followed formal protocols, nor is it an evaluation. It is a documentation process about ongoing practices, with the idea of developing a format to present these processes to a wider audience, as well as to improve upon them.

#### **I.4 The selected approaches**

The five selected approaches are: (i) *“Productive Education”*<sup>1</sup> in Bolivia, (ii) *“Raise your head up and go forward”* approach with children outside the formal educational system in Burkina Faso, (iii) *Resource Centers for Children and Adolescents* in Kenya, (iv) *The Children’s Network of Reading Promoters* in Nicaragua and (v) *Reintegration, Tutoring and Productive Technical Workshops in Schools of Ica* in Peru.

These approaches, their goals, main strategies and partners are briefly described below, as well as a brief characterization of the Program participants and beneficiaries.

##### **Bolivia: Productive Education**

The purpose of this approach is to ensure mechanisms and strategies that allow for the implementation of productive education according to Bolivia’s Education Law of 2010. The objectives include integrating productive education into the school curriculum that recovers, rediscovers and values the ancestral knowledge of the First Nations and Indigenous peoples. It also has the objective of improving working children and adolescents’ working conditions, promoting access to relevant and useful knowledge in the labour market, and increasing the understanding of alternative education and labour rights from a rights-based and gender equality perspective.

The productive education approach began with a market study and analysis and then by strengthening the ‘productive centres’ of schools. From there, a proposal was developed to include ‘training for work’ in the regional curriculum with various activities for students of primary and secondary school, that included productive education workshops, reinforcement in reading, writing and mathematics, after-school support, life skills, etc. Teacher and community

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<sup>1</sup>Productive Education is the literal translation from the Spanish “Educacion Productiva” and refers to the “training for work” explained in the lexicon in Page 5 of this document.

trainings were also conducted, with a key message in the process being the recovery of traditional artisan practices that promote local cultural identity. The approach's partners are First Nations Indigenous Organizations Qhara Qhara Suyu and JAKISA, and NGO Chasqui.

### **Burkina Faso: Raise your head up and go forward**

The purpose of this approach is to promote working children and adolescents' rights through protection based on non-formal education and 'training for work', especially for those outside of the formal school system. It seeks to promote young people's inclusion in education through vocational training and by acquiring life and leadership skills, keeping in mind at the same time a gender equality focus on the demands of the labour market. The approach's partner is Munyu, a local NGO that offers training in various trades as well as in some cases, reintegration into secondary school education. The approach offers a module on life skills, and also proposes strengthening non-formal training centers to offer more relevant skills, such as tailoring, and has trained young women as literacy trainers.

The approach promotes the relationship between education and protection for groups of highly vulnerable children. It works with young women who are apprentices in sewing and domestic service (accompanied by the Munyu Association in the *Cascades* region), and young male apprentices in electricity, carpentry, and welding jobs, in partnership with the TIE Association in the *Hauts-Bassins* region. These young people are trained outside the formal education system in skills and knowledge related to the relevant occupations that will allow them to be independent in the future. It also reinforces the economic capacity of some beneficiaries so that they can develop their own businesses.

### **Kenya: Resource Center for Street Children and Adolescents**

The purpose of this approach is to ensure that working children and adolescents gain access to job training through non-formal education, and acquire relevant skills to access dignified work. This approach empowers working children who attend a resource center run by Action for Children in Conflict (AfCiC) so that they can become engaged citizens with dignified work. These children also are put in contact with community credit and savings services and vocational guidance and integration is offered by local companies so that they can train as apprentices.

The children and young people who attend the center on a daily basis are provided with food, washing facilities for personal hygiene, counseling and informal education and support. For those who are illiterate, reading and writing are taught, along with numeracy and financial literacy skills. Additionally, the young people may be linked to savings and credit services.



**Nicaragua: The Children and Adolescents Network of Reading Promoters**

This approach aims to promote working children and adolescents' participation and organization into a network that encourages reading for pleasure, so as to motivate members to study and stay in school. The objectives are for working children and adolescents to improve their knowledge and skills, and share learning experiences about the rights to education and protection in the face of economic exploitation and dangerous jobs. At the same time, it advocates within local decision-making spaces to demand children's rights at a higher level. To this end, it promotes the accompaniment of working children and adolescents who participate in the network so that, through their own initiative, they encourage their peers at school and community members to engage in this activity.

The network is made up of groups of children and adolescents from rural communities who participate in educational spaces created by the partner organization CESESMA, which employs games-based strategies to read stories, cartoons and anecdotes. The approach collaborates with the Harvest Plan<sup>2</sup> to prevent child labour in coffee plantations. In this context, the approach fits within the municipal strategy of the Harvest Plan, by supporting the protection and promotion of working children and adolescents' rights. The reading network promotes joint actions coordinated throughout the year so that vulnerable children and adolescents do not leave the classroom to go and participate in the harvest of coffee and other crops, and when this is inevitable, they do so with appropriate educational safeguards and protection.

Further to the promotion of reading, the approach includes life skills training, after-school support and strengthening in language and mathematics. Its end goal is not to support the transition towards dignified work, nor does it offer specific content or courses for vocational training. However, it helps working children and adolescents to acquire the capacity and abilities that are useful for life and through this be able to access safe jobs. The working children and adolescents who are members of the network also participate in other CESESMA initiatives related to entrepreneurship, but these activities are not the focus of the systematization.

**Peru: Reintegration, Tutoring and Productive Technical Workshops**

The objective of this approach is to enable primary and secondary school aged working children and adolescents to attend school, improve their performance, and develop social and employability skills. The goal is for working children and adolescents to remain in the education system, comprehensively develop their personalities, strengthen their social skills, and develop their vocational capacities so that they can improve their current working conditions and quality of life, thereby preventing exploitative situations.

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<sup>2</sup>The harvest plan is a strategy created by Nicaragua's government to provide non formal education and child protection to working children and families during the coffee harvest period, with the idea of reduce student's drop out.



BOLIVIA

SAVE THE CHILDREN

The approach includes three components:

- First, the “comprehensive development of working children and adolescents who are reintegrated into the educational system”, which offers a series of strategies to improve a child’s quality of life and academic development at school, including educational monitoring and interaction with parents.
- Second, “tutoring” in five schools for working children in grades 5 and 6 including logic, mathematics and communication. Pre and post evaluations (end of the year) are included, as well as follow-up with teachers to evaluate a child’s development.
- And third, the strengthening of technical productive workshops and vocational education courses at the secondary level. Teacher training is carried out at both primary and secondary levels. Five schools have been supported to create productive plans that have successfully been put into practice. This activity is jointly carried out with teachers, and the students are trained throughout the process in the areas of production and sale.

In addition to these three components, workshops for parents and teacher training are included. Life skills workshops are also implemented, which include topics on self-esteem, self-confidence, and labour rights as a form of protection from exploitative work. Through these approaches it is hoped that working children and adolescents develop skills for other job options that allow them to focus on other markets. Abilities and personal skills are strengthened so that they can overcome difficulties and obstacles. Based on this training, some working children and adolescents have developed their own productive initiatives. Currently, the schools are looking to strengthen these entrepreneurship initiatives to go beyond a “lemonade-stand” type of business model.

### **1.5 Profiles of the Participant Working Children**

**In Bolivia:** The working children and adolescents are between 6 and 18 years old; they come from indigenous communities in rural, urban and semi-urban areas, the latter area populated by migrants. They belong to poor families and live in areas that do not have services such as electricity or potable water, and children travel great distances to access schools. Children are involved in traditional subsistence agriculture (in rural areas), while in semi-urban and urban areas, they work as peddlers, food vendors, porters, etc. They are part of multi-ethnic and pluri-lingual communities. Many of them have been victims of physical and psychological violence in their homes and schools and have malnutrition problems. In rural areas especially, there is a greater presence of traditional and inequitable gender beliefs that translate into the undervaluing of domestic work usually done by girls and women. This is reflected not only in

unequal salaries, but also an acceptance of gender roles that include the perception that girls are only suitable for tasks such as cooking, cleaning, washing clothes or making pastries

**In Burkina Faso:** The approach works with young people between 14 and 18 years of age who are generally excluded from the formal educational system, having either never gone to school or having dropped out, within the region of Banfora and the surrounding rural areas. These adolescents live in poverty and are from families where discriminatory gender roles are upheld, and heavily influenced by women's traditional roles that are bound to marriage and domesticity. This results in low investment in the schooling or training of girls. Children and young people in the region engage in hazardous work, such as agriculture or artisanal mining, or work as peddlers or domestic servants (mostly girls).

**In Kenya:** Children and adolescents included in this approach are between the ages of 14-18, are out of formal school, but have completed primary education. Most of the approach's working children and adolescents live on the streets and/or work in coffee plantations or quarries in Kiambu and the surrounding region. It is a population that includes those living with HIV and AIDS. The adolescents in some cases are young mothers and, many others (males and females) play the role of breadwinner for their families.

**In Nicaragua:** The approach includes working children and adolescent reading promoters that study in primary and secondary school (formal part-time), and also those who participate in the network's spaces without being motivators themselves. They are distributed in two groups: children (under 13 years) and adolescents (up to 18 years). For both groups, there are distinct methodologies to prepare them to become reading motivators (techniques in body and vocal expression). The working children and adolescents come from impoverished families, many of which maintain patterns of migration in search of seasonal farm work, mainly at coffee plantations and in the corn and bean harvests. In these rural communities cultural factors persist that perpetuate gender inequality as women are associated with domestic tasks and men with dangerous work.

**In Peru:** The working children and adolescents of the approach are under 18 years old and live in conditions of poverty, economic and emotional crisis, in semi-urban towns around Ica. They suffer from conditions of exploitation and under-employment with agro-export companies, domestic work and informal mining. They come from communities at risk, a condition that is often not taken into account by school teachers. Many live far away from schools, making it difficult for them to participate in extracurricular school activities. Economic poverty, the priority placed on work by adults, and the poor academic preparation of mothers do not allow them to support their children. In some cases the families are migrants from mountainous areas and their cultures and customs are different from the coastal context where they now live.

### Summary of Activities and Population Reached

The delivery of services provided by the CLW Program across the five countries is diverse and can be summarized in the following categories:

- *Support of primary education:* this includes activities that ensures working children can access and stay in school, providing materials, curricular support, promoting reading and writing and raising awareness about children’s rights, dignified work, recreational activities and after-school support.
- *Support of secondary education:* this includes scholarships to access or continue studying in secondary school, vocational and professional training, building life plans, strategies for school retention and raising awareness about children’s rights and dignified work.
- *Support of out of school children (non-formal education):* this includes life skills training, job training (including self-employment), literacy and numeracy support and developing knowledge of children’s rights.

These actions are carried out through direct interventions with working children and adolescents, teacher training and work with parents.

The following table summarizes the population reached per service delivery:

Type of service	Total boys	Total girls	Total adult men	Total adult women
<b>1. Primary education support</b>	2973	3041		
<b>2. Secondary education support</b>	1899	1804		
<b>3. Teacher and parent training</b>			553	665
<b>4. Vocational and professional training</b>	289	223	83	66
<b>5. Life skills</b>	2050	1978	81	150
<b>6. Reading, writing and mathematics</b>	256	210	19	16
<b>7. After-school support</b>	221	199	13	5
<b>8. Other types of informal education</b>	290	299	19	16

## 2. Strategies to Change the Understanding towards Working Children and Adolescents

### 2.1. The Alliances

A key component to enable SCC to have an impact on children's rights on a strategic level is to work with a wide range of partnerships, coalitions and networks in the implementation of its approaches (SC, 2013). These inter-institutional partnerships include governments, civil society organizations, communities, and the private sector to share knowledge and influence and develop capacities to achieve holistic and integrated programming that ensures the fulfillment of working children's rights.

The implementation of the approaches includes two types of actors: *partners* and *stakeholders*. The first are those who implement the approach's activities and are civil society organizations (NGOs, community organizations); and the second are those who participate in different ways that contribute to the fulfillment of the Program's objectives (government agencies from national to local levels, community associations, schools, networks and other social organizations). The table in Page 20 shows the diversity of these two types of actors in the five studied approaches.

The partners have different profiles and levels of prior experience working with SCC. Also, the understanding and application of the concept of dignified work varies among them. In Nicaragua, Peru and Kenya, the partners are **civil society organizations with technical profiles**, with experience in the human rights field in general and working children and adolescents' rights in particular. They also have extensive experience in the education sector and in the implementation of social and educational projects. For that reason, their approaches leverage the accumulation of their previous work, as well as the networks that they have created to unite efforts, but also to provide them with new perspectives.

In Bolivia, the two Indigenous Organizations, representing the local population and a NGO, have a very active role in local social participation. In Burkina Faso the work is carried out with a NGO that has a strong focus on participation and coordinates the Program's implementation with grassroots associations. SCC's support to these partners has given them a new perspective on interventions with working children workers in guaranteeing children's rights, including the promotion of the concept of dignified work. The partner organizations state that this new perspective has been key to their growth.

Synthesis of Partners and Stakeholders

COUNTRIES	PARTNERS	STAKEHOLDERS				
		Nongovernmental sector		Governmental entities		
		Private sector	NGOs and grassroots organizations	National level	Regional level	Local level
BOLIVIA	Qhara Qhara Suyu, Chasqui		K'anchay, Educational Council of Indigenous Communities (TRAPS), local CONAMAQ regional, NGOs like Realities		Departmental Directorate of Education, District Education Office, Human Rights Ombudsman for Children and Adolescents	
BURKINA FASO	Munyu Women's Association of Camoe	Employers	Associations of mother educators  Parents d'élève (regroupés au sein des AMES) (Parents' Association)  UNICEF  Noyaux Relais, Association des enfants et Jeunes Travailleurs (AEJTB) des Cascades (Young Workers' Association of Cascades) Tie Association.	National Training Centers		Communal authorities  Centre de Formation Professionnelle Non Formelle (CFPNF) de Koutoura (Non-formal Education Centre)
KENYA	AfCiC	Employers	Federation of Women Lawyers - Kenya (FIDA Kenya)	Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Service, Ministry of Education, Child Labour Committees.		Government officials, Schools, Community Owned Resource persons (CORPs)
NICARAGUA	CESESMA	Coffee plantation La Florida	Books for children, LA CUCULMECA, other CESESMA initiatives e.g., Transforming Research	Ministry of Education		Ministry of Education delegations in the municipalities of Tuma, La Dalia y Rancho Grande. Local actors of the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Health. Schools
PERU	CODEH Ica				Regional government (GORE)	Technical-Productive Educational Centers (CETPRO), Regional Bureau, Ministry of Education. Schools

Stakeholders include a broad network of public entities at the national, regional and/or municipal levels and the non-government and private sectors. Governments are critical for the sustainability of the various approaches. In some cases, they have provided resources and they have generally been trained and advised by SCC. In terms of the non-governmental and private sectors, civil society organizations provide technical assistance and, in the cases in which there are employability components, certain companies also act as stakeholders in the Program.

The strategy of working with partners and stakeholders is essential for combining efforts and different kinds of resources, to strengthen the approaches and to impact on public policy at different levels. A remarkable feature of some of the approaches is that they have managed to achieve inter-institutional programming to work collaboratively.

## **2.2. Changes in Partners and Stakeholders with Respect to the Concept of Dignified Work**

To understand the changes experienced by the partners during the implementation of the approaches, the diversity of their profiles must be considered. Partners in Nicaragua, Peru and Bolivia, have extensive experience working with working children and adolescents, including a rights-based approach, although not all of them have worked with the concept of dignified work. Others have worked from a needs-based approach, especially Kenya and Burkina Faso, and have not had any prior experience to the approach of dignified work. Each individual partner's situation prior to the Program can be illustrated through the following examples:

CESESMA (Nicaragua) already had a position that recognized the diversity of jobs that working children and adolescents have, some of which are harmful because they affect or interrupt the process of schooling or lead to health and development risks. They also make a distinction between child work and various forms of economic exploitation. While they consider a working child to be a social phenomenon mediated by economic and cultural factors, economic exploitation is a crime.

In this way, CESESMA has fulfilled an awareness raising role and trained other partners and stakeholders. A representative stated that *spaces for reflection were created with other actors like the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Health and the non-governmental organization La Cuculmeca about how each of them understands working children and adolescents' comprehensive protection. At the community level, informal educational processes were developed to facilitate knowledge about working children and adolescents' rights and the recognition of risks at work.* In this context, CESESMA's approach and that of SCC coincided so that both institutions benefitted from each other.





Through the development of Nicaragua's approach, CESESMA and SCC have had the opportunity to generate learnings that strengthened their capacities to address the gaps between genders, as well as violent situations that working children and adolescents face.

Another example is from Peru, and the partner CODEH-ICA, which has a special strength in its understanding of dignified work and extensive experience in developing a methodology to approach this area. In this case, SCC benefitted from the partner's prior work to set up the approach. *"The work with schools, families and working children and adolescents has been significant, reaching out to schools and families to understand the importance of the protection of working children and adolescents' with support from the schools and training for work"*.

Advocacy to change perceptions in schools and teachers is especially relevant in Peru's approach. On the one hand, there is a recognition that a child who works can study, that he or she can have good school performance, and is not destined to fail. This implies an important break from previous preconceptions that indicated working children and adolescents' destiny was failure at school due to the fact that they had to work.

In Bolivia, although there was significant work carried out previously in the area of children's rights, there was a different point of view from the start of the Program in the sense that the indigenous 'cosmovision' (understanding of time and space) of family and community did not reconcile with concepts of child labour, since the activities children engage in are considered "activities of support to the family," and thus child work was invisible. *Changes appear for working children and adolescents as well as adults. Before they entered the Program they were not considered working children and adolescents, but through the Program, they have reflected that children who work in or outside the home, should be considered workers. Teachers' attitudes have changed significantly, instead of considering working children and adolescents lazy and scolding them when they arrive late to class, one hour of leeway in arriving to class has been given.*

In Kenya, the partner AfCIC had extensive experience with working children and adolescents, using a needs-based approach<sup>3</sup>: *"AfCic had eight years of experience working with vulnerable children before participating in SCC's Program. The organization's approach was very advanced in the rescue, rehabilitation and reintegration of street children returning to the community. The approach had a reasonable level of knowledge about dignified work, but did not have the capacity to support working children to effectively and efficiently access dignified work. Most of the initiatives were based on a needs-based approach as opposed to a rights-based one and were therefore, not sustainable"*.

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<sup>3</sup>A rights-based approach to human development is frequently contrasted with an approach that is based on "individual needs". Both focus on the objective of contributing to people's survival and the total development of their potential. Both seek to identify a range of assistance and actions necessary to obtain the objective. They differ in their foundations, the rights approach suggests that the subjects themselves play an active role. Those who possess rights have the power "to demand" their rights. This approach also includes moral and legal obligations in addition to the responsibilities of society and its institutions, and within the subjects themselves (SC, 2002).

Apart from workshops and other strategies, a change was facilitated from a needs-based approach towards a vision and programming based on rights. *“SCC’s commitment helped AfCiC change its approach from needs to rights.*

*They have learned to consider working children and adolescents as key actors in programming and their contribution is taken into consideration in the decision-making process. AfCiC learned through a holistic approach that characterizes the CLW Program to work with communities to develop their capacities. Before the approach they had a specific view: to impart knowledge to children and adolescents. At the moment the plan is to increase capacities, train the teachers and community members that education can be a protective tool for working children and adolescents, and that school retention can increase if it is combined with families’ well-being.”*

Finally, a third situation is with partners that were not previously knowledgeable about the concept of dignified work, or only related working children and adolescents’ rights to their return to formal education and protection from the worst kinds of work. This is the case in Burkina Faso that went from a lack of questioning about working children and adolescents’ situation, to an understanding aligned with SCC’s vision, both in terms of the implementing partner as well as with the stakeholders. *Most organizations did not understand very well what the concept of children’s protection included. Therefore, they did not have “decent or dignified” work representation.* A change was reflected not only in the partner... but also in different state actors in the way in which a child worker is seen in “another way”. This is particularly the case with the conditions in which training and learning take place.

To summarize, the approaches with their various departure points, act as generators or multipliers of SCC’s perspective about dignified work from a child rights perspective. SC’s local offices and partners act as facilitators and help raise awareness to make changes already demonstrated in other examples captured in the following table, which reproduce extracts from the data collection of the systematization.

## Examples of Changes in Different Actors' Views on Working Children

<p>Changes in the families</p>	<p><b>Burkina Faso:</b> The most change was noticed in families and communities. It is understood that the idea is not to exclude children and adolescents from all kinds of work, but to take care of the conditions in which they work, preventing them from doing work of the worst kind. The families stated that "thanks to the Program they understood that working children and adolescents have necessities and that they had to take care of them".</p> <p><b>Kenya:</b> A family representative held the opinion that children must work to maintain their families. After being part of the Program, he understood the concept of dignified work and the necessity of alternative education.</p> <p><b>Nicaragua:</b> In the most impoverished and migrant families there was the idea that children and adolescents should accept any work opportunity to contribute to the subsistence of the household. Now the perspective has changed, families send children to work but the conditions in which they work are different. In addition, mothers, fathers and community members are aware of the risks to which working children and adolescents are exposed and are insisting that employers not allow them to do dangerous work.</p>
<p>Changes in communities</p>	<p><b>Burkina Faso:</b> The different contexts in which the subject of dignified work has been developed shows a greater predisposition to embrace new perspectives that cover child labour. The concept of "dignified work" is understood better and there is a good level of participation among the stakeholders during the exchanges designed to change their mentalities.</p> <p><b>Nicaragua:</b> Stable communities were more open to the concept of "dignified work" rather than the coffee migrant groups.</p> <p><b>Kenya:</b> Communities that currently participate in the Program have adopted the strategies offered and have become aware of their capacity to generate change, in particular within the educational sphere.</p> <p><b>Bolivia:</b> Produced change perception printed material to increase the participation of educational communities and to strengthen student governments. The exchange of experiences between technical staff from indigenous partners allowed them to share strengths related to dignified work.</p>
<p>Changes in schools/ teachers</p>	<p><b>Bolivia:</b> Before the Program there were very few teachers who had heard of SCC's position on working children. At the moment the majority of them have adopted the concept itself. The change has not been the same across the teaching community.</p> <p><b>Nicaragua:</b> Teachers did not recognize that many students were also workers, or that the choice to work was their own. Now they recognize that child work is diverse and multidimensional, they work to raise awareness at school and are able to identify situations of economic exploitation and to denounce these situations to the authorities, ensuring working children and adolescents' protection.</p> <p><b>Peru:</b> Teachers recognize the changes that are seen in participating students' improved academic performance, and that they complete their homework. They also recognize that when children receive more attention that is affectionate and personalized, than the teacher can achieve changes not only in knowledge but also in attitudes. Now teachers have specific strategies to identify and take care of working children and adolescents: they implement internal norms, for example, knowing which children work so as to allow them a few extra minutes to arrive late, give them time to eat lunch while they are at school, offer homework support, work with management, follow-up of documents, etc. It was also observed that if teachers in classrooms with working children and adolescents who have participated in the reinforcement program had favorable conditions to work, as well as better methodological strategies, they could achieve better results.</p>

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Changes in the authorities	<p><b>Burkina Faso:</b> Municipal authorities or agents, for example, did not have a good understanding of the concept of dignified work before the Program, in particular because they mainly focused on the financial burden. Currently, another concept is being adopted.</p> <p><b>Kenya:</b> A government official initially argued that children should not carry out any kind of work, but soon became more flexible.</p> <p><b>Peru:</b> The regional government of Ica has taken up the initiative of capacity-building, incorporated it into their plans and is offering economic support to extend the approach to other schools.</p> <p><b>Bolivia:</b> The Human Rights Ombudsman, which already had an opinion on child labour, is a government agency, so they have to align themselves to state policies. Although their prior knowledge was average, they have perspectives that are aligned with those of the partner, albeit at a low level.</p> <p><b>Nicaragua:</b> Teachers did not recognize that many students were also workers, or that the choice to work was their own. Now they recognize that child work is diverse and multidimensional, they work to raise awareness at school and are able to identify situations of economic exploitation and to denounce these situations to the authorities, ensuring working children and adolescents' protection.</p>
Changes in the companies	<p><b>Kenya:</b> A learning contract was formalized between the trainers (in general the tradespeople themselves) and working children and adolescents. The agreement had clear outcomes, formalizing the learning process.</p> <p><b>Burkina Faso:</b> Established a code of conduct between the young person, the employer and Munyu that includes working conditions and certain agreements according to the economic sectors.</p> <p><b>Nicaragua:</b> Progress has been achieved in improving employers' attitudes towards child labour. In some coffee plantations they have approved protection norms establishing that working children and adolescents must only have safe jobs that do not affect their health, schooling and comprehensive development and in general, employers recognize that they should not hire children under 14 years of age.</p>
Changes in professional training centers	<p><b>Bolivia:</b> The concept of working children has been introduced in training centers in urban areas. In rural boarding schools there was initially a high level of acceptance and moderate knowledge; currently they have adopted the concept.</p> <p><b>Peru:</b> Innovative approach at school that values the technical training received and has managed to integrate it within the subject areas. They are also moving this outside of school to family ventures, or productive projects of the working children and adolescents that earn small levels of income.</p>

Although these examples illustrate some change, it is important to question their extent. As it is obvious that these concepts are deeply rooted culturally and socio-economically, each country's systematization indicates that a change in perspective on working children and adolescents still has a long way to go, especially in reference to the stakeholders. In families, local schools, communities and governments, awareness-raising work is a continuous effort to achieve consensus and support to promote approaches that unite protection, education and participation. Each country's legislation on the work of children and adolescents and sectorial public policies on the subjects (education, health, work, social development) clearly shows a different framework of each country's possibilities, debates and challenges.

### 2.3. Capacity-building and Advocacy Activities

Three factors appear to have enabled the approaches to affect stakeholders and other actors in the ways proposed by the CLW Program. First, this is **SCC's prior experience with each partner**. Secondly, the fact that **these approaches are part of larger projects**, and that the actions are mutually strengthening. Thirdly, **a strong capacity-building element was carried out with the partners**.

The previous experience working with SCC greatly helped facilitate the process. Partners worked closely with the SC local office as generators and/or multipliers of SCC's perspective on dignified work, enriching it and adapting it to each local context. In other cases, an important aspect of the SC office's work was to spread and discuss the perspective with partners and stakeholders based on national and local contexts.

At the same time, the previous experience of the partners themselves also contributed to the Program's perspective, as happened with CODEH ICA in Peru. This organization has specific expertise with working children and adolescents carried out over many years. CODEH ICA plans will promote and accompany regional childhood plans independent of the government up until 2021. Also at the municipal level, registration cards for working children and adolescents' have been issued. Children's movements (not just those of working children), have contributed to a participatory approach that enriches each group because it involves an encounter with different realities.

In addition, the impact of the approaches cannot be understood without considering that they are part of larger projects and are generally tied to a multiplicity of actions included in each approach.

Capacity-building activities with partners have allowed SCC's concepts to be spread, while also discussing them with other perspectives, like the abolitionist perspective on child labour, or approaches that do not emphasize working children and adolescents' protection. Depending on the initial situation of each approach, SCC carries out capacity building with partners or, in the case where the partners already had extensive experience, they themselves were in charge of formulating and carrying out training for stakeholders on SCC's perspective.

The subjects in which the approaches have strengthened their stakeholders are related to: introducing cross-cutting concepts to all of the CLW initiatives, such as a) the right to work with dignity, gender equality and life skills; b) improving the quality of education, such as teaching strategies, training for work (productive education/professional training/learning) and initiatives tied to literacy; and finally, c) abilities related to approach planning, monitoring and evaluation.

In general terms, the strategies were similar in all of the countries: workshops and forums with partners including working children and adolescents and their families, monitoring and ongoing mentoring, and intense advocacy work with governments at different levels.

Other strategies used were **mentoring, follow-up visits and meetings with staff**. This strategy of tailored work in the field was used in Kenya to carry out capacity-building in monitoring and evaluating the partners. Teachers at public primary schools have been trained to transmit life skills to working children and adolescents with Ministry of Education support.

#### Some Examples of Working Strategies with Stakeholders

BURKINA FASO	SCC's support allowed stakeholders to benefit from training on their roles in the approach, children's rights, ways to support education, and the concept of equality between men and women. The partner participated in activities such as training of trainers on leadership and life skills; learning conditions (of apprenticeships) for young people and good codes of conduct.
KENYA	SC Kenya was particularly committed to the development of AfCiC partner and other stakeholders' capacities, through joint review meetings, training sessions and forums to strengthen the approach, (perspectives on working children and adolescents, gender, environment, alliances) and the Program's implementation of concrete tools with working children and adolescents (monitoring tools and advocacy (lobbying)).
NICARAGUA	SCI Nicaragua carries out a role linking the Ministry of Education and partner organizations, which recognizes that SCI Nicaragua was critical to leading the Ministry of Education to endorse the work of local organizations with primary school teachers. The Program promoted the alliance with the NGO Books for Children since they also work to promote reading for pleasure.

These examples show that capacity-building does not only include meetings, and workshops with participatory methodologies, but also provides flexible support **tailored to stakeholders' needs** according to their previous profiles and the particular challenges of the country's context, such as legislation and public policies on working children and adolescents, and on the institutions and specific communities where the approaches are developed. They are also framed within advocacy work at all public levels. In this way, a "protective framework" is generated, constituting a resource network that exceeds SC's economic contribution, and maintains the approaches to improve their development.



### 3. The Right to Education and Protection for Working Children and Adolescents

For SCC, education is an extensive and dynamic process that includes much more than school itself. Education is a right and its fulfillment is obligatory throughout the different phases of children's lives (early infancy, childhood, adolescence, and youth). The right to education is developed in the various environments where children and young people interact (at home, in school, on the street, in parks, at work, in community centers, or in other training centers). Through access to quality education at every stage of life and in each place of interaction, young generations are protected and grow through learning how to build a healthy, productive and creative life.

Along with the right to education, every child has a right to be safe from harm (violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect) so that they can survive and thrive, with an opportunity to learn, participate, play and develop into empowered citizens. In Save the Children's vision, child protection is situated on a continuum – moving from the minimum goal of protection from harm (addressing critical vulnerabilities) towards the full participation of children as engaged political, social and economic actors and young leaders (maximizing a child's potentialities) (Save the Children 2012).

In this way, the education objectives of SCC's programs for working children, besides ensuring that they attend school, seek to help them maximize their potential in different spaces, equipping them with the skills and opportunities to build their own life plans, earn a living, and support their families and communities. Although child protection and education represent different rights that need to be fulfilled, they are interconnected and simultaneously represent powerful means to promote the participation and empowerment of young generations (SCC, 2012).

Within this holistic approach, this systematization examines formal and non- formal education, both of which promote participation, empowerment and the protection of Program participants.

### **3.1 The Approaches within the Framework of Formal Education**

Although access to basic education has expanded around the world, equitable access, especially to secondary education, continues to be a challenge and many young people are unable to access and/or finish their studies. In addition, the education system often does not provide a quality level of education, nor does it provide children and young people with the basic skills and know-how to integrate this education into their work and social life in order to satisfy their needs and provide them with decent living conditions. School curricula are not designed to be contextual or relevant; teachers are badly trained, and are not equipped to meet the needs of children and young people (UNESCO, 2012).

Considering this diagnosis, SCC's interventions in the area of basic education focus on reading and writing, developing life skills and an understanding of rights, as well as ensuring a quality learning atmosphere that promotes safe and healthy learning spaces, including parent and community participation (SCC, 2013). Transformative actions based on this approach have been proposed for the schools and communities participating in the CLW Program.

#### **Strategies to Promote Working Children and Adolescents' Retention and/or Reintegration in School**

Children and adolescents living in poverty face many obstacles in completing their schooling. One of the questions that the approaches must face is working children and adolescents dropping out of school. One of the primary reasons to leave school are the conditions of poverty in rural, urban and semi-urban contexts in which permanent or transitory families and migrants live in search of work and/or better living conditions. In general, families lack basic needs including food and healthcare, while family breakdown (women are the heads of the household in many cases) and very low educational levels mean that they can offer little or almost no support to their children's learning.

For children and adolescents, there are tensions between attending school and working to support the family financially. As a result, each of the approaches has shown that working with the families is critical to improving school attendance. For example, the approach in Bolivia has identified that the reasons that children and adolescents' leave school include family breakdown, the distance between communities and schools, parents' susceptibility to the problem of trafficking, and children migrating from the countryside to the city in search of better employment and educational opportunities.

Both Bolivia and Peru indicated that low educational coverage is due to the long distances that children and adolescents must travel to get to school, the poverty of households, and the lack of relevance of course content as reasons for school abandonment. A story from the systematization in Bolivia shows these difficult living conditions:

*“It’s true that sometimes people have not been able to participate in the workshop during vacations, because of poverty where they live, [the students] must work to support their parents and siblings, because the parents cannot deal with all the obligations that they have in their house, family, school... And when [the students] do not arrive on time to class, often the teachers criticize them saying, why don’t you come to school? Why don’t you do your homework? Why don’t you worry? Why are you lazy? I think that they misinterpret because they do not understand what these students go through” (Student).*

The approaches that work with schools in Bolivia, Nicaragua and Peru are a holistic approach that promotes student retention, and generating conditions and motivation to remain in school. For example, in Bolivia the approach is comprehensive, focusing on improving the learning conditions in the school as a whole. To achieve this, partners do not only provide educational and school materials, but also carry out cultural activities, workshops, meetings, group and community work, including efforts with teachers, working children and adolescents and their communities. These activities focus on values, rights, self-esteem, reflection, active participation and leadership. In addition, the cultural practices of the different groups are valued.

In Nicaragua’s case **the non-formal educational activities of the Reading Promoters Network initiated** during the coffee harvest help working children and adolescents to not lose contact with the educational experience and maintain **interest in continuing their studies**. The Network’s members organize skits in which they depict the work being carried out, showing the difference between those jobs which by nature or conditions are harmful (dangerous) and those which can be carried out by them (decent). They also write stories on risks at work, which encourages families to adopt practices that care for and protect their children. Also, **separate spaces and times** at the coffee plantations have been made available so that working children and adolescents can exercise their right to **recreation and play**, relating these experiences to the development of creativity and the world of reading. Educational protection is provided although the children are working. None of the working children and adolescents that participate in the Network have dropped out of school, which is related to the strong work that is done with them through informal education. At the same time it is hoped, that the multiple participatory activities that these groups organize with other children generate an enjoyment of reading and reinforce their skills and motivation, and contribute to school retention.

In Peru's case, a focus has been **on reinserting working children and adolescents** that have dropped out of school, which has been a major challenge. At the beginning it was very difficult to locate the children because contact had been lost with them. To achieve their re-entry to school, **work was carried out with the parents**, with schools and by home **visits made by a psychologist**. This involved **constant monitoring, tutoring and participation** in the life skills module. The working children and adolescents that have managed to return to school are permanently accompanied and supported.

## **Strategies to Improve Learning**

The quality of learning is another factor that influences the various approaches and expands the horizons and opportunities for working children and adolescents. The contexts in which these take place, for instance in schools, are usually also impoverished due to: a shortage of materials, poorly trained teachers, poor or lack of infrastructure, long distances between home and school, little relevance and coherence in the curriculum content, and inadequate teaching strategies. Furthermore, schools barely recognize children and adolescents' as workers and have little flexibility to adapt to their circumstances, as evidenced by the approaches in Bolivia and Peru.

This results in heightened difficulties for working children and adolescents in basic subjects, such as mathematics, reading, writing and communication. Without this foundation, it becomes impossible to acquire knowledge and more sophisticated skills that allow them to continue with their education, participate as citizens, accessing better jobs, and developing careers.

In Bolivia, activities to strengthen schools include **teacher training, support in mathematics and language, and implementing productive education**.

Nicaragua's reading network approach addresses a gap that the formal education system does not provide in terms of reading comprehension, communication skills, and artistic expression. The capacity building methodology that members of the network receive is innovative for two reasons: first, CESESMA educators use this methodology to **transmit techniques and strategies to encourage reading**, and secondly, it is developed through a **self-evaluation process**. The book bags tool equips reading promoters with children's books, helping them to promote reading among the communities. These books are frequently the only means that children from the most remote communities have to access the world of reading. One aspect of the approach is the **teaching methodology of child to child** instead of the traditional adult to child model, which generates a beneficial effect between peers for learning and school retention.

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In Peru, efforts have been carried out to identify working children and adolescents who require additional tutoring support and offering them after-school support, particularly in the areas of mathematics and comprehensive communication. These activities have been organized on alternating days and include **personalized support**. Another complementary strategy has been **awareness-raising with parents** about the importance of these support activities. The following section will discuss how the relevance of the school curricula has improved by linking it with ‘training for work’. This strategy views work as not being a disadvantageous factor for suitable education. The goal is that, through tutoring, students acquire essential knowledge for the development of core competencies in the areas of communication and mathematical logic. Apart from enhancing students’ learning and school performance as a means of developing organizational skills and consistency in their studies, personal support is also provided through psychological guidance to develop social skills.

### **3.2. The Approaches on ‘Training for Work’**

The approaches of ‘training for work’ are based on the concept of preparing young people in their transition to dignified work, including: creating subsistence opportunities; supporting entrepreneurial initiatives and/or activities to generate income; empowerment through education and professional training in soft and technical skills; strengthening life skills; providing guidance on employment options based on the life plans of working children and adolescents; and, supporting insertion to employment (SCC, 2013).

Currently the borders between academic learning and ‘training for work’, and between theory and practice are increasingly blurred, given that the creation of knowledge requires an integration of existing knowledge with the on-going adoption of change. The most innovative concepts of ‘training for work’ consider that when a young person is learning to do a job, it not only involves learning what work is involved, but also about citizenship and social development. Consequently, the ‘training for work’ approach promotes hands-on engagement with materials to produce and foster an understanding of what the individual does. ‘Training for work’ is not just a tool to learn a trade or profession to lead to the generation of income, but also provides an opportunity to learn about social relationships in the framework of employment, rights and citizenship. **This view values the pertinence and relevance of training that goes beyond the world of work and is based on experiences.**

Within the five approaches selected, ‘training for work’ does not just have the objective of developing the technical competencies required in the job market (pertinent training), but it also has a more integrated development approach that includes the provision of information

and participation of working children and adolescents (training that is relevant for them). This approach aims to improve the possibilities of access to dignified work, personal development and future employment.

In Bolivia and Peru, the ‘training for work’ component can be found within the formal education system, while in Burkina Faso and Kenya the training experiences are supported within non-formal education. The approach in Nicaragua does not include ‘training for work’, but the participation and organization of working children and adolescents was strengthened in order to improve their knowledge and capacities in terms of advocating for their rights in local decision-making spaces.

All of these approaches have identified the potential work available in the local setting that can be characterized as dignified. Some of them have undertaken market studies to guide training processes. An interesting innovation took place in Bolivia where a value-chain analysis process was implemented through 13 local studies. For each one of these studies a business plan and a supporting curriculum for school were developed to pilot in secondary schools. This proposal is currently being presented to education authorities, local organizations and schools for adoption and implementation. Formal market studies were also developed in Peru. **The most innovative element of all of these studies is that they not only capture the voices of the local businesses, but also the voices of all those concerned with job security and, in particular those of working children and adolescents themselves, taking into account their interests and aspirations.**

### **Training for Work Approach within Formal Education**

In Bolivia and Peru, training for work is linked with formal education and is implemented in primary and/or secondary schools. Bolivia illustrates an experience that falls within the framework of the new Education Law, which facilitates **a favorable environment for the development of the approach from an innovative point of view.** The legal framework promotes community-based productive education in the entire education system of Bolivia, and the CLW Program contributes to putting the law into practice in the intervention zones. The Program has consolidated the implementation of the law in the rural (indigenous) and urban (migrant indigenous) communities where it works. This has involved the participation of the partners implementing ‘training for work’, which facilitates the actions and activities that the Program promotes. New productive and vocational competencies are being generated through productive education for working children and adolescents who are, for example, building and running school vegetable gardens, raising chickens and growing quinoa, all of which also contribute to nutritional security.

Another important aspect to note from Bolivia is that various experiences of productive education (training for work) propose the **recuperation and revaluing of traditional knowledge and culture** such as weaving, ceramics, traditional medicine and other ancestral products.

In Peru, importance is placed on integrating innovative ‘training for work’ in the curriculum of primary schools. When a school shows interest in implementing the approach, teachers receive training and follow-up support, to integrate ‘training for work’ within subjects in their curriculum, and a link with productive technical centers is promoted. Different curricular areas are integrated, incorporating history, mathematics, social skills, knowledge of the environment, art, etc. One of the teachers involved mentioned that *“after the discussions (led by the partners) there is a plan, an objective and a sequence to work with the students”*. The children participate in an entrepreneurship component: they are organized into groups (with a treasurer, secretary, etc.) to administer the approach. These learning experiences go beyond the school because they promote either entrepreneurialism with working children and/or in families to generate income. This strategy has been recognized by the regional government as they have requested training for teachers in the region from the partner that is based on the model developed by the approach.

While the approach in Nicaragua did not directly develop ‘technical ‘training for work’ (even though CESESMA and other partners also implement it with CLW), the Network of Reading Promoters have worked on related child rights, which have contributed to creating an awareness among children, adolescents and their families on the right to work in safe and dignified conditions that do not put their health at risk, nor impede their school attendance or formal education. In addition, this work focused on promoting an understanding among employers of the importance of improving work environments and making commitments to do so. In addition, working children and adolescents that participate in the network are also integrated through entrepreneurship initiatives led by CESESMA. On the other hand, the experience of being a reading promoter generates new expectations among working children regarding their own future life paths: some have stated that they wish to become teachers or community leaders - expanding the horizon of their possibilities.

The systematizations carried out in each country demonstrate that the difficulties, contradictions and obstacles in ‘training for work’ are many. For example, in Bolivia it has been observed that while there is a legal framework that supports and facilitates the implementation of ‘productive education’, its implementation has faced a number of different obstacles. The most significant difficulty identified by the team was the need to change the attitude of teachers so that they move from practice based on theory and demonstration to a way of working that includes practice, theory, evaluation, manufacturing and final product.

Generally in the targeted communities, teachers in Bolivia did not leave the classroom and were



totally isolated from the community (being migrants from other areas), however, productive education requires interaction between the different actors in the education system and the community, who play an important role. Implementing 'productive education' requires the teacher to be creative and engage with the community, realizing that the community has valuable knowledge on production than the teachers themselves. These approaches involve a change in the position of power of the teacher in terms of the generation and development of knowledge.

The other countries involved don't have the same legal framework that Bolivia has, and as a result the approaches have fewer opportunities to be developed and broadened, as is the case in Peru.

### **Training for Work in the Work Place**

In Kenya and Burkina Faso the approaches are focused on providing technical training linked to specific skills and work roles. These integrate the promotion of the rights of working children and adolescents through their protection by education and professional training (Burkina Faso) and propose ensuring that all working children access productive education in order to acquire pertinent skills to access dignified work (Kenya). These approaches are implemented to specifically support young people in apprenticeships and professional training courses. Both of these approaches focus on the life skills module, which will be covered later in this report.

In both Burkina Faso and Kenya, it should be noted that the training offered is certified. An important part of the efforts of these approaches focus on **safeguarding the rights of working children and adolescents in apprenticeships**. In both countries this form of learning has traditionally been a way to obtain staff at a low cost for a long period of time, with the conditions of the young worker not protected, and their possibilities for learning limited. In both of these countries the partner works with each employer to improve the work and learning conditions of the adolescents.

In Burkina Faso the establishment of a *Good Code of Conduct* between the young person, the employer and the partner is a pertinent achievement. The code specifies adequate working conditions for the young apprentice according to the sector they work in. The code is not yet official but the partner is currently working with Ministry of Labour to make this happen. In addition, efforts have been made so that all the professional training provided in the framework of the approach is certified and the competencies developed by the young people are recognized. As a result, official exams are organized for the apprentices to acquire a Professional Qualification Certificate. Employers, partners and the working children and adolescents are satisfied with this recognition. However, it is obviously not easy to put this into practice because many employers are not supportive of this process.

In Kenya efforts are also being made to create good conditions for apprentices in the workplace and to strengthen protection conditions for working children. Firstly, a baseline was created to establish the availability of local tradespeople to act as trainers; the community was consulted to vouch that the tradespeople were not exploitative; and the desires and interests of the working children and adolescents were taken into account. Secondly, a type of contract was organized between trainers (generally tradespeople recommended by the community) and the working children and adolescents participating in the apprenticeships. This agreement formalizes the learning process and identifies clear deliverables for both parties – the employer and the working child. Finally, frequent monitoring by the partner and meetings held with the employers ensure that they are not exploiting the young person and that their rights are being guaranteed. The learning achievements of the working adolescents are measured through tests designed and given by their employers. The majority of the apprentices are evaluated informally at a later stage, and those that demonstrate strong competencies are registered for formal tests for certification by the corresponding government agency.

One of the factors that enabled the improvement of working conditions for working children and adolescents was **the active participation of the young people who**, during the process, learned about their rights and strengthened capacities to make their own decisions. For example, some children are now capable of negotiating a full salary, as well as receiving commissions for the products they have they make. This training also focuses on developing soft job skills to strengthen young people’s competencies, sense of responsibility, practical skills and interpersonal relationships. As stated in an interview regarding the experience in Kenya,

*“The most important innovation was an integrated vision of empowerment, education and rights. We combined this methodological approach with different tools to ensure that working children and adolescents had their rights guaranteed. How did we do it? We empower working children and adolescents, communities and different partners and stakeholders using the SCC perspective.*

### **3.3. Strategies to Integrate Life Skills in the Training Process**

Life skills education aims to improve the capacity of children and adolescents to live a healthier and happier life, to intervene in the determinants of health and well-being and to actively participate in the construction of a fairer, more supportive and equal society<sup>4</sup>. All of the approaches in question include a life skills component to empower working children and adolescents through the strengthening of social and cognitive skills. SCC has various manuals that have structured methodologies to promote life skills for working children and adolescents to face the challenges created by daily life. These include: communication skills, active listening,

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<sup>4</sup>This concept was proposed in 1993 by the World Health Organization and later adopted by other non-profit international agencies and organizations such as UNESCO, ILO, UNICEF and Save the Children.

assertiveness, presentation, organization, planning, resource management and critical/analytical skills. This also covers conflict resolution skills, management of emotions and stress, developing empathy, making self-informed decisions, personal confidence, self-esteem and resilience.

For example, in Kenya all of the young people receive life skills training in meetings, participation-based forums and in children's centers, where they also develop literacy and mathematics skills. Those that are in school receive a life skills program delivered through public schools with training provided by the partner AfCiC in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.

In Peru, life skills workshops are provided through tutoring sessions in schools, while working children reintegrated into school have separate sessions, based on a module developed by the partner CODEH ICA. Workshops are carried out within schools with the objective of creating an environment to cultivate social relationships that improve human relationships from diverse areas. These workshops include topics on: self-esteem, decision making, tolerance, assertiveness and self-control. This program supports working children and adolescents to acquire tools that allow them to develop the skills to democratically live together, based on exercising their citizenship. It is important to note that in the case of working children and adolescents that have been reintegrated into school, efforts have been carried out to provide **constant monitoring during the entire year. The links between staying in school and activities related to their rights are part of the Program, which is why life skills do not form just part of the sessions but are worked on in a close and continuous manner.**

In Burkina Faso, children and adolescents access training in life skills that include communication, mathematics, basic competencies in science and technology, digital competencies, social/civic competencies and entrepreneurial initiatives. In the life skills module participants learn to negotiate their rights and dignified working conditions (salary, working hours, etc.) with their employers. In a secondary phase, they are supported to develop a life plan. The development of this module is considered one of the notable achievements of the approach.

In Bolivia and Nicaragua **the development of life skills is included in the training process as a cross-cutting and participatory theme.** In Bolivia, tools, technical and financial support are provided to support the functioning of student governments as a form of participation in decision-making processes that impact the lives of working children and adolescents. In Nicaragua, participants go through a training process adopting a rights-based program that guarantees that all members of the network are empowered in their rights, as demonstrated in the testimony of this child:

*“All of us have a past before participating in the CESESMA process, many of us didn’t know that these rights existed except for the rights to eating, playing, having fun and a name, now we know that we have a lot of rights that we can demand them, we have a right to dignified employment and a home that is free of aggression”.*

In addition, training in life skills and knowledge form part of the **cross-cutting participation-based strategy that all of the approaches implement, empowering working children and adolescents**. For example, in Peru:

*“The ‘training for work’ in schools is chosen by students. The teacher presents the activity at the beginning of the year along with examples of projects that have been developed in the past, and the students then decide which one they would like to work on. In addition, the students also decide how they are going to use the money that they are going to earn with support from their teacher. In one of the schools the working students stated that for the next year they would like to learn how to make other things like pastries, decorative containers. One teacher commented that the working children and adolescents want to learn these skills thanks to the exchange of information that occurred with the other schools”.*

It is important to highlight the strong value that the approaches add to the development of **integrated life skills, based on the idea of empowering young people through participation**. In reality, beyond the specific life skills modules, joint actions within the approaches provide a relevant space for children to manage themselves and give them the opportunity to strengthen their individual and collective voices when participating in power-based scenarios.

### **3.4. The Voices of Working Children and Adolescents and their Families**

SCC uses a community-based approach in all of its work through direct collaboration with communities, working children and adolescents and their families. It aims to strengthen participation, understood as both a goal and as way of protection. To provide a space for their voices, the systematization included focus groups with working children and adolescents.

## Relations with Families: Support and Needs

According to the testimonies that have been collected, the families of working children and adolescents participating in the Program support the approaches. However, in almost all of the cases, this support is conditional on seeing results, and their support grows stronger as this occurs more often, which will be described in more detail below.

The needs of the families can be categorized into two areas. On the one hand, they require **economic support for working children and adolescents**, in cases of extreme poverty and when these young people sustain the family. On the other hand, review of **the nature of the education being offered**. This includes: organizational flexibility of the school timetable, academic support, and, the possibility of accessing vocational guidance as well as training for work that links them with employment.

It is interesting to note that the majority of the people interviewed did not mention gender barriers as a key factor when stating their needs, with the exception of Kenya where young mothers noted the critical importance of childcare support while they were studying. Additionally, participating girls and boys in Nicaragua noted that a key factor in being able to participate in network activities was their respective responsibilities at home, which require different levels of time based on gender roles. Overall, the low reference to gender inequalities by participants within this research likely demonstrates that further capacity building and mobilization is required to support girls, boys, women and men in identifying and participating in creating solutions to address gender gaps.

The approaches in which needs are most evident are in Burkina Faso and Kenya, evidenced by **requests for scholarships and economic support**. Due to the focus on training for work in these approaches, participants particularly appreciated that the learning process included economic support for families and their communities in the mid-term (Burkina Faso), and that the scheduling allows participants to combine school and work (Kenya). Given that in Kenya the approach includes attention to the needs of an at-risk group of children with HIV, financial support is required to sustain their activities. In Burkina Faso, families value especially that the experience can result in a noticeable change in the transition to a dignified job. For example, as a result of the introduction of the Good Code of Conduct for working children and adolescents learning trades, a significant foundation for the protection of working children and adolescents has been created.

In Kenya, the following excerpt from the focus group shows the high expectations of parents regarding the approach: *Parents believe that the program will provide access for children and young*

*people to a dignified job, it will give them the skills to resolve problems faced in daily life, it will give them a more promising future, help them with problem solving, will help them learn about their rights and responsibilities, and will empower them with intellectual skills to improve decision making processes. Parents stated that supporting their children to meet the basic requirements of the training process was very important. They highlighted the need to visit them where they do their apprenticeships and also visit AfCiC more regularly to access updated information related to the progress of their children. They also said that sitting down with their children to discuss some issues helped them to improve parent-child relationships, gave children more confidence and protected them from being exploited.*

Similarly, in Bolivia participants considered that it was useful **to create changes in the attitudes and skills of working children and adolescents, however, they stopped supporting these practices when they observed a drop in their academic performance.** They also expressed a need for quality education with better infrastructure, equipment, qualified teaching staff, school support and vocational counseling. At the same time they requested that the educational approach support local production as well as general employability skills in the cases in which migration is considered inevitable.

In Nicaragua parents in the focus group called for an improvement **in the flexibility of the education being offered** such as coordinating timetables for the network with working hours, studies and school responsibilities. Paradoxically, working children and adolescents requested courses to improve their employment skills, but their families did not. The high level of support that the Network members receive from the community is evident in the following comment:

*“To be a reading promoter brings with it recognition from the community that can contribute to increasing the level of satisfaction with the experience. The teachers recognize the potential of the working children and adolescents that are part of the Network to contribute to improving the academic performance of their peers, and that’s why they get involved in the additional educational support activities.”*

In Peru, the mothers of participants requested **additional educational support, psychological support, access to educational materials and increased flexibility in the hours that activities are programmed.** The recognition of this approach is associated with an improvement in academic performance and also personal development. In addition, **they value the ‘training for work’**, because these involve the child providing economic support for the family when the approach is later taken up at home. A lack of support can occur when the families live far from education centers and can’t take working children and adolescents to activities.

To summarize, **parents recognize that the approach produces changes, which strengthens**

**their confidence in the work being carried out.** The following testimonies from families in Nicaragua and Peru demonstrate how this process is implemented.

*“Resistance drops once the family notices changes in their children such as improving their academic performance and developing capacities in communication and their integrated development, which are useful for daily life. The families recognize that the processes help their children also grow as people. While the families are aware that participation in the network of reading promoters isn’t directly linked to vocational training and/or obtaining employment, they do understand that the educational processes can help their children develop skills that will help them in the future when seeking dignified employment.” - Nicaragua*

*“The families that support their children in participating in the experience [approach] recognize the benefit of the skills [taught] in the lives of their children. They recognize an important change at an academic level, but also personally. One mother commented that the re-entry of their children to school has been very beneficial for them, both academically and personally: “...this year the teacher told me that they are fine...according to their report card they don’t need extra help anymore. However, the mother wishes that her children continue to benefit from these activities because she doesn’t think that she can help them.” - Peru*

### **Children’s Expectations, Satisfaction with and Understanding of their Rights**

The approaches demonstrate that working children and adolescents enthusiastically participate in the activities and they value them both as spaces of learning and of participation. The relationship and potential of the formal educational activities with non-formal education, in the framework of participation processes, appears to be clearly linked to the enthusiasm of the children.

For example in Bolivia, expressions of happiness and well-being among participants were observed in workshops, educational fairs, exchanges of experiences and cultural festivals. One student said:

*“Before I was really shy, I was afraid that people would criticize me, that they would call me an idiot because I didn’t speak well, little by little here I’ve stopped being afraid, now I’m not afraid to speak, to participate, now I know that it’s my right. ... In Chasqui they always encourage us to participate, they tell us that we have to make sure that they respect our rights...I feel good to be a part of this program, I’ve learnt a lot of things about gender equality, about rights, about hygiene, how to wash my hands and many other things that I also teach other people about...”*

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What do the participants particularly value? The expectations and satisfaction of the working children and adolescents are related to the specific objectives of the approaches. However, in all of the comments there is a strong sense of satisfaction because their voices are listened to, they are able to participate with their peers, to learn with them and from them.

In Burkina Faso, working children and adolescents demand solid training at an initial stage, and later **request help and support to create a project** that goes beyond their experience as an apprentice. Expressions of satisfaction were observed among both children and young people as well as in their families. Despite the fact that this is one of the countries with higher levels of children doing harmful work, including the worst forms of child labour, there was strong evidence of general learning about rights. Statements such as *“the boss shows us more respect in my workplace”*, *“I have the right to a week’s holiday”*, *“I have the right to a break”* demonstrate this. It is significant that in the case of the girls doing domestic work they are no longer seen or treated as inferior to the boys. There are testimonies that demonstrate that children have greater access to participation, have improved their skills in speaking and defending their points of view and are listened to more, and finally have improved their ability to learn.

In Kenya, the expectations of working children and adolescents are to finish their studies in a short period of time so as to be able to support themselves, improve their financial situation and start their own businesses in the long term. A large number of working children and adolescents demonstrated an interest in participating in the approach, even when at the start of the Program those working as domestic maids were not considered as workers by their employers – who had a negative opinion of the approach.

The working children and adolescents and their families positively valued the work carried out in **life skills training and child rights training**. Both boys and girls participating in the focus group demonstrated that **they know how to protect their rights**. One girl stated that she hoped to benefit from the information regarding the rights of working children and adolescents and how to report cases of abuse as a way of being able to educate the people in her community on these topics. “Our parents have learnt a lot about the approach of the CLW Program and about the rights of children, because things are different from before, they support us and they even encourage us to participate more actively”. **The working children and adolescents that participate in peer groups** were satisfied with their improved confidence and developed the **capacity to freely participate with their peers** in various forums in the community. Those that are receiving training in a trade feel that their participation will be very valuable for future employment. One 17 year old mother from Kenya expressed the following changes in her life:

*“My story completely changed. I don’t do the undignified work that I used to do, like harvesting coffee for long hours at a time. I know my rights and I can’t let employers treat me without respect or that*

*they don't pay me. I also now know how to negotiate better pay and demand when they have to pay me, like other workers do. I am capable of supporting my six-month old son and helping my parents.*

Enthusiasm was also observed in the approaches from participants related to 'training for work' in schools, the possibility of learning "useful" things and generating income. For example, in Peru a teacher mentioned that "the children have opened up to the world of employment, they can do other things, they don't just have to collect herbs, they can work in their homes and make money". The teachers report progress among working children and adolescents and have noted enthusiasm in their participation in the activities. Children and adolescents state that their parents see their participation in 'training for work' as something positive. In the case of those that have taken the experience outside of the school, they stated that their parents think "*it's good, because they are helping their parents, other people don't earn much but with the chocolates that they make they can earn more*". The enthusiasm is also evident in how the working children and adolescents and other groups of children that don't work **mutually support each other** in accordance with their skills and knowledge. In this area a teacher commented that "the working children and adolescents that accompany their friends to sell the chocolate are now more confident in doing this". This was also identified among the working children and adolescents in terms of their sales, stating that "with the chocolates you have to be quick with the people in the store".

The children also happily participate in games-based activities, such as those used by the reading promoters network of Nicaragua or by popular education staff in Bolivia. In the approaches that have a strong relationship with schools, the children highlight that their expectations are to improve skills as part of the transition to school, as well as to be in a better position for entering adulthood. For example, in Bolivia the expectations of working children and adolescents were related to "*playing*", "*making projects*", "*learning theories*", "*helping for school*", "*talking with teachers and principals*". In Peru, among the children that participate in the tutoring sessions, the expectation was focused on achieving better grades in their classes and "*because I like to learn more*".

In the case of Peru, offering additional tutoring outside of regular school hours is recognized as an adaptation to the needs of teachers, families and working children and adolescents. Children from the approach stated that the right to education is one of the most important rights. According to what was stated by participants, there is a strong level of "enthusiasm" among working children and adolescents, as mentioned by one of the teachers in charge of 'training for work'. Based on the interviews that have been carried out it is evident that while the three initiatives included in the approach have demonstrated a positive impact on working children and adolescents, 'training for work' are the activities that most facilitate participation.

These statements also apply to when the approaches are part of holistic processes in which education and participation are part of the same process. For example, in Bolivia, based on the **DIN** (Integrated Child Development) methodology, active participation is encouraged for working children and adolescents in both educational and organizational processes within schools. The methodology of popular education is applied by teachers and is implemented both inside and outside the classroom. A high level of participation exists in the activities at community, municipal and national levels. The working children and adolescents linked to partners in rural areas, participated in the National Congress of Organized Working Children and Adolescents. *The experience of the student governments, which began in Oruro, allowed for the generation of active participation of students in the areas of the intervention. Particularly in Oruro, an agreement was signed with the Plurinational Electoral Organization that facilitates the institutionalization of student governments and provides them with their own budget.*

According to the systematization of the approach in Burkina Faso, within the socio-cultural context there is no valuing of the participation of young people. However, the approach has facilitated the participation of children, of all ages, in exchanges and activities for the development of capacities. Among these achievements it was evidenced that children acquire competencies in the areas of speech, debate and decision-making. Many of them continue with their education (for example in night classes) and work during the day. One of the strategies implemented has been **peer-to-peer work between children and adolescents**, with the more experienced helping the younger ones by acting as tutors. There is also **extensive work carried out with employers** so that they understand the need to frame the work/learning of young people with the objective of improving their conditions. This is facilitated by instruments and flexible methods, with negotiation as a key aspect of this process.

In Kenya, the activities include **raising awareness in the community about harmful work, HIV & AIDS, sports, and artistic and entrepreneurial activities**. For example, a group of 25 working children and adolescents that participate in the program created their own initiative, were trained and began **income-generating projects with the community**. They are earning income and have also been transformed into **peer tutors**, helping working children and adolescents to study and be trained on their rights. These tutors are recognized as role models in the community and are very popular.

In Nicaragua, CESESMA, in cooperation with the *Libros para Niños* (Books for Children) NGO and the Ministry of Education, use reading resources as a means of reaching objectives related to the integrated protection of working children and adolescents. In this innovative initiative the working children and adolescents have a leading role. A factor that encourages their participation is the **recognition that participants of the network receive from their community**. At the same time the children from the network are in contact with other initiatives implemented by

CESESMA (such as initiatives within the framework of CLW), for example almost all of them are integrated in the **“transformative research” process in which they use** social research techniques to investigate problems that affect them. These also integrate **other processes and networks such as promoters of agro-ecological initiatives, positive masculinities, and gender equality.** Through its role, SC promotes **the linkage of partners** in this process.

There have been no records of members of the network dropping out of their studies and they are characterized as being good students that pass their grade levels without any difficulties. In addition, awaking their interest in reading means that other working children and adolescents are motivated to attend classes daily and to continue learning. One adolescent described this factor: *“The reading has a lot of objectives, but we work hard so that the kids become interested in reading. When we give talks, have reading afternoons or we read in the classroom, the kids like it and they tell their mothers “I’m going to go listen to what they’re reading”. They become more interested in studying and reading, and that’s a good thing.”*

In summary, the approaches integrate education and participation, promoting quality education processes in schools and in non-formal education. Knowledge of their rights empowers working children and adolescents in all areas, including work. At the same time these processes imply the active participation of working children and adults in local areas where they are recognized by their communities. Awareness is raised with communities, partnerships are developed with local governments and stakeholders, and through this, working children and adolescents form youth movements that influence government policies at different levels, with the support and advocacy of Save the Children and other stakeholders.

## 4. Mainstreaming gender equality: strategies and achievements

### 4.1. Barriers in the implementation of gender equality

Gender equality is a basic right for all people, including girls and boys. Based on this understanding, Save the Children believes that it is critical to directly address gender discrimination and promote gender equality in order to ensure that no harm comes to children, and to advance our vision for a world where every child attains their equal right to survival, protection, development, and participation. SC works on promoting gender equality through fostering empowerment for girls, boys, men and women, and recognizes this is essential to create a sustainable change (SC, 2014). Below are some specific examples of gender inequalities that have been identified and addressed with the CLW program. It should be noted that the material available only allows for an initial view of the topic, which requires a more in-depth study.

Within and across the approaches, a wide range of gender inequalities are experienced by girls, boys, women and men, reflecting socio-structural and cultural relationships at local and national levels. Among these, **the gender stereotypes and discriminatory gender norms within families and in communities were highlighted as having the most impact for girls and boys in fulfilling their equal rights to protection and participation.** It was also clear that gender inequalities and their impacts on girls and boys cannot be seen as separate from other vulnerability factors, especially poverty, as well as the distance between communities and schools and cases of family breakdown, which together are factors that most influence the participation of working adolescents and young people.

Even though **gender stereotypes and power imbalances within relationships between sexes appear repeatedly across the five approaches, each case must be understood in the particular context.** For example, in Burkina Faso traditional norms regarding the roles of men and women in families and society show an unbalanced distribution of power. Males are privileged above females in accessing education, and girls are considered “foreigners” within their own family as they will eventually go and live with the family of their future husband; traditionally, fathers in particular are commonly not interested in supporting their daughters’ education. At both the community and family levels, women are seen as being exclusively linked to the domestic environment, in such a way that the training that young women usually receive is in domestic work and/or sewing. The possibility of girls leaving the home to work once they are married is not considered however, there are efforts being made to change this belief.

While girls and women face disproportionate and systematic gender discrimination, boys and men too face constraints as a result of gender norms. For example, in participating programming communities in Kenya the perception has traditionally been that male children and youth are and should act as adults. They are taught to look after themselves from an early age, as well as that they should obtain some form of employment and begin acting as a provider. On the contrary, girls do not usually receive any support for their education and it is a widely held belief that once they are married they will (and should) be looked after by their husbands. However, for those that do go to school, there is a higher dropout rate for males compared to females.

In Nicaragua, gender equalities are linked to discriminatory gender norms which are deeply embedded within culture, and related to gender roles within families and communities. These again include the belief that women should only concern themselves with domestic issues, and that because men are considered to be physically 'strong' they should learn skills to get a job and act as the family provider. Moreover, gender based violence and abuse are widespread and despite the existence of a legal framework for the protection of children and young people on this matter, there are deficiencies in its implementation and a lack of resources allocated to fight against cases of gender based violence and abuse, especially in remote areas.

The experiences shared in Bolivia provided a somewhat different narrative on key gender equality considerations, where the approach was implemented in communities in which the dominant vision of gender equality is related to the symbols of Chacha-Warmi (Aymara) or Khari-Warmi (Quechua), which represent the duality and harmonizing relationships between men and women. As a result of this belief system, gender equality challenges were not identified in the same ways within communities or among partners and stakeholders. However, despite this vision, there continue to be significant challenges with gender gaps and barriers for girls and boys in Bolivia. Discriminatory stereotypes for girls and boys, women and men, were still identified and demonstrations of machismo, influenced by the mass media, impact the cultural vision of gender being put into practice in day-to-day life.

## 4.2. Strategies directed at achieving gender equality

The five approaches work to integrate gender equality as a crosscutting theme. As can be seen in the following table, gender mainstreaming was prioritized across actions, from the **promotion of equitable participation in education to participation in groups of working girls and boys** organized to promote their equal rights, and from **influencing regulations and laws to direct work with communities**.

## Some examples of strategies to address gender equality

<b>Bolivia</b>	The approach emphasizes equal participation for girls and boys in all spaces. A core message promoted across activities is that all people, males and females, should carry out shared work without any discrimination, and that it is imperative to enable equitable opportunities for all stakeholders irrespective of their gender identity. In practice, the approach promoted respect for oneself and respect for others based on the recognition of equal human rights for girls, boys, women and men.
<b>Burkina Faso</b>	The main strategy utilized within this approach is training. One achievement resulting from this approach is the enrollment of young women in roles traditionally held by the opposite sex, as well as males enrolling in training related to sewing and domestic services. Capacity building and sensitization with parents on gender equality are recognized by this population as a key factor of change.
<b>Kenya</b>	At the community level, training on gender equality was carried with community resource people and community gatekeepers to guarantee visibility of specific work on gender equality. A strong relationship was established with FIDA (a national organization with experience in the promotion of gender equality) which provided a strong benefit for effectively delivering relevant gender equality messages. Within schools, 'Children's Rights Clubs' were developed, and exchange spaces were generated for working children and adolescents alongside other students and teachers, on gender equality topics, including family and gender-based violence and reproductive health.
<b>Nicaragua</b>	Members of the reading promotion network engaged in capacity building on equity and gender equality, as well as created a 'Masculinity Network', made up of boys and male adolescents, to explore and discuss gender equality with a focus on positive masculinities. A female network was additionally established, with active participation from girls and young women. Both networks work on the prevention of gender-based violence, and through these networks more cases of abuse against girls and young women have been identified and addressed.
<b>Peru</b>	Based on Save the Children's methodology, gender mainstreaming within this approach involved unifying visions and utilizing tools. The approach has worked extensively with partners to support them to explore and build their understanding of what gender equality means within their contexts. Activities promoting gender equality were carried out with schools, but not at a community level. Under the approach, girls and boys participate in equitable numbers and efforts are taken to support active and meaningful participation. The initiatives are directed at equitably responding to the demands and needs of working children and young people, both girls and boys. A study is being developed on child exploitation, particularly of girls.

An example of what the inclusion of this cross-cutting theme meant for the approaches in question can be demonstrated in the case of Kenya:

*“The incorporation of the gender equality perspective is guaranteed in all of the activities and there is a progression towards the full application of the gender equality strategy in the approach. The legal assistance program focuses more on the cases of gender-based violence that generally affect women and children. The rehabilitation program focuses on the boys, while the sponsorship of the secondary school benefits [...] girls. The promotion activities are organized to strengthen the rights of children in school, as well as in community forums and encourage a gender balance to ensure that both men and women are represented. All of the activity and approach reports are broken down by gender”. (Staff from AFCIC received technical training and support in gender equality.)*

One innovative aspect within these approaches is the incorporation of a positive masculinities approach. For example, in Nicaragua gender equality has been integrated as a cross-cutting theme, and a masculinity network has been formed, made up of boys and male adolescents while a female network has also been created with participation from girls and young women. Both networks work on the prevention of gender-based violence. In this way, the “positive masculinities approach” has been adopted, creating safe spaces for boys and young men, alongside girls and young women, to explore their own identities and concepts of what it means to be a male or female, as well as ideas about gender equality.

The key mechanisms to support awareness raising on gender equality were workshops, technical support visits and monitoring. Peru, for example emphasized, that they used Save the Children’s Gender Maps tool for trainings. The majority of approaches included the topic of gender equality within key life skills modules, to support engaging girls and boys around gender equality topics. In addition, gender equality being positioned as a key cross-cutting theme meant that the topic was present across each approach’s activities. For example, in the case of Burkina Faso, awareness was raised with tutors and instructors so that they were knowledgeable of specific needs of girls/young women in terms of (i.e.) changing the finishing time of the class so that they didn’t have to travel through certain areas late at night and risk their safety, promoting equitable participation in spaces in which girls and boys could express themselves, and in raising awareness of entrepreneurs and tradespeople about gender equality. In Kenya, where gender mainstreaming was facilitated in part via training in communities, a lesson learned from the strategy was that staff should use simple language to avoid resistance in the community and to encourage participation, using for example “men, women, boys and girls” to be inclusive instead of terms like “gender” and “reduction of inequality”

The progress achieved in the conceptualization and identification of gender inequality is important. But at the same time, gender barriers and inequalities continue to be a critical challenge for girls



and boys fulfilling their equal rights. The achievements made within this program (further discussed below) are, however, positive steps in a process to modify strongly held discriminatory socio-cultural and economic stereotypes, and to ensure that girls and boys can equitably access and benefit from development programming.

### 4.3 Changes in the gender-equality perspective.

The approaches together represent a contribution to the transformation of stereotypical and discriminatory gender norms that were dominant within the communities. The following table provides a selection of examples, synthesizing changes in diverse aspects such as: (i) the participation of girls and young women in education and training activities; (ii) discriminatory practices such as gender access barriers for girls and young women to trades that are traditionally considered masculine; and (iii) the raising of awareness on gender equality, especially regarding discriminatory gender roles within the family and in relation to training and work. In addition, the approaches emphasize the need to strengthen the capacities of girls and boys, as well as the environments they operate within, to enable equitable and meaningful participation in decision making processes.

In conclusion, through these five approaches changes were recorded linked to **making** gender inequalities **visible, and working to support** a continuous process of empowerment for girls, boys, women and men. A young man in Bolivia, reflecting on the impacts of these changes in gender equality, stated: “We know that there shouldn’t be this discrimination between males and females, both sexes are necessary, there shouldn’t be a difference... for example, in my school we are organized into groups, we all work, no one says this is for men and this is for women. Males also know how to peel a potato... in the house there also aren’t any differences, we all do everything. My father does it, my mother does too.

Case	Initial views of gender equality	Approaches/changes detected
BOLIVIA	The communities have a vision that includes a definition of gender in which males and females are seen as complementary. However, in rural areas the practices of defined gender roles persist.	The existing concept was strengthened by a rights-based approach. The experience helped to put this approach into practice and make the meaningful participation of girls and women visible. Stakeholders were strengthened in valuing the opinions of girls and young women, demanding their equitable representation on school councils, improving participation of females in technical spaces and increasing involvement of girls and young women in decision making processes. In practice, differences were detected in the salaries received by men and women even though they have the same job, where men were commonly paid more. However, this situation is starting to shift with the implementation of laws that support gender equality.
BURKINA FASO	Prior to the experience there was no gender equality perspective. In practice girls stay in the domestic environment and boys stay with the men of the community.	Within communities the approach used training designed to view gender through a rights-based approach, and as a result concrete practices were changed. For example, the enrolment level of girls in schools increased. At the same time it was observed that young women were enrolling in vocational courses that were traditionally the domain of young men and vice versa. Further, participating young women that work in domestic services reported experiencing less discrimination within their work environments.
KENYA	AfCiC already had a concept of gender equality prior to the work with SC, based on a perspective of equal and sustainable training for all children. The gender approach is included in all of the actions that were carried out. In partnership with SC a shift was made from a needs-based approach to a rights-based approach.	Through work with the community and awareness raising regarding children's equal rights, the approach helped the community to take into account that both sexes are equally considered in the Constitution, law and international treaties. Support for secondary school focused on girls, broadening their educational opportunities.



NICARAGUA	<p>CESESMA had a gender concept prior to working with SC. This focused on contributing to male and female children and adolescents building and discovering in themselves tools that allow them to transform lives support their wellbeing and assume their responsibilities. There is a mutual strengthening between SC and the partner in regards to this area.</p>	<p>The gender equality focus has been integrated as a cross-cutting theme. As noted above, a masculinity network has been formed by boys and young men and another network involves the participation of girls and young women. Both work in the prevention of gender-based violence. More cases of abuse of girls and young women were identified, which is a topic discussed in workshops with working children and adolescents, recognizing the risks that they are exposed to due to gender discrimination. "We have learned that many girls and young women suffer sexual abuse in their homes and in the places where they work, we know that abuse is a crime that should be reported, that girls shouldn't keep quiet" Teacher interviewed.</p>
PERU	<p>CODEH had a broader approach, linked to human rights and development. They did not have a specific gender equality approach.</p>	<p>A core objective within this approach was to achieve a discourse that is consistent with the vision of SC. This worked on different levels: from SC to CODEH, and CODEH working with schools and families. To this end, workshops were designed and implemented for parents and cover the topics of positive parenting, protection and work, with a gender perspective that highlights girls' equal rights and the importance and benefits of working to promote gender equality.</p>

## 5. Conclusions

Throughout this systematization, a number of examples have been presented regarding the progress made to date<sup>5</sup> in the strategies of the CLW Program to improve quality of life and access to dignified work for working girls and boys. The approaches studied have also made progress in the equitable participation and empowerment of working children and adolescents so that they become committed citizens in public life and in decisions that affect their lives; in the promotion of relevant and quality education (formal and non-formal) as a way of protection and preparation for employment, as well as a way of raising awareness and working with governments, employers and families in the fight against exploitation and the guarantee of the rights of working children.

The CLW Program is based on the concept that education and child protection are profoundly connected: both are fundamental rights protected by the CRC. Quality education is critical for the development of children and adolescents, and protection from violence is a key condition to guarantee their wellbeing, and both are framed in fulfilling children's right to participation. Taking into account this starting point, the systematization conducted an in-depth examination of how approaches strengthen their strategies through work with partners and how they are implementing concrete practices that are intersected by education and protection in different countries.

### 5.1. Summary of Lessons Learned

Lessons learned are structured taking into account the following aspects: i) the accumulated experience and on-going learning of Save the Children with their partners; ii) the strategies that link formal and non-formal education; iii) the integrated promotion of the rights of working children, and iv) gender equality.

#### **(i) The Accumulated Experiences and On-going Learning of Save the Children with their Partners;**

*The partnerships represent a cycle between the accumulation of knowledge during the work carried out by SCC, the holistic framework of the Program, and the strengthening achieved during the implementation of the approaches.*

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<sup>5</sup>At the time of writing, the CLW Program had been implemented for half of its planned duration. For this reason promising practices and ongoing learning experiences have been highlighted, but it should not be assumed that these will be reflected in final results and lessons learned.

NICARAGUA

SAVE THE CHILDREN



The working strategy implemented by SCC with partners and stakeholders is essential for combining a range of efforts and resources that enrich the approaches and impact on public policies at different levels. To be able to identify achievements related to the inter-institutional approach implemented during the course of the Program it is important to consider that the partners have previous experiences and ways of working with SCC, and other partners. The different experiences form part of wider projects and are interconnected with a multiplicity of actions that enrich and provide feedback.

The work of SCC in the strengthening of partners and stakeholders is innovative in that it does not just include meetings or workshops that use participatory methodologies but it also includes **flexible support tailored to the partners** according to their profile, the particular challenges included in the context of the country (e.g. legislation in terms of working children and adolescents and public policies) and the characteristics of institutions and communities where the Program is being implemented.

The strengthening of partners and stakeholders is also part of advocacy actions at all levels. In some approaches (Nicaragua, Peru and Bolivia) regional and/or municipal governments are heavily involved and this is critical for its sustainability and potential to impact the local policy framework. In some cases the governments have provided resources and have generally been trained by the approach and received technical assistance for the development of regulations in accordance with the perspective of SCC.

Progress was made so that partnerships generate a “protective framework” consisting of a network of resources that surpass the economic contribution of SCC and sustain the approaches to improve their development. In this area, all of the approaches have achieved **inter-institutional programming with partners and stakeholders through the support of SCC** that has been mobilized to facilitate joint actions.

## **(ii) The Strategies that link Formal and Non-Formal Education;**

*The approaches redefine the boundaries between formal and non-formal education, integrating them in a holistic approach, with the central themes of participation and empowerment of working children and adolescents.*

The approaches studied promote quality education processes in schools and in non-formal settings. A mutual enrichment was observed in the approaches of the Program within and outside the school through by developing initiatives that articulated these approaches. For example, ‘training

for work' in the formal curriculum was introduced in primary and secondary schools (Bolivia and Peru). In addition, the incorporation of productive workshops (e.g. the chocolate making project in Peru) in the formal learning environment provides children with a new interest to promote learning and the generation of income. These strategies contribute to the **pertinence and relevance of formal education through the recognition of the value that 'training for work' has**. These learning experiences are shifting from the territory of the school, given that they also promote family entrepreneurialism or the entrepreneurship initiatives of working children and adolescents to earn a small amount of income (Peru). An emphasis was also observed on **the recuperation and revaluing of knowledge and ancestral knowledge**, which widens the social and community relevance of the experience (Bolivia).

The promotion of reading and additional academic support workshops (Nicaragua and Peru respectively) also impact on the improvement of learning experiences and the school retention rates for working children and adolescents. These initiatives have contributed to raising awareness among children and their families regarding the right to work in safe and dignified conditions that do not represent a risk to their health nor provide obstacles for their participation in education. In addition, employers are supported to understand the importance of improving work environments and making commitments to implementing concrete actions that do not affect the education of working children and adolescents (e.g. reading for pleasure networks in the coffee plantations of Nicaragua).

On the other hand, strategies to promote dignified training conditions in workplaces as learning environments have been put into place (Kenya and Burkina Faso). **The approaches select employers that provide dignified working conditions and work with each one of them**; efforts are made so that all professional training is **certified** and **the active participation of young people** is promoted. Through these processes the working children and adolescents are aware of their rights and strengthen their capacities to make their own decisions, which is crucial for guaranteeing dignified work.

Both, formal and non-formal education strategies develop all types of participatory actions involving children, teachers and communities to work on their rights, including the right to recreation. In this way they have facilitated the generation of conditions and motivation so that children remain in the school and/or in non-formal education programs and improves their learning practices.

### **(iii) Integrated promotion of the rights of working children and adolescents**

*The integrated vision of empowerment, education and promotion of the rights of working children and adolescents is evident, amongst other areas, in the cross-cutting training on "life skills" that is implemented,*



*strengthening the development of different skills among working children and adolescents.*

The five approaches contain a component of life skills linked to empowering working children and adolescents, and includes the strengthening of personal, social and cognitive skills. This component appears as a specific module in some countries (Peru, Burkina Faso and Kenya) and is included in training as a cross-cutting and participatory theme in the other two, (Bolivia and Nicaragua). In all of the countries there is a strong value placed on **the idea of empowering young people through participation**, as part of their training in life skills. In reality, the group of actions implemented in the approaches provide a relevant space given that the working children and adolescents can manage themselves and organize with others, develop confidence, resiliency and have an individual and collective voice in power spaces.

The working children and adolescents in the focus groups valued this integrated vision. They demonstrated their satisfaction that their voices are listened to and that they are able to participate with other peers and learn with and from them. Both female and male participants from the focus groups stated that **they learned how to protect their right to education and dignified work**. In the approaches that have strong relations with schools the working children and adolescents stated that their expectations were **to improve the skills developed in the transition to full time school**, as well as their transition to the adult world. School support and “learning in other ways,” such as children’s reading networks, are particularly valued. The working children and adolescents that participate in the **Training for Work Program value acquiring skills to obtain a trade** and with this training can achieve **better conditions in the world of work** and new opportunities to generate income.

In summary, the participation and knowledge of their rights empower working children and adolescents in all areas, including education and work. Working children and adolescents recognize that they gain new learning experiences and improve skills from their increased levels of participation. These processes go hand in hand with the active participation of working children and adolescents in local environments where they are recognized. Awareness is raised among communities, partnerships are developed with local governments and other partners and as a result the working children and adolescents have managed to take part in existing youth movement or to form new ones that influence government policies at different levels with support and advocacy from SC and other partners and stakeholders.



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**(iv) Gender equality**

*The adoption of a crosscutting gender equality perspective supports the recognition of inequality between boys and girls, men and women, both working children and adolescents as well as adults that they relate with and who play a significant role in their lives.*

Conceiving gender equality as a fundamental right for all people, the perspective adopted by SCC aims to directly address discrimination and promote gender equality, with the underpinning principle that each child should have their rights to survival, protection, development and participation fulfilled. The approaches addressed a range of gender inequalities that respond to socio-structural and cultural situations of the contexts in which they interact, including gender equality stereotypes in the families and in communities recognized at the beginning of the experience. It was also clear that the **gender cannot be separated from other** vulnerabilities, especially poverty, the distance between communities and schools and family breakdown are the factors that most influence participation potential of working children and adolescents.

This gender equality perspective cuts across all actions, from **promotion of participation** to the **representation of organized groups of working children and adolescents** to promote their rights in a broader sense.

Changes were recorded linked with acknowledging existing gender inequality as a continuous process of empowerment. These changes were demonstrated, in the first place, in **the participation of young women in education and training activities and in decision making spaces; access of young women to trades that are traditionally considered as the domains of men and vice-versa; and awareness raising in gender equality topics, such as the differentiation of roles within the family, in the work place.**

**The most innovative aspect is probably the incorporation of the positive masculinities** (Nicaragua). For the prevention of gender-based violence the “positive masculinities” approach creates safe spaces for males and boys together with females and girls to explore their own identities and concepts of what it means to be male or female, as well as ideas about gender equality.

In summary, the advances made in the concept and identification of gender inequality are important. The adoption of a gender equality perspective as a crosscutting theme increased the representation of women and supported the recognition of inequality related to women and also for men.

## 5.2 Challenges

Within the same areas in which the approaches have shown progress, as summarized above, also constitute challenges. Below are some of the challenges that were identified during the systematization.

### **Challenge I: Impact on strongly held cultural, social and ideological concepts**

The systematization demonstrates that world views, influenced by cultural, socio-economic, and ethnicity factors, have a deep impact on the way societies view and treat children, however, there have been notable changes in perspectives. In families, schools, communities and local governments, the work to raise awareness forms part of a continuous effort to achieve consensus and support of a view that promotes practices that enforce the protection, education and participation of working children and adolescents.

In regards to the concepts of dignified work and gender equality, both face specific difficulties in being achieved, as they are closely linked to the family setting. Particularly, when addressing the issue of work, it's necessary to take into account family coping strategies to poverty. In many cases, children are working in order to support the household economy. The concept of "dignified work" thus needs to be grounded in the reality of each boy and girl, addressing the gender stereotypes that are prevalent in their culture, the moral values associated to their work, and the needs that their work is responding to. To appropriate the concept of child protection and to understand the rights of children forms part of a long process in which the family needs support and incentives that allow them to improve their standards of living and their income. This has been observed in the requests of the families that link the possibility of working children and adolescents attending school with economic support.

On the other hand, the legislation in each country on child labour, and public policies for children's access to education, health, work, and social development clearly define a framework of possibilities, debates and challenges that are different in each country. Most countries have policies oriented around the prohibition of work for children under a minimum age set by the ILO Convention 138. Recently, the government of Bolivia has passed a new law with an innovative framework for the protection of working children. This framework has been informed by the direct participation of working boys and girls and includes protective mechanisms for children to work from the age of 10. However, the situation is different in other countries.

The impact of strongly held cultural and social views within a society also impacts advances in gender equality. The progress achieved in the conceptualization and identification of gender inequality is important, but at the same time this area should be considered a challenge and was identified as such by the majority of the approaches. The achievements are steps along a path to modify socio-cultural stereotypes, forms of organizing work, economic configurations and long-standing political relationships within societies. It is important to develop in-depth knowledge on the distribution of power and the allocation of roles based on gender in families, schools and non-formal education in the different activities, such as decisions on how responsibilities are distributed, who works where and who controls resources; differences (as well as similarities) in the priorities of women, men, girls and boys and; how equal participation can be promoted in decision-making processes. In each case there are strong groups of power that resist these transformations. Consequently the construction of strategies, at both micro as well as macro levels, should involve permanent learning and reflection in order to mobilize changes at different levels.

## **Challenge 2: Promote sustainable improvements in the quality of education in schools**

The systematization collected many comments regarding the weakness of the schools and the qualifications of the teachers that they worked with. The approaches work with educational institutions that often don't have adequate levels of quality education, facilities and materials are deficient, and they suffer from the same poverty conditions as the children and adolescents. In addition they don't manage to develop in students the fundamental skills and technical knowledge to facilitate their insertion into social and working life. The curricula of the schools are not designed to be contextual and relevant while the teachers are poorly trained and not equipped to the needs of children and young people. Within this framing the support of institutional capacity for the appropriation of the Program content within school models is a challenge, as they are rigid and have insufficient or inadequate teachers, as well as low teacher compensation. It was noted that teachers and principals frequently demonstrate resistance to these changes for many reasons, such as the bureaucracy involved in adapting curricula, a lack of time, concepts and beliefs that are extremely rigid and not open to modification, and even not agreeing with the idea of empowering children so that they can better formulate and voice their demands for change. As a result, introducing and implementing the initiatives requires motivating teachers and principals so that they participate and learn as part of this process and work to improve learning conditions, a process which often takes a lot of time.

### **Challenge 3: Driving transformations in the availability and creation of dignified employment**

One of the clear difficulties of the approaches is that in the local contexts in which they occur, the employment market doesn't provide dignified employment. For example, these include agricultural establishments with high levels of informality in their hiring processes, and/or they hire a member of the family that is usually the father but in reality the contract also implies that all of the family will work there in highly vulnerable conditions; in semi-urban areas, informal employment is also offered to children, due to their acceptance of low wages, and they are forced to work long hours in highly volatile working conditions. This also occurs in the practice of "informal apprenticeships" in both Burkina Faso and Kenya in which children work in exchange for "learning" in very bad conditions that are sometimes exploitative. Another important part of child and adolescent work occurs in the home and this often affects their attendance at school.

The work of children and adolescents in exploitative and unhealthy conditions is interwoven with forms of labour organization and power relationships between social actors in each society. For this reason, the discussion of the concept of dignified employment with business owners is not theoretical but is an element of which its acceptance will imply changes in the forms of labour organization and the rights of all workers. As a result, the challenge that exists is how an approach can contribute to improving these structural situations in the employment markets of these countries.

### **Challenge 4: To generate knowledge and conditions for increased participation of working children and adolescents in the approaches**

Beyond the documented participation, both in formal education as in non-formal activities, it is important to note that the approaches develop knowledge on the different ways and levels of participation of working children and adolescents, their profile, in what sort of conditions participation is facilitated in schools and non-formal education environments and what obstacles exist for this participation. The approaches from the CLW Program have recognized that this participation "is not easy". Not everyone values nor understands the importance of this participation, including the children and adolescents involved, whether they are working or not. The living conditions of working children and adolescents, the particular cultural characteristics of social and ethnic groups that they belong to<sup>6</sup> (their domination of the language and relationship

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<sup>6</sup>For example, there were different levels of participation registered in Latin America compared to Africa, according to testimonies.

with oral culture, their world view and view of authority, the relationship between adults and young people, for example,) configure a group of contextual and biographic conditions that should be better known so that the strategies to promote participation are widened to not just include the children that can be considered as ‘natural leaders’. The question would be: how can forms of participation be put into objective terms that inform more specific and personalized strategies in order to more actively include all working children and adolescents and encourage their participation?

### **Challenge 5: To establish continuous systematization of learning experiences in different areas of work**

The enormous richness of approaches, innovations and adaptations to different contexts and the existence of a systematic monitoring and evaluation system create the conditions for the documentation of learnings within different practices, and the identification of conditions that facilitate these processes and those that create obstacles. These learning experiences are also relevant and can be shared with other practices from the CLW Program, as well as contribute to Save the Children’s strategic themes and international discussion in this area. For example, the approaches could systematize processes, methodologies, learning experiences and obstacles in terms of: a) the path of instituting an integrated vision of education and protection; b) the potential of the training process to generate significant and relevant learning experiences for working children and adolescents; c) the strategies that link formal and non-formal education to improve the quality of learning, etc. All of these areas of reflection could contribute to a process that supports an in-depth implementation of lessons learned at the same time as continually positioning SC as a key actor in international discussion on issues affecting children, such as within the Global Partnership for Education (Education for All), Millennium Development Goals, etc.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The following recommendations aim to respond to the identified challenges and/or of strengthening the promising practices shown by the approaches, and to propose these to others<sup>7</sup>. These are particularly directed at the level of the CLW Program but can also be relevant at the level of the approaches.

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<sup>7</sup>This is based on the concept of SC that programming should be considered as both policies as well as services that translate political initiatives into best practice and concrete results for children. Given that the focus of the systematization was in this final level, the recommendations refer mainly to services.

## **Recommendations for the schools to ensure quality education delivered in safe and healthy environments**

In the international debate on ensuring access to quality education, economic support is positioned as a method to increase student retention in schools, as are proposals for pedagogical innovations that allow for the identification of new ways of teaching and learning. In accordance with the integrated work processes that are being developed, the following recommendations are suggested for this area:

- Develop a link with social protection public policies (that in many countries currently include cash transfer programs for families with children under the age of 18 that study) and to contribute to their implementation and monitoring;
- Support links between school dining halls with training for work;
- Develop efforts to systematize and provide continuous training on pedagogical and institutional strategies involved in the revision of curriculum. The potential of the training for work approaches is related to their contribution to the rethinking of the meaning of the construction of knowledge within education systems. Pedagogical tools that are used for this integration (for example, training in approach management or problem solving) and the ways in which these are implemented allow for the generation of mobilizing experiences that have a strong role in the general transformation of the school. It is important to take into account that for the teaching teams, this participation in curriculum integration projects is more practical and has more educational impact than other types of training.
- Provide a strong role in pedagogical programming for tutoring strategies and monitoring of actors involved (partners), including collective moments of reflection. These personalized strategies have significant relevance in relation to the achievements that have been obtained.

## **Recommendations for inter-institutional programming**

The systematization has shown that the strongest interface between SC, implementing partners and stakeholders has been obtained as a result of inter-institutional programming with common objectives and goals. These processes have achieved an impact both in terms of working children and adolescents who participate in the activities that better fulfill their rights, and have impacted



on public policies and have raised awareness about child labour and the situations faced by working children and adolescents. This integration is also a critical factor of sustainability of the approaches. For this reason it is recommended that:

- The reach and tools for inter-institutional programming are broadened as they represent an important strategy for the construction of a value chain, which allows for the scale-up or multiplication of innovative approaches and impacts on public debate.
- Create observations of inter-institutional programming practices and promote self-reflective processes in relation to these practices.

### **Recommendations to increase the understanding and recognition of the working children and adolescents, and their own knowledge**

The approaches are creating knowledge on intervention strategies with working children and adolescents. In the following stages of the Program, it is recommended that knowledge is broadened and new dimensions are created that increase opportunities for working children and adolescents. An alternative action could be to establish an observatory that tracks the progress of working children and young people with a particular emphasis on the detection of gender inequality. This observatory could focus on the following three areas:

- Reconstruction of their trajectories: based on the progress of working children and adolescents compared to the baseline of the Program, a tool could be developed that would allow for longitudinal measurements, including some updating of this information after they leave the Program. The final objective would be to establish comparisons between these different moments in order to generate new learning experiences;
- Multiplication of the monitoring process: supporting the installation of monitoring processes of working children and adolescents in other areas, such as schools and municipalities and, to link this initiative with other data relating to child workers;
- Validation of the knowledge and competencies of working children and adolescents: this component would be directed at observing how and what working children and adolescents learn in their jobs and in productive experiences and how they integrate theoretical and practical knowledge. This would help in the recognition of the knowledge of working children and adolescents and to identify learning processes that occur in different places and at different rhythms. This process could be used in the future to relate to broader initiatives that involve the certification of competencies;
- Meaningful participation of the children and adolescents to capture their own perceptions of the outcomes of the program and to jointly draw conclusions and recommendations from the study as part of the research team.

## **Recommendations to support the creation of dignified employment**

Often the question arises of what can be done beyond the introduction of the concept of dignified employment given that this type of work is not widely available, even for adults within the given communities. In accordance with some progress that has already been recorded, it is suggested that these approaches could strengthen their contribution to Training for Work and the generation of dignified work through:

- Establishing systematic practices of market studies with innovative methodologies that include the perspectives of working children and adolescents and the development of occupational profiles that guide relevant training; Incorporating the results of studies in action plans;
- Identifying sectors and partnerships that have potential for the strengthening of small-scale entrepreneurship initiatives and the feasibility analysis of these approaches. This is related to bringing together and systematizing information on where to focus strategies to support sustainable entrepreneurship initiatives and how to link them to fair trade programs and to social/economic networks.
- Strengthening work with associations or chambers of commerce according to sectors of activity (beyond specific companies), entrepreneurial groups and public health and safety agencies in the programming of integrated areas of action that support dignified work and guarantee the education and social rights of working children and adolescents.



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