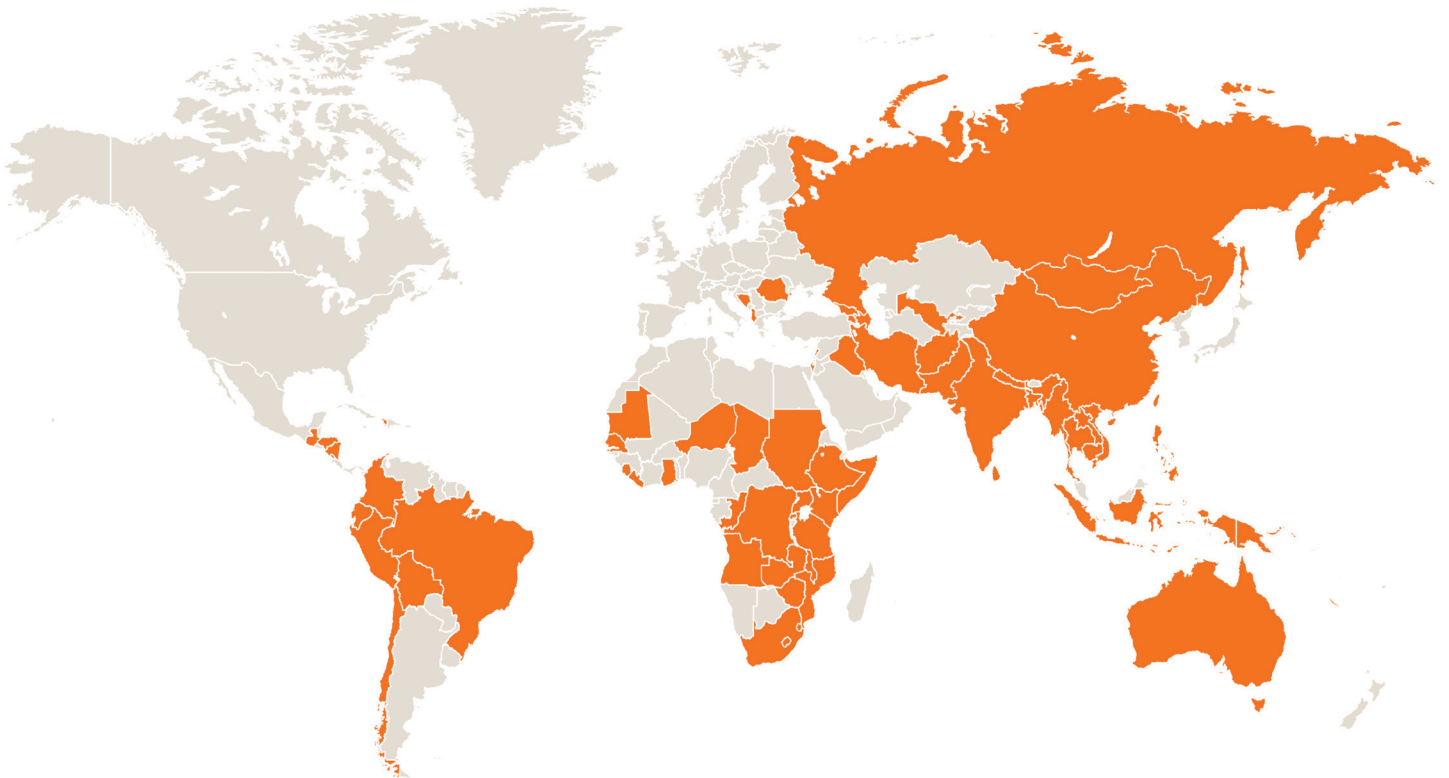


World Vision



# Annual Evaluation Review 2010

World Vision Australia



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**June 2011**

Front Cover Map:

 Countries where World Vision Australia works

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ABN 28 004 778 081

ISBN 978-1-875-140-80-0

ISBN 978-1-875-140-81-7 (Electronic)

World Vision Australia is a Christian relief, development and advocacy organisation dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice.

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# Acknowledgements

The 2010 Annual Evaluation Review was a joint effort by individuals from a number of departments within the Policy and Programs Division of World Vision Australia. Without their commitment and contribution the review would not have been possible. In addition, the authors offer their sincerest thanks to World Vision National Office staff, program partners, communities and consultants who contributed to the evaluation reports included in this review.

We thank Mark Lorey, Graham Tardiff, Martin Thomas, Tim Morris, David Lansley, Bill Pheasant and Catherine Johnston who played a critical role in supporting the review and providing valuable feedback on drafts of this document. Thanks are also due to all staff who assisted with the identification and sourcing of evaluation reports.

The review provides valuable insights into programming practices in World Vision, and we look forward to engaging with you on key issues emerging from the review. Once again, thank you for your contribution.

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# Foreword

The Annual Evaluation Review is an important part of our continued commitment to be accountable to communities we work with and to our donors. The review contributes to our culture of critical, reflective learning and our commitment to continuous improvement. It provides World Vision Australia and the broader World Vision Partnership with insights into our performance as an organisation and clear direction on where we need to focus to continue to improve.

This is our second Annual Evaluation Review. It considers evaluations carried out as part of regular program implementation to determine overall effectiveness and the impact of our projects on communities. The review draws on evaluations of emergency response, long-term community development and advocacy projects conducted over a 12-month period (October 2009 – September 2010). Overall, this year's findings are consistent with those from last year, backing up the approach used and reinforcing the importance of this exercise.

Appraising our work at this level makes a valuable contribution to continuous quality improvement. For example, in response to last year's review, World Vision Australia introduced a process for ensuring gender issues are more rigorously considered when making decisions about the development and evaluation of programs. While it may be some time until these changes reveal themselves in future evaluations, this demonstrates the impact that critical reflection can have in influencing our work today.

This work on gender has been important, but there is more we can do. We need to embed our learning from this review in our practice and ensure that the findings contribute to improved programming and outcomes for communities. To this end, the findings of this review will be an important input to the refresh of our organisational strategy.

This year's findings again make clear that World Vision is contributing to positive changes in the social, economic and physical conditions of local communities and the wellbeing of children. There is particularly encouraging progress in the areas of health and education.

But they also identify areas where we must improve. The ability of communities to sustain and maintain project outcomes is crucial to effective development. As such, an intentional focus on sustainability during program development and implementation, as well as part of the evaluation process, is vital for ensuring that positive changes are maintained and built upon. Partnering with local groups has become a central tenet of World Vision's programming approach and this, along with continued community participation, is important to ensure sustainability.

The Annual Evaluation Review has quickly become an essential element of World Vision Australia's system of reflection and learning. I look forward to championing action on its recommendations, especially in the areas of sustainability, measuring outcomes in the field, gender and other cross-cutting themes such as disability.

**Graham Tardif**  
**Director, Policy and Programs**  
**World Vision Australia**

## Acronyms

<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
<b>ADP</b>	Area Development Program
<b>ANCP</b>	AusAID NGO Cooperation Program
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organisation
<b>DME</b>	Design, Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>FGM</b>	Female Genital Mutilation
<b>HEA</b>	Humanitarian Emergency Affairs
<b>IPM</b>	World Vision's Integrated Programming Model
<b>FY</b>	Financial Year
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>LAC</b>	Latin America and Caribbean Region
<b>LEAP</b>	World Vision's Learning through Evaluation with Accountability and Planning framework
<b>MEER</b>	Middle East and Eastern Europe Region
<b>NGO</b>	Non Government Organisation
<b>NO</b>	World Vision National Office, the office in the country where projects are located
<b>PRA</b>	Participatory Rural Appraisal
<b>SO</b>	World Vision Support Office
<b>TB</b>	Tuberculosis
<b>TDI</b>	Transformational Development Indicators
<b>WatSan</b>	Water and Sanitation
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme
<b>WV</b>	World Vision International Partnership
<b>WVA</b>	World Vision Australia

## Glossary of terms

The **Annual Evaluation Review** is based on document analysis which collates, synthesises and analyses findings from all available evaluation reports for World Vision Australia-funded projects ending in 2010.

**Area Development Programs (ADPs)** – refers to World Vision's principal model for long-term community development. ADPs are a programming model in a defined geographical area, covering populations between 10,000 to 50,000 people, within which project activities are implemented. The average lifespan of an ADP is 15 years. Each ADP incorporates concurrent and successive sector projects that together are intended to address a diversity of development aspirations of the partner communities.

**Cross-cutting themes** – for the purpose of this study refers to issues that have relevance across all or a number of program or project sectors. Within LEAP, these issues include gender, disability, peace building, Christian commitments, protection and the environment.

**Integrated Programming Model (IPM)** – World Vision's new approach to programming, which emphasises the importance of working with, and engaging local partners.

**LEAP (Learning through Evaluation with Accountability and Planning)** is World Vision's approach to design, monitoring and evaluation.

**Outcomes** – for the purpose of this study refers to the achievements of projects against their objectives set at goal and outcome levels.

**Sustainability of change** – for the purpose of this study refers to the elements of projects such as partnerships, participation, ministry integration and cross-cutting themes which underpin sustainable development for children and their communities.

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# Executive summary

## Introduction

In recent years, World Vision has reinforced its commitment to sustainable wellbeing of children as the overarching goal of our work.

This report outlines the findings of the 2010 review in terms of each project's progress against its own objectives, as well as towards broader goals like sustainable child wellbeing, including changes in community awareness of the issues they face, changes in community capacity to address these issues, practice and behavioural change, and changes in the social, environmental and physical conditions.

Of the 58 evaluation reports that were reviewed, the majority (91%) observed that there had been positive outcomes in the target communities. Of these, in 14 cases there was evidence of significant positive change within the target community.

## Background

In 2009, World Vision Australia conducted its first Annual Evaluation Review of projects ending in 2009<sup>1</sup>. This report is the second Annual Evaluation Review and it reports on projects<sup>2</sup> ending in 2010.

The 2009 Annual Evaluation Review recommended a central focus on the evaluation of Area Development Programs (ADPs), which are the platform for most of World Vision's programming. A second area of concern was achieving better engagement in our programming on issues of gender. Therefore, the 2010 Annual Evaluation Review focuses attention on these two important areas in addition to the outcomes and sustainability of change for all projects ending in 2010.

A total of 211 projects funded by World Vision Australia ended in 2010. Of these, 122 have been evaluated or an evaluation was in progress at the time of the review; 58 reports were available and included in this review; 64 reports were pending.

World Vision Australia is reassured by the consistent patterns that emerged in 2009 and 2010 in terms of program outcomes, the sustainability of change and evaluation practices. This consistency means that the Annual Evaluation Review frames of reference, processes and tools give consistent results, and this validates the review methodology.

## Program outcomes

The review shows that 91% of evaluations report positive change in local communities. Changes range from increased community awareness and capacity building, to improvements in child wellbeing, and positive changes in the social, economic and physical conditions in communities. While we should refrain from over-reaching in our conclusions, information from the 2009 and 2010 reviews suggests that our approach to health is consistently making good progress, and our approach to improving access to education is particularly successful.

Partnering has become a central tenet of World Vision's programming approach. This recognises that development is a complex endeavour that requires partnerships with local stakeholders to achieve effective programming and enduring positive change. Effective partnering with key actors and organisations in the community is also crucial to building local ownership and supports the sustainability of program outcomes.

The review shows that our work with partners is yielding positive outcomes in terms of awareness and capacity building, but there is more to be done. In particular, evaluations of partnerships need to be much stronger, and need to address critical components of partnering, including the quality of networks and relationships, alignment and mutuality between partners, and changes in awareness, capacity and practices.

1. Where we refer to projects and programs ending in 2009 and 2010, this refers to World Vision's financial year which is 1 October to 30 September.

2. The review includes evaluation of individual projects and programs, and of Area Development Programs. For ease of reporting we use the term "projects" to refer to all of these.



Overall, significant changes are observed in the communities World Vision works with. There are without doubt many other factors and actors that contribute significantly to the positive changes observed in communities. However, our findings suggest that World Vision plays a vital role in leveraging this change, through awareness raising, capacity building and partnering with local communities.

### **Sustainability of change**

While the findings suggest that positive change is occurring in communities we work with, evidence that these changes are sustained beyond World Vision's presence in a community is weak.

These findings are consistent with those in 2009, when the recommendation was made that improved attention to sustainability is critical. The fact that these issues remain a concern in 2010 indicates that continued focus is essential.

### **Evaluation practices**

Findings on evaluation practices in the 2010 review are also similar to those in 2009, with similar scope for improvement. Almost 30% of evaluations were considered to have gaps in methodology and a similar proportion contained no explanation of the rationale for selecting the overarching methodology. On a positive note, a greater proportion of evaluations compared the evaluation findings with baseline data collected at the start of a project – a promising trend that allows for better analysis of the extent of change that takes place in communities.

Community consultation as key informants occurs in most evaluations. However, community members rarely participate in more empowering ways such as in setting the terms of reference for the evaluation or in the design, data collection and analysis.

The role of children in evaluations was a concern, with children involved only about half of the time and mainly as key informants. About a third of the evaluations involved project and program partners as participants in several key stages of evaluation.

Overall, the review revealed that there was significant variation in the scope and quality of evaluation and reporting, especially in the case of ADP evaluations. The reasons for this vary, but in many cases it is due to over-stretching evaluation resources.

### **Area Development Programs**

The review has also explored the performance of our flagship programs – ADPs – in greater depth, highlighting program outcomes, sustainability of the changes observed, and some of the challenges faced by our ADPs. The latter includes an assessment of the way in which ADPs manage complexity.

The first generation of World Vision's ADPs are now reaching the end of their engagement with partner communities. Therefore, the current period is a valuable time to study and reflect on the legacy of these programs, to retain what we do best, and adapt what could have been more effective. The 2010 ADP evaluations have clearly observed positive change in communities where ADPs are operating. These positive changes were evident in people's awareness about important development issues; their capacity to act on them; their practices and behaviour; and also deeper impacts on their communities' social, environmental, economic and physical conditions.

However, quality evaluation of the sustainability of change is not consistent. Further, some reports suggest that we are too ambitious in our scope and expectations that ADPs will achieve positive outcomes across multiple sectors in often very large geographic areas.

An area of concern is the limited focus on disability in our ADP evaluations – this raises the question of whether this lack of focus in evaluations reflects a lack of attention to this in our projects.

ADPs operate in a complex mix of social, political, spiritual, environmental and cultural factors, each of which needs to be addressed and/or accounted for if the ADP is to achieve its intended outcomes. Responding effectively to these issues is an iterative process of exploration, rather than one in which pre-determined solutions can be imposed. The review shows that some of our ADPs struggle to adapt to changing circumstances, partly due to the propensity for ADP monitoring frameworks to focus on measuring inputs and not outcomes.

In addition, there is limited evidence of communities having been empowered to do their own problem solving – to identify issues and become advocates for change. So while we are addressing some aspects of sustainability, and we are making progress, we need to be much more intentional about empowering local communities to sustain the change.

## Gender

In the 2009 Annual Evaluation Review, gender was identified as an area for more attention in our programming and evaluation work.

We are beginning to see some projects effectively addressing gender issues, and there is some improvement in the way we evaluate gender outcomes. However, there is still much to be done to ensure that project design, implementation and evaluation address key issues associated with gender. These include considering benefit to women/men, benefit to girls/boys, participation of women/men and girls/boys, consideration of needs, changes in access to and control of resources, and changes in gender relations.

This review shows that the majority of evaluations do not assess entrenched gender inequalities. They usually have a narrow construction of gender as women's attendance and/or participation in project activities; and lack any analysis of changing power relationships, patterns of decision making and access to and control of resources.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

### Sustainability

- Given that the first generation of World Vision's long-term flagship programs are now coming to an end, it is critical that World Vision significantly improves its focus on empowering communities to sustain positive outcomes well beyond World Vision's presence in a community. This requires more intentional focus on effective community and child participation, strengthening of local partners, empowerment of women, as well as the integration of cross-cutting themes. To ensure we effectively address sustainability, future program evaluation work will also need to invest more in this area.

### Gender

- Our organisational understanding of gender needs to move beyond a focus on achieving gender balance, to more strategically tackling issues of power and control. World Vision should further build the capacity of staff to ensure that the substantive issues in gender programming – access to and control of resources, decision making at household and community levels, and changes in gender relations, norms and roles over time – are appropriately addressed in program design and usefully assessed in evaluation work.

### Disability

- Given that children, young people and adults with a disability are present in all communities, and these groups are especially at risk of marginalisation in development interventions, it is critical that World Vision improve its focus on this important cross-cutting theme.

### Monitoring and evaluation

- To build evidence of sustainability and support our programming for sustained child wellbeing, it is critical that World Vision's evaluation methodology and indicator framework support assessment of sustainability, including:
  - Effectiveness of partnerships – evaluations should address critical components of partnering, such as the quality of networks and relationships, alignment and mutuality, as well as partner awareness, capacity and practices.
  - Effectiveness of ministry integration and integration of cross-cutting themes – this should include the development of indicators for ministry integration and cross-cutting themes.
- Given the need for programs to be adaptive and respond to ever-changing, complex challenges, it is important that World Vision develop monitoring and evaluation approaches that enable staff to identify and respond to the outcomes of project activities over time, as well as the changing community and external dynamics. This requires inclusion of inductive, exploratory approaches that collapse some

of the distinctions between monitoring and evaluation.

- With the revision of World Vision's monitoring and evaluation framework, and the development of child wellbeing indicators, it is critical that evaluation practices apply both qualitative and quantitative methods that will enable us to speak about the very specific impacts we are endeavouring to influence, while also capturing the rich, diverse complexity of changes we contribute to. It is also critical that evaluation practices include sex-disaggregated data.
- World Vision needs to increase resourcing of its program (ADP) evaluations vis-à-vis project evaluation, in recognition of their significant scope, and their critical role in providing a platform for much of our project work.

A total of 30 projects reported increased stakeholder awareness and changed attitudes toward key issues (short-term outcomes), 31 reported increased community capacity including knowledge, skills, networks, relationships (intermediate outcomes), 28 evaluations reported behavioural and practice change in communities (intermediate outcomes), and 18 projects reported changes in the physical, social, environmental, and/or economic conditions (ultimate outcomes).

In terms of specific sectors, the review highlights that of the 11 evaluations that assessed health outcomes, nine noted positive change; all six evaluations that assessed education outcomes observed positive change. Good progress was also observed in projects focusing on local economic development and agriculture.

No doubt a number of significant other factors and actors contributed to the changes observed; however, evaluation findings suggest that World Vision played a vital role in leveraging this change through awareness raising, capacity building and partnering with local communities.

# Introduction

In 2009, World Vision Australia conducted its first Annual Evaluation Review of projects ending in 2009. This report is the second Annual Evaluation Review and it reports on projects ending in 2010.

Through LEAP (World Vision's Design, Monitoring and Evaluation Framework)<sup>3</sup>, all projects and Area Development Programs are required to conduct baseline studies and end-of-phase evaluations to support reflection and learning, and accountability to our communities and donors. Synthesising the findings of these reports in an Annual Review is a critical step in building the evidence base for our projects.

The 2009 review observed substantial change in the communities World Vision works with, particularly in relation to child health, child education, local economic development and agriculture, though questions were raised about the sustainability of change. The review provided a critical source of reflection and learning. For example, in response to the findings, significant efforts were made to improve our gender programming and focus attention on gender in evaluations. This is reflected in this year's result with some improvement in our assessment of gender programming. Similarly, World Vision Australia is also exploring ways in which it can improve attention to other cross-cutting themes, such as Christian commitments, child protection and the environment.

The 2009 report was made public and this contributed significantly to the transparency of World Vision Australia's work. Not only was this recognised when World Vision Australia was awarded the 2009 PricewaterhouseCoopers Transparency Award for its suite of annual reports, the increased transparency is also a key driver for our ongoing efforts to improve the quality of our projects. In 2010, World Vision Australia has once again undertaken this important reflective exercise.

This year's findings echo last year's: the majority (91%) of evaluations reported positive change in local communities. Changes range from increased community awareness and capacity building, to improvements in child wellbeing and positive changes in the social, economic and physical

conditions in communities. However, there is little evidence to suggest this change has a lasting impact beyond World Vision's presence in a community.

While it is too soon to identify long-term trends in the data, it is interesting to note that the 2009 and 2010 findings for program outcomes, sustainability and evaluation practices are similar. This is encouraging as it validates the review process. The value of this review will increase in future years, when an accumulated data set will enable genuine insights into trends and patterns over time.

## Objectives of the review

The purpose of the Annual Evaluation Review is to:

- facilitate organisational learning about the quality and effectiveness of World Vision Australia-funded projects; and
- report on progress to donors and supporters, by describing the effectiveness of project outcomes.

Specifically, it aims to:

- assess the outcomes of our projects: What changes in the community did the project or program contribute to?;
- assess the effectiveness of projects in terms of their contribution to sustainable change within communities;
- assess the quality of evaluation practices in World Vision Australia-funded projects;
- facilitate organisational learning and continuous improvement.

In addition, this review explores in greater depth two issues that emerged from the 2009 review:

- the need to focus on evaluations of ADPs, which provide the platform for most of World Vision's programming; and
- the need for a stronger focus on gender to improve gender programming.

3. LEAP – Learning through Evaluation with Accountability and Planning

## Outline of the report

The report is structured as follows:

- **Section 2** outlines key findings in terms of program outcomes, sustainability of change and evaluation practices of projects.
- **Section 3** describes key findings in terms of gender and ADPs.
- **Section 4** outlines key findings and recommendations.
- A description of the methodology that underpinned the evaluation review and evaluation status of projects included is provided in the Appendix.

# Program outcomes

## Introduction

In recent years, World Vision has reinforced its commitment to sustained wellbeing of children within families and communities – especially the most vulnerable – as the overarching goal of our work.

This section outlines the findings of the review in terms of progress towards sustained child wellbeing, including changes in community awareness of the issues they face, changes in community capacity to address these issues, practice and behavioural change, and changes in the social, environmental and physical conditions.

Of the 58 evaluation reports that were reviewed, the majority (91%) observed that there had been positive outcomes in the target communities.

Figure 1: Outcomes achieved 2010.

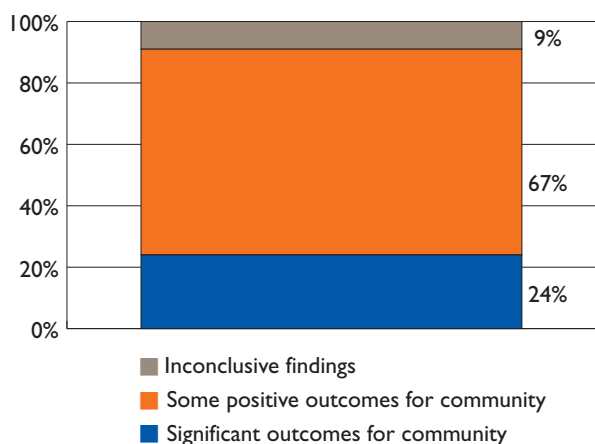


Table 1: Outcomes achieved in target communities.

Outcomes achieved	2009		2010	
	No.	Prop.	No.	Prop
Significant outcomes for community	11	24% (39%)*	14	24%
Some positive outcomes for community	17	37% (61%)*	39	67%
Inconclusive findings	0	0%	5	9%
<b>(Sub total)</b>	<b>(28)</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>(58)</b>	<b>100%</b>
Evaluation did not measure outcomes	18	39%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100%</b>

\* Adjusted proportions for 28 evaluations that measured these outcomes

## Observed changes in communities

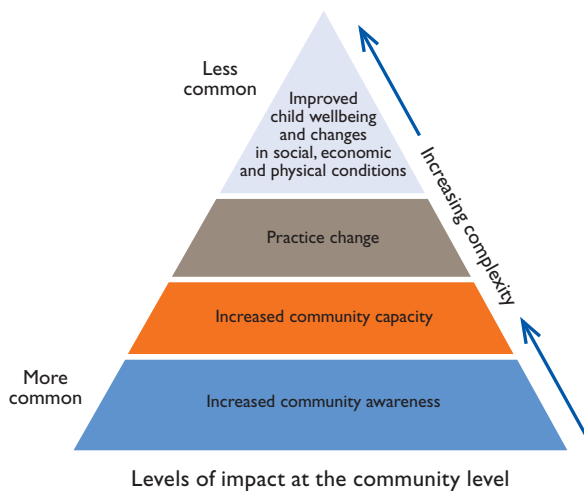
A key outcome of the 2009 evaluation review process was the development of a conceptual diagram (see Figure 2) for characterising change in target communities. This has become an important unifying framework that enables us to synthesise information across our projects, despite the inherent complexity and diverse nature and contexts of World Vision projects worldwide.

The types of change reported in the evaluations were characterised into four broad levels or platforms, as follows:

- Increased community awareness: demonstrated improvement in stakeholder knowledge about issues and opportunities
- Increased community capacity: demonstrated improvement in community, partner and stakeholder capacity to actively respond to issues and opportunities
- Practice and behavioural change: where stakeholder actions and responses to issues and opportunities reflect actual practice change

- Improved child wellbeing and changes in social, environmental, physical and economic conditions: an identified reduction in vulnerability or increase in resilience in the program area and target communities

Figure 2: Conceptual diagram of levels of project impact.



There is an implicit hierarchy in these levels: sustainable improvements in child wellbeing and changes in physical and economic conditions cannot be achieved without practice and behaviour change by human actors. In turn, this depends on stakeholders' capacity to respond, which is underpinned by an awareness of the need to respond to issues and opportunities. However, it should be noted that not all projects have goals at the highest level – for example, some projects may have building staff capacity as their goal which would not contribute directly to improved child wellbeing.

Overall, the results in 2010 demonstrate that positive change is evident in the majority of our target communities. Out of the 58 evaluations reviewed, almost all (52) reported an increase in community awareness, 41 noted an increase in community capacity, 37 demonstrated practice changes, and a further 25 reported changes in the social, economic, environmental and physical conditions within the target community. This pattern of change at each level is similar to the review findings in 2009; however, there are some differences in the relative proportions for each level.

The Kitgum ADP, which has been in operation since 2001, has been particularly effective in the areas of health and education.

*"... the project ... has been effective in achieving set objectives and realizing expected results. A comparison of baseline indicators and evaluation findings shows significant improvement in the area of education with enrolment [of]... 100 percent for OVC [Orphans and Vulnerable Children]... some improvement in performance, and completion of the primary school cycle which suggests increased [school] retention. In the area of HIV/AIDS, knowledge levels for prevention are high. There is an increased awareness of modes of transmission and preventive practices and an increase in the care and support to people living with HIV/AIDS in the communities. Improvements in livelihoods and child wellbeing indicators such as reduced incidences of sicknesses, improved nutrition etc have been ascertained. Goals for improved food security set at 25 percent were realized although the majority of household heads remain food insecure. Nutritional indicators show an improvement compared to the national indicators and generally, there is an improved awareness of basic nutrition for children. Improvement in household incomes remains a big challenge, but the intervention registered about 27 percent mentioning that their incomes increased as a result of the intervention."*

Source: End of phase evaluation of the Kitgum ADP, Uganda

Figure 3: Percentage of 2010 evaluations reporting change across the five levels of project impact.

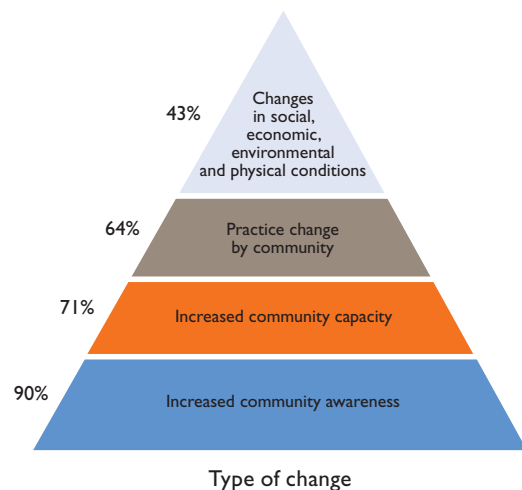


Table 2: Evaluations reporting evidence of positive change at the community level.

Type of change	2009		2010	
	No.	Prop.	No.	Prop.
Increased community awareness	30	65%	52	90%
Increased community capacity	31	68%	41	71%
Practice change by community	28	61%	37	64%
Changes in social, economic, environmental and physical conditions	18	39%	25	43%

### Observed changes for program partners<sup>4</sup>

World Vision's new approach to programming, the Integrated Programming Model (IPM), emphasises the importance of working alongside partners, and engaging and empowering those partners. This is achieved with positive changes in partner awareness, capacity and practices. Given this increasing emphasis on partnering, the 2010 review included an assessment of our contributions to such change. A total of 31 (53%) projects contributed to increased partner awareness, 21 (36%) reported increased partner capacity and 15 (26%) indicated a contribution to partner practice change.

Table 3: Evaluations reporting evidence of positive change for program partners.

Type of change	2010		
	No. assessed	No. positive change	Prop.
Increased partner awareness	56	31	53%
Increased partner capacity	57	21	36%
Practice change by partners	57	15	26%

In Laos, the Champassack HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care project has increased the awareness and knowledge of target groups on HIV/AIDS, STIs, condom use, trafficking and reproductive health. The youth in Champassack said that they would like the project to continue...

*"... because it gives us more knowledge about HIV/AIDS and makes us more careful. We would like to continue to receive knowledge and involve younger students and more classes."*

Source: Champassack HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care project, Laos

While this has led to some behaviour change, women particularly were still resistant to condom promotion due to beliefs it encouraged their husbands to be unfaithful.

While it is preferable that health outcomes be measured to provide evidence of the effectiveness of the project's activities, this is not always possible. For example, the Community-based Therapeutic Care Program in Kenya achieved significant positive outcomes through focusing on access and coverage of supplementary feeding centres.

*"Together, program effectiveness and good coverage is what creates impact. With the current cure rate of 97% and a prior estimate of coverage at 64.5%, it can be said the project is currently meeting the needs of almost 63% of SAM [Severe Acute Malnutrition] children in Lokori division."*

Source: Community-based Therapeutic Care Program, Kenya

Again the proportions of the various levels of change reflect the unifying framework in Figure 1. However, when compared to the results achieved within communities, positive change for partners is lagging behind. Empowering interactions with partners is critical for effective programming and achieving sustainable change in local communities. Not only do we need to be doing better, but we also need to know when and how we are doing better. Future program evaluation work will need to invest more in this area.

4. While the community are our partners, this section distinguished community partners from other types of partners such as groups, government organisations, other NGOs etc.



### Child wellbeing outcomes

World Vision is a child-focused organisation. Our goal is sustained wellbeing of children within families and communities – especially the most vulnerable. While the contribution of projects to child wellbeing varies from context to context, all projects are designed to contribute to the following four child wellbeing aspirations:

- Children enjoy good health
- Children are educated for life
- Children experience love of God and their neighbours
- Children are cared for, protected and participating

Following are the findings for two of these aspirations: child health and child education.

It is envisaged that once the child wellbeing outcomes framework is rolled out across the World Vision Partnership, we will be able to report more comprehensively against it.

### Child health outcomes

The World Vision Partnership has developed a series of programming models that assist National Offices to deliver evidence-based and cost effective maternal, newborn and child health projects.

In the 2010 review, 28 projects included child health related issues as a sectoral focus area.

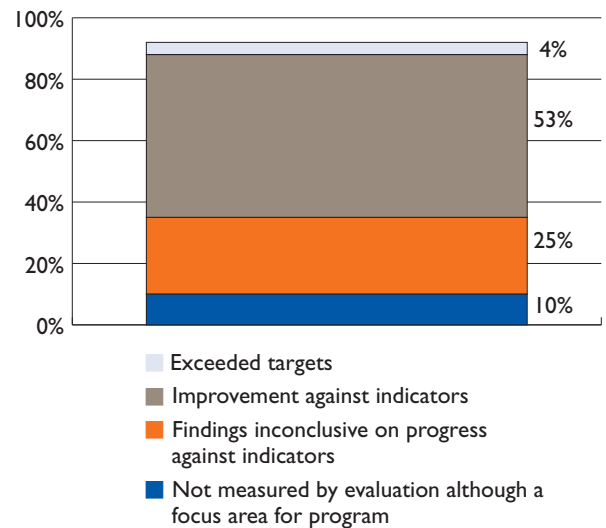
While the sample is small, it does seem that there is a trend towards achieving positive results. In 57% of cases in 2010, improvements in child health indicators were reported, while 40% did so in 2009.

In the Haven of Rest ADP in the Philippines:

*“... target communities have seen a decrease in morbidity and mortality cases among children 0 to 6 years old; knowledge gained from mother’s classes has led to a decrease in malnutrition among children; 100% of children aged 0 – 59 months were immunized and 100% of children with diarrhoea had their disease acceptably managed. This is also attributed to the local health centres’ performance.”*

Source: Haven of Rest ADP, Philippines

Figure 4: Child health outcomes.



In 2010, one program, the Tinsukia ADP in India, was considered to have exceeded expectations in child health targets. There were a number of evaluations (seven) where findings on child health were inconclusive. Also, in five cases, no attempt to measure child health indicators was apparent in the evaluation report although child health was a focus area of the program/project.

Similar to other development disciplines, successful programming in child health requires a multi-sectoral approach. Food security, gender, agriculture and economic security are all crucial determinants that impact on the health status of children. Of the 28 projects reviewed where child health was a focus area, agriculture was addressed in 11 (29%), economic development in six (21%), food security in seven (25%) and children’s education in 16 (57%).

Recognising that community health has a significant impact on children, outcomes from community health programming are an important focus for the review.

Of the 58 evaluation reports reviewed, 33 included general health as a focus area (57%). This is higher than in 2009, when 30% of projects identified health as a focus area. Patterns of findings between years are similar.

Table 4: Evidence of contribution to improved child health.

Reported evidence around child health indicators	2009		2010	
	No.	Prop.	No.	Prop.
Exceeded targets	0	0%	1	4%
Improvement against indicators	6	40%	15	53%
Findings inconclusive on progress against indicators	3	40%	7	25%
Not measured by evaluation although a focus area for program	6	20%	5	18%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100%</b>

Of the 33 evaluations from 2010 that addressed community health issues, 12 (36%) reported improvement against most health indicators and 11 (33.3%) reported some improvement. Another six indicated the evaluation results were inconclusive, while in four cases health outcomes were not measured, despite the fact that the projects had a health focus.



A child's growth is measured during a health check in Jumla ADP, Nepal.

Table 5: Community health outcomes.

Reported evidence on community health outcomes	2009		2010	
	No.	Prop.	No.	Prop.
Project or program exceeded its target indicators for community health	0	0%	0	0%
Demonstrated improvement against health indicators	8	53.3%	12	36%
Evaluation findings were inconclusive for health indicators	2	13.3%	6	18%
Not measured although a focus area for the project	5	33.3%	4	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Child education outcomes

In 2010, 18 of the projects included in the review aimed to address children's educational needs, and in 17 cases the evaluation found a demonstrated improvement. The results are consistent with those in 2009; in programs that address children's education the outcomes are usually positive.

Fig 5: Child education outcomes.

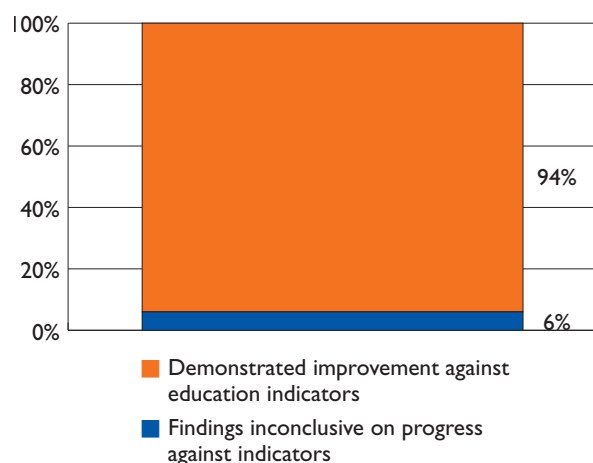


Table 6: Child education outcomes.

Child education outcomes	2009		2010	
	No.	Prop.	No.	Prop.
Project or program exceeded its target indicators for education	1	10%	0	0%
Demonstrated improvement against education indicators	5	50%	17	94%
Findings inconclusive on progress against indicators	0	0%	1	6%
Not measured although a focus area for the project/program	4	40%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

Evaluation results suggest that efforts to improve school enrolment rates, reduce school dropout and ensure access to education for girls have been particularly successful. However, there is less evidence on educational outcomes, such as changes in literacy and numeracy, and primary completion levels. This is due to World Vision's past emphasis on access to education over quality of education, and the desire to make a valuable contribution to the "Education for All" goals. A greater emphasis on learning outcomes needs to become an important feature of evaluations in the future.

There are valuable examples of the benefits of support for children's education in the evaluation reporting. Learning environments are improved and access to education is increased through provision of school buildings, educational materials, teacher training, student meals, access to water and sanitation facilities, and increased safety.

However, prevention of school dropout is an ongoing challenge, and this is often due to economic constraints that prevent parents from sending their children to school or lead to children's labour being needed to maintain farm production or for paid work to support the family.

This highlights the need for a multi-sectoral approach to education and particularly a focus on economic development if children are to make use of the improved education infrastructure and services achieved in project areas. Most projects address multiple sectors; for example of the 18 projects that included child education, 16 also had a child health focus and seven addressed agriculture. However, only five addressed economic development (28%).

Decisions about children's schooling are dependent not only on availability, quality and affordability, but on the attitudes of key decision makers and influence of role models and peers, and on the perceived opportunity costs.

Recognising the importance of these factors, the review assesses evidence of outcomes from non-school based interventions, such as adult literacy education, vocational training and parent education. There were 16 projects that included such interventions and 13 of these showed improvement against indicators. Investment in non-school based education produces positive outcomes, and is an important component of child wellbeing.

However, attitudinal change among adults regarding the value of education for children, and particularly girls, remains a challenge in some ADPs. For example, evaluation of the Banan ADP in Cambodia suggested that older children left school due to a lack of support from parents, and that parents prioritised education for boys over girls.

### Humanitarian and Emergency Affairs outcomes

Eight of the 58 project and program evaluations reviewed were for Humanitarian Emergency Affairs (HEA) projects. It is worth highlighting that these interventions differ considerably from other projects. Their objectives are usually short-term and focused on rapid increases in community resilience to specific threats and risks. HEA projects are often about direct aid or in the case of the CAPABLE project in Indonesia, the capacity of our own organisation and partners to mitigate hazards through Disaster Risk Reduction with communities.

Of the eight HEA projects included in the review, seven reported positive outcomes for communities, while one had inconclusive findings. Examples of the challenges to achieving positive outcomes in relief projects are highlighted in the evaluation of a group of six Emergency Operations Food Aid Programs in Kenya. The projects' food distributions were critical to alleviating acute food shortages experienced by many households. However, this food relief was also reported as having some negative impacts, such as increased social tensions due to perceived interference in the selection and verification of food aid beneficiaries.

### **Conclusion**

The review shows that the majority (91%) of evaluations report observed positive change in local communities. Changes range from increased community awareness and capacity building, to improvements in child wellbeing and positive changes in the social, economic and physical conditions in communities. While we should refrain from over-reaching in our conclusions, information from the 2009 and 2010 reviews suggests that our approach to health is consistently making good progress, and our approach to improving access to education is particularly successful.

Our work with partners is yielding positive outcomes in terms of awareness and capacity building, but there is more to be done. In particular, evaluation of partnerships needs to be much stronger, and it needs to address critical components of partnering, including the quality of networks and relationships, alignment and mutuality between partners, and changes in awareness, capacity and practices.

There are without doubt many other factors and actors that contribute significantly to the positive changes observed in our project areas. However, overall our findings suggest that World Vision plays a vital role in leveraging this change, through awareness raising, capacity building and partnering with local communities.

## Sustainability of change

Effective development empowers poor, marginalised and vulnerable children and communities, firstly to improve their circumstances and secondly to sustain and build upon that change.

World Vision defines “sustainability” as “the ability to maintain and improve upon the outcomes and goals achieved with external support after that support has ended”<sup>5</sup>.

As discussed in more detail below, while the findings suggest that positive change is occurring in communities we work with, our review processes do not give sufficient evidence to have confidence that these outcomes are sustainable. These findings are consistent with those in 2009, when the recommendation was made that improved attention to sustainability is critical. The fact that these issues remain a concern in 2010 indicates that continued focus is essential.

In the 2009 review, sustainability was not assessed in 25 of the evaluations, and of the 21 that did explore this it was found to be effectively addressed in only one-quarter. This led to the recommendation that improved attention to sustainability is critical.

Table 7: Sustainability in projects.

Sustainability	2009		2010	
	No.	Prop.	No.	Prop.
Sustainability was effectively addressed	5	11%	5	9%
Sustainability was partially addressed	12	26%	30	52%
Sustainability was not addressed	4	9%	3	5%
Sustainability was not investigated or mentioned	25	54%	20	34%
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100%</b>

There were some good examples of sustainable benefits in the 2010 reports. These include the women's income associations that recruit new members in Vietnam; the Senegal farmers outside the project area who observe and copy soil conservation techniques practised by their neighbours; and the healing and reconciliation associations who continue to refine and adapt their projects to reach new groups in Rwanda, well after the program was completed.

In 2010, 20 evaluations did not investigate sustainability, which remains a serious concern. Of those where sustainability was explored (38), it was found to be effectively addressed by the project/program in only five cases (13%).

Poor attention to reporting on the sustainability of change in evaluations is a particular issue for World Vision ADPs. Of the 20 ADP evaluations reviewed, seven did not investigate sustainability at all. Of the reports that did assess sustainability, in three cases the program was found to have made no progress against any sustainability indicators; sustainability was effectively achieved in one case, and partially achieved in nine cases. Worryingly, in two ADPs there was no evidence of progress against sustainability indicators after 15 years implementation. In fact, half of the ADPs that were evaluated had been running for 10 or more years.

Both in 2009 and 2010, the number of evaluations that did not investigate sustainability represents a critical oversight. Reporting on sustainability is essential to enable the constraints and obstacles to maintaining and building upon outcomes to be identified and overcome.

As in the 2009 review, the 2010 review reports on the effectiveness of projects in terms of their contribution to sustainable change within communities in the following areas:

- participation in projects
- partnerships
- integration of ministry, sectors and cross-cutting themes

## Community participation in projects

The review explores the extent to which communities participate in projects. Of the 58 evaluations, 12 (21%) reported that the community had a high level of engagement in decision making within projects. This is lower than the findings from the 2009 review, where almost half the evaluations reported the effective participation of communities in projects. However in 2010, the proportion of projects with evidence of “some” community participation is much higher than in 2009.

Table 8: Community participation in projects.

Community participation	2009		2010	
	No.	Prop.	No.	Prop
Effective participation	16	48%	12	21%
Some effective participation	7	21%	29	50%
Not effective participation	4	12%	3	5%
Inconclusive findings	1	3%	2	3%
Not investigated	5	15%	12	21%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100%</b>

The combined proportions for “effective” and “some effective participation” in both 2009 and 2010 are very similar (69% and 71% respectively). The difference between the judgements of effective versus some effective participation will also be due to a revision of the tools and a lifting of the bar by the 2010 review team in terms of what was accepted as “effective”.

These results, however, do mean that we are not demonstrating community participation in almost one-third of the projects. This is a concern given that without community participation, the shared learning, responsibility and ownership that underpins community development may not be sustained.

## Child participation in projects

Child participation in projects is an essential component of program sustainability. Yet there is little reported evidence of this occurring in the majority of evaluations reviewed. In over 60% of cases in 2009 and 2010, child participation was not investigated or mentioned.



Young health and nutrition advocates educate their peers in Haven of Rest ADP in the Philippines.

Where child participation is explored, it is often in the context of engaging children and young people in issues of child rights. A good example of this is in the evaluation of the Capiz ADP in the Philippines. There was evidence of children participating in decision making within the projects.

*“Children aged 10-17 actively participated in trainings and workshops about their rights to development, participation and protection ... children are aware of their rights, [and] participate in decision making especially about things that concern them.”*

Source: Capiz ADP, Philippines

In the Haven of Rest ADP child participation was a key part of a strategy to increase awareness of child rights to protection and education.

*“Project interventions on child protection and participation have improved the well-being of children as a result of increased children’s and community awareness on children’s rights, laws and procedures for protecting children, and the children’s completion of elementary, secondary, and some, even tertiary education. The leadership development project of the ADP has also raised leaders who are committed to the vision of their organization and to the cause of disadvantaged children and their families.”*

Source: End of phase evaluation of the Haven of Rest ADP, Philippines

Table 9: Child participation in projects.

Child participation	2009		2010	
	No.	Prop.	No.	Prop
Effective participation in project/program	9	27%	5	8.6%
Some effective participation in project/program	3	9%	5	8.6%
No participation	0	0%	5	8.6%
Inconclusive findings	1	3%	7	12.1%
Not investigated or mentioned	20	61%	36	62.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100%</b>

In the 22 evaluations that considered child participation in 2010, about half showed positive results (five recorded “effective participation” and five “some effective participation”).

The IPM provides practical guidance and strategies to facilitate greater child participation. We anticipate that this will support effective child participation in programming and a concerted effort to ensure that these aspects of programming are properly evaluated.

### Partnerships

As mentioned earlier, partnering has become a central tenet of World Vision's programming approach. This recognises that development is a complex endeavour that requires partnerships with local stakeholders to achieve effective programming and enduring positive change. Effective partnering with key actors and organisations in the community is also crucial to building local ownership and supports the sustainability of program outcomes.

Of the 58 evaluations reviewed in 2010, 44 assessed the effectiveness of partnerships within projects. Twelve (21%) evaluations found that effective partnerships had been established while a further 26 (45%) showed evidence of some effective partnerships. These numbers are comparable with those in 2009, although the relative proportions are different.

Evaluation of the Arapai ADP at the end of its first phase highlights the importance of involving local government as key partners.

*“Failure to share information threatened the ability of the local government to own and sustain ADP activities and benefits. The local government as the steward of people's welfare, and on whose behalf the ADP operates may not easily own projects for which it has not been involved in from the very beginning. Besides, a weak relationship conflicted with the ADP value of partnership, and the agreed on provisions in the memorandum of understanding signed between the ADP and local government...”*

Source: End of phase evaluation of Arapai ADP, Uganda

Table 10: Effective partnerships in projects.

Partnerships	2009		2010	
	No.	Prop.	No.	Prop
Effective partnerships	14	42.4%	12	21%
Some effective partnerships	7	21.2%	26	45%
Partnerships were not effective	8	24.2%	2	3%
Inconclusive findings	4	12.1%	4	7%
Partnerships were not investigated	0	0%	14	24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100%</b>

In two cases the evaluations concluded that no partnerships had been established, which as a proportion of the total is lower than the 2009 results, where eight of the 33 evaluations assessed showed no effective partnerships. Partnerships were not explored in about one-quarter of the 2010 evaluations. With the roll out of IPM there will need to be sustained attention to ensuring that partnerships are explored.

Evaluation of the strength of partnerships within World Vision program evaluations on the whole lacks depth. A more strategic approach is needed and should consider these critical components – the quality of networks and relationships, alignment and mutuality between partners, and changes in awareness, capacity and practices. This is required for partnerships within communities, and between communities and enabling partners, particularly government.

### Ministry integration

World Vision's approach to effective development programming relies on the integration of three ministries – relief, advocacy and transformational development – to ensure a holistic approach to the alleviation of poverty.

Evaluations of World Vision projects should assess integration of these three ministries where appropriate, but in both the 2009 and 2010 reviews, only a minority of evaluations did so. Where ministry integration was assessed, six out of 12 evaluations in 2010 and three out of 13 evaluations in 2009 reported effective integration.

Table 11: Effective ministry integration.

Ministry integration	2009		2010	
	No.	Prop.	No.	Prop.
Evaluation reports effective integration	3	11%	6	10.7%
Evaluation reports there was no effective integration	3	11%	4	7.1%
Findings inconclusive	7	26%	2	3.6%
Not investigated or mentioned	14	52%	44	78.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Cross-cutting themes

World Vision has identified six cross-cutting themes as important for all program design: gender, the environment, protection, peace building, disability and Christian commitments. These themes are considered crucial to program

sustainability and therefore are a requirement for World Vision program evaluations, particularly for ADPs. In the 2009 review it was noted that very few evaluations actually delivered on this requirement and the pattern is similar in 2010.

Reviewers were asked to make a judgement about the extent to which evaluations addressed cross-cutting themes. Only three evaluations addressed this requirement adequately and six addressed some of the themes relevant to the program. In the majority of cases (62%) the cross-cutting themes were not addressed and this is higher than in 2009 when the proportion was 52%.

The proportion of evaluations that assessed the various themes is shown in Table 12.

Table 12: Cross-cutting themes in projects.

Cross-cutting themes	2009		2010	
	No.	Prop.	No.	Prop.
Report assesses all cross-cutting themes	3	9%	2	3%
Report assesses gender	12	36%	26	45%
Report assesses environment	9	27%	16	28%
Report assesses protection	5	15%	8	14%
Report assesses peace building	5	15%	7	12%
Report assesses disability	5	15%	6	10%
Report assesses Christian commitments	5	15%	8	14%

There has been a noted improvement in the number of evaluations that report on gender. In 2009, 36% included gender while the proportion was 45% in 2010. This may be partly due to the increased investment in gender programming and evaluation that occurred after the release of the 2009 review findings. The quality of gender programming and the associated evaluation of it remain variable.



Thirty-two (55%) projects evaluated included programming in sectors such as the environment, agriculture, livelihoods, water and sanitation, and food security.

As with many of these cross-cutting themes, there was a lack of evidence to show there had been intentional integration of environmental concerns in the design and implementation of projects.

Five projects included protection as an explicit sectoral focus and eight of the 58 evaluations reviewed reported on this. Only one of these was an ADP. Even where protection was included, it was not analysed in any depth, although some reports noted that to be effective, protection efforts required the involvement of multiple stakeholders, staff training and integration into budgets and other project activities.

There was one peace building project among those reviewed and peace building was reported on as a cross-cutting theme in seven evaluations. Where it was mentioned, there were some encouraging activities, such as the formation of peace clubs and the inclusion of children in peace and reconciliation training from an early age. In some cases there was reference to a reduction in domestic and community violence as a result of increased income and food availability.

A further cross-cutting theme that should be addressed in all projects is disability. Children, young people and adults with a disability are present in all communities and these groups are especially at risk of marginalisation in development interventions. This is why disability is such an important theme in World Vision projects – yet only six evaluations reported on this cross-cutting theme. Five of these were ADP evaluations; the remaining 15 ADP evaluation reports made no mention of the issue. Again, this is of significant concern and raises the question of whether this lack of focus in evaluations reflects a lack of attention to this issue in our projects.

The Christian commitments theme, and the intersection between being Christian, child-focused and community-based, is at the heart of World Vision's programming<sup>6</sup>.

Evaluation of the Bac Binh ADP shows that while sustainability and transition were articulated in the program design; there was little attention to these in practice.

*"Transition plan has not been specifically built and performed during this stage. There are very few sustainable indicators at programme level as well as at component project level. Although the programme design mentions sustainability and transition plans, ADP and local partners have not had any plans, activities or discussions on sustainability as well as on transferring achievements of the program for partners when ADP no longer works in the area..."*

Source: Evaluation of the Bac Binh ADP, Vietnam

Similarly, in the Homosha-Assosa ADP, sustainability was addressed in program design but the risks were not addressed very well in program implementation.

*"There was wide consultation at the beginning of the program and, on paper, mechanisms for sustainability were built in. The study found that the assumptions made at the beginning of the program may have been valid but their implications were not fully taken into account and certainly not much was done to mitigate the risks embedded therein."*

Source: Evaluation of the Homosha-Assosa ADP, Ethiopia

Even when sustainability is a focus of program implementation, problems do arise and more strategic attention is needed:

*"Many assumptions held about project sustainability need to be interrogated. For example, many water sources put in the schools were no longer functional although WV had done a lot to ensure their functionality including setting up committees and securing the commitment of school leaders and parents. It therefore necessitates revisiting the sustainability strategy in light of the failure for such services to continue running."*

Source: Evaluation of the Kitgum ADP, Uganda



Children collect clean water in the Kitgum ADP, Uganda.

6. LEAP, p25.

A key area of activity for this theme was collaboration with religious leaders. Three projects highlighted this aspect, and in two cases how this had led to a reduction of stigma from AIDS. In one case, despite good collaboration with religious leaders, there were dilemmas in addressing traditional practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), due to levels of community support from a religious and cultural perspective.

Overall, while there is some encouraging feedback on the integration of cross-cutting themes, it is of concern that projects, and particularly ADPs, poorly measured the cross-cutting themes. Of the 20 ADPs that were evaluated, one assessed the cross-cutting themes adequately and three only partially. As was noted in one evaluation, there are no organisational indicators for assessing ADP performance in integrating cross-cutting issues in project activities. As such, integration of these issues is ad hoc and often left to the goodwill of program coordinators and program staff to address. Developing indicators with clear definitions is essential in guiding the integration of cross-cutting themes.

### Conclusion

While World Vision projects are demonstrating positive outcomes, evidence that these outcomes are sustainable is not consistent. There are three potential reasons for this: inadequate attention to incorporating fundamental requirements for sustainability into project and program design; a lack of investment or support to ensure such requirements are met during implementation; and finally, insufficient effort in evaluating progress in this area. Given the strong emphasis that LEAP places on conceptualising and embedding sustainability in program design, the weaknesses are most likely to derive from project implementation and evaluation.

In terms of implementation, the results of the review show that sustainability is effectively addressed in just under 10% of cases and partially addressed in about half. The results show that we are not demonstrating community participation in almost one-third of the projects reviewed and are not demonstrating child participation in up to 90% of cases. This is a concern given that without community and child participation, the shared learning, responsibility and ownership that

underpin sustainable community development cannot be achieved.

The results of the review also show that our approach to the evaluation of sustainability is inconsistent and lacks depth. While partner participation was evaluated in most cases (44), reflection on the nature and quality of the partnering was largely absent. Integration of ministry themes was not explored in 44 reports and only two reports assessed each of the cross-cutting themes. Gender remains an area of concern given that fewer than half of the evaluations reported on this cross-cutting theme. ADPs also remain an area of concern, with two ADP evaluations showing no evidence of sustainability for any indicators after 15 years of implementation.

These findings are consistent with those in 2009, when a recommendation was made that improved attention to sustainability is critical. While it is premature to be overdrawing conclusions, the fact that these issues remain a concern in 2010 indicates that more attention is required. Specifically, the results point to the need for a more strategic approach to evaluations, assessing each of the key elements of sustainability at a level of depth to enable reflection and improvements to be made.

## Evaluation practices

This section broadly appraises the evaluation practices observed in the 58 reports based on a number of criteria relevant to achieving quality evaluation work, with particular reference to the recommendations in LEAP. The aspects considered in this section include evaluation design and methodological approaches and tools applied by evaluators, and the extent to which their practices support meaningful participation by community and partners in evaluation work.

### Evaluation design

Just over one-third (24) of all evaluation reports compared the findings of the evaluation with baseline data. Nearly half (27) described end of project/phase data only, because they did not have baseline data available or the data available was not usable. Five reports described the use of other data for comparison with evaluation data, such as mid-term evaluation findings and data from another project in the same area that had already ended (see Table 13). None of the evaluations used a comparison (control) group to assess for change.

Table 13: Evaluation design.

Evaluation design	2009		2010	
	No.	Prop.	No.	Prop.
Experimental design (including control group)	0	0	0	0
Comparison of end project data with baseline data	11	38%	24	41%
End of project data only	18	62%	27	47%
Secondary and other data used in lieu of baseline data	-	-	5	9%
Other method/ approach	-	-	2	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100%</b>



Height boards and measuring sticks for child growth measurements used in the evaluation of Makueni ADP in Kenya.

### Methodological reporting

The methodology section of an evaluation report should clearly and comprehensively describe all methods used for the evaluation, including data collection, sampling strategies, and methods for data analysis<sup>7</sup>. The methodology section should also include a clear and convincing rationale for selecting those methods and a description of the limitations of the chosen methodology and likely implications.

Appraisal of the methodology section of 58 evaluation reports showed overall consistency in the adequacy of descriptions of qualitative and quantitative methods. The main findings are:

- The majority of reports reviewed adequately described qualitative and quantitative data collection methods used (93% and 88% respectively).
- Qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods were adequately described in 67% and 73% of evaluation reports respectively.
- Approximately three-quarters of evaluation reports contained an adequate description of the sampling strategy used. This was true for both qualitative and quantitative sampling (75% and 77% respectively). This contrasts with last year's evaluation reports, where descriptions of qualitative sampling strategies were generally weak and incomplete.

- The rationale for the overarching methodological approach was adequately described in close to two-thirds (35) of reports. This represents a decline from last year, when nearly three-quarters of reviewed reports provided a sufficient outline of the rationale for the methodology employed.
- Limitations of the selected methods, and the implications of those limitations, were sufficiently described in nearly half (25) of evaluation reports reviewed. One-fifth of the evaluation reports (12) described the limitations but not the implications, while approximately one-third (21) did not describe methodological limitations at all or in satisfactory detail. This is similar to last year, when just over half of the evaluation reports described methodological limitations and implications. This is an area requiring greater vigilance as it impacts upon the robustness and utility of evaluation findings overall.
- Appendices were largely incomplete, failing to include all the documentation expected. The evaluation terms of reference were included in the appendices of only 45% of reports; only 34% included an evaluation design; 60% and 46% contained copies of the qualitative and quantitative data collection tools; just over half (55%) listed the key informants consulted; while less than one-quarter (23%) included a copy of the project logframe.

As was the case in 2009, there was considerable variation across reports in the level of detail contained in the evaluation methodology section. Nonetheless, in all instances there was sufficient information to assess the adequacy of the methods used to answer the evaluation questions.

### Evaluation methods

The majority of evaluation reports (95%) were appraised as having employed an appropriate selection of methods for the context; the methods used in three evaluations were deemed as not supporting a quality result. Among the 55 evaluations utilising appropriate methods, 29% nonetheless had “some” (16%) or “large” (13%) gaps in the methods used.

Nearly two-thirds (38) of the evaluations used mixed methods, i.e. a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. One-third (19) used qualitative data collection methods only and in one evaluation only quantitative methods were used (see Table 14).

Evaluation methods used in 2010 were largely consistent with 2009 practices, aside from a small shift from using mainly quantitative methods with some supplementary qualitative methods, towards a more even combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches.

Table 14: Evaluation methods.

Methods applied in evaluation	2009		2010	
	No.	Prop.	No.	Prop.
Equal balance of quantitative and qualitative methods	9	31%	27	47%
Mainly qualitative with some quantitative methods	5	17%	9	15%
Mainly quantitative methods with some qualitative methods	5	17%	2	3%
Qualitative methods only	10	35%	19	33%
Quantitative methods only	0	0%	1	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Participation

Consistent with good development principles and World Vision values, partners and community members participated to some degree in most evaluation events (79% and 82% respectively). Approximately half of the evaluation reports described partners and community members participating in one or two stages of the evaluation (48% and 64% respectively), most commonly as key informants to data collection and participation in reflection and/or interpretation of findings.

As was the case in 2009, participation of children in evaluations was limited. Out of 56 evaluations where it was appropriate to include children, fewer than half (46%) included them in any stage and only three had boys and girls participate throughout the entire evaluation process (5%, compared with 4% in 2009). Similar patterns of

participation emerged for children as for partners and community members, with participation usually being by way of consultation as key informants (51%) or participation in reflection and/or interpretation of findings (13%). In 41% of evaluations, boys and girls participated in one or two stages of the evaluation.

The highest levels of participation were recorded for project partners, with 18% of reports showing they were involved in all five stages of the evaluation, compared with 7% for community and 5% for children. Similarly, 34% of reports showed partners to be involved in three or more stages of the evaluation, compared with 21% for community and 9% for children.

Three evaluations stood out as being highly participatory in nature – Haven of Rest ADP in the Philippines; Arapai ADP in Uganda; and Reducing Flood and Storm Vulnerability in Quang Ngai Province Project, Vietnam. These evaluations included partners, community and children throughout all stages of the evaluation, from planning, right through to data collection, interpretation and formulating recommendations.

### **ADP evaluation practices**

Evaluation of ADPs is an area to highlight in terms of the variation in practices and reporting quality. Among those reviewed in 2010, there are evaluations and reports of a very high standard, but also some that were limited in scope and/or quality. This is potentially the result of low DME capacity of evaluators or insufficient attention to the evaluation terms of reference and design stages. But a more likely reason is that that we are trying to do too much with too little.

The longevity of ADPs reviewed in 2010 ranges from five years to over 15 years implementation, and most include four or five key sectors and numerous performance indicators for each. An ADP evaluation typically includes extensive document review, a broad scale household survey and a series of key informant interviews and group discussions – each of which covers numerous sectors and topics, and must be done in appropriate gender, age groups and locations within the ADP.

The resulting volume of data is very large and there are challenges to maintaining quality at all stages of data collection. This is particularly due to the limitations of an intensive and short period of

field work, usually done with scarce logistical and human resources, followed by data verification, coding and analysis and substantial report writing requirements within the two to four weeks that follow. Consequently, evaluation and reporting quality can suffer. Irrespective of who does the evaluation, the time and resource limitations place a heavy constraint on an evaluator's ability to explore the data or achieve useful triangulation and integration of the findings, and to do justice to all World Vision requirements such as assessing integration and cross-cutting themes. It is also worth highlighting that the scope and workload associated with evaluation of an ADP is considerably more than for a standard project evaluation, but in practice timelines, budget and resources allowed are the same. Evaluation resources are stretched thinly and depth is traded for breadth. Evaluation of ADPs under this approach cannot capture all lessons and change.

There was inconsistency in the timeframes of ADP interventions that were evaluated. Some evaluations explored the achievements of the ADP since the beginning of implementation, while others only focused on achievements of the final phase (the last three to five years). It was evident that those evaluations that did try to measure progress over the entire life of the ADP struggled to identify reliable baseline data from the project beginning, and often had to rely on Transformational Development Indicators (TDI) reports or previous evaluations against which to measure progress.

Another point to highlight regarding evaluation of ADPs is that as well as an appraisal of the achievements of individual projects that comprise the program, the collective effect of the projects' outcomes should also be assessed. Overall, in the 2010 reports it was clear that ADP evaluations assessed the progress of individual projects, but not the broader impact of the entire program and the wider "programmatic goal". In addition, the contribution of improvements in the ADP target communities to the work of other organisations (government/other NGOs) or changed circumstances (e.g. improved economy, remittances) was rarely discussed.

## Gender and evaluation practices

Nearly half (45%) of the reports reviewed evaluated gender, but in most cases it was only in the context of producing evidence of women's participation in, or contribution to project activities.

For example, one evaluation found evidence that the project ensured women participated, but it did not explore how women participated or were prioritised in project interventions, and paid no attention to power relationships and decision making.

*"There is intentional inclusion of most vulnerable groups (children, women, and disabled, poor) in project as beneficiaries and participants. Those groups were encouraged by the project staff and partners to participate in project interventions in as much as they can. Selection of beneficiaries and planning was conducted using PRA tools that provided chance for low educated and less advantaged people to present and contribute."* (Hien ADP, Vietnam)

The role of men in reducing women's work burden, or in shaping power relationships, did not emerge in the evaluations, although we know that behaviour change on the part of men is vital to addressing gender issues.

There were few examples where evaluators achieved the depth required for a proper analysis of gender. Evaluations of the North East Masaka ADP and the AATPI Project in Ethiopia were two exceptions. Important aspects of gender were observed, such as women's unequal access to resources compared with men, and the tendency for women to be overshadowed by their male counterparts when they do participate.

In the good examples of gender evaluation, quantitative data were disaggregated by gender and this was qualified with an explanation of actual changes in power dynamics. Although not always showing that the projects helped to shift some of these imbalances, these examples show that deeper analysis is starting to take place.

Sex-disaggregation is key to ensuring that "gender mainstreaming" occurs in projects. Of the 58 evaluations reviewed, 38% presented sex-disaggregated data. Only 14% (eight projects) assessed gender as a cross-cutting theme and presented sex-disaggregated data. In the remaining 62% of projects reviewed in 2010,

What is most striking is the explicit links that have been made between gender and women's participation in this year's evaluation reports, such that these two notions have often been constructed as almost equivalent:

*"Gender equity is one of the project considerations: male and female have equal chance to participate in training. More women took part in village events. 'Wives attended training more than husbands as agreed by their husbands'- farmer group in Prao ... Understanding development principle of equity is limited among some ADP staff, local leaders. Women participation in village meeting was not high: most of men who were considered as heads of households presented in community meeting."*

Source: Hein ADP, Vietnam

A deeper analysis of gender in evaluation allows for a better understanding of the interaction between participation and power:

*"With regards to gender, the ADP has made progress in addressing practical gender concerns such as 75% of women attending meetings and engaging women as model farmers but the issue of control of resources was not adequately addressed. The survey revealed that household resources such as land and cash crops are controlled by men (68%) compared to 28% who jointly control resources. This is a similar trend as elsewhere in the country."*

Source: North East Masaka ADP, Uganda



Women participate in rural appraisal, Kammengo ADP, Uganda.

the different impacts upon women, men, girls and boys cannot be quantified without sex disaggregated data. Important inequities may remain hidden in the data, with the result that

the greater vulnerability of women and girls is overlooked. More seriously, any adverse effects of projects on different gender groups cannot be identified. These limitations make it difficult to identify and correct problems and ensure equitable allocation of services and resources.

## Conclusion

Findings on the evaluation practices in the 2010 review are similar to those in 2009, with similar scope for improvement. Almost 30% of evaluations were considered to have gaps in the methodology and a similar proportion contained no explanation of the rationale for selecting the overarching methodology. Disaggregation of evaluation data by gender was not presented in the majority of reports and there were often important omissions in the appendices, such as description of tools, protocols and key informants. In practical terms there is a lot of scope to address these issues by ensuring evaluation terms of reference clearly articulate needs, expectations and requirements, and by requesting that consultants review LEAP evaluation guidelines and tools and propose a robust evaluation design prior to carrying out the work.

Community consultation as key informants occurs in most evaluations. However, there is little evidence that community members are participating in evaluation design, data collection and analysis and in developing recommendations. This level of participation is not always possible, but is far more effective in achieving outcomes that address community needs.

The role of children in evaluations was a concern, with children involved only about half of the time and mainly as key informants. Greater participation by children, where appropriate, needs to be articulated in evaluation terms of reference. About a third of the evaluations involved project partners as participants throughout the key stages of evaluation. Ideally this would occur in most project evaluations.

An area of particular concern was the variation in the scope and quality of analysis reporting in the case of ADP evaluations – which is to a large extent the result of stretching evaluation resources too thinly. ADP evaluations encompass multiple sectors and require review and collection of extensive data sets, analysis of the collective

outcomes of multiple projects, and reflection on periods of program implementation that range from five to 15 years. Either the expectations need to be reduced, or there must be increased investment in these important learning events.

The 2009 Annual Evaluation Review referred to “Theory of Change” as a concept that enables us to map what a project is designed to achieve, and how a project will attempt to achieve it (p33). Currently, our emphasis on logframes locks field managers into the pursuit of inputs. If we assist our field colleagues to develop a theory of change before a logframe is developed, then monitoring progress can become more intuitively a measure of whether we are getting closer to the goal. For World Vision, the process of how to codify the development of a theory of change, and how to translate that into progress indicators and monitoring frameworks is not yet developed. Over the next one to two years, doing so would be a useful and practical support to field staff in our individual ADP locations, and the wider World Vision Partnership.

# Area Development Programs

Area Development Programs (ADPs) are World Vision's principal model for long-term community development. They have an average lifespan of 15 years and geographically tend to mirror a country's administrative boundaries that cover populations of between 10,000 and 50,000.

Each ADP incorporates concurrent and successive sector projects that together are intended to address a diversity of development aspirations of the partner communities. Child sponsorship provides the core funding for three to five sector projects. Complementary special projects may be added to the ADP, funded by other sources, such as appeals or government funding.

The ADP concept was developed in the early 1990s, and had become World Vision's mainstream approach to community development by the mid-1990s. So, the first generation of ADPs are now reaching the end of their engagement with partner communities. Therefore, the current period is a valuable time for World Vision to study and reflect on the legacy of these first generation ADPs, to retain what we do best, and adapt where we could have been more effective.

In 2010, World Vision Australia managed 236 ADPs in 43 countries across Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. These ADPs were funded by Australians sponsoring 496,000 children who benefit from these community projects. Child sponsorship generates 58% of World Vision Australia's revenue, representing Australians' largest investment in child wellbeing through World Vision.

This section explores the performance of our flagship programs – ADPs – in greater depth, highlighting program outcomes, sustainability of the changes that have occurred in communities and some of the challenges faced by our ADPs. The latter includes an assessment of the way in which ADPs manage complexity.

## ADP outcomes

The 2010 ADP evaluations clearly demonstrate that World Vision ADPs are contributing positively in the communities with which it works; 95% of evaluation reports observed positive changes in partner communities.

These positive changes were evident in people's awareness about important development issues; their capacity to act on them; their practices and behaviour; and also deeper impacts on their communities' social, environmental, economic and physical conditions. Intuitively, a development program's ability to influence these changes becomes more difficult further along this continuum. This is evident in the degree of change the projects achieved, where positive change in people's knowledge excelled, but deep change to the social, environmental and economic fabric of society was harder to achieve. Compared to last year's evaluations, there are improvements, but we should be cautious about inferring too much by comparing two consecutive years. Only over the coming years as data cumulates, will it become possible to observe true trends.

Greater changes were recorded among individuals in the wider community, compared to partner organisations. This may indicate World Vision's general "comfort zone" in working at the grassroots level, and our ongoing challenge to improve the way we support community organisations to improve their capacity and effectiveness.

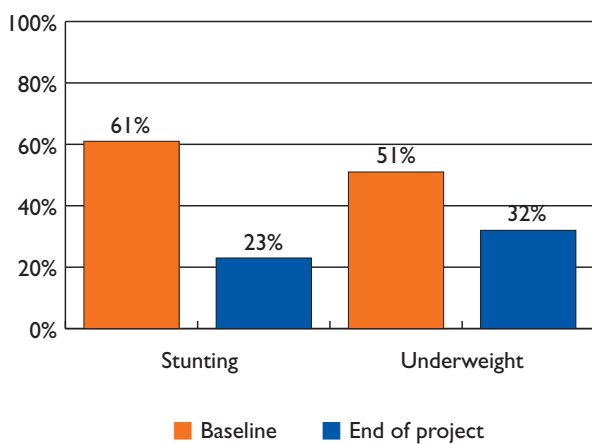
By sector, 65% of ADPs reported improvements in child health indicators (25% were inconclusive), and 75% of ADPs recorded improvement in child formal education indicators (only 5% inconclusive).

Evaluations that made good use of baseline data and quantitative surveillance methods provided good insights into the scope of positive change in World Vision ADPs.



For example, in Bac Binh ADP in Vietnam, the proportion of poor households decreased from 19.7 to 7.1%. The number of households who faced year-round food shortage fell from 22% in 2004 to 5% in 2010. The proportion of households who are able to access an improved water source in the dry season rose from 24.8% to 65.7%. The rate of stunting malnutrition (height for age) decreased from 60.5% in 2004 to 23.0% in 2010. (see Fig.6)

Figure 6: Rate of children from 6-59 months old with malnutrition, Bac Binh.



Household food security has improved in Bac Binh ADP, Vietnam.

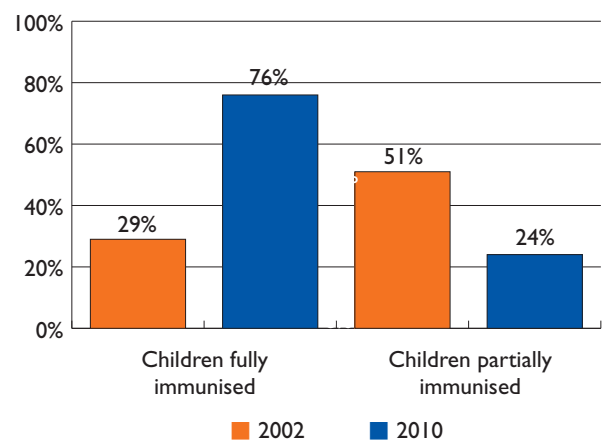
In the remote Inteta ADP in Mozambique, the education project contributed to an increase in the literacy rate from 37% of the population in 2005, to 72% in 2010.

In Kitgum ADP in Uganda, an area that has recently emerged from 25 years of civil war, the agricultural and economic development project contributed to a reduction in the proportion of households earning less than 10,000 shillings per week (A\$4.30) from 58% to 33%, and an increase in the proportion earning between 10,000 and 30,000 (A\$4.30 to A\$12.97) from 25% to 43% of the

population. Changes in incomes for those already earning higher amounts were less than 5%, which is consistent with World Vision's focus on the most vulnerable sections of a target community.

In Tinsukia ADP in India, the immunisation rate of infants has increased from 28.7% to 76.2% since 2002 (see Fig.7). As they strive towards total coverage, this should translate to significantly lower under five mortality rates in these communities in coming years.

Figure 7: Status of immunisation coverage, Tinsukia.



Nevertheless, 30% of all evaluations also registered some negative effects associated with the ADPs. Examples include communities forming a culture of dependency on World Vision (such as in El Dorado ADP, Colombia); jealousy and stigmatisation towards sponsored children where direct benefits persist (in Kitgum ADP, Uganda); and creation or reinforcement of power for local elites in decision making to the exclusion of the wider population.

In Inteta ADP in Mozambique, for example, 87% of the population expressed that they had never been invited to participate in meetings about local development. In Banan ADP in Cambodia, women expressed that it was "... useless and a waste of time" to participate in development committee meetings because "...no-one considers our (women's) ideas". These two examples highlight the difficulty faced by our field staff in determining which voices best represent wider community opinion.

## ADP sustainability of change

The immediate outcomes of ADPs, as described above, provide some measure of whether we are addressing what is important to partner communities. To estimate our longer term legacy, we can consider the sustainability of ADPs in light of participation in projects, partnerships, integration of ministry, sectors and cross-cutting themes.

A number of ADPs empirically demonstrated the optimal effect of building strong partners and networks of like-minded organisations. In Kitgum ADP in Uganda, it was found that investing in and entrusting existing community structures such as local councils, children's committees, schools, churches, police and elders, played a critical role in effective identification of the most vulnerable children and households. Investment in partners *"...limited the number of staff needed to oversee the implementation of activities, but also it enabled tapping into material and immaterial resources which have played a key role in augmenting the success of the intervention"*. The same evaluation found that the ADP's collaboration with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was critical in increasing the effectiveness of farming interventions.

However, despite some positive examples, an emerging theme in ADP evaluations is the fragility of community-based partner organisations, which have a high risk of stagnation or collapse once ADP interventions phase out.

For example, community-based partner organisations in Capiz ADP in the Philippines were found to have a *"...lack of stable financial resources and technical competencies, and ... weaknesses in financial and organizational management"*.

In the Haven of Rest ADP, also in the Philippines, the core community development partner was found to be *"...not yet sustainable as an organization. Its leaders and members still lack the necessary knowledge and skills on human resource management, resource generation and mobilization, financial management, policy formulation, as well as material and financial resources to continue its operations"*.

Haven of Rest ADP in the Philippines has achieved valuable outcomes after 10 years implementation. However there was further work to do to ensure that benefits would be sustained.

*"Through sponsorship funding and coordination with LGUs [Local Government Units], government agencies and other community partners, the ADP projects have been generally effective. Transformation in the lives of children, their families, and even in the community partners, donors and sponsors were evident. However, to ensure that the impact and the gains of the ADP are sustainable, important mechanisms have yet to be established or enhanced."*

Source: End of phase evaluation of the Haven of Rest ADP, Philippines

The report from Hien ADP in Vietnam suggested that focusing on leadership development *"...should play the most important portion of the ADP in terms of budget, man power, and staff thinking"*.

Another common trait highlighted in a number of evaluations relates to empowerment. Several projects were reluctant to transfer managerial responsibilities within the ADP to community partners, inhibiting their opportunities to develop those functions and skills. In fact, several ADPs worked against this ideal, creating dependency by using local organisations as conduits for delivery of World Vision material goods to vulnerable groups like orphans or people with HIV, or distorting incentives for participation, such as cash payments to attend training events. The latter practice encourages attendance by those whose only interest is cash, rather than mobilising only those who are keen to put new learning into practice.

As Hien is an ADP entering its final phase, the evaluator insisted that from this point on the program must simultaneously focus on strengthening community organisations and progressively transferring ADP interventions to them in all sectors.

Kammengo ADP in Uganda was also found to be hindering community empowerment by holding all responsibility for ADP activities. Partner associations acted as recipients of material support, or conduits for delivering

support services. The report expressed the need to reorient the ADP to “...foster creativity and belief in the community ability to sustain their own development, to overcome the dependency syndrome...” in part by “...helping them form significant external partnerships [...]. Since the Community Based Organisations engage in different activities but which are in one way or another complementary, there is need for creation of a comprehensive structure clearly showing the linkages among them”.

Effective development practice requires the development of partnerships with key stakeholders in local communities. In this regard, deficiencies identified included ADPs not developing networks with other organisations that could add local or sectoral expertise, and ADPs not assisting local partners to form their own partnerships that could enhance their capacity or alliances. In some instances, large gaps also existed in developing networks between local organisations' ADP partners.

The report from Rakai Kyotera ADP in Uganda noted that World Vision “... should work closely with other NGOs to develop their capacities ... to ensure optimal resource allocation and sustainability of interventions”.

The report from Banan ADP in Cambodia noted the lack of skills within supported community organisations for networking more widely to advance their status and capacities. The ADP also missed opportunities to better coordinate its activities with local actions by other NGOs.

ADP evaluations show that there are positive changes in the lives of children and their communities and we need to celebrate these. However, there is limited evidence of communities having been empowered to do their own problem solving – to identify issues and become advocates for change. So while we are addressing some aspects of sustainability, and we are making progress, we need to be much more intentional about empowering local communities to sustain the change.

### Scope of ADPs

Several evaluations noted that ADP designs were simply too ambitious in the number of villages or communes they attempted to assist in a given phase, or in the breadth of topics covered by each initiative.

The evaluation of Hien ADP in Vietnam found that program effectiveness would increase if the ADP reduced the number of communes it covers, and encouraged the ADP to continue to focus on reinforcing existing practices in agriculture, education and healthcare, instead of introducing new pilot projects and models. The report from Bac Binh ADP, also in Vietnam, referred to the need for the agriculture project to “... be built with a specialised focus, not spreading out interventions”. Similarly, the report on Tinsukia ADP in India found that impact was compromised due to the program “scattering too thin our resources”.

### Managing complexity

ADPs operate in a complex mix of social, political, spiritual, environmental and cultural factors, all of which need to be addressed and/or accounted for if the ADP is to achieve its intended outcomes. In this context, engagement with local communities and partners builds a better understanding of the issues that need to be addressed. Responding effectively to these issues then becomes an iterative process of exploration, rather than one in which pre-determined solutions can be imposed<sup>8</sup>.

Evaluation reports note that some of our ADPs struggle to adapt to changing circumstances, partly due to the propensity for ADP monitoring frameworks to focus on measuring inputs and not outcomes.

The report on Kitgum ADP in Uganda, for example, noted:

*“Building flexibility in project design... This is very critical if the intervention is to respond effectively to unexpected eventualities such as the long drought which hit Kitgum... and severely affected initiatives aimed at boosting food security, agricultural productivity and incomes. The project did not have [a] plan B...”*

The evaluation of Makueni ADP in Kenya was critical of the ADP for not responding to differences between target communities, such as the variability in socio-economic opportunities among different groups. The project assumed a false homogeneity of the ADP population, which resulted in some negative consequences, such as a lack of uptake of project activities in some communities. The evaluation pointed out that:

*"The Project should have done this [context analysis] process in a more frequent, regular, systematic and rigorous manner, so as to enable them to address the needs, which are ever constantly changing in the community as per the ever changing dynamics of the environment around it."*

The evaluation of Banan ADP in Cambodia found that the ADP urgently needed to develop a process to:

*"...constantly review their context to ensure that activities they are proposing are responding to the real need in the community. Sometimes the focus did not respond to the real need of the community."*

The evaluation of Bac Binh ADP in Vietnam reported the need to:

*"...strengthen monitoring systems to improve quality of collecting, analysing and using monitoring information... to improve quality of project activities and to give timely revising decisions."*

This need was further evidenced by Bac Binh ADP's education project, where it was found that the project was unaware of and not addressing the reasons for student drop-out.

All World Vision projects need to formulate monitoring and reflection processes, and two-way communication practices that can identify and enable adaptation to changing community and environmental dynamics.

No amount of analysis before a project can capture and anticipate the complex dynamics surrounding a community and its development path. We must ask ourselves: how do we find out what we did not even know that we need to know? Learning and adaptation of programming must therefore be an ongoing process throughout each project's life cycle. World Vision would benefit from engaging National Office peers in monitoring and evaluation, and project management, to identify the core barriers to crafting and executing more sensitive and flexible project design and implementation. Such collaboration may permit the development of core project monitoring approaches that learn and adjust to complex systems, and not just capture whether staff have completed the tasks assigned to them under the original project design.

## Conclusion

The 2010 ADP evaluations clearly demonstrate that World Vision programs are contributing to improvements within communities we work with around the world. These positive changes were evident in people's awareness about important development issues; their capacity to act on them; their practices and behaviour; and also deeper impacts on their communities' social, environmental, economic and physical conditions.

However, quality evaluation of the sustainability of these changes is not consistent. Further, some reports suggest that we are too ambitious in our scope and expectations that ADPs will achieve positive outcomes across multiple sectors.

There is limited evidence of communities having been empowered to do their own problem solving – to identify issues and become advocates for change. So while we are addressing some aspects of sustainability, and we are making progress, we need to be much more intentional about empowering local communities to sustain the change. In particular, we need to improve the capacity of partner organisations and evaluate this; we need to develop networks with other relevant organisations; and we need to support partners to develop such networks. We also need to be more realistic about the geographic and sectoral scope of ADPs, and be mindful of the complex environment in which they operate.

# Gender

## Introduction

As stated in World Vision's monitoring and evaluation framework, LEAP: "Sustainable development practice and impact cannot be achieved without explicit recognition that every policy, program and project affects women and men differently"<sup>9</sup>. Gender is a key consideration in sustainable development and is a cross-cutting theme in World Vision projects.

In the 2009 Annual Evaluation Review, gender was identified as an area for more attention in our programming and evaluation work. This year's Annual Evaluation Review has sought to provide a clearer picture of how our projects are addressing gender and identify steps to improve programming in this area.

## Gender in programming

In addition to the issues noted in the evaluation practices section where gender analysis is based mainly on women's participation, findings in the 2010 review highlight a number of serious issues in relation to how gender is understood in projects. Evaluation evidence suggests that women participate in project activities in only about 43% of cases. Fourteen percent reported that the program addressed access to and control of resources between genders, and 17% reported positive changes in gender relationships as an outcome of the intervention.

Quality gender programming needs to ensure that our organisational understanding of gender moves beyond token attempts to achieve gender balance, to strategically tackling issues of power and control.

In 2010, reviewers considered six key gender aspects associated with programming: benefit to women/men, benefit to girls/boys, participation of women/men, consideration of needs, changes in access to and control of resources, and changes in gender relations.

Disappointingly, only one project (Strengthening Protective Factors Against HIV/AIDS, Swaziland) addressed all gender analysis aspects that were considered in the review. Three projects addressed five of the six criteria.

As in 2009, findings in 2010 suggest that gender is included as a theme in program design and evaluation to comply with LEAP requirements, and is not driven by an understanding of how gender relations impact development in a community. In the majority of cases, only a broad statement on gender is provided, with little emphasis on power dynamics or specific explanation of how projects impact women, men, girls and boys.

Evaluation of North East Masaka ADP (Uganda) included an important observation about mainstreaming gender issues:

*"Gender mainstreaming should be carefully defined to go beyond numbers in order to address key gender issues such as access and control of resources, domestic violence, etc. These gender inequality concerns are considered some of the key causes of poverty and disempowerment of women. Negative cultural practices and beliefs are considered key hindrances to gender equality and women's empowerment."*

Source: End of phase evaluation of the North East Masaka ADP

Notably, the concept of "participation" itself appears to have been diluted to women merely being in attendance for a project intervention. This type of reporting lacks thorough analysis that considers women's roles, power dynamics and importantly, women's decision making. The way women voice their needs and take leadership roles can thus become sidelined in favour of statements on gender balance in meetings.

There is an urgent need to deepen the understanding of how gender relations and power structures impact on programming, so that gender issues are seen as core to World Vision's development work, not an add-on.

One of the ways in which a more intentional focus on issues of structural change can be facilitated is through deeply embedding gender issues throughout the project cycle. According to the data, of the 21 projects that considered gender in the design, 18 (86%) also went on to assess gender in the evaluation. This highlights the importance of addressing gender issues right from

<sup>9</sup> LEAP, p23-24.

the design phase. In the last year or so, gender advisors at World Vision Australia acknowledged the importance of the design phase and have encouraged new designs to include at least one gender outcome. This makes the linkages to gender more explicit and ensures intentionality.



Joweria and her family benefited from agricultural development activities in North East Masaka ADP, Uganda.

### Challenging gender norms

It is important to emphasise that there are projects that do recognise and tackle issues of power. One project that contributed to changes in gender norms was from the Rakai Birungi Byokka III ADP in Uganda. Interventions by World Vision have resulted in women being involved in household income generation and making decisions about how to spend their own money. Unequal distribution of household chores, favouring men over women and children, have also been challenged as a result of the project

There are examples that reflect critical consideration of gender issues, and an understanding of power:

*“... involvement of women in the leadership of the cooperatives has been considerable. Three out of the seven executive members in the Adama cooperative and three out of five management members in Buno cooperative are women. However, discussions at all levels revealed that the role played by member women in such committees is so subordinate and overwhelmed by their counterparts. The existing composition of committees needs slight adjustment in such way to accommodate the engagement of women beyond nominal representation.”*

Source: AATPI Project, Ethiopia

intervention. Traditional gender roles are shifting, and this is leading to the empowerment of women.

### Conclusion

We are beginning to see some projects effectively addressing gender issues, and there is some improvement in the way we evaluate gender outcomes. However, there is still much to be done to overcome the noted constraints. Those to highlight are entrenched gender inequalities; a narrow construction of gender as women's attendance and/or participation in project activities; and lack of focus on changing power relationships, patterns of decision making and access to and control of resources. These key aspects of gender analysis should inform the design, monitoring and evaluation of all World Vision projects.

## Key findings and recommendations

Key findings and implications emerging from this review are:

- In terms of the conduct of this review, we are reassured by the consistent patterns that emerged in 2009 and 2010 in terms of program outcomes, the sustainability of change and evaluation practices. This consistency means that the Annual Evaluation Review frames of reference, processes and tools give consistent results, despite the difficulties of reviewing a very heterogeneous set of projects.
- The overall picture that emerges from the review is that World Vision projects achieve positive outcomes in the majority of cases (91%), with particular success in community awareness raising and capacity building. While we should refrain from overdrawing conclusions, information from the 2009 and 2010 reviews suggests that our approach to health is consistently making good progress, and our approach to education is particularly successful.
- While World Vision projects are demonstrating valued positive outcomes, evidence that these outcomes are sustainable is not consistent. Sustainability was effectively addressed in just under 10% of cases and partially addressed in about half.
- The results show we are not demonstrating community participation in almost one-third of the projects reviewed, and are not demonstrating child participation in up to 90% of cases. This is a concern given that without community and child participation, the shared learning, responsibility and ownership that underpin sustainable community development cannot be achieved.
- Further, our approach to evaluating the sustainability of change is inconsistent and lacks depth. Consistent with the results of the 2009 review, greater attention is required on the nature and quality of partnering, the integration of ministries and cross-cutting themes.
- Findings on the evaluation practices in the 2010 review are similar to those in 2009, with similar scope for improvement. Almost 30% of evaluations were considered to have gaps in methodology and a similar proportion contained no explanation of the rationale for selection of the overarching methodology. On a positive note, a greater proportion of evaluations compared the evaluation findings with baseline data collected at the start of a project – a promising trend that allows for better analysis of the extent of change that takes place in communities.
- Evaluation of the sustainability of change continues to be an area of weakness. This finding emerged consistently throughout the review and was particularly a concern in relation to gender and ADPs. Much effort goes into conceptualising and embedding sustainability in program design, but this isn't matched by monitoring or end-of-project evaluations.
- With respect to ADPs, the evaluations reviewed show that there are positive changes in the lives of children and their communities, and we need to celebrate these. However, there is evidence to suggest we are too ambitious in our scope and expectations that ADPs will achieve positive outcomes across multiple sectors.
- An area of concern is the limited focus on disability in our ADP evaluations – this raises the question of whether this lack of focus in evaluations reflects a lack of attention to this in our projects.
- There is also limited evidence of communities having been empowered to do their own problem solving – to identify issues and become advocates for change. So while we are addressing some aspects of sustainability, and we are making progress, we need to be much more intentional about empowering local communities to sustain the change.

- The review noted significant variation in the quality of evaluations and reporting of ADPs. This has some obvious causes, such as low skills among staff and local consultants, as well as the fact that World Vision does not adequately resource ADP evaluations, given their scope and significance.
- World Vision currently has no organisational indicators for assessing ADP performance in integrating the cross-cutting themes. As such, integration of these issues is ad hoc.
- With respect to gender, we are slowly beginning to see more projects recognising the importance of gender issues, and a stronger commitment to gender outcomes. However, there is still much to be done to ensure that projects address issues of power in gender programming, from design to implementation to evaluation.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

### Sustainability

- Given that the first generation of our long-term flagship programs – ADPs – are now coming to an end, it is critical that World Vision significantly improves its focus on ensuring that communities are empowered to sustain positive outcomes well beyond World Vision's presence in a community. This requires more intentional focus on effective community and child participation, strengthening of local partners, empowerment of women, as well as the integration of cross-cutting themes. To ensure we effectively address sustainability, future program evaluation work will also need to invest more in this area.

### Gender

- Our organisational understanding of gender needs to move beyond a focus on achieving gender balance, to more strategically tackling issues of power and control. World Vision should further build the capacity of staff to ensure that the substantive issues in gender programming – access to and control of resources, decision making at household and community levels, and changes in gender relations, norms and roles over time – are appropriately addressed in program design and usefully assessed in evaluation work.

### Disability

- Given that children, young people and adults with a disability are present in all communities, and these groups are especially at risk of marginalisation in development interventions, it is critical that World Vision improve its focus on this important cross-cutting theme.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

- To support our programming for sustainable child wellbeing, it is critical that World Vision's evaluation methodology and indicator framework support the assessment of sustainability, including:
  - Effectiveness of partnerships – evaluations should address critical components of partnering, such as the quality of networks and relationships, alignment and mutuality, as well as partner awareness, capacity and practices.
  - Effectiveness of ministry integration and integration of cross-cutting themes – this should include the development of indicators for ministry integration and cross-cutting themes.
- Given the need for programs to be adaptive and responsive to ever-changing, complex challenges, it is important that World Vision develop monitoring and evaluation approaches that enable staff to identify and respond to the outcomes of project activities over time, as well as changing community and external dynamics. This requires inclusion of inductive, exploratory approaches that collapse some of the distinctions between monitoring and evaluation.
- With the revision of World Vision's monitoring and evaluation framework, and the development of child wellbeing indicators, it is critical that evaluation practices apply both qualitative and quantitative methods that will enable us to speak to very specific impacts we are endeavouring to influence, while also capturing the rich, diverse complexity of changes we contribute to. It is also critical that evaluation practices include sex-disaggregated data.
- World Vision needs to increase resourcing of its program (ADP) evaluations vis-à-vis project evaluation, in recognition of their significant scope, and their critical role in providing a platform for much of our project work.



# Appendices

## Appendix A: Review methodology

The 2010 Annual Evaluation Review reports on the progress of World Vision Australia-funded projects against their own objectives and against broader organisational goals including child wellbeing. The methodology is based on one developed in 2009, and is primarily a document analysis of end-of-project evaluations. The analysis was carried out by a team of reviewers from the Policy and Programs Division, who looked at program outcomes, sustainability of change, evaluation practices, approaches to evaluation in ADPs and gender outcomes.

The reports included in the review were drawn from the total population of end-of-phase evaluation reports produced for World Vision Australia-funded projects ending in 2010. A total of 211 projects ended and of these 122 were due for evaluation. Fifty-eight evaluation reports were available and included in the review. The remaining reports were not received or were pending at the time of the report collection closing date.

## Appendix B: Evaluation status of projects

The purpose of this section is to outline findings of the evaluation review in terms of evaluation status of projects, outcomes achieved and the sustainability of change.

World Vision projects are very diverse, covering numerous sectors and with different timeframes, from as short as six months to as long as 15 years as in the case of ADPs. All projects should be evaluated at their end-of-phase, but situations arise where evaluation is not possible or is not warranted. These situations include the small size of some projects, lack of budget and security issues. Furthermore, conducting rigorous evaluations for all projects is very resource intensive. In light of this, the World Vision Partnership is exploring the development of a tiered approach to evaluation that will reduce the evaluation requirements for some initiatives, depending on their size, significance and nature. The tiered approach will ensure better targeting of evaluations, allowing World Vision to meet accountability and learning objectives, while also ensuring good stewardship of donor funds.

In 2010, a total of 211 projects funded by World Vision Australia ended. Of these, 122 were due for evaluation. Fifty-eight evaluation reports were included in this review, while the remaining reports were either pending or were not received by the closing date for the review (30 November 2010).

In 2010, a higher proportion of projects were evaluated compared with 2009. This trend should continue as greater priority is given to evaluation in programming.

As indicated in Figure 8, of the 58 reports that were reviewed, 24 are from the Africa region, 26 are from the Asia and Pacific regions and nine were in the Latin America and Caribbean and Middle East and Eastern Europe regions. There were no projects ending in our Australia Programs in 2010.

Of the reports reviewed, eight were Humanitarian and Emergency Affairs (HEA) projects (four in Africa, three in Asia and one in the Pacific region) with project implementation phases typically from 12 months to two years. Much of the work of these projects is relief and capacity building, and evaluations are often focused on lessons learned rather than on sustainable changes at the community level.

Two of the 58 reports reviewed were evaluations of advocacy initiatives. Advocacy is a particularly challenging area for evaluation, as the environment of advocacy work is complex and it can be difficult to identify the specific contributions of advocacy work to local level change. Consequently, monitoring and evaluation need to be particularly flexible and sensitive. World Vision Australia has had some success in implementing and evaluating advocacy projects using theory of change maps to capture the complexity of projects and their outcomes. Theory of change mapping enables identification of a range of outcomes to which projects contribute, and which in turn contribute to higher level advocacy goals (e.g. policy change).

World Vision Australia is developing guidelines so that more advocacy projects can be evaluated and assessed for this review in future years.

In figure 9 the distribution of projects ending, and those evaluated and reviewed, is shown by funding stream. Of the 211 projects ending in 2010, 179 (84%) were funded by the Australian public – 68 via appeals/donations/other; 111 by child sponsorship; and 19 by AusAID and 14 from other grants.

In the 2009 review, the distribution of projects ending and evaluated was compared by funding stream and this revealed that AusAID-funded projects were over-represented in the total number of projects evaluated and reviewed.

The possible relationship between funding stream and the likelihood that a project or program will be evaluated was not as marked in 2010, although projects funded by appeals are still under-represented (32% of all projects ending, 26% of those evaluated and only 17% of those reviewed). Having said this, it remains a concern that for the 62 projects funded by child sponsorship reserve and the 68 projects funded by appeals and donations, no evaluation was planned in 50% of cases. Exploration of the reasons accounting for this may be warranted in future reviews.

Figure 8: Evaluation status by region 2010.

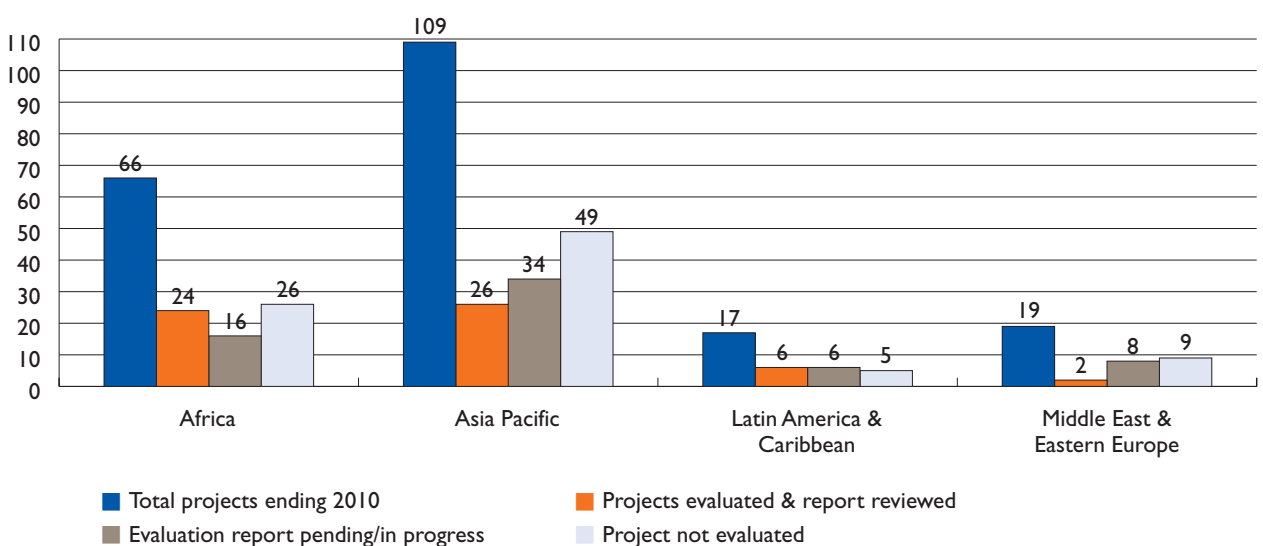


Figure 9: Evaluation status of projects ending in 2010 by funding source.

