UCW Workshop Report:
Good Practices in Combating Child Labour

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1. Purpose of Meeting

As Frans Röselaeers, IPEC Director, indicated in his opening statement at the inter-agency meeting, the purpose of the meeting was to review the experiences with good practices approaches in the three UCW agencies (IPEC, UNICEF, and the World Bank) and to discuss how this could be taken further into a joint process. The workshop had three specific objectives:

- To review experiences with developing and working with good practices so far.
- To discuss the potential for a common or at least a complementary approach across the three agencies that would provide for the sharing of good practices.
- To identify some concrete initiatives for the current and possibly the next phase of the UCW initiative.

2. Workshop Agenda

Annex 1 presents the original plan and agenda for the workshop. Annex 2 provides a list of the participants.

In general, the emphasis on the first day was on discussing experiences with good practices, and on the second day next steps. There was considerable discussion throughout the entire workshop, including about the potential for further joint processes and activities.

The following brief presentations were made, followed by ample discussion in most cases:

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Background and Context to Good Practices

- Furio Rosati – Setting the context: how good practices relate to the UCW Project overall and some challenges that will need to be addressed.
- Burt Perrin – Background and overview to the rationale, approaches, and lessons learned about what makes for effective approaches to good practices.

Agency Experiences with Good Practices in Child Labour

- UNICEF:
  - Alec Fyfe – Good practices in education across UNICEF.
  - Ruby Noble – a field perspective on good practices in education in Bangladesh.
- IPEC:
  - Peter Wichmand – Overview on the approach to good practices within IPEC.
  - Uma Sankar – Discussion of the new project: “Including the Excluded: Combating Child Labour through Education” where the identification and sharing of good practices is a central aspect of the project.
  - Anita Amorim – Good practices in gender mainstreaming
  - Ayaka Matsuno – Good practices in Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

The World Bank chose not to make a presentation as such on its own work in child labour, but expressed great interest in learning what others have been doing and in taking the process forward.

Note: a request was made at the workshop for those who made presentations to distribute a very short summary or notes of what they presented along with references or links for further information. It might be appropriate for the focal point of each agency to collect these and then to provide them to the UCW Secretariat for distribution.
3. **Key Points Arising from the Discussions**

Following is a very brief summary of some of the major points arising during the discussions about the presentations:

- General agreement in principle regarding the importance and utility of identifying and sharing good practices in child labour in some way.

- Acknowledgement that it is often arbitrary at present what makes something a “good” practice, and that there is a need for guidelines and/or criteria of some form.

- Sharing, especially across agencies, can be challenging at times.

- General agreement about the need for overall *principles* for good practices, as well as for some degree of compatibility to facilitate sharing across agencies, while acknowledging that each agency will need to develop its own specific approach.

- Importance of context – i.e. a good practice (as opposed, for example, to a “best” practice) is not intended to represent a practice that can or should be applied everywhere.

- The importance of participation in developing and implementing an approach to good practices, including involvement of the field.

- Given the above, acknowledgement of the need to provide understanding about *why* something can work or not in given circumstances, as this is essential in order to facilitate learning from the experiences of others.

- Need to consider the relationship of good practices to evaluation and impact assessment, as well as to other sources of information including about what does not work.

- Recognition that it is premature for agreement upon an overall approach or framework, as it was indicated that each agency needs to do more work in terms of developing an approach to good practices that is most appropriate given its own situation.

- Need for UCW support:
  - To support conceptual work on developing compatible approaches to good practices.
  - To further joint inter-agency activities (e.g. education and child labour was highlighted as one potential area where there already has been some joint work with the potential to do considerably more).
4. **Major Conclusions and Decisions Arising from the Workshop**

Participants at the workshop agreed upon the following:

- It is appropriate for each UCW partner agency to move forward on developing processes for identifying and sharing good practices in child labour.

- The three agencies are not ready to agree upon a common approach. It may be more appropriate for agencies to develop approaches that are compatible (i.e. at a minimum that facilitate sharing across agencies) rather than identical.

- Each agency should develop an approach for good practices.
  - This approach should address the particular needs of each agency, but it should be compatible with the approach of the other UCW partners in order to facilitate sharing of good practices information.
  - The “*Proposed Framework and Approach for Identifying, Sharing and Using Good Practices in Child Labour*” (see Annex 3) should serve as a starting point for development of the approach to good practices.
    - This paper is based upon an earlier draft discussed at the meeting, which has been revised taking into account the discussion at the workshop, and in particular the key points identified above.
  - Each agency should engage in appropriate dialogue with its field staff.
    - It was noted that this would benefit from a simplified version of the attached “*Proposed Framework and Approach*”, which by design is comprehensive in nature, identifying the rationale for good practices and the necessary components and supports for a good practices system to be effective.
    - IPEC has found that the *Sample Good Practices Guidelines* in Annex 4 have proved very useful for this purpose. (Note that Annex 4 represents a slightly updated version of the *Guidelines* that have been used within IPEC.) Additionally, specialised adapted versions of these Guidelines (e.g. regarding Gender Mainstreaming, Education) also have been developed. The other agencies similarly might either use the *Sample Guidelines* in Annex 4 for discussions with its field, or adapt these as appropriate.
Based upon this experience, it may be appropriate to revise these Guidelines further.

It was agreed that the above should be done over about the next six months. At this point, there should be another inter-agency meeting.

- The purpose of this meeting would be to review the approaches that have been developed, and to agree upon a mechanism that would provide for the sharing of good practices across the three UCW partner agencies as well as among others also working in the child labour area.
- It was agreed that this meeting should take place this coming winter (i.e. December 2003 - February 2004).

5. **Recommended Next Steps for UCW in Order to Support Good Practices**

A key objective of the meeting was to identify some concrete initiatives for the current and possibly the next phase of the UCW initiative. These are listed below under two categories:

A. **Facilitating further joint development of a good Practices “system” (or overall approach) that would permit the sharing of good practices across the UCW partners and enable the UCW Project to fulfil its mandate in this respect.**

B. **Joint initiatives in identifying and sharing actual good practices information that can take place at the current time.**

The following recommendations were specified by participants at the meeting, or identified by the facilitator in response to needs that were identified.

**A. Facilitating further joint development of a good Practices “system” (i.e. taking the approach further)**

1. Secretariat support for the work of each agency in developing an approach to good practices, as recommended above, and for providing for harmonisation and coordination. This will include ongoing Secretariat support to each agency, support to permit testing and assessment of the approach(es) developed and at least one Inter-agency meeting.
2. Staffing and financial support for good practices database development, testing, and for at least initial data entry.

3. Support for a Good Practices Facilitator/Coordinator (e.g. as the paper in Annex 3 indicates, this is necessary in order to make the process work in practice).

4. Support for development and operation of one (or more) communities of practice.

5. Provision for a joint expert/inter-agency review of existing collections of good practices, such as recommended in the Proposed Framework and Approach (Annex 3), e.g. to do the following:

   - Assessment of the validity of the good practices identified, including identifying the need for more validation where applicable.
   - Comments on the overall process and guidelines, including identification of potential revisions as applicable.
   - Assessment of the state-of-the-art and key implications.
   - Identification of how this information could be used, and by whom.
   - Identification of implications for further dissemination.
   - Identify larger learnings about impact assessment of various interventions related to child labour where possible, as well as recommend priorities for additional evaluation where applicable (e.g. identify how one could “build up”, synthesising implications from specific “little” practices to more macro-level models and larger learnings and determination of impact).

B. Joint initiatives in identifying and sharing actual good practices information that can take place at the current time.

Inter-agency conferences, technical meetings, and/or support for the development of joint compendiums, providing for sharing of good practices and identification of implications for policy and practice at all levels.

- Education was mentioned as a priority area: both UNICEF and IPEC are doing considerable work in this area, there already have been discussions about what could be done collaboratively and thus it could be possible to move quite quickly in this area.

- Other topic areas specifically mentioned include:
- Child labour monitoring
- Facilitating partnerships (e.g. as in Yemen).
  - It was suggested that the field be asked to identify other potential areas.

6. Summary Comments and Recommendations from the Facilitator

Inter-agency collaboration is always challenging. Nevertheless, considerable strides were made at this meeting. There was general agreement among all participants about the importance of identifying and sharing good practices, and about the need for an approach of some form in which all three agencies are involved.

It is apparent that the development of an identical approach to good practices in use across the three agencies would be challenging at this point. This is not essential, provided that compatible approaches are developed and implemented that would facilitate the maximum among of sharing of experiences and information. In this regard, the more that there can be agreement at least on common principles, such as suggested in the proposed Framework (Annex 3) and Sample Good Practices Guidelines (Annex 4), what information should be accessible on the Internet, and on other aspects that would permit at a minimum linking of databases, the more it would be possible to facilitate the sharing of information and practices on what is effective in combating child labour, whatever the source. This would appear at be a basic prerequisite in order for the mandate of UCW in this regard to be fulfilled.

Nevertheless, progress to date across the three agencies in the development of approaches to good practices has been uneven. There appears to be a need to move the process further, as suggested by the recommendations emanating the workshop as identified above. It would appear that the process could benefit from more specific action steps and timelines, perhaps with increased guidance and follow-up from the UCW Secretariat.

The workshop also demonstrated the importance of the process. Without involvement from the key people, buy-in and support for a good practices approach (or for much of anything else) is unlikely. It will also be important to the appropriate development of a good practices approach that people from different areas, e.g. including evaluation, knowledge management, as well as specialists in child labour, also be involved in
the process. Involvement of people from these sectors at the workshop was limited.

To end on a positive note, the workshop did affirm the importance of joint work in child labour, with considerable interest and discussion about the activities and experiences of others. There appears to be considerable potential for further collaboration and joint work in the fight against child labour. There are many steps that the UCW Project can do to support and to facilitate such activity.

Attachments

Annex 1 – Agenda for the meeting
Annex 2 – List of participants
Annex 4 – Sample Good Practices Guidelines