Putting children first

The International Cocoa Initiative is a leading organisation that promotes child protection in cocoa-growing communities. ICI works with the cocoa industry, civil society, farmers’ organisations, international organisations and national governments in cocoa-producing countries to ensure a better future for children and to advance the elimination of child labour.

Operating in Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana since 2007, ICI has promoted holistic child protection measures in 600 cocoa-growing communities benefitting 682,500 children.

Vision

ICI’s vision is of thriving cocoa-growing communities where children’s rights are respected and protected, and where child labour has been eliminated.

Mission

ICI works to improve the lives of children in cocoa-growing communities, safeguarding their rights and contributing to the elimination of child labour by supporting the acceleration and scale-up of child-centred community development and of responsible supply-chain management throughout the cocoa-sector.
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Highlights of the Year
Expanded operations in Côte d’Ivoire with U.S. Department of Labor grant

The U.S. Department of Labor has awarded the International Cocoa Initiative a $4.5 million grant for its project “Eliminating Child Labour in Cocoa” (ECLIC). Over the next four years, ICI will implement the project in 50 cocoa-growing communities in Côte d’Ivoire, benefitting 5,450 vulnerable children by providing them with access to formal and non-formal educational opportunities. As part of the ECLIC project, ICI will also help 1,500 vulnerable households by supporting livelihood services such as income generating activities for women.

Turning the cocoa sector into a game-changer for sustainable agriculture

Held under the auspices of Ghana’s Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations, ICI’s annual stakeholder meeting brought together more than 100 participants in Accra in November 2015. Officials from the governments of Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire, workers’ and farmers’ organisations, the chocolate and cocoa industry, the UN, the EU, children’s rights groups, civil society organisations, media and other influencers tackled two major themes: improving and expanding Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation Systems (CLMRS); and bridging gaps in children’s access to quality education.

Reducing child labour risks for the future

In light of current initiatives to boost yields and cocoa supply, it has been necessary to test the hypothesis that pressure to enhance yields may push smallholder farmers to rely more heavily on family labour – including child labour. The International Cocoa Initiative therefore commissioned a research study into the labour markets in cocoa-growing areas of Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire. Key findings show that, indeed, one of the main challenges that cocoa farmers face is access to adequate and affordable sources of labour, but they also show that there is generally no statistically significant link between higher yields and increased rates of child labour. The study also reveals specific risk factors that may prompt the use of underage labourers and suggests labour market interventions in order to minimise these risks, such as communal shared labour arrangements, training of specialised workers and affordable labour-saving technologies. Furthermore, income generating activities continue to be a viable alternative for financially constrained farmers, as does access to formal education and vocational training.
Côte d’Ivoire: compulsory education and multi-sectoral action

In 2015, a milestone was achieved regarding children’s access to education in Côte d’Ivoire: the country declared schooling to be compulsory for ages six to 16. With this legal framework in place, the government seeks to increase school attendance from the current level of 70% to 100%. This policy commitment is backed by supportive actions and funds, such as the recruitment of teachers and the construction of classrooms. The government is also planning a sensitisation campaign for families about the benefits of education, allowing them to see that schooling is the better alternative for their children.

The National Committee for Monitoring Actions Against Trafficking, Exploitation and Child Labour (CNS) also launched its 2015-2017 National Action Plan in 2015. With a global cost of 12,920,296,600 CFA (approximately $21 million), this inter-ministerial plan will be funded mainly by the Government and its partners, and aims for a 30% reduction in the number of child labourers in all sectors.

Cocoa Barometer: measuring the state of sustainability in the cocoa sector

Published by a consortium of European civil society organisations advocating for a sustainable cocoa economy, the Cocoa Barometer reviews the livelihood and social situation of cocoa farmers and the structural challenges faced by the cocoa and chocolate sector. The 2015 edition of the Cocoa Barometer confirms that cocoa farmers currently do not gain sufficient income from their activities and that they struggle with inadequate access to schools and other public services. This state of poverty and constraints to accessing education constitute a high risk for the use of children in cocoa farming. The report further acknowledges that governments in cocoa-producing countries have a major role to play in securing better living conditions for their farmers, and that the private cocoa sector is already taking unprecedented steps to change. The review’s claim for joint action on a larger scale is based on the same principle of shared responsibility that underscores ICI’s mission, which the Cocoa Barometer positively recognises as fulfilling its role as “clearinghouse of good practice”.

ICI’s training kit endorsed by Ghana national authorities

After being validated in Côte d’Ivoire in 2014, ICI’s training and awareness raising materials have been endorsed by the government of Ghana in 2015. This core tool is now a national standard in both countries in which the organisation is active. Containing a trainer’s manual and sets of posters, pictures and illustrated books, the kit is ready to support community workers, agricultural extension officers, information agents and many more in their efforts to protect children in cocoa-growing communities.

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CocoaAction gains strength

After the launch of industry’s joint CocoaAction initiative in 2014 and its bold commitment to promote cocoa sustainability for 300,000 cocoa farmers and 1,200 cocoa-growing communities in Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana, 2015 saw a further refinement and consolidation of the overarching operational strategy, with ICI’s technical advice ensuring that defined good practices for child labour mitigation are appropriately understood and integrated. 2015 also marked some important steps in CocoaAction’s engagement with the governments of Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana to optimise its alignment with government priorities and plans, and the definition of a common Results Framework which will facilitate CocoaAction’s collective, public reporting. CocoaAction’s catalytic potential was also revealed with the launch, by the Jacobs Foundation, of a complementary $52 million Transforming Education in Cocoa Communities (TRECC) programme to improve the access to and quality of education in selected CocoaAction communities in Côte d’Ivoire. As companies take the first significant steps in operationalising their CocoaAction strategies and with collaboration across industry, civil society and governments gaining momentum, 2016 will be a strong year for implementation and early results on the ground.

A voice for children in the global agenda

The International Cocoa Initiative’s role as a leading child protection organisation in the cocoa sector resulted in a wide variety of speaking opportunities at large international meetings with civil society, the cocoa industry, cocoa-producing governments and cocoa-consuming governments. At the World Cocoa Foundation’s Partnership meeting in June 2015 in Washington DC, ICI took part in an expert panel reviewing CocoaAction’s expected impact on community development.

ICI also channelled its expertise and influence into various UN platforms including the UN Global Compact, the UN Special Rapporteur’s consultation on Modern Day Slavery, and the Business and Human Rights Forum. ICI participated in specialist panels at events organised by the US Department of Labor and the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (GISCO), sat on the Consultative Board of the ICCO, and contributed expert advice into the CEN/ISO process which seeks to define an international standard for sustainable and traceable cocoa. Through all these engagements and many more, ICI sought to champion the rights and protection of children living in cocoa-growing communities.
Increasing capacities and impact on the ground

As per the ICI 2015-2020 strategy, this year was marked by the transition to a new phase of community development interventions, embedding 80% of ICI-supported communities within our member companies’ supply chains and programmes. These holistic child protection activities are directly implemented by ICI teams in Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana, allowing for an increased capacity to monitor and learn from those activities while building the understanding and capacities of member companies. This practice will in turn facilitate the replication of those interventions at a greater scale.

The new strategic model includes an improved interventions package and a higher per-community investment (particularly for concrete interventions, notably in the areas of education infrastructure, child protection and women empowerment). It also offers a space for exploring different approaches and helps to better capture and disseminate the lessons learnt.

Expanding a model that works

2015 was another year of rapid expansion for the Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation System (CLMRS) implemented by Nestlé and ICI in Côte d’Ivoire. In a single year, the number of cocoa farmers monitored by the system doubled to reach 24,470 in over 40 cooperatives.

This innovative system allows companies to monitor children in every single farmer’s household and to gather precise information to better understand and tackle the child labour occurring. For instance, knowing that 90% of the 1,885 identified child labourers benefitting from remediation assistance in 2015 were identified as carrying heavy loads helps the cocoa industry to better target its awareness raising messages to that specific risk and adapt its remediation strategies accordingly (for instance by providing wheelbarrows to farmers). See page 13 for global and 2015 CLMRS results.
Progress and challenges - latest numbers of child labourers revealed

A report on child labour in West African cocoa-growing, released by Tulane University in July 2015, was a reminder of the persisting scale of child labour in cocoa, but also gave important glimpses of progress being made. The study was commissioned by the U.S. Department of Labor in order to measure changes in estimates of working children, children in child labour, and children in hazardous work in the West African cocoa sector between the baseline years of 2008/09 and 2013/14. Sampling over 2,000 cocoa-growing households in Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana, the report estimated that 2.12 million children were involved in child labour in 2013/14, a 21% increase in the absolute number of child labourers in cocoa compared to the selected baseline year of 2008/9.

However, the study also found evidence of progress, including significant improvements in access to education for children in Ghanaian and Ivorian cocoa-growing areas, allowing 651,747 more children to attend school in 2013/14, compared with 2008/9. Furthermore, ICI’s analysis of the report shows that the 21% increase in the number of child labourers was less than the estimated 43% increase in the number of children living in cocoa-farming households, and also less than the 40% increase in cocoa production recorded over the same period of time. Relative to the increase in the cocoa-growing population, therefore, the study showed a net 7% decrease in the prevalence of child labour in cocoa-growing households across both countries, stating that “improvements on household level indicate a positive trend, with cocoa-growing households moving away from child labour”.

ICI in the media

In 2015, ICI continued to draw media attention, not only as a technical reference in the field of child protection in cocoa-growing communities, but equally with a focus on our work, our achievements and our learnings. On the international media stage, one highlight was Fortune Magazine’s thorough piece on child labour in West African cocoa production and the measures being taken to tackle the problem. This holistic media report also featured ICI’s work on the ground, such as the sensitisation of farmers and the child labour monitoring and remediation system. Focusing on how different stakeholders work towards solutions, Devex – an online hub for international development – highlighted that collaboration is “the key to ending cocoa’s child labour”. Also focusing on partnerships, JustFood took a closer look at CocoaAction’s first active year and included some reflections from ICI on the potential for progress and the urgency for action. Confectionery News featured ICI’s approach in tackling cocoa child labour in “The Model Works” and, in a second article, took a closer look at our Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation System (CLMRS).

With additional focus and resources in Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire, ICI’s visibility in the national media of the two countries in which we operate has significantly increased. Our work and results on the ground progressively find their way into a variety of media channels, ensuring a more regular and objective reporting on the issue, and offering a platform for ICI’s advocacy.
The Year in Numbers
157 communities assisted through ICI’s core programme

Ghana

64

Côte d’Ivoire

93

313,273
People benefitting from community development through ICI’s core programme

≈50%

146,030
Children

460 Community development actions

4 primary health centers

34 latrines

8 boreholes

119 income generating activities

121 new or renovated classrooms

1,003 tables & benches furnished

20 new teachers

12 teachers’ accommodations

4 school kitchens

6,185 Children
newly enrolled in school since 2014 in ICI assisted communities

1,003

€10

119

146,030

50%

460
46% of the support came from the communities

33% of the support came from other local partners

15% of the support came from local and national authorities

Increased support from local and national authorities

The Year in Numbers

ONGOING OPERATIONAL & RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

International COCOA Initiative
125,000 Cocoa farmers and community members reached with ICI’s awareness raising tools

1,715 Key actors trained on child labour prevention and response

27% Increase in ICI field capacity

20% increase in operational budget since 2014
The Year in Numbers

Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation System (CLMRS) results

Results 2012-2015

- 40 coops covered by the system
- 852 communities reached with ICI’s awareness raising tools
- 7,044 awareness raising sessions
- 120,067 community members and farmers reached with ICI’s awareness raising tools
- 2,019 supply chain actors trained
- 2,196 identified child labourers benefitting from remediation assistance
- 88% of the identified child labourers were carrying heavy loads

Results in 2015

- 18 new coops covered by our system
- 311 communities reached with ICI’s awareness raising tools
- 5,270 awareness raising sessions
- 84,331 community members and farmers reached with ICI’s awareness raising tools
- 1,188 supply chain actors trained
- 1,885 identified child labourers benefitting from remediation assistance
- 90% of the identified child labourers were carrying heavy loads

13
Message from the Executive Director
2015 was the first implementation year under ICI’s new 2015-2020 Strategy. It brought change, as we interlinked our work across communities, supply-chains and knowledge-centres. It brought growth, as we increased our budget and operations by 20%. And it brought results, as evidenced in this report. But 2015 was also a bittersweet year in which our ground-level results were set against the macro-level findings from the Tulane University’s national child labour surveys in Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana, showing that in spite of real progress in the cocoa sector and reductions in the prevalence of child labour in cocoa-growing households, the absolute number of child labourers in cocoa had increased alongside demographic and cocoa-production increases. The burden of child labour in the cocoa sector remains significant and widespread. ICI’s rallying call to improve child protection for one million children by 2020 is all the more pertinent and pressing.

What we realise from this mixed bag of perspectives is that whilst we do know what is needed to tackle child labour in cocoa, the solutions to many of the root-causes remain complex, and many of our proven mitigation measures have struggled to be applied at a scale that matches the size of the problem.

However, I believe that we are now at a turning point. We have more energy and engagement from all the people that matter than at any time before, on cocoa sustainability, on relevant pillars of social development and on children’s rights. The industry is forging ahead with its ambitious CocoaAction commitment to harmonise and scale up its support to 300,000 cocoa farmers and 1,800 cocoa-farming communities. The governments of Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana both launched vital policy initiatives in 2015, the former making basic education compulsory for 6 to 16 year olds, the latter expanding the identification and assistance of vulnerable children through its Child and Family Welfare Policy. And the 2015 launch of the UN Sustainable Development Goals charts a course for the next 15 years of development assistance, with specific ambitions to ensure inclusive and quality education for all, and to end all forms of child labour by 2025.

Obviously, step-change can only come if commitment translates into action. But equally critical will be the extent to which that action is synergised. Specifically, disparate actors will need to unify around proven innovations and good practices. They will need to play according to their distinct skill-sets as well as their comparative strengths and influences. They will need to communicate and coordinate carefully with each other. As a convener, as a technical reference, and as a platform for collaboration, ICI’s role has never been more relevant.
Messages from our National Teams

Euprasie Aka,
National Coordinator, Côte d’Ivoire

In 2015, ICI strengthened its work with the national authorities and also its presence in cocoa-growing communities. As a member of Working Group 6 (GT6) of the Public-Private Partnership Platform (PPPP), we increased our collaboration with our key partners: the National Committee for Monitoring Actions against Trafficking, Exploitation and Child Labour (CNS) and the Conseil du Café-Cacao (CCC).

Our operations in cocoa-growing communities also increased thanks to a partnership with the company Station Energy, a specialist in solar energy. I have always considered darkness to be a major obstacle to knowledge and learning in rural areas. That is why we decided to supply individual solar kits to 29 cocoa-growing communities across eight departments of ICI’s intervention areas, thereby equipping 500 literacy committees and improving the educational conditions of more than 5,000 children.

Our child labour prevention actions were also consolidated at the community level by the official hand-over of classrooms and school canteens, built or renovated by ICI, to the communities of Ahoutouagui, Saréagui, Sogefia and Petit Odienné (Department of Méagui).

All this is thanks to the hard work of our team in Côte d’Ivoire, whose dedication to the achievement of our goals is tireless. For 2016, this dynamic and motivated team is ready to take on even more!

Côte d’Ivoire Highlights

- ICI Côte d’Ivoire started the implementation of the ICI 2015-2020 strategy in August 2015 in 39 new communities.
- Côte d’Ivoire declared schooling compulsory for children from the age of 6 to 16.
- ICI wins U.S. Department of Labor grant of $4.5 million benefitting 50 communities in Côte d’Ivoire.
- The National Committee for Monitoring Actions against Trafficking, Exploitation and Child Labour of the Ivorian authorities presented its 2015-2017 National Action Plan, aiming to reduce the rate of child labourers by 30% in all sectors.
- ICI delivered together with Nestlé 1,445 school kits to children in 22 cooperatives through its CLMRS.
My work as National Coordinator for Ghana focuses on coordination, team leadership, networking, and on influencing policy at the national level. However, the true impact of our work becomes apparent to me whenever I visit the cocoa communities we assist. I get energised by interacting with the beneficiaries of our work. On one such trip I met Patricia Dziwornu, a young lady who joined the community’s Child Protection Committee (CCPC) when she was still a child in school. Patricia told me how the training that ICI had provided to the CCPCs in Aboagyekrom had empowered her. “I am not afraid to speak to parents about the importance of sending their children to school”, Patricia said. She has grown up into an outspoken and assertive young woman. She is not intimidated to speak in public. Patricia looks forward to furthering her education and vying for a leadership position in her community. When I understand how ICI is effectively planting the seeds of longer-term change, I feel truly inspired.

We are grateful to the Government of Ghana and all our stakeholders for the collaboration in 2015. We look forward to an even stronger partnership in the years ahead so we can continue our efforts to empower women like Patricia and thereby protect children in cocoa communities.

Avril Kudzi, National Coordinator, Ghana

Ghana Highlights
- ICI Ghana started the implementation of the ICI 2015-2020 strategy in August 2015 in 19 new communities.
- 25 staff from district government agencies responsible for child protection in ICI’s new communities were trained.
- ICI’s support to the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations led to the review of the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Child Labour (NPA) 2009-2015 and the development of the draft of the new NPA 2016-2020.
- The ICI training tool kit was validated and endorsed by the National Steering Committee on Child Labour (NSCCL).
During a recent dialogue and information sharing meeting at Kwanane, one of the communities in the Sefwi Wiawso District of Ghana, participants discussed the effects of agro-chemicals on humans and the environment. With the aid of the ICI’s Child Labour Training toolkit, the participants developed a deeper understanding of the possible hazards sustained during unprotected use of agro-chemicals on farms. It was clear that their children, who also participated in the discussions, were at risk. Mr. Anni, CCPC Chairman, realised that asking his grandson to spray the farm was dangerous.

“Just some days ago, I did not realise the harm I was doing to my grandson. He was always present on the farm with me whilst spraying was ongoing. He fetched water, helped me carry the spraying machine and at times also did some of the spraying when I was tired. But I am not going to take him to the farm to support me with the spraying any more. I have learnt that the harmful effects may not be obvious now but take their toll in the future. I have also learnt that the spraying can even affect his education performance, his health and development.”

I am always happy to hear these testimonials, because I realize that through my work I have effected positive behavioural changes in the lives of some children who are now assured to have better future. This is one reason why I really appreciate my work at ICI.
Within the framework of the child labour monitoring and remediation system project, I make contact with the authorities, the partners and the managers of cooperatives as regards the presentation of the project, the initial training of the cooperatives and their operational agents, the monitoring of activities on the ground (in the community), regular support for the operational agents, and the implementation of remediation actions. Within the framework of our community development activities, I also make contact with the same actors, put in place the protection committees that I train with the community structures, help the communities to draw up community action plans, and see to their implementation and to that of the remediation actions.

Liaison is carried out through calls and regular visits by motorcycle.

I recall one particular occasion when, after a training session, I was approached by Mrs Marie-Jeanne N’Goran Ahou, a widow aged forty-four and the mother of four children. She told me that she now understood all the risks she had been exposing her children to by entrusting them with tasks which, until then, she had considered normal, whereas she had just learned that these tasks were in fact extremely dangerous. Her children would accompany her to the fields carrying pesticides, and return to the village transporting on their heads bundles of wood or large bowls of crops for the family meal. She thanked ICI for organising these training sessions, which had made her aware of the risks, and undertook to no longer expose her children to dangerous work.

For my activities to be successful, I have taken care to master all the aspects of the different projects, to explain them properly to the targets and actors on the ground, and above all to be there for the communities and always be willing to listen to them.

Guillaume Brou Bléhiman
Yamoussoukro, Côte d’Ivoire

I am in charge of implementing the different projects in the region, and I also represent ICI to the authorities and our partners. I am responsible for 6 departments, with a total population of more than 1 million inhabitants.
Messages from ICI’s Co-Presidents
Kwadjo Cléophas Mally
WAO-Afrique Director

In 2016, we are at a pivotal moment for the execution of our strategic plan and the implementation of the commitments made by all the partners, in particular concerning the schooling and vocational training of children in cocoa-growing areas.

No country can achieve emergence without placing education at the centre of its priorities. That is why at ICI we undertake to raise the awareness of this, and mobilise the governments of both Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire, as well as the cocoa-growing communities, and the chocolate industries to do more. All these stakeholders must step up their efforts so that the goal of providing quality education for all children, and especially for girls, is achieved by 2020 in all the areas in which ICI operates. ICI’s goal of tackling child labour is dependent on this.

Jeff Morgan
Mars Global Chocolate

The International Cocoa Initiative recently issued a challenge to everyone in the cocoa sector to be “game changers” for sustainable agriculture. In sports, game changers surface when the result, victory or defeat, is about to be determined.

For the cocoa sector in West Africa, stakeholders are at a similar point in time. As ICI gains ever more experience in the prevention, monitoring and remediation of child labour, the need to define “best practice” at this critical juncture becomes acute. Looking forward, I would urge all those in the sector to pool their experiences, and to offer support to ICI’s strategic effort of defining and promoting the best methods of child protection in the cocoa supply chain – an effort that may be a cornerstone of henceforth achieving a sustainable sector.
Voices for ICI
“ICI is a foundation in which we believe, a foundation that is greatly involved in our sector and with whom we shall soon intensify our partnership. ICI will train our operatives on issues relating to child labour. We shall work together on schooling for children, and on greater independence for women. We are delighted to be able to draw inspiration from ICI’s professionalism and diligence at work.”

Massandje Touré-Litsé
General Director of the Conseil du Café-Cacao, Côte d’Ivoire

“I am very happy with my new school. Here, I will learn my lessons and study hard, in order to become a doctor like my dad.”

Odjé Daphné
Jeanne Epiphanie
10 years, Petit Odinné Primary School, Côte d’Ivoire

“As a founding member of the International Cocoa Initiative, MARS has consistently valued and benefitted from ICI’s knowledge and expertise in tackling child labour in cocoa. Most recently, ICI has greatly assisted the industry’s collective efforts by ensuring that our CocoaAction strategy integrates tried and tested good practices for community development and child protection. As a result, our positive impact on farming families and their children will be maximised.”

Barry Parkin
Mars Chief Sustainability Officer and CocoaAction Chairman

“Before ICI provided our school with desks, children were stacked on their old benches by four or five. Sometimes they would even fall from their seats because it was so tight. Since we have the new desks, the school attendance has increased and the pupils can focus better. The teachers can also move through the classroom and go from child to child. In the future, we would like to construct an additional classroom, install a school library and also provide laptops, so that the children can learn about computer sciences.”

Georgina Donkor
Headmistress Primary School Nsata Subriso, Ghana

“ICI represents a powerful platform for Save the Children’s engagement with the private sector, with the aim of advancing children’s rights in the chocolate and cocoa industry. ICI’s strategic goal to promote child protection in rural communities, while also promoting a broader child rights approach in the industry through the Children’s Rights and Business Principles, means that we share similar visions. By uniting our skill-sets and our fields of influence, we will turn those visions into a transformative reality.”

Mattias Forsberg
Senior Child Rights and Business Advisor, Save the Children, Sweden

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Mattias Forsberg
Senior Child Rights and Business Advisor, Save the Children, Sweden
Guided by the principle of “shared responsibility”, ICI counts some of the largest chocolate companies, traders and processors among its members and partners, as well as UN bodies (ILO and UNICEF), civil society organisations and a trade union from Ghana.

In 2015 we welcomed three new contributing partners – Tony’s Chocolonely, Guittard Chocolate and Beyond the Bean’s “Zuma” - innovative chocolate companies with a clear vision for sustainable cocoa production. Their membership confirms our potential to bring all hands on deck to scale-up our collective impact.

Board Members

Contributing Partners

Board advisor
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<th>2015 Financial Statement</th>
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