
Burt Perrin

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Proposed Framework and Approach for
Identifying, Sharing and Using
Good Practices in Child Labour

Annex 3

Annex to Workshop Report: UCW Project Inter-Agency Meeting on Good Practices in
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Presented to: Furio Rosati, Project Coordinator
Understanding Children’s Work (UCW)
A joint ILO, World Bank, and UNICEF Project

Presented by: Burt Perrin
Independent Consultant

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Executive Summary

Purpose of Paper

This paper presents a recommended framework and approach for the sharing of good practices among the three partner agencies of Understanding Children’s Work and its Impact (UCW): a joint project involving UNICEF, The International Labour Office’s (ILO) Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), and the World Bank. This paper is based upon a review of the literature and experiences in various organisations, as well as recent practical experience at IPEC. Earlier versions of this framework have already been tested at IPEC, and modified based upon this initial experience.

It is expected that each agency will adapt and further develop this proposed framework to suit its individual needs, but in such a way that compatible approaches will be put in place that will facilitate the maximum amount of sharing across agencies, as well as sharing among others who are also working to combat child labour.

The Need for Information and Sharing of Good Practices

Good practices information provides a means of being able to learn from and to apply experiences of others. It represents institutional memory, ensuring that important information is not lost or forgotten, and constitutes an important element of a learning organisation. Given the size and scope of the work of the three UCW agencies with respect to child labour, for example involving activities in over 75 countries with a wide range of partners, there is a danger of important learnings not being known or shared with others.

As the text of this paper discusses, good practices have the potential to:

- Contribute to the development of knowledge about what works, at various levels (a.k.a. “impact assessment”), and why.
- Identify processes and practices that can help result in the identified impact.
- Contribute to a culture of sharing, where those working in the child labour area are open to new knowledge and to learning from the experiences of others.

A good practice can be defined as anything that works in some way, whether fully or in part, and that may have implications for practice at any level elsewhere. A good practice can represent any type of practice, small or large:

- It can represent a practice at any level, e.g. ranging from broad policy-level activities to nitty-gritty grassroots practices in the field.
- It need not represent an overall project or programme. Even if a project overall has not been successful, there still could be good practices that it has developed or applied. (Conversely, even if an overall project has worked well, this does not mean that everything it has done has been effective.)
- It could also represent something that only emerges after comparison across multiple settings, such as through some form of synthesis, which could be proactive (e.g. via a cluster or thematic evaluation) or retrospective (e.g. a review of existing reports and documentation) as discussed previously.
The text of the framework suggests criteria for three types or levels of good practices, depending upon the extent to which they have been evaluated, and if the practice has been documented in just one or in multiple settings. This serves the dual purpose of both facilitating easy identification of current practices with promise, as well as for identifying those practices with demonstrated effectiveness.

**What Makes for an Effective Good Practices “System”?**

Experiences of other organisations in working with good practices can be instructive. One of the key findings emerging from the literature, as the American Productivity and Quality Center (APQC) said in its recent paper on “Identifying and Transferring Internal Best Practices” is that: “The process of identifying and transferring practices [internally within an organisation] is trickier and more time-consuming than most people imagine.” Nevertheless, despite this difficulty, the APQC indicates that “the potential gains are enormous.” Failure to learn from experience inevitably impedes the ability of any organisation to improve, and ultimately to be effective at what it is supposed to be doing.

The following chart summarises some key findings from other organisations about what makes for an effective good practices “system”.

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**Some Key Findings from Other Organisations**

- The identification and transfer of good practices is very difficult.
- But there can be major rewards to doing so.
- Technology can help — but should not be the driver of good practices.
- A culture which supports and rewards sharing is crucial.
- A database can provide insight into what has been done and what might be possible vs. trying to provide the “right” answer.
- The distinction between explicit and tacit knowledge has significant implications for the appropriate design of a good practices “system”.
- Transfer is a people-to-people process.
- “Managing knowledge is 20% about technical solutions, and 80% about people management and cultural issues.” (Demming: World Bank and DFID).
- Identifying and entering information must be an explicit part of someone’s job.
- The facilitation of “communities of practice” networks is a major element of most knowledge management systems at other organisations.
- Opportunities built into gatherings can enable the identification, discussion and sharing of potential good practices.
- Evaluation needs to explore the “hows” and “whys” as much as the “whats”.
- Good practices/knowledge management is still in its early stages, especially in the development sector, but there are some noteworthy initial efforts at some agencies.

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It should be noted that despite frequent confusion, good practices are \textit{not} the same as best practices. Calling a practice “best” implies comparison and that it is superior to other approaches, irrespective of context or circumstance. Attempting to copy an approach that may be effective in one situation to another is a sure route to failure and to disillusionment.

There is, however, a close relationship between good practices and knowledge management. Technically, knowledge management includes — but goes beyond — GPs. Indeed, knowledge management can be used to refer to the management and transfer of GPs.

Effective good practices “systems” require attention to the following four dimensions:

- Technology
- Cultural factors facilitating sharing
- Strategy and leadership
- Measurement/Evaluation

“System” is put into quotes, because it refers not in a narrow sense to an information technology, but to a multi-dimensional approach involving all four dimensions. Indeed, a common mistake is to confuse a database with a good practices system. As the American Productivity and Quality Centre explains:

“The first reaction to the desire to share practices mainly is frequently to create a technical solution, usually an online database of best practices, the theory being that if people only knew that the practice existed, they would adopt it. …

What happened? Often nothing. Despite sometimes massive internal corporate program campaigns, few people entered information about their practices and few accessed it.”

While a database is an essential tool to permit the collection and sharing of good practices, it is no more than that. In particular, most sharing of good practices happens on an interpersonal basis. As Steve Demming, formerly of the World Bank has indicated:

“Managing knowledge is 20% about technical solutions, and 80% about people management and cultural issues.”

As the chart on the next page suggests, there are four inter-linked key aspects of a good practices “system” emerge:

- Identification of good practices.
- Dissemination of information about GPs in appropriate forms.
- Use of GPs information, by those involved in the child labour area, to improve the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of what is being done.
- Management or maintenance of data or information about the GPs that have been identified.

The text of this report provides examples and recommendations for how these processes can be facilitated.
Recommendations for UCW and its Partner Agencies

Each agency should develop an approach to good practices for combating child labour. This approach should be consistent with the following basic principles:

1. Acknowledgement of the value and importance of identifying and sharing good practices.

2. Each agency should develop an approach to GPs that is appropriate for its situation.

3. Approaches to GPs across the three UCW agencies should be compatible, although not necessarily identical, i.e. consistent with the guidelines and approach recommended in this section.

4. The overall approach to GPs should permit the identification and sharing of GPs developed by others as well (e.g. NGOs, international, national, local agencies and partners).

5. An inclusive, pluralistic approach should be taken that recognises and can accommodate the needs of different types of users of GPs information, ranging from grassroots practitioners, policy makers, researchers and other.

6. There should be a validation process of some form.

7. Nevertheless, the GPs approach should not be overly restrictive, at least at an entry level, in order to encourage, facilitate, and reward sharing.

8. The emphasis should be on identifying practices that can help others doing similar work.

9. Sharing mechanisms should be provided in various forms, e.g. not limited to formal written reports, and should enable sharing across agencies and with other practitioners.

The body of the report provides further suggestions for how these principles could be put into place, included recommended criteria, a suggested validation process taking into account the degree of substantiation of good practices, and recommendations for the identifi-
cation of good practices, dissemination or sharing, and the needed management systems and support to provide for the actual use of good practices information.

It would be appropriate for the three agencies to meet in the near future, once they have had an opportunity to review the proposed framework and to identify how it might apply in their own particular organisational context. Some factors that would be important to discuss would include agreement in particular on common principles and key elements that are necessary to provide for consistency and to facilitate use, as well as means of joint information sharing and dissemination.

Conclusion

A good practices “system” can be a major tool to assist the three UCW partner agencies (IPEC, UNICEF, and the World Bank) in capturing institutional knowledge about what approaches are most effective in combating child labour. It can serve as a tool to promote sharing about approaches that have been demonstrated to be effective, including approaches undertaken by the three agencies directly, by their partners, and by others involved in the child labour area. It represents a major tool for enhancing the impact of efforts to reduce the extent of child labour around the world.
1. Introduction

A. Background and Purpose of Paper

a. A Proposed Approach to Provide for the Sharing of Good Practices

The purpose of this paper is to present a recommended framework and approach for the sharing of good practices among the three partner agencies of Understanding Children’s Work and its Impact (UCW): a joint project involving:

- UNICEF.
- The International Labour Office’s (ILO) Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC).
- The World Bank.

Good practices information provides a means of being able to learn from and to apply experiences of others. It represents institutional memory, ensuring that important information is not lost or forgotten, and constitutes an important element of a learning organisation. Give the size and scope of the work of the three UCW agencies with respect to child labour, for example involving activities in over 75 countries with a wide range of partners, there is a danger of important learnings not being known or shared with others.

It is expected that each agency will adapt and further develop this proposed framework to suit its individual needs, but in such a way that compatible approaches will be put in place that will facilitate the maximum amount of sharing across agencies, as well as sharing among others who are also working to combat child labour.

b. The Need for Increased Sharing Of Information and Experiences

The raison d’être of the UCW project is based upon the premise that the three partner agencies jointly involved in the struggle against child labour should work together as much as possible, and in particular, to share their information and experiences in the area. To a large extent, the UCW project was developed in response to donor perceptions that there is opportunity for greater sharing in this regard.

In order to combat child labour as effectively and efficiently as possible, it is important that there are mechanisms permitting the three lead agencies to learn from each other’s experiences. There is a huge demand to know what is working – and a corresponding need to draw upon the knowledge and experience of all those working in the area of child labour in order to be able to develop more collective knowledge about what approaches work most effectively. But information about impact is of little use unless one also can identify the reasons why a given approach or practice has been effective. There is a need to indicate what all types of practitioners, ranging from the grassroots activists to senior policy makers, can do to act upon this knowledge. Good practices represents one way of doing this.

“You must learn from the experiences of others. You can’t possibly live long enough to make them all yourself.”

- attributed to Sam Levinson
c. The Potential of Good Practices

As this paper discusses, good practices have the potential to:

- Contribute to the development of knowledge about what works, at various levels, and why.
- Identify processes and practices that can help result in the identified impact.
- Contribute to a culture of sharing, where those working in the child labour area are open to new knowledge and to learning from the experiences of others.

| Some Examples of Good Practices at Different Levels |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| **Macro-economic** | **Intermediate** | **Grass-roots** |
| How a macro-economic economic policy, say, of the World Bank, or features in a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, can contribute to the reduction of child labour. | How national networks, and other devices, can lead to engagement and coordination of different sectors, e.g. employers, trade unions, government, NGOs, etc. | What a teacher can do to assist children recently withdrawn from commercial sexual exploitation to cope with the emotional damage and to stay in school and out of work. |

This latter aspect is a central aspect of a learning organisation.

As the original terms of reference to this study indicate:

“The broader context is knowledge management … as it relates to good practices from operational interventions:

- What do we know about good practices from programmes and projects?
- How do we manage what we know?
- How do we share what we know for the purpose of better design and implementation?”

From the above, four key aspects of a good practices “system” emerge:

- Identification of good practices.
- Dissemination of information about GPs in appropriate forms.
- Use of GPs information, by those involved in the child labour area, to improve the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of what is being done.
- Management or maintenance of data or information about the GPs that have been identified.

B. Information Sources

This paper is based upon input and information from the following sources:

- Discussion at an Inter-Agency workshop on 20-21 March 2003, with representatives of UNICEF, IPEC, the World Bank, and the UCW Project Coordinator.
- A review of experiences of other leading organisations with good practices that could have relevance to the child labour area and the UCW partner agencies.
• A case study at IPEC, which given its work in all aspects of child labour and its readiness to proceed, seemed an appropriate choice. This involved extensive consultation with staff in both the field and at HQ, as well as testing and adaptation of an earlier version of this framework in different parts of IPEC, including: gender mainstreaming, Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, and the role of education in combating child labour.
2. What Makes for an Effective Good Practices “System”?

A. Introduction and Current Status

This section discusses some of the main findings and implications about how to implement and use a good practices approach (or “system”), based upon the experiences of other organisations and the literature. The table on the following page summarises these key findings.

One of the key findings emerging from the literature, as the American Productivity and Quality Center (APQC) said in its recent paper on “Identifying and Transferring Internal Best Practices”¹ is that: “The process of identifying and transferring practices [internally within an organisation] is trickier and more time-consuming than most people imagine.” They say that even leading private corporations devoting significant resources to the task have found it extremely difficult to identify and transfer knowledge internally, that ironically it can be more difficult to do so than to benchmark externally with other organisations.

Basil Cracknell, in a review of the use of feedback and knowledge specifically in development organisations², indicates that: “Acquiring new knowledge is not too difficult: learning from it is far more challenging.”

Nevertheless, despite this difficulty, the APQC indicates that “the potential gains are enormous.” Failure to learn from experience inevitably impedes the ability of any organisation to improve, and ultimately to be effective at what it is supposed to be doing.

It is also apparent that while there is increasing interest in GPs/KM, activities along these lines are at the early stages, at least amongst public sector and non-profit organisations. This is confirmed by other queries. For example, agencies such as DFID (British Department for International Development), ALNAP (Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action), and CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency), have recently or are currently exploring the roles they can play in this area. DFID has recently completed a review of “best practices” in knowledge management.³ The World Bank, and apparently SIDA (Swedish International Development Agency) seem to be the exceptions who have engaged in more extensive KM activities. The Bank in particular is frequently recognised as one of the leaders in this area among organisations of any type.

¹ Ibid.
³ “Doing the Knowledge: How DFID Compares with Best Practice in Knowledge Management.” Internal draft report, August 2000.
Generally, good practices approaches have been developed by organisations with geographically dispersed operations, in order to provide for the identification and sharing of approaches among people doing similar work but in different settings and to expand institutional memory. As a result, most GP’s approaches developed to date have focused primarily on field-level rather than head office or policy-level activities.

### Some Key Findings from Other Organisations

- The identification and transfer of good practices is very difficult.
- But there can be major rewards to doing so.
- Technology can help — but should not be the driver of good practices.
- A culture which supports and rewards sharing is crucial.
- A database can provide insight into what has been done and what might be possible vs. trying to provide the “right” answer.
- The distinction between explicit and tacit knowledge has significant implications for the appropriate design of a good practices “system”.
- Transfer is a people-to-people process.
- “Managing knowledge is 20% about technical solutions, and 80% about people management and cultural issues.” (Demming: World Bank and DFID).
- Identifying and entering information must be an explicit part of someone’s job.
- The facilitation of “communities of practice” networks is a major element of most knowledge management systems at other organisations.
- Opportunities built into gatherings can enable the identification, discussion and sharing of potential good practices.
- Evaluation needs to explore the “hows” and “whys” as much as the “whats”.
- Good practices/knowledge management is still in its early stages, especially in the development sector, but there are some noteworthy initial efforts at some agencies.

Within the UN system, a number of agencies e.g. UNDP (its gender programme, with work under development for its poverty programme), UNAIDS, and UNESCO’s Management of Social Transformations (MOST) programme have developed best practices databases in some instances. A factor distinguishing these from many other systems is that these databases are publicly accessible via the Internet. In some cases, the databases can contain case examples from a variety of sources including those emanating from outside the sponsoring organisation. While the MOST programme does make efforts to disseminate information about best practices in a variety of forms, for the most part these approaches seem to be limited at least thus far in linking the database to actual use of the information.
For example, the UN Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions recently completed a survey of knowledge management activities within United Nations agencies. It concluded that: “Overall, the survey findings show that knowledge management is at an early stage. Only a few agencies report tangible results; communities of practice are active in only half of the agencies.”

In spite of the limited experience to date, a high degree of consistency both about what not to do, as well as what steps are necessary to facilitate the identification, sharing and use of GP information is emerging. The table on the previous page summarises some key findings from the literature and the experiences of other organisations.

B. What are Good Practices? How Can They be Used?

A good practice can be defined as anything that works in some way, whether fully or in part, and that may have implications for practice at any level elsewhere. A good practice can represent any type of practice, small or large:

- It can represent a practice at any level, e.g. ranging from broad policy-level activities to nitty-gritty grassroots practices in the field.
- It need not represent an overall project or programme. Even if a project overall has not been successful, there still could be good practices that it has developed or applied. (Conversely, even if an overall project has worked well, this does not mean that everything it has done has been effective.)
- It could also represent something that only emerges after comparison across multiple settings, such as through some form of synthesis, which could be proactive (e.g. via a cluster or thematic evaluation) or retrospective (e.g. a review of existing reports and documentation) as discussed previously.

A key aspect is that a GP be something that actually has been tried and shown to work, with at least some evidence of effectiveness, i.e. as distinct from what may be a potentially good idea but has not actually been tested. It could, however, be work in progress, representing preliminary or intermediate findings.

The overriding criteria should be the potential usefulness of a GP to others in providing new ideas or guidance or stimulating thought about how one could be more effective in one’s work. It is rarely appropriate for GPs to be copied from one setting to another. As Pawson\(^4\) indicates, programmes invariably “work” for some people in some situations, but not in other cases. The context invariably differs across settings, and thus even highly successful interventions may not “travel” well. At the least, good practices can provide “food for thought” and ideas about possible adaptations. The more that a similar approach has


been tried and shown to work in multiple and varied settings, the more likely that it might also apply in some respect elsewhere as well.

**Good Practices vs. Best Practices**

Note that this depiction of good practices is quite different from concepts such as “best” practices, “model” programmes, “proven” practices, and the like that are put forth as exemplary approaches worthy of emulation. Calling a practice “best” implies comparison and that it is superior to other approaches, irrespective of context or circumstance. (This can be exacerbated, perhaps unintentionally, by rewards given for the “best” of “best” practices.) As Patton notes: “Seldom do such statements [of “best practices”] identify for whom the practice is best, under what conditions it is best, or what values or assumptions undergird its best-ness.” Attempting to copy an approach that may be effective in one context to another is a sure route to failure and to disillusionment.

Furthermore, the value and evidence base for assertions of “best-ness” often is very precarious. How does something come to be anointed as “best” practice? Too often, someone (the “someone” is not always clear) declares arbitrarily, in the absence of any clear criteria or evidence, that a given practice is “best”. As Patton indicates, calling something a “best” practice typically is more of a political assertion than an empirical conclusion. He adds that the “best practices” label has been applied to almost any kind of insight, empirically based or not, and thus it ceases to have any meaning.

**Good Practices and Knowledge Management**

“Good Practices” and “Knowledge Management” (KM) are very closely related. Technically, KM includes — but goes beyond — GPs. In practice, some organisations speak of KM and others of GPs (or BPs) while referring to the same thing.

KM can be used to refer to the management and transfer of GPs. For example, the American Productivity and Quality Center (APQC) defines knowledge management as “a framework for the transfer of best practices” and states that: “We consider internal benchmarking and transfer of best practices to be one of the most tangible manifestations of

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6 Nevertheless, terminology frequently is muddy in this area, without a high degree of consistency. In some cases, “best practices”, when used in the plural, is intended to mean much the same thing as good practices as presented here (e.g. this is how “best practices” is used by the APQC).


8 One can set up a GPs system in the absence of a KM perspective. But as the following section indicates, the evidence is that technical solutions such as databases, in the absence of accompanying mechanisms to provide for sharing, rarely are effective or used.

knowledge management — the process of identifying, capturing, and leveraging knowledge."

The term “GPs” seems to apply to UCW in this broader sense. For example, the key goal, implicit in the terms of reference for this project and as discussed at the inter-agency meeting, is the effective use of this GP's information in some way to improve the effectiveness of efforts to eliminate child labour. In the IPEC case study, and in work done recently in various programme areas, GPs are being used in this broader sense, to encompass the overall approach including identification, dissemination and use. This usage is very close to the above definition of KM. In narrow terms, the identification of “good practices” per se represents just an intermediate outcome.

Thus it is not meaningful to separate good practices from knowledge management.

**Good Practices, Evaluation and Impact Assessment**

As the illustration below suggests, there can be a two-way relationship between good practices, and evaluation and impact assessment. On the one hand, documented GPs, especially when they take place in more than one setting and have been evaluated, can be used to demonstrate effectiveness. They can suggest where to target future impact assessments. On the other hand, when effectiveness or impact has already been demonstrated, GPs can represent ways in which this can be brought about, and in particular, how it might be applied in a different setting. Information knowing that a given policy or programme approach is effective is of little utility unless one can demonstrate what activities and practices can result in this. GPs can play a key role here.

![Diagram of the Dual Relationship between Impact Assessment, Evaluation and Good Practices](image)

GPs, of course, are not the only source of information to assist in assessing effectiveness, or in knowledge management. For example, information about what does not work can also
be very useful. Experience suggests that this information, unlike GPs, is unlikely to be volunteered on formal programme reports. Yet this information can be obtained through others means such as evaluations, management or process reviews, even audit reports.

GPs have the value of being positive, of telling people what it is that they can do. They can be informed by information about what does not work as well. Syntheses and thematic reviews in particular can draw upon a range of available evidence. As suggested later in this paper, GPs descriptions will be most useful when they identify those contextual and other factors related to their success, and in this way can also build about information about what has not worked as well.

C. Key Elements of an Effective Good Practices “System”

The APQC in particular has been acting as a clearinghouse of information and experiences with GPs/KM among both private and public sector organisations. Its chief findings and conclusions are mirrored by those in the literature and the experiences of other organisations that have been examined. The APQC has developed a framework for the transfer of good practices. This model on the following page provides a helpful way of looking at what is involved in developing and using an effective good practices system.

The KM process, as identified by the APQC\textsuperscript{10}, involves three major aspects:

• “Finding and collecting internal knowledge and best practices.”
• “Sharing and understanding these practices so they can be used.”
• “Adapting and applying these practices to new situations and bringing them up to best practice performance levels.”

As indicated earlier, identification of GPs is the easy part. More challenging is addressing the barriers that inhibit understanding and transfer of these practices to other situations.

The APQC framework identified four critical environmental enablers that are prerequisites to a GPs “system”:

• Technology
• Cultural factors facilitating sharing
• Strategy and leadership
• Measurement/Evaluation

These same factors are also mentioned in other documents and literature, including in reports of the experiences of other organizations to date.

“System” is put into quotes, because it refers not in a narrow sense to an information technology, but to a multi-dimensional approach involving all four dimensions.

\textsuperscript{10} See Note 9.
Framework for Knowledge Management / Transfer of Good Practices

Strategy and Leadership

Organisation Knowledge

Use
Adapt
Create
Identify
Collect
Organise
Share

Measurement/Evaluation

Culture

Technology

enablers

processes

*APQC
D. Technology — One of the Four Key Enablers

A key finding is that while technology has a helpful role to play, “it will not be the driver of sharing best practices.” As the APQC explains:

“The first reaction to the desire to share practices mainly is frequently to create a technical solution, usually an online database of best practices, the theory being that if people only knew that the practice existed, they would adopt it. …

What happened? Often nothing. Despite sometimes massive internal corporate program campaigns, few people entered information about their practices and few accessed it.”

APQC has identified four major learnings, based upon both successful and not-so-successful technological solutions:

1. “The really important and useful information for improvement is too complex to put online; too much tacit knowledge is required to make a process work.”
   - So, most firms have turned to directory and ‘pointer’ systems that can supplement the search for best practices.”
   - Effective databases are brief rather than comprehensive. They are designed to enhance and support, rather than replace, existing sharing mechanisms.
   - Databases provide insights into what has been done rather than “the right answer.”

The distinction between explicit and tacit knowledge and how to facilitate sharing and use of both forms is considered below.

2. There has to be a framework for classifying information.

3. “Entering information into the system must be part of someone’s job.”
   - “Busy managers and professionals will rarely take the time to enter a practice into a database unless it is part of their job.”
   - GP databases work only when selected employees are assigned responsibility for finding and entering practices, as well as helping others use this information.

4. “Culture and behaviours are the key drivers and inhibitors of internal sharing.”

E. Cultural Factors Facilitating Sharing

What strongly emerges from the literature and from the experiences of all organisations involved in GPs is that cultural considerations, where people are motivated, supported, and rewarded for sharing information, is a basic prerequisite and is the most important factor related to sharing and transfer of knowledge, including good practices.

As suggested above, understanding the distinction between explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge is key to the development of a meaningful GPs “system”.

- Explicit knowledge can be recorded, written down.
- Tacit knowledge, by its very nature, cannot be codified.
• Tacit knowledge involves “the know-how, judgement, intuition, and little tricks” (APQC) that are essential to the transfer of good practices. In this respect, tacit knowledge typically is seen as more relevant than explicit knowledge to application.

• Tacit knowledge can only be shared and transferred to others through human interaction. This can involve face-to-face contact, but also can be done via workshops and meetings, on-line discussions, and other similar means.

APQC refers to research that indicates that 80 percent of knowledge that needs to be transferred is non-codifiable (i.e. tacit) in nature. Similarly, Steve Demming, formerly of the World Bank, has said that:

“Managing knowledge is 20% about technical solutions, and 80% about people management and cultural issues.”

DFID’s review underlined that the above view was shared by all the leading organisations involved in knowledge management. The UN survey indicated that even among those organisations which have initiated GPs or KM activities, “there is an ‘IT’ (Information Technology) thrust to most efforts in contrast to APQC’s findings that communities of practice are supported by IT rather than driven by it.”

Cracknell indicates that the research on how people learn indicates that there can be considerable “learning by involvement”, whereas “learning by communication” (i.e. through receiving reports, attending seminars, etc.) is seldom so effective.

For the above reasons, leading organisations in the KM arena have facilitated and supported the development of informal networks of people working on common issues, most frequently referred to as “communities of practice.” These networks typically communicate mainly through electronic exchanges, with the help of a facilitator, supplemented by the occasional face-to-face meeting. Networks can be active for very short periods of time, or indefinitely, depending upon the interest.

The World Bank now has more than 100 of what it refers to as Thematic Groups (TGs).

“[These] are groups of people who are passionate about a common subject. They are mostly front-line staff, working in the regions and networks. They consist of a core leadership/facilitation team of about 3-5 co-leaders drawn from both the regions and networks. Leadership and membership in TGs is voluntary and open to all staff in the Bank Group. TGs also have external partners, and knowledge sharing becomes seamless across the group through the email distribution lists and Websites.”

Ironically, when opportunities are provided to share and to discuss tacit knowledge, particularly in a group context, this can result in capturing of at least some of this knowledge in written form. For example, the Thematic Groups in the World Bank frequently produce publications and newsletters arising out of their discussions, presenting good practices and other information.

DFID and Cracknell have indicated that there is frequently interest among staff in “horizontal sharing”, so that staff in far-flung locations can communicate directly with one other without having to go though headquarters. Ironically, this can be greatly supported by cen-

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11 Cited in the DFID report, Note 3.
tral approaches such as good practices database, a pointer system or directory of expertise within the organisation, and support for informal sharing such as through communities of practice.

F. Leadership and Strategy

Meaningful sharing of information, including the identification and transfer of good practices, cannot be mandated. However, the conditions can be set in place that can facilitate and support sharing, or conversely, inhibit it. In particular, it is important that senior management provide visible and tangible support, as well as provide opportunities and rewards for sharing.

The World Bank\textsuperscript{12} identified what it refers to as “the eight pillars of knowledge sharing:

1. Defining a knowledge sharing strategy
2. Organising knowledge management
3. Providing a budget for knowledge sharing
4. Nurturing communities of practice
5. Choosing a technology that helps sharing knowledge
6. Communicating the values of knowledge sharing
7. Introducing new personnel incentives
8. Measuring performance

G. Measurement and Evaluation

Clearly, evaluation is critical in order to be able to establish what in fact is a “good” practice. But as the APQC indicates, this alone is not enough. Information about \textit{why} the superior results were obtained, and \textit{how} this was done, is essential in order to be able to act upon this information, and potentially to replicate or adapt these in other settings. Evaluation that provides \textit{understanding} about what has happened and why is at least as important as the actual results.

Cracknell similarly has indicated that a common fault of aid evaluations is to focus exclusively on the needs of donors. They typically fail to involve other stakeholders sufficiently in the evaluation process, which as we know is critical to the learning process. He says that:

“Impact evaluations, taking place some years after project completion, will still be needed, but relatively greater emphasis will need to be placed on the role of on-going evaluations being carried out in close conjunction with the beneficiaries, the results being fed back, through horizontal networking, to others working in similar circumstances.”

It should be noted that recent developments in evaluation theory and practice indicate that this need not be an either-or situation. There are credible evaluation designs, for example,

\textsuperscript{12} Knowledge Sharing in the World Bank. Undated report.
that can rely on qualitative approaches to demonstrate causality while at the same time providing the “how” and “why” information needed to guide future practice and policy. Nevertheless, it is important to recognise that “proof” impossible. The wrong approach to evaluation can inhibit, rather than facilitate, sharing of information and acting upon what has been learned. Indeed, the APQC stresses that measurement and “paralysis by analysis” too easily can get in the way and be a hindering rather than a contributing factor on sharing and transfer of knowledge.

Another issue concerns evaluation of the good practices process itself. The APQC says that current approaches employed thus far are “embryonic” and that “clearly, the measurement of the effectiveness of transfer systems is on the agenda for attention.” Similarly, Cracknell says that: “More research into the process of learning itself will be needed, especially into how we learn how to learn!”

**H. Conclusion**

While there is increasing interest, the actual development and use of good practices approaches are still in their early stages, particularly in the public/non-for-profit sector. There are opportunities for UCW to demonstrate leadership in the area, in particular in developing an approach that can contribute to the sharing and use of good practices across different agencies. Nevertheless, there is still much that can be learned from the experience to date, both about what to do and what mistakes to avoid, in developing and implementing an effective good practices “system” that will in fact lead to the transfer of knowledge about what has been demonstrated to be effective.
3. Proposed Good Practices Framework for UCW

A. Introduction

This section proposes an overall framework and approach for the identification, management, dissemination, and use of good practices within UCW and its three member agencies (UNICEF, IPEC, and the World Bank), as well as providing for sharing with others involved in the child labour area. This framework is generic in nature, that can be tailored to the particular context of each agency, while still providing for sharing among everyone.

Note that this proposed approach is pluralist in nature. For example, it provides for the inclusion of good practices in the policy as well as the operational arena. It provides for the inclusion of practices of others, as well as the three UCF agencies, and for use of information by anyone involved in the child labour area. The approach is designed to maximise actual information sharing and use. In these respects, the proposed approach goes beyond those that have been identified in many other organisations.

This section starts with a proposed description and definition of what is a good practice, followed by considerations related to the four key aspects of a good practices “system” that were identified on page 2:

- Identification of good practices.
- Management and structure of the system, including database and other management considerations.
- Dissemination.
- Use of GPs.

It is important to emphasise, however, that these are not necessarily linear steps, as suggested by the following diagram:

As Section 2 has emphasised, sharing and use of good practices is one element of information sharing in general. “Sharing”, by definition, involves two-way communications. Thus many of the same mechanisms by which GPs can be identified can also serve as means of dissemination. As discussed earlier, cultural factors account for some 80 percent of what is involved in the sharing of good practices. A formal technical system, at best, can support and supplement person-to-person sharing, rather than replace it. Many of the recommendations
in this section are designed to facilitate both formal and informal sharing of information, including information about GPs.

### B. Some Basic Principles

Following is a list of recommended basic principles, to serve as a basis for the development and implementation of a good practices approach in each agency. These principles are largely consistent with the discussion at the Inter-Agency meeting in March 2003.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed Principles</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Acknowledgement of the value and importance of identifying and sharing good practices. | • A prerequisite to permit learning from experience and corporate memory.  
• A GP is something that actually has been tried. |
| 2. Each agency should develop an approach to GPs that is appropriate for its situation. | • This will help ensure relevance. |
| 3. Approaches to GPs across the three UCW agencies should be compatible, although not necessarily identical, i.e. consistent with the guidelines and approach recommended in this section. | • This is essential in order to permit sharing and maximising the potential learning that can take place. |
| 4. The overall approach to GPs should permit the identification and sharing of GPs developed by others as well (e.g. NGOs, international, national, local agencies and partners). | • Otherwise, there is a danger of being overly narrow. |
| 5. An inclusive, pluralistic approach should be taken, that acknowledges and can accommodate the needs of different types of users of GPs information, ranging from grassroots practitioners, policy makers, researchers and other. | • This acknowledges that there can be a need for different forms of GPs information, e.g. ranging from nitty-gritty techniques for improving day-to-day work in the field, to macro-level, highly documented research.  
• This suggests the need for a range of criteria for GPs, to avoid excluding by default information that can be of value to a wide variety of users. |
| 6. There should be a validation process of some form. | • This is needed to ensure that GPs are based upon actual evidence of effectiveness, not just because something “seems interesting” or because someone arbitrarily proclaims something as a GP.  
• Otherwise what is included as a GP will be arbitrary, or at least seem so, potentially jeopardising the credibility of the entire GPs/KM process. |
| 7. Nevertheless, the GPs approach should not be overly restrictive, at least at an entry level, in order to encourage, facilitate, and reward sharing. | • The experience elsewhere is that this is essential, otherwise people may be resistant to sharing their experiences and good practices with others. |
| 8. The emphasis should be on identifying practices that can help others doing similar work. | • This is the primary purpose of GPs.  
• Given the importance of context, it should be recognised that GPs should be used to stimulate thinking, and normally are not expected to be copied exactly from one setting to another. |
| 9. Sharing mechanisms should be provided in various forms, e.g. not limited to formal written reports, and should enable sharing across agencies and with other practitioners. | • The evidence supports the need for alternative means of dissemination, and in particular means involving inter-personal communication.  
• Mechanisms of some form should be developed to permit sharing of GPs with other agencies. |
C. Proposed Definition and Criteria for Good Practices

a. Why Good Practices in the Child Labour Area?

Any definition of GPs should be based upon why there is an interest in GPs, how they are expected to be used, and by whom. Similarly, this could provide guidance for criteria about what should be included or not in the database, forms of dissemination and other considerations.

In researching this report, the following uses for GPs have emerged:

- To inform and improve practice, learning from experience about what approaches work best in combating child labour.
- “Practice” includes policy, planning, and research activities, as well as “on-the-ground” delivery of programmes.
- Guidance for how to do good work, how to improve what we do, or as one person put it: how “we can change the way we work in order to be more effective, strategic, and cost-efficient.”
- Contributing to the knowledge base internationally about what is effective in child labour.
- Influencing donors and public opinion about the value and impact of efforts to eradicate child labour.

Key users of GPs are expected to include:

- Staff in each agency involved in some way in child labour.
- This includes staff working at both policy and operations, HQs and in the field.
- Other UCW agencies.
- Other partners (including governments, NGOs, and other regional/national/local organisations, as well as beneficiaries).
- Other organisations working in the child labour area.
- Researchers.

As emphasised later, GPs can be used most appropriately to stimulate thinking and to suggest ideas for consideration. It is not expected that GPs necessarily should be copied from one setting to another. The context can vary across settings, and thus even highly successful interventions may not “travel” well. At the least, however, these can provide “food for thought” and ideas about possible adaptations. The more that a similar approach has been tried and shown to work in multiple settings, the more likely that it might apply in some respect elsewhere as well.

b. Proposed Definition of Good Practices

As indicated earlier, a good practice can be defined as follows:

A good practice is:

Anything that works, whether fully or in part, and that may have implications for practice at any level elsewhere.
This definition is based upon the above considerations, and is very similar to that used by others, e.g. UNAIDS. The following are implicit in this definition:

- A GP can represent any type of practice, small or large:
  - It could represent a practice at any level. E.g. GPs can range from broad policy-level activities to practices at the grassroots level in the field.
  - It need not represent an overall project or programme. Even if a project overall has not been successful, there still good be good practices that it developed or applied.
  - It could be a very specific “nitty-gritty” process or activity, e.g. a strategy for incorporating questions related to child labour in other household surveys, a means of getting teachers in a rural setting to incorporate child labour considerations into the curriculum, a technique that was successful in getting an employer association on board, an effective communications strategy, an approach that led to the adoption of Convention 182, a means of building child labour considerations into a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, an innovative legal clause in implementing legislation ...
  - It could also represent something that only emerges after comparison across multiple settings (e.g. what has emerged from analysis of IPEC’s work in numerous settings is that a mix of measures is almost always required) that may be more useful at the policy level than with nitty-gritty programme implementation considerations at the grassroots.

- A key aspect is that a GP be something that actually has been tried and shown to work, i.e. as distinct from what may represent a potentially good idea but has not actually been tested. It could, however, represent work in progress, representing preliminary or intermediate findings.

- While there should be evidence that the practice is indeed effective, definitive “proof” ordinarily is not essential.

- The overriding criteria should be the potential usefulness of a GP to others in stimulating new ideas or providing guidance on how one can be more effective in some aspect related to child labour.

c. Criteria for Determining What Makes a Practice “Good”

The box on the following page presents proposed criteria for assessing potential “good” practices. They criteria are also similar to those used by other organisations that have developed GPs or similar approaches. It should be noted that these criteria are generic in nature. They can be made more specific to a particular programme area or context. For example, these criteria have been tested in different parts of IPEC, such as in gender mainstreaming, education, and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. While the same basic criteria were found to be appropriate in all cases, the wording and explanations have been modified to make them specific to the particular programme area. Thus they would seem flexible enough to be adapted to suit other approaches as well.

In discussion about these criteria at the UCW Inter-agency meeting in March, 2003, there was discussion about inclusion of principles of partnership and of participation. One perspective
## Good Practices Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Innovative or creative</td>
<td>E.g. what is special about the practice that makes it of potential interest to others? Note that a practice need not be new to fit this criterion. For example, often an approach may have been used for some time in one setting, but may not be widely known or applied elsewhere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness/impact</td>
<td>What evidence is there that the practice actually made a difference?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replicability</td>
<td>Is this a practice that might have applicability in other situations or settings?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>Is the practice and/or its benefits likely to continue, and to continue being effective, over the medium to long term? This criterion may not apply to all types of practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>How does the practice contribute, directly or indirectly, to action of some form against child labour?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsive and ethical</td>
<td>Is the practice consistent with the needs, has it involved a consensus-building approach, is it respectful of the interests and desires of the participants and others, and is it in accordance with ILO labour standards and conventions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency and implementation</td>
<td>Were resources used in a way to maximise impact?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

was that these are underlying principles that should be implicit in good practices. They could however be added as additional criteria, if desired.

Similarly, these criteria should be treated as general guidelines. They may vary in applicability depending upon the level or nature of the specific practice. For example, one would expect specific criteria to be of a different nature for a GP with respect to a legal approach to action on the Convention than for a policy approach in a district or for a particular technique used by educators to get parents to agree to send their children to school.

Also, GPs do not have to be perfect in every respect (what is perfect in life?). Indeed, information about inhibiting factors or circumstances limiting the applicability or impact of a practice can be even more useful to others than a 100 percent “success” story.

### Degree of Substantiation or “Proof” of Good Practices

There are two schools of thought about how well a potential practice should be substantiated before it could be considered “good”:

- One perspective, most common among researchers, is that it would not be legitimate to endorse a practice as “good”, and for others to emulate it, until it has been proven to
work through several experiences at different settings. This group argues for a high standard of proof before something can be given the label of a “good” practice.

- The other, somewhat more common, perspective is that given the challenges faced in addressing child labour, one cannot afford to wait for the “perfect” answer or definitive proof, that just because something has not yet been subject to extensive evaluation or tried in many different settings does not mean that it would not be useful. This group says that decisions and actions must always be made on the basis of imperfect information and that timely information and ideas based even on less than perfect data can be more useful than nothing.

It is apparent that there is a trade-off between perfection on the one hand and rapid response on the other. One can also speak of a continuum of degree of confidence, ranging from well-developed and tested approaches at one end to rough and unproven, but perhaps imaginative and creative ideas at the other end. Staff have also indicated that requiring too high a standard, requiring confirmation through research/evaluation findings, can act as a disincentive for practitioners both to propose what is working well as a potential good practice, and even to attempt to be innovative.

Which perspective is right? In fact, both can be legitimate. Different people, depending upon their roles, may require different types of information at different levels of confidence, for example:

- Those working in the field, trying new approaches often on a day-by-day basis, most frequently require “soft” information and ideas to consider, and perhaps to try out or to adapt, often on very specific practices.

- Those involved in research, in discussing overall strategies with other agencies or involved in the development of new policy approaches where decisions may be more difficult to reverse if they do not work out, frequently may require information with a higher degree of confidence and that has been based upon experiences in multiple settings.

- Those involved in programme development typically require something in between.

An effective good practices system needs to be open to multiple needs, providing for GPs at different levels of confidence.

- If a GP’s system does not require documentation and evaluation of entries, then there can be a danger that these practices may not be as “good” as they appear, and the system will be limited in value for knowledge creation.

- Conversely, the experience of IPEC as well as other GPs systems is that most entries, at least initially, have not yet been subject to formal evaluation or replication. Failure to provide for inclusion of GPs of this form in some way would eliminate most promising practices. These practices might be subject to evaluation or replication later. Furthermore, it is exactly this form of current ideas that practitioners require.

In order to provide for this range of needs, a variety of GPs systems provide for multiple levels or classes of GPs. Consequently, it is recommended that a good practices approach in child labour provide for GPs of three levels (one could substitute the term “types” or “categories”, or a similar term), depending upon the degree of substantiation. Note that this approach closely follows that of the American Red Cross in particular.
Level 1: Innovative Practices

Practices at this level may not be substantiated by data or formal evaluation, but they have actually been tried and a strong logical case can be made about their effectiveness, in accordance with the seven criteria listed above.

Level 2: Successfully Demonstrated Practices

Practices at this level have been demonstrated to be successful, with demonstrable results, at one setting. Although this practice is localised, it has characteristics that are transferable to other settings or situations.

Level 3: Replicated Good Practices

Practices at this level have been demonstrated to work and to lead to desired results at multiple settings. These settings could be across countries, projects, or sectors. But they also could be different locations served by the same project (e.g. in different communities or with different groups).

It is important to note that GPs of Level 3 are not necessarily “better” than those at Level 2, nor are those at Level 2 inherently better than those at Level 1. What distinguishes the good practices from one level from another is the extent to which they have been evaluated or replicated, and thus the degree of supporting evidence.

In general, taking into account the purpose of GPs, as well as approaches at other organisations and the difficulties to date in getting GPs in child labour identified, in spite of various attempt, it would be appropriate to err on the side of inclusion rather than omission. The guiding principle should be to make available information that, at the least, can serve as “food for thought” for others.

Proposed Level 1 practices should be included in a GPs database as long as they seem to make sense and are not in conflict with what else is known. (This does not mean that it would be inappropriate to raise questions about what has been proposed, or to ask for additional information.) This is consistent with the approach of the American Red Cross:

“As long as the practice does not violate an established policy or cause legal trouble we post it as a phase I Innovative Practice. The bar is intentionally set low so that we can get people in the habit of sharing practices, rather than discouraging them because their practice is not the ‘best.’”

Evaluation of some form should be required for entries at Levels 2 and 3. But “evaluation” should be defined broadly. While normally this would consist of a programme evaluation, in some situations (e.g. legal innovations) other forms of evaluations might be appropriate, e.g. expert or even peer review.

This approach can serve the multiple purposes of users of GPs. With the levels built into the classification system of the database, as recommended below, a user can chose the criterion level to search. It also encourages people to make submissions or suggestions for what should be included, and minimises the potential of missing practices that could be noteworthy.

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13 Personal communication from Kevin Hans, Knowledge Management manager for the American Red Cross.
This approach also provides for a reclassification of practices where there is additional evidence. Indeed, promising practices may suggest ideas for evaluation, which can provide for reclassification from Level 1 to 2. If a number of similar Level 1 (or 2) practices are proposed independently, it may be appropriate to combine them into a Level 3 description. Thus this approach can also help serve the needs of those who require information at a very high level of confidence. Conversely, if encouraging practices are not supported by further evaluation or evidence, it might be appropriate to drop them from the database.

Those asked to identify potential GPs normally would not be asked to identify its level. This would be determined through the validation process as discussed below, based upon the supporting evidence.

**D. Identification of Good Practices**

A key feature of the proposed approach allows for the identification of good practices in a variety of different ways. As Section 2 reported, the experiences of the APQC with dozens of organisations is that it is naïve to expect busy professionals to volunteer good practices submissions to a database. Most good practices are likely to arise in the context of meetings or discussions rather than through formal submissions. The challenge is to capture these in some way.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multiple Routes for the Identification of Good Practices</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submission of hard copy, electronic or online GPs form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentioning a potential GP to the GPs Coordinator or to other designated staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Mining” of documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of regular progress reports and at mid term and annual review meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and evaluation studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations and discussion at formal and at informal face-to-face meetings, workshops and training sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities of practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section 2 also emphasises that it is essential that someone be given responsibility to ensure that good practices are elicited and entered into a database. Someone within each agency needs to be designated as the GPs Coordinator and be given lead responsibility, with other technical people also with the responsibility to elicit good practices in their particular areas of responsibility.
Following are some ways through which GPs can be identified. These are summarised in the chart on the previous page. This, of course, is not intended to represent a complete list. As many routes as possible should be provided.

- Make it as easy as possible for people to propose potential GPs.
  - A revised format for proposing GPs should be developed and distributed, as well as placed on each agency’s Internet and Intranet sites. The following box provides a suggested format. All staff should be encouraged to either use this form to identify GPs or to bring potential GPs to the attention of the GPs Coordinator. As well, they should be asked to encourage partner organisations and others involved in the child labour area to identify potential GPs.

**Good Practices Submission Format**

Please keep the total entry to no more than 2-3 pages, using the guidelines for each item suggested below.

1. Descriptive title.

2. When was the practice initiated (and competed, if applicable)?

3. Brief description of the practice – e.g. background, purpose and objectives, nature of the practice. [1-2 paragraphs]

4. Achievements/accomplishments – i.e. what makes this practice “good”, and on what basis can one determine this (e.g. any formal or informal evaluations or assessments), what can one expect this practice to do? [1-3 paragraphs]

5. Necessary conditions – what are the circumstances in which this practice took place and which it can be used, any cautions, limitations, or “words of advice” that might affect its applicability in other settings or situations, are there other factors that could support even further the use and impact of this practice? [1-2 paragraphs]

6. How was this practice carried out, with particular emphasis on ideas or hints one could suggest to others who might be thinking about doing something similar? [1-3 paragraphs]

7. For more information:
   - Other related documentation about the practice that might be of interest to others:
     - Electronic documents [links should be provided from the database if possible]
     - Hard copy documents, including both formal (e.g. reports or studies) and informal (e.g. notes, newspaper clippings) information
     - Multi media (e.g. videos) or other information
   - Contacts:
     - Staff familiar with the practice (if applicable), e-mail and telephone
     - Others (e.g. partners) with e-mail and telephone

8. Reference:
   - Name of person who provided the information and/or edited it
   - Dates: initially presented, revised

- Take a proactive approach.
- Recognise that only a small number of good practices are likely to be self identified, at least without some encouragement. Often GPs can most easily be identified by someone just a bit detached, as those intimately involved may be too close at times to see the obvious or to appreciate that what they are doing actually may represent a good practice. As various people suggested: “Someone should go around knocking
on doors to ask for GPs.” “Someone should be coming to see what people are doing at the grassroots and recording this and sharing with others.”

- Many people engaged in good practices may not feel comfortable, or have the time, to document what they are doing. For example, as one technical advisor observed: “People don’t write.” But most people are happy to talk about what they are doing, and why they think it is effective. Thus it may be appropriate for the GPs Coordinator or other designated staff to interview people engaged in promising practices and to document this themselves.

- Designate particular individuals with specific responsibility to elicit GPs, to follow up as needed for additional information, to edit as necessary and to enter these into the GPs database.

Make it clear that fully completed forms are not necessary. For example, encourage people to identify to the GPs Coordinator or to other appropriate staff something that sounds promising, whether or not it is a practice that they personally are involved with, that can be followed up.

- Staff, including field-based staff, should encourage those with promising practices, in particular locally based partners, to identify these themselves. In many cases, however, assistance of some form may be required to help with this.

- Another suggestion was to engage a journalist or anthropologist to document particularly effective good practices.

- Provide for routine identification as part of regular progress reports.

- Most of the GPs that have been identified thus far within IPEC have been done as part of Country and Project progress reports. This should be made mandatory (with the option of indicating “nothing to report”). Similarly, some of the field staff interviewed recommended that identification of good practices should be mandatory in the periodic project reports from partners who are funded.

- As well, identification of GPs should be mandatory (where applicable!) at mid term and annual review meetings.

Provide opportunities for discussion of GPs at workshops, meetings and other gatherings.

- Face-to-face gatherings represent valuable opportunities to share information, including about good practices. As indicated above, good practices are much more likely to be identified in the course of collegial discussions than as formal reports. Person-to-person exchanges also provide opportunities for the exchanges of tacit knowledge that, by definition, cannot be codified or written down. Given that tacit knowledge accounts for perhaps 80 percent of all knowledge, this is particularly important.

- One suggestion was that specific time should be dedicated to discussions of “content” at formal meetings (e.g. annual Regional meetings), including the opportunity for presentations (with handouts if possible) and discussion of good practices.

- In addition to formal meetings, GPs also can be discussed at informal gatherings, such as brown bag lunches. As well, when field staff or representatives of other organisations come to HQ or to regional offices, this represents an opportunity for them to make a short presentation based upon their work, or even to set aside some time for informal discussion.
- It might be appropriate for gatherings to budget, if necessary, for someone to act as a recorder, in order to identify potential GPs that arise during discussions for possible addition to the GPs database.

- Person-to-person gatherings provide an opportunity for two-way exchanges of information. Thus at the same time they can enable both the identification of GPs, as well as for dissemination.

  - Communities of practice,\textsuperscript{14} as described in the box at the right.

    - As Section 2 has indicated, these are one of the most common ways in which leading-edge organisations are providing opportunities for exchange of information. Again, these provide for two-way exchanges of information on whatever topics are of interest to participants, including tacit knowledge and discussion of potential GPs and when they might be applicable.

    - Participants can involve both staff from the agency as well as staff from other organisations. Note, however, that participation is on a voluntary basis, when the participants feel that they are getting value form this.

- Research and Evaluation

  - Good practices frequently can emerge, directly and indirectly, from research and evaluation studies. Thematic evaluations and syntheses that consider a variety of different activities at different sites can be a particularly valuable approach to identifying GPs that might not emerge through other means.

- “Mining” of documentation that may contain GP information, e.g.:

  - Mission (back-to-office) reports — these could be a major source of GPs or potential GPs.

  - Reports of management reviews or equivalent.

  - Progress reports.

\textbf{Communities of Practice}

Perhaps the key direction other organisations are taking to facilitate sharing of information and knowledge is to nurture and support knowledge and practice networks, most commonly referred to as “communities of practice”. These are networks, with members drawn from across the organisation, who engage in discussion and tasks on a shared interest or topic. Thus there typically can be a number of these networks active at any one time in an organisation (e.g. the World Bank reportedly has over 100 “Thematic Groups” active, involving a high proportion of Bank staff as well as outsiders as members on one or more of these networks). Communities of practice can be active for just a short period of time, or can carry on indefinitely, depending upon the nature of the topic and the interest of the members.

The major means of communication is through focused online discussion groups. Sometimes these are supplemented by an occasional face-to-face meeting. A facilitator to support and manage the discussion is essential. In some organisations (e.g. the World Bank), communities of practice produce proceeds and publications falling out of their discussions and may have their own Internet or Intranet sites). For this, dedicated funding appears to be essential. In any case, they not only provide an opportunity for informal discussion of ideas and practices (i.e. tacit knowledge); they can provide a means of identifying good practices than could be documented in the database — provided that there is someone (i.e. the facilitator) designated to capture these as they come up.

\textsuperscript{14} I personally am not especially keen on this term. The World Bank uses the term “Thematic Groups”, which strikes me as only slight better. It might be an idea to seek a term more appropriate, given the context of agencies involved in child labour.
E. Review and Validation of Proposed Good Practices

As indicated earlier, some form of review or validation process is essential, in order to provide for the integrity and credibility of those good practices that are included in a database or listing of any form. Nevertheless, the overall process should be kept as quick and simple as possible, in order to encourage the bringing forward of as many potential GPs as possible. The nature and extent of the review process required would depend upon the category or level of the proposed good practice.

Each agency will need to develop its own process for validation of potential GPs. In order to provide for the integrity of the database, as well as some degree of consistency across agencies, it is suggested any validation process be consistent with the principles in this box:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed Principles for Review/Validation of Potential Good Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• All potential GPs should be subject to some form of review, in order to provide for the integrity of the database.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Someone will need to be given lead responsibility for managing the process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• It should be recognised that most submissions will require some degree of follow up and editing, in order to provide for consistency of format and to make database entries as easy as possible for others to use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The review process should be as simple and quick as possible, along with timely feedback to whoever has proposed a GP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Level 1 practices should be reviewed mainly for relevance to child labour and for overall consistency, with a bias towards inclusion. Review of Level 2 practices, given that these practices need to have been evaluated in some way, normally should involve reviewers with appropriate content and evaluation expertise. Level 3 practices, involving some form of synthesis, require a higher level of confidence and hence more extensive review, normally including at least one outside reviewer, i.e. from another of the UCW partner agencies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proposed Approach to Validation

Following is a proposed approach for the validation process. It is expected that each agency would develop an approach suitable for its own circumstances, in accordance with the above principles and taking the following suggestions into account. Note that someone will need to be designated with responsibility for overall coordination of the good practices approach (which might form part of larger responsibilities). For convenience, this person as designated in the following at the “GPs coordinator”.

Preliminary follow-up and editing

As indicated above, follow up of some form generally will be needed in order to seek out additional information. This will be required in particular when rough or incomplete ideas for a potential good practice have been identified. This would be the responsibility of the
GPs coordinator or of the other technical staff designated with responsibility for seeing that
GPs are identified and entered.

The GPs coordinator should make a preliminary assessment of the level of a proposed GP,
and arrange for review as indicated below. The GPs coordinator should also take responsibil-
ty to ensure that all proposed good practices are acknowledged immediately, and that fol-
lowing the review, the results are communicated as soon as possible.

*Level 1 (Innovative Practices)*

Focus of review:

- To review the proposed good practice for relevance to child labour, that it does not ap-
  pear to be in conflict with policies or raise ethical concerns, and that the logical argument
  makes sense

- Given the desire to encourage people to identify good practices, and taking into account
  that the primary purpose of good practices is to serve as “food for thought” rather than
  as models one necessarily should copy, one should err on the side inclusion rather than
  exclusion for Level 1 submissions.

- Identify promising entries that might be priority candidates for more extensive evalua-
  tion.

- Submissions should be edited and rewritten as necessary to make them as easy to read.

Responsibility:

- The GP coordinator, who can ask from advice from someone else if need be, particularly
  if there are questions about the suitability of the proposed practice.

Proposed time frame for review:

- Normally within two weeks.

- This could be extended if it is necessary to track down additional information about the
  good practice.

*Level 2 (Successfully Demonstrated Practices)*

Focus of review:

- Level 2 practices must have been evaluated in some form, in order to be able to docu-
  ment their impact and effectiveness, and preferably to be able to identify which mecha-
  nisms or approaches have been responsible for these.

- Thus review of proposals at this level should check to be sure that there has been an
  evaluation of some form and that this evaluation appears credible and valid, and also to
  check that proposed good practice for overall consistency with the good practices criteria
  listed above.

- The nature of “evaluation” should depend upon the nature of the practice. While nor-
  mally this would consist of a programme evaluation, in some situations (e.g. legal inno-
  vations) other forms of evaluations might be appropriate, e.g. expert or even peer review.
  What is important is that there be convincing objective evidence documenting the value
  of the practice in some way.
• Promising entries that might be suitable for replication or inclusion as part of a thematic evaluation should be identified.
• The emphasis, as with proposed Level 1 practices, should be on simplicity, but with a higher standard of review.

Responsibility:
• The GP’s coordinator should arrange for review, normally involving a content expert and an evaluator where applicable (e.g. if the evaluation consists of an expert review of legal process, than a legal person might be more appropriate) in order to review the adequacy of the evaluation.
• Optionally, the GP’s Coordinator can select additional reviewers from within the agency, and/or from within the other UCW partner agencies as applicable.

Time frame for review:
• A maximum of 30 days, unless extensive follow-up is required.

Level 3 (Replicated Good Practices)

Focus of review:
• To qualify at this level, a good practice requires demonstration at multiple sites, preferably with credible evaluation of some form.
• Level 3 good practices could arise in the following ways:
  o Evaluation syntheses or thematic reviews.
  o From combining a number of good practices that have been independently identified, which may or may not have already been in the GP’s database as Level 1 or Level 2 good practices.
  o Proposals where the presenter is aware of a practice that has been used at multiple setting is possible (e.g. in different communities in a country or district).
• Level 3 good practices require a higher level of confidence than those at Levels 1 or 2, and thus may warrant a higher level of review.
• At a minimum, one should check that a proposed Level 3 good practice is not inconsistent with any other similar good practice in the database, at any level. If so, these should all be reviewed in some way, with entries combined, modified or deleted as need be.
• Where there may be potential inconsistencies but the overall picture emerging from across settings nevertheless can provide useful guidance to others, the good practices description can be modified, as necessary, to include appropriate qualifications or questions one should take into account if considering doing something similar.
• Particularly significant practices should be identified that might be appropriate for dissemination through other means, ranging from an item in a newsletter to more extensive treatment in a separate publication.
• Nevertheless, all necessary information for carrying out the review should be contained in the proposal summary and/or supplementary documentation, and thus the review should be able to proceed in a straightforward manner.

Responsibility:
• A small panel of reviewers should be identified by the GPs Coordinator. These can be
drawn from HQ and/or field staff within the agency. Normally there should be at least
one outside reviewer, e.g. from another of the UCW partner agencies.

Time frame for review:
• Within 30 days, unless extensive follow-up is required.

Note that reviewers ordinarily would not need to meet physically. Copies of pertinent
documentation can be sent via e-mail, as can follow-up comments. If need be, a conference
call can be arranged.

F. Dissemination of Good Practices

The following chart summarises a range of alternative ways whereby good practices can be
disseminated. These are discussed below.

Alternative Ways for Disseminating Good Practices

- Presentations and discussions at formal and informal gatherings
- Communities of Practice
- In-person get-togethers for people working on similar activities
- "Human portals" to respond to queries and proactively to identify introduce GPs information
- Searches on the GPs database
- Written publications, e.g.:
  - Compendia of GPs
  - Guides and training manuals
  - Syntheses and thematic evaluations
  - Other research and evaluation report
  - Short fact sheets
  - "Glossy" highlights
  - Electronic documents or summaries

a. Interpersonal Communications

As Section 2 indicated, perhaps 80 percent of knowledge, including information about GPs,
is tacit in nature and does not readily lend itself to formal documentation or recording in a
database. GPs can best be shared through both informal means, including various forms of
person-to-person exchanges, as well as through more formal means.

Recognising that most transfer of knowledge takes place interpersonally, one should seek op-
opportunities for introducing GPs into discussions at venues such as formal meetings, informal
get-togethers, training sessions, and other gatherings. These are the identical venues previously discussed in more detail in Section D (pp. 22ff) as means for identification of GPs. As indicated previously, these most properly should be viewed as opportunities for sharing of information, where good practices can be identified and discussed, and in the process disseminated.

Providing occasions where individuals who are working on similar activities to get together can result, by itself, in opportunities for informal discussions. But a number of people said that this sharing process could be valued more highly as a major objective rather than as a by-product, and further facilitated, through the provision of structured time for presentation and discussion of good practices, as well as for other “content” discussions. These could provide opportunities as well for discussions of what is not working so well, which could vary well result in the identification of how others have dealt with similar situations — and the further identification of GPs.

Similarly, communities of practice (as discussed on p. 25), provide opportunities for the sharing of practices and information of other participants. Further, experiences elsewhere (e.g. at the World Bank) indicate that these groups provide opportunities for participants to pose questions for which other participants sometimes may be able to identify solutions (a.k.a. good practices) they are familiar with. Also, through exchanges taking place electronically, it sometimes may be possible to describe tacit knowledge in a way that it can be shared. Many of the Thematic Groups of the World Bank issue publications based upon their discussions.

Much actual dissemination of good practices is likely to take place proactively, when these are introduced to the right person at the right time. As a “human portals”, the GPs Coordinator and other well connected staff (such as team leaders or networking facilitators) can respond to queries for information and suggest appropriate GPs or approaches based upon these. They can also volunteer information without being asked, where they feel it might be appropriate.

Staff of all UCW agencies, both in the field and at HQ, can play a major role in diffusing information about good practices to their partners. For example, one of the major ways in which UNESCO’s MOST programme disseminates information to municipalities is in this way, via their staff.

b. Electronic Newsletter

One of the most commonly suggested ideas for dissemination of good practices, very highly supported by all staff who were interviewed, was an electronic newsletter. This can provide an opportunity to highlight one or more selective good practices in each issue, to identify new good practices that have been added to the database, as well as to provide staff with other information (e.g. about forthcoming events).

The general consensus was that frequent, short editions would be more likely to be read and used than less frequent and longer publications. While this was identified as an internal staff newsletter, it would seem that the same, or possibly a slightly modified version, could be circulated more widely, possibly even being made accessible via the website.

c. Written Publications in Various Formats

GPs can be disseminated formally through other means such as:
• Compendia of good practices, as well as findings from syntheses and thematic evaluations.
• Guides and training manuals based upon the above, as well as workshops that provide for greater exploration of the “details” and that provide for interaction.
• Research, evaluation and other reports.
• Short fact sheets.
• “Glossies”, highlighting one or several GPs for public consumption.
• Electronic documents or summaries, including website announcements or discussion of selective good practices.

As a general rule, before deciding upon the format and type of publication, one should first identify the intended audience. This should be taken into account in deciding upon the most appropriate means of dissemination. E.g. detailed technical reports are appropriate for researchers and for some policy analysts, but rarely are the medium of choice for grassroots practitioners.

d. Searches on the Good Practices Database

Provided that access to the database is made available, as has been recommended, interested people can search the GPs database to identify good practices of potential interest and relevance. A preliminary classification scheme has been developed to aid in searches.

Some people undoubtedly will do their own searches. But as noted earlier, the experiences of other organisations is that most people will not do so directly. The database is most likely to be accessed by intermediaries, who in turn can pass on information about good practices to others as applicable.

e. Availability Via the Internet or Through Other Means

What GPs information should be made publicly available? Given that a main purpose of GPs is to share information as widely as possible, it would appear that public access to this information should be provided, e.g. via the Internet sites of the three UCW partner agencies (and/or at the UCW website, with appropriate links). This could include full access to the database, and/or to selective examples of GPs. If there are reasons for limiting the extent of access to the database, at least initially, these should be identified.

G. Use of Good Practices

Good practices information can be used in a variety of way, by a variety of practitioners. For example, good practices can be used:

• To inform the development of policy, so that policy and programme development is based upon actual information about what works or not in given circumstances.

• To inform practice. This can range from how to effectively implement a household survey in rural areas with a large number of homeless people and children engaged in illegal work, to the development of national or regional strategies, to “small” activities at the grassroots level, such as how to encourage employers and trade unions to work cooperatively regarding child labour.
- For research purposes. The good practices database can serve as a rich source of data in its own right. It can also suggest areas for future research.
- Contributing to the knowledge base internationally about what is effective in child labour.
- For advocacy, where potential donors and the public can be given actual information about the effectiveness of practices to combat child labour.

The following table summarises some of the potential audiences and uses for GPs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential users of GPs information</th>
<th>Potential uses of GPs information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff within the UCW partner agencies (policy and operational levels)</td>
<td>Ideas about new programmatic techniques and practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy makers, including perhaps politicians</td>
<td>Strategic planning and policy development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners of UCW agencies, including community groups, officials in partner countries, etc.</td>
<td>Advocacy and mobilisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practitioners and other stakeholder groups with an interest in combating child labour.</td>
<td>Training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researchers.</td>
<td>Impact assessment, evaluation, and research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Development of the knowledge base about child labour.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One potential form of use of GPs would be for someone to copy or apply a good practice that someone else has used elsewhere. However, because circumstances typically vary, direct cloning of an approach from one situation to another rarely would be appropriate. Most often, GPs from one situation would need to be modified, at least to some extent, when applied elsewhere.

As previously discussed, GPs should be used most appropriately to stimulate thought about what is being done and to suggest the consideration of alternatives approaches, including the potential modification or adaptation of practices that have been shown to work in other situations. Thus perhaps the main form of use of GPs would be indirect, where the thinking process is transformed in some way. For example, consideration of GPs could result in practitioners at all levels in constantly looking outward for new ideas about how they can increase their effectiveness. Other terms for this include “continuous quality improvement” and “thinking evaluatively.”

As Section 2 indicated, learning — and use — is more likely to occur through active participation than through passive means, such as through reading documentation or listening to a presentation. An effective GPs system needs to provide for a variety of person-to-person exchanges, in order to share this information and transform it from individual to institutional knowledge. And by so doing, in some instances this may make it possible to record at least some of this information, in effect transforming some tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge, and in turn into action.

Sharing of information of any kind can represent an outcome in and of itself. This can include being open to practices of other organizations or in other parts of the world. Presently,
staff within the UCW partner agencies, as well as locally based partners, often have little knowledge of what is being done, and to what effect, elsewhere.

People working in the child labour area have expressed strong interest in learning about others who are involved in similar activities. An increasingly common approach undertaken by other organisations to facilitate increased sharing of knowledge and of practices is to provide a roadmap (or “who’s who” directory of expertise) of who is doing what, as a valuable tool to facilitate networking. As Section 2 has indicated, other organisations have found this an invaluable tool, even more useful than databases containing “hard” information. The GPs database, as described earlier, would include contact information and might represent an initial first step in this direction.

The GPs database itself represents opportunities for use of a different nature. This can serve as raw data, which can form the base of syntheses and other research studies. It can identify commonly occurring themes and approaches, which can help inform further research, policy and programme development.

When is it most appropriate to seek out and to apply GPs? While this may appear obvious, this is not always clear. Information overload can be a danger, if too much information is provided when people are not ready to use it. GPs’ information may be most likely to be considered useful and to result in “just-in-time” use under the following situations:

- When launching a new initiative.
  - It would be appropriate to require that new project/programme proposals indicate what they have been able to learn from the experiences of others (or if not, that at least they have checked the GPs database and other sources).
- Similarly, when programmes/projects are subject to revision.
- When there are problems, or a sense that one should consider alternative approaches or to attempt something more innovative.

The above represent potential instrumental uses of GPs. As well, it might be appropriate to consider GPs’ information at periodic reflection sessions. These could include semi-annual or annual review meetings. But given that staff have indicated that priority seems to be given to what is most urgent rather than to what may be most important, it would be necessary to set aside specific time for reflection.

H. Management and Structure of The Good Practices “System”

a. Strategy and Leadership

Genuine information sharing, including the sharing of good practices, can only occur when people are genuinely interested in doing so. Thus senior management cannot force this to occur. Nevertheless, the experiences of other organisations suggest that the leaders of an organisation have a critical role to play in a number of areas, in particular:

- Indicating why this is important, and providing tangible and visible support.
- Creating the environment in which information sharing is most likely to take place, and removing barriers and impediments.
- Setting clear expectations.
• Providing recognition, feedback and rewards for sharing.
• Making available the necessary resources, in particular for someone to serve as a Good Practices Coordinator in each agency, and for the development and maintenance of a database.

b. Coordination of the Good Practices Process

As suggested earlier, it is essential that someone be designated as GP Coordinator or equivalent within each agency, with lead responsibility for the overall coordination and management of good practices. This need not necessarily be a full-time position. It may be appropriate to be even more specific, e.g. designating staff in Regions or Sub-Regions, IPEC’s technical units, etc. But the evidence indicates that without clear responsibility, action is unlikely to follow. Coordination would involve activities such as the following:

• Gentle reminders, as need be, to others with responsibilities for eliciting and entering GPs.
• Follow up on initial submissions (to provide acknowledgements and to refine what has been provided), interviewing others involved in potential GPs, and drafting/revising/editing actual GPs descriptions.
• Arranging for review of submissions.
• Arranging for entry into the database.
• Proactive in soliciting GPs ideas, including following up on leads, and also proactive providing information to others.
• Serving as the “human portal”, as the intermediary connecting people with one another and with relevant information to address their needs.
• Periodic review of the GPs system, for keeping the database up to date and to identify needed changes to the overall GPs approach.

c. Creation of a Good Practices Database

Creation of a database containing listings of good practices represents an essential resource. Otherwise, it would be impossible to keep track of all the GPs that have been identified, the ability to share practices would be severely limited, and the potential to use GPs for the generation of knowledge and contribution to impact assessment.

A database need not be complex, however. The box on page 23 suggests a format that can be used for database entries. To permit maximum use of the database, a few other fields will need to be added to the actual database, e.g. agency or programme where GP took place, the level of GP, category or type of intervention, geographic locality. While each UCW agency could develop its own database, it would be useful if at a minimum, links could be provided to maximise potential for sharing.

The proposed format for GPs is in keeping with the experience and examples of other organisations, that suggest that database entries are most useful when they are short and simple, i.e. a maximum of two to three pages. Indeed, some people suggested that this be limited to one page. These descriptions should provide a feel for what was done and what makes it
interesting and perhaps worthy of emulation in some way. They are not expected to provide all the “details”. Each entry should provide references to other documents, preferably accessible electronically via direct links, as well as human contacts, where those who are interested can turn for more information. It should also be recognised that one major use of the database is to serve as raw data for use in other venues and publications, including compendiums and training guides and training workshops, that can elaborate upon how to act upon the good practices that have been identified.

As Section 2 has identified, however, there are dangers of looking at GPs just or mainly in technical terms. In particular, the experience of other organisations, as well as the initial experience within IPEC, is that only a minority of people are likely to make database submissions or to look directly themselves in the database. It will be necessary to designate specific individuals to take responsibility for this. Even in those organisations where knowledge management systems are primarily database based (e.g. the large consulting firms), the system only works with designated individuals to “work” the system, to arrange for input of what has been learned into the system, and also to help with digging up appropriate output when it is needed.

Access to the GPs Database

UCW’s mandate includes the sharing of information about effective approaches in the child labour area. Given the desire to share information as broadly as possible with everyone involved in action against child labour, child labour databases should provide for public access in some. It would seem that the best way of providing for this would be via the UCW website, with links to the databases (if different) of each of its partner agencies. This approach would be consistent with that of a number of other UN agencies.

d. Measurement/Evaluation

Evaluation has a valuable role to play in support of good practices/knowledge management. Perhaps its most important role is symbolic, in emphasising the importance of basing decisions on actual evidence about what works and about what might apply as well in other contexts and situations.

More concretely, a key role of evaluation is to confirm that apparent “good” practices are indeed effective, to indicate what makes them so, and to identify other situations in which they might be appropriate. This can be done both directly, through carrying out, commissioning or supporting formal evaluation studies, and also indirectly, through assisting agency staff and its partners in learning how to “think evaluatively” and to constantly ask how we know what is working or not and why.

Evaluation can contribute in other ways to the identification of GPs. For example, evaluators, including in-house evaluation staff, consultants, and contracted researchers, often are well placed to spot GPs and to identify what are the factors that make a given approach successful or not. Evaluation expertise can also be invaluable in reviewing or “mining” existing reports and documentation for good practices that may be buried within. Along these lines, evaluation can assist with management of the good practices database, and at some point may be able to identify how the database can be used for research and evaluation purposes.
There are many reasons for doing evaluation, including establishing the overall impact of programme activities and providing accountability to funders. The reasons for evaluation should guide both the methodological approach and the form of presentation and findings. It is helpful, when planning evaluations, to consider the trade-off between rigour/perfection and currency/usefulness. There are some situations where highly rigorous methodologies are needed, along with detailed technical reports.

In most situations, however, reducing uncertainty as quickly as possible may be more important than attempting to establish definitive proof. In some circumstances, “quick and dirty” evaluations may be more useful than more “scientific” approaches. Also, for grassroots practitioners in particular, selectively identifying key findings and implications from good practices and other evaluation studies to networks and interpersonal exchanges may prove more useful than formal technical reports. Newsletter articles and fact sheets are other means for presenting good practices and other evaluation findings that are “user friendly.”

The approach of evaluation within IPEC may be instructive. DED (IPEC’s Design, Evaluation and Documentation Section) has taken a leadership role with respect to the introduction and integration of GPs. DED has provided methodological support to the technical staff who have taken primary responsibility for the identification and dissemination of GPs within their own areas of responsibility. This support has helped provide for consistency of the meaning of GPs across the various good practices initiatives under way within IPEC.

Generic IPEC GP’s guidelines often have been adapted to the needs and priorities of individual thematic areas. There are now projects within IPEC (e.g. education) where one of the main strategic approaches involves identification and dissemination of GPs, and other projects have a specific GPs component build in.

IPEC’s evaluation approach has been increasingly emphasising syntheses and thematic evaluations, in order to identify patterns of positive experiences across a number of different settings. This approach appears particularly valuable, and worth continuing. It is a way of identifying good practices that only can become evident in a comparative analysis. As well, the terms of reference of specific evaluations specific as one of the outputs the identification of potential GPs.

Perhaps for the above reasons, IPEC staff generally are supportive of evaluation and find it helpful to them, more so than in many other comparable organisations. As well, IPEC’s evaluations generally have attempted to involve field staff, locally based partners, and sometimes beneficiaries. Participation in the evaluation process has been demonstrated to enhance the relevance and credibility of the evaluation, as well as the learning and potential for actual use.