



International
COCOA
Initiative

The Impact of ICI's Community Development Programme in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire on Child Labour

Summary

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SUMMARY

Cocoa-growing communities in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana face several development challenges, including limited access to quality education and basic health care services; weak physical infrastructure including roads, electricity and mobile telephone networks; dependence on a single livelihood source; and low agricultural productivity. Coupled with these is the involvement of children in hazardous activities in cocoa farming, which can affect their health and development and can also interfere with their school attendance. The International Cocoa Initiative (ICI) implemented a community development programme over 4 years (2015-2018) in cocoa-growing communities in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana with the overall aim of improving these communities' capacity to protect children.

The study was conducted to complement an external evaluation of the ICI's community development programme, which assessed the impact of the programme at community level, e.g. by comparing changes in ICI-supported communities between 2015 and 2018 with changes in a similar set of non-assisted communities.¹ The evaluation concluded that the programme brought several positive impacts to the assisted communities, especially in relation to education, community mobilisation and women's empowerment, but it did not measure the impact of the programme on child labour.

This paper assesses the impact of ICI's Community Development Programme on the prevalence and severity of hazardous child labour by comparing data collected from the assisted communities to a selection of non-assisted communities in the same geographic areas.

The study uses child labour data from 504 households in 41 communities in Côte d'Ivoire (21 programme and 20 control communities), and 446 households in 24 communities in Ghana (14 programme and 10 control communities, collected in January 2019).

We examine five different outcome indicators in relation to child labour: : a child-level indicator of whether a child is engaged in hazardous work; a household-level indicator of whether any child in the household is engaged in hazardous work; the number of different hazardous tasks a child engaged in; and for children aged 12 years or older, the number of hours per day, and the number of days per week the child engaged in hazardous tasks;² and whether a child was enrolled in school.

To account for differences between programme and control communities, the study uses data on community-level indicators from ICI's PCCF tool (Protective Cocoa Community Framework, a community profiling and needs assessment tool), collected before the programme started in 2015 in programme and control communities.

Since community selection for the programme was informed by a set of community indicators, some of which may also be correlated with child outcomes, we expect that **child labour prevalence would differ between programme and control communities even in the absence of the programme. To address community selection bias in our**

¹ BIRD (2020) [External Evaluation of ICI's Community Development Programme, 2015-2018](#)

² These two indicators are calculated only for children aged 12 years or older because it is very difficult for younger children to provide reliable estimates on how long they have been doing hazardous work.

sample, we apply *propensity score matching* to establish a comparable reference group from our control communities, using the available baseline community data.

Côte d'Ivoire

When we look at the **prevalence of child labour** in communities in Côte d'Ivoire, we estimate that the programme has:

- **reduced the prevalence rate of hazardous child labour** in programme communities in Côte d'Ivoire by 10.6 percentage points, from an estimated 62% in control communities down to an estimated 51% in ICI assisted communities. This corresponds to a 17% reduction in the prevalence of hazardous child labour.
- **reduced the proportion of households with at least one child doing hazardous work** by 12 percentage points in ICI assisted communities, from an estimated 75% in control communities to an estimated 63% in ICI assisted communities, corresponding to a 16% reduction in hazardous child labour at household level.

The estimated effects on prevalence are statistically significant at the 10% level (in other words, the likelihood for these results to occur in these data *by chance* if such an effect was *not* present is lower than 10%).

When we look at the programme's impact on the **severity of child labour** in Côte d'Ivoire, our data indicate that the programme has:

- **reduced the average number of different hazardous tasks** children do from an estimated 1.3 in control communities to 1.1 in ICI assisted communities;
- **reduced the number of hours children spend working on hazardous tasks** in cocoa on a working day from an estimated 4'22h in control communities to an estimated 3'13h in ICI assisted communities (amongst children aged 12 years or older), corresponding to a 26% decrease in hours worked;
- **reduced the average number of days per week on which a child works** from an estimated 2.0 days in control communities to an estimated 1.8 days in ICI assisted communities (amongst children aged 12 years or older), corresponding to a 10% reduction in the number of days on which a child worked per week;
- **increased school enrolment** from an estimated 69% in control communities to an estimated 84% in ICI assisted communities, corresponding to a 22% increase.

The estimated effects on child labour severity are estimated with lower precision on a reduced sample.

Ghana

When we look at the **prevalence of child labour** in communities in Ghana, our estimates suggest:

- **a decrease in the prevalence of hazardous child labour among children** in programme communities, although this estimate is not **statistically significant**.
- **a decrease in the prevalence of child labour at household level**, although this estimate is not statistically significant.

The fact that our data do not allow us to find statistically significant effects on child labour prevalence in Ghana is partly explained by the relatively small sample size: a substantial share of control communities had to be discarded from the Ghana sample for lack of comparability to the programme communities.

When we look at the programme's impact on the **severity of child labour** in Ghana the results indicate that the programme has:

- not reduced the average number of different hazardous tasks children do in Ghana, but;
- **reduced the average number of hours children work on hazardous tasks in cocoa on a working day** from an estimated 1.28h in control communities to an estimated 1.03h in ICI assisted communities, corresponding to a 28% reduction in hours worked;
- **reduced the average number of days per week on which a child worked** from an estimated 1.0 in control communities to an estimated 0.7 in ICI assisted communities, corresponding to a 30% reduction in the number of days on which a child worked per week (this result is statistically significant at the 5% level);
- had **no significant effect on school enrolment in Ghana** (which already approaches 100% in all communities in the sample, leaving little room for improvement).

These results show that ICI's community development programme has achieved its key objective of reducing children's engagement in hazardous child labour in cocoa growing communities in Côte d'Ivoire. For Ghana, results are indicative of a decrease in child labour, but do not allow us to see a statistically significant effect, most likely due to the small sample size.

This study also makes a novel attempt to capture impact on child labour not only in terms of a binary outcome, but also in terms of child labour *severity*: we show that the ICI programme in both countries has resulted in children working less often and for fewer hours; and that in Côte d'Ivoire, children are also exposed to a smaller number of different hazards.

It is important to note that the community development programme was not designed to facilitate a robust evaluation of its impact on child labour, and baseline data on child labour prevalence were not collected at the start of the project. We therefore have had to resort to second-best impact evaluation methods, using observational data from a limited number of children from programme and control communities. While the method we apply is sufficiently solid to allow for the conclusion that tangible impacts were achieved in relation child labour in both countries, the precise estimates remain subject to potential bias, since unobserved differences between programme and control communities may not be accounted for.

The detailed results and methodology used for this impact analysis are published in the full report: *The Impact of ICI's Community Development Programme in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana on Child Labour*.³ The findings on child labour prevalence should also be viewed alongside the other impacts of the project, which are outlined in a separate external evaluation report by the Bureau of Integrated Rural Development (BIRD) of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.⁴

³ ICI (2021) [The Impact of ICI's Community Development Programme in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire on Child Labour](#).

⁴ BIRD (2020) [External Evaluation of ICI's Community Development Programme, 2015-2018](#)