

Management Response & Recommendations Action Plan

Evaluation Report Title: Independent Verification and Evaluation of the End Child Marriage Programme: Ethiopia

Response to Evaluation Report (overarching narrative)

IMC Worldwide (IMC), the Independent Verification & Evaluation (IV & E) supplier for the Ending Child Marriage Programme (ECMP), was contracted by the UK Department for International Development to undertake Final Evaluation of the ECMP. It assessed the extent to which the ECMP has been successful in meeting its expected outcome. The evaluation has also tried to identify programme approaches which have been most relevant to success and which can be taken over by the government. This end line evaluation has been guided by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC/OECD) Principles for evaluation of development assistance.

The End Child Marriage Programme (ECMP), or Finote Hiwot (Pathway to Life), was an £11 million multi-year (2011-2017) programme, based on a partnership between the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the Government of Ethiopia's (GoE) Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation (MoFEC), with the programme positioned within the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) and the Amhara National Regional State Government, in particular, the Bureau of Women and Children Affairs (BoWCA). The programme aimed to improve the wellbeing (reducing poverty and improving health, education and empowerment) of girls and women and their children and families in Eastern and Western parts of Gojam. During its four-phase Implementation period (2012 - 2017) the programme was expected to delay the age of marriage by at least one year for 38,500 girls. A major objective of the programme was to support GoE to develop a sustainable model to end child marriage that can be scaled up in Amhara and throughout Ethiopia.

ECMP worked in partnership with the GoE to end child marriage and other harmful traditional practices (HTPs). ECMP's vision was "that young people, families, communities, religious leaders and governments are empowered to end child marriage". The approach was a holistic, multidimensional social process that drew together the key individuals and organisations to focus on those at highest risk of child marriage: adolescent girls. The Theory of Change (ToC) that underpins the programme's activities argued that through better knowledge, training and dialogue, key decision makers with an influence upon adolescent girls (and boys in some cases) will cease to believe in and practice child marriage.

The programme was managed through a consortium led by Maxwell Stamp PLC (MSP), DFID contracted management agent. The main participants of the programme were adolescent girls, but other elements of the programme included parents, the wider community and leaders (particularly religious leaders and members of women's groups) and government officials. Accordingly, the programme developed four major components: (1) Community level programme; (2) Strategic engagement and communications; (3) Capacity building; and (4) Monitoring and Evaluation, Learning and Dissemination.

The IV and E Final Evaluation report describes the major programme achievements and performance in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, equity, impact, and sustainability along with key lessons learned. It also makes key recommendations drawing on experience within the programme.

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Summary of Key Recommendations/Comments from EQUALS	Accepted or Rejected	If “Accepted”, Action plan for Implementation or if “Rejected”, Reason for Rejection
<p>1. STRUCTURE AND CLARITY</p> <p>1.4. A table to be inserted (in annex 4 or 5) which sets out the numbers of participants according to community and PIGD type/in-depth discussion?</p> <p>1.5. ToC & Log frame to be included</p> <p>1.6. Any departures from the original ToR have been adequately explained and justified – no mentioning in the report</p> <p>1.7. From a clarity perspective in terms of presentation it’s fine. There are a few typos, and there are small things like some of the table links in the text are corrupted. Technically in terms of the standards expected to an evaluation, there is a lot of room for improvement.</p>	<p>Accepted</p> <p>Accepted</p> <p>Accepted</p> <p>Accepted</p>	<p>Addressed: The revised report has addressed the comment. This is inserted as a separate annex (Annex 3). The annex is referred to in section 2.1.9.</p> <p>Addressed: The revised report has addressed the comment. The ToC and log frame are included in Annex II.</p> <p>Addressed: The revised report has addressed the comment. Section 1.4 presented that the end line evaluation has not deviated from the ToR.</p> <p>Addressed: The revised report has addressed the issue and comments raised and made reasonable attempts to retrospectively strengthen the evaluation approach.</p>
<p>2. CONTEXT</p> <p>2.1. Include adequate description/explanations on the project target groups (poor & marginalised girls and their families), target locations (woredas), control area (south Gondar zone), and clearly setting out the models themselves (expansion 7 diffusion-expansion), what it consists of, etc.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>Addressed: The revised report has addressed these comments. Descriptions of target beneficiaries are included under section 1.2.</p>

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<p>4.8. The contextual limitation, impact/implication should be acknowledged on evaluation methods; the existing power dynamics within the communities are not described in the methodology section, and any of the limitations are not associated with the methods listed.</p>	Accepted	<p>Addressed: The revised report has largely addressed the comment under Section 2.1.8 & 2.1.9. However, due to its limited scope the end line evaluation document couldn't go in-depth about standard good practice for participatory enquiry.</p>
<p>4.9. No departure from the ToR was mentioned – including confirming the ToR being fully delivered.</p>	Accepted	<p>Addressed: The revised report has addressed the comment. Confirmation for no deviation from the ToR is included under section 1.4.</p>
<p>4.10. Possible bias of the evaluation team or any of the participants isn't discussed.</p>	Accepted	<p>Addressed: The revised has report addressed the comment. Adequate explanation is provided under section 2.1.8</p>
<p>5. IMPLEMENTATION</p>		
<p>5.1. Pre-testing of instruments is not mentioned /included.</p>	Accepted	<p>Addressed: The revised report has explained why it was not feasible to pre-test the survey instruments (time and cost were principal limiting factors).</p>
<p>7. FINDINGS</p>		
<p>7.2. – 7.9. To improve the flow, content, sequence, and the link of the Findings section (including 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.5, 3.3.1; quantitative findings included in the annex but not in the report.</p>	Accepted	<p>Addressed: The revised report has addressed the comment. The entire Section 3 of the findings is restructured as per EQUALS comments. The section 3 and 2 are now clearer, and all the queries in either section have been addressed.</p>
<p>8. RECOMMENDATIONS & LESSONS</p>		
<p>8.1 – 9.4. Various feedback/comments related to the Recommendations (SECTION 8) and Lessons sections (SECTION 9).</p>	Accepted	<p>Addressed: The revised report has addressed the comments. Section 5.4 addressed the lessons learned and 5.5 included additional recommendations. The key points from the Good Practice document are now included in section 5.4 and the whole Good Practice document is annexed to the report. It's believed that there would be no opportunity for further DFID financial investment in the programme, the report focused on the fact that Government of Ethiopia (GoE) stated commitment to meeting its own end child marriage target by 2025 deadline.</p>

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<p>10. USEFULNESS</p> <p>10.1. The ToR is quite hard to follow up so it's hard to say whether the report meets its expectations for sure. There is significant repetition of the ToR in the main body of the report (context, purpose, scope), so the report doesn't shade further understanding of the ToR. The specific expectations of the final evaluation are minimal in the ToR.</p> <p>10.3. There is no mentioning of the consultative approach for the evaluation report.</p> <p>10.4. Strengthen the communication plan highlighting the future dissemination strategy/plan of the final report and lessons.</p>	<p>Accepted</p> <p>Accepted</p> <p>Accepted</p>	<p>Addressed: The revised report has addressed the comment. It has been stated in the report executive summary and other sections that the evaluation met the ToR. DFID will consider the comment in designing sharper ToRs for other evaluations.</p> <p>Addressed: The revised report has largely addressed the comment. The consultative report employed for the evaluation is included in section 2.3.6. And the participatory methods used during qualitative data collection are detailed in Annex 3.</p> <p>Addressed: The revised report has largely addressed the comment. Section 4.4. has clearly listed the products for dissemination. DFID will ensure relevant products, including this end line evaluation, will be disseminated to relevant partners and stakeholders. Some of the products are already disseminated, such as the 2015 ECMP Annual Review which has already been published on DFID DevTracker and has now become a public document. A film on the unique methodology the evaluation used with Young Evaluators is also available on YouTube.</p>
<p>11. INDEPENDENCE</p> <p>11.1. The Phase 4 model stakeholders are mentioned frequently but their views not necessarily cited. Not does the participation of the IP come through very much. Differences in perspectives are mentioned in relation to impact within communities, but differences of opinion isn't dealt with (or confirmed as not present) consistently in the report.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>Addressed: The revised report has largely addressed the comment. Few alternations made, but strengthened views of other stakeholders. There were no differences in opinion between the team.</p>

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11.2. Conflict of interest isn't discussed.	Accepted	Addressed: The revised report has addressed the comment under section 1.1.1 and 1.4.
11.3. The evaluation team's freedom to carry on work without interference was not confirmed in the report	Accepted	Addressed: The revised report has addressed the comment under section 1.4.