

ICI summary of European Commission report “Ending child labour and promoting sustainable cocoa production in Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana”

July 2021

ABOUT THE STUDY

A [study](#) financed by the European Commission entitled “Ending child labour and promoting sustainable cocoa production in Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana”, carried out in 2019 and published on July 22nd 2021¹, indicates that while a reduction in child labour can be observed in certain regions of Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana, and more specifically among households in which initiatives to address child labour have been implemented, child labour in areas that are not yet covered by such initiatives has generally increased together with the inflation of cocoa production and the cost of labour. Overall, child labour in cocoa producing areas in these two countries has not substantially decreased over the last 10 years.

Based on a detailed analysis of the root causes of child labour, the objective of the study is to propose solutions to address them. It is based on desk-review of relevant documents and interviews conducted with 137 individuals from 100 organisations representing cocoa and chocolate companies, governments (national, EU), the UN, international foundations and NGOs as well as workers’ and employers’ organisations. The below provides a summary of the most relevant findings of the report.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

The report recognises that ending child labour and promoting sustainable cocoa production has proven to be more complex than anticipated. Acknowledging the significant efforts undertaken, the report concludes on the following three key requirements to be met:

- 1) Greater integration of child labour initiatives into a functioning institutional support system.
- 2) Develop a wider systems-based approach.
- 3) Greater focus on poverty reduction, education for children/youth, gender equality and deforestation.

KEY CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED

The following 14 challenges related to the elimination of child labour are detailed in the report:

Challenge	Description
Poverty of cocoa farmer households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low farm gate prices. However, increasing prices alone will not solve the child labour issue. • Lack of income diversification from sources other than cocoa. • Low farm yields per hectare due to aging trees, infertile soil and outdated production methods.
Weak institutional environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child labour initiatives have been implemented within low technical and logistical environments and have not been sufficiently integrated into national policies and programmes.

¹ The report takes into account the findings of the ILO-UNICEF study “Child labour - global estimates 2020, trends and the road forward” published on June 10th 2021

Weak enforcement of legal and regulatory frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited child protection law enforcement.
Lack of access to quality child protection services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of government-led child labour identification and remediation systems at scale, including birth registration. Lack of integrated child protection and due diligence mechanisms.
Lack of access to quality education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are gaps in access to quality education, including vocational training.
Lack of decent work opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited access to decent work opportunities, is exacerbated by gaps in the provision of technical vocational education and skills training for older children and youth, especially in the agricultural sector.
Limited access to social protection and health services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services are unavailable, especially in far away and difficult to access areas.
Lack of sufficient and quality physical infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient and low-quality infrastructure (roads, schools, water sanitation, etc), resulting in reluctance for children to attend school.
Internal and cross-border migration and trafficking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to poverty in Burkina Faso, Mali and other regions of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana.
Weak farmer-based organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient farmer-based organisations and with limited effectiveness, thus making it difficult to provide the right support to smallholder farmers.
Deforestation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associated with poverty and the need to increase production with links to child labour.
Limited coverage of due diligence mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> So far, due diligence systems are reported to cover 10-20% of cocoa producing areas, meaning that efforts to identify, monitor and remediate child labour remain limited. Also, efforts for ongoing due diligence could be better coordinated and integrated with national systems.
Limited attention to social inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited attention to gender and inclusion of other vulnerable groups in the development and implementation of child labour programs.
Socio-cultural attitudes, customs and practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combined with poverty, result in a reliance on child labour as a fall-back option instead of hiring adult labour.

PROPOSED INTEGRATED SOLUTIONS

Building on the identified challenges, the report puts forward a set of inter-related solutions.

Overarching

Solution	Description
Multi-stakeholder process platforms established and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop multistakeholder processes at international (e.g EU Sustainable Cocoa Initiative), national (e.g., PPP, Children First in Cocoa Framework) and local level. Ensure effective coordinated implementation and horizontal communication.

functioning at all levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop integrated area-based approaches at decentralised level.
Adopt systems approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a systems approach guide. Based on continuous improvement of initiatives. Implement methods for quantitative and qualitative data gathering.
Operationalised Results Based Management System (RBMS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a methodology guide for Results Based Management (RBMS) to track progress against objectives, review companies' due diligence and traceability methods and report on interventions. Develop legal penalties for non-compliance.

Specific

Solution	Description
Initiatives and partnerships of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana and those of corporate actors are aligned with international standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve/strengthen existing partnerships and cross-boarder agreements Align corporate practices, trade agreements, policies and initiatives with international conventions and frameworks, incl. HRDD guidance. Ensure that child labour elimination is integrated into all economic development policies and investment plans.
Strengthened enabling environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen regulatory frameworks and ensure improvement of enforcement mechanisms. Develop and expand targeted social protection mechanisms. Develop/adapt local development plans. Integrate Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation Systems (CLMRS) and similar initiatives into national child protection mechanisms while at the same time expanding the coverage of such initiatives. Conduct a capacity gap analysis of stakeholders. Strengthened infrastructures (especially roads, schools, health and child protection infrastructure), improve access to quality education and strengthen provisions of child protection services (incl. access to birth registration).
Improved decent work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure continuous price and income increase; Promote income diversification and support village savings and loans associations (VSLA) Provide for training on modern cocoa production methods.
Strengthen farmer-based organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen and scale-up farmer-based organisations. Strengthen community bodies, integrate actions into child protection systems.
Social behaviour change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a good social behaviour change communications (SBCC) guide.

Country-specific recommendations

Country	Description
Côte d'Ivoire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure functioning birth registrations mechanisms, especially for children with a migration background and orphans.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the management of cooperatives.
Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement institutional reforms within the COCOBOD and the CRIG (Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana). Analyse how illegal mining influences child labour in cocoa.

Stakeholder specific recommendations

Stakeholder	Description
Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They carry the ultimate responsibility for the well-being of their children, remain a key actor for the elimination of child labour. The ongoing discussions to strengthen public private cooperation in Côte d'Ivoire should be pursued, while their development in Ghana should be further supported. Strengthening the targeting of public policies and programmes following a risk-based approach, proposing ICI's community child labour risk calculator as an effective tool for doing so.
Private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All companies, large and small, should join forces towards eliminating child labour, including through the implementation of effective human rights due diligence initiatives. Focus should be on scaling-up current and planned systems such as the CLMRS, as well as other measures identified in the Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) Children First in Cocoa framework, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Learning and Education Facility (CLEF) Early Learning and Nutrition Facility (ELAN) School nutrition Birth registrations Education, incl. Technical and Vocational Education and Skills Training (TVEST)
Foundations, standard setting organisations, NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a key role to play in the implementation of human rights due diligence, especially at farm level. The report suggests that ICI's well-tested training material should be widely disseminated and stresses its role as a multi-stakeholder organisation in further acting as a bridge between government and other stakeholders.
International organisations and the European Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International organisations have the mandate to support the governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana in implementing relevant policies and strategies. The European Union, and more specifically the European Commission, is considered being in a good position to help tackling child labour. <p><u>Support human rights due diligence:</u> The European Union should support effective human rights due diligence through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing companies' due diligence, traceability and reporting methods Develop legal penalties for non-compliance Define standards that will be accepted as evidence of compliance <p>In this regard, the report acknowledges that major companies are already engaged in implementing specific programs such as CLMRS and insists on the need to scale-up efforts to cover the whole supply chain.</p> <p><u>Policy dialogue at national and international level</u> The European Union's policy engagement should be articulated around the following key areas:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring better coordination and alignment between national child protection initiatives (education, social protection, national child labour monitoring systems) and donor-funded initiatives. • Support the implementation of some key measures foreseen by the PPP, especially CLEF, ELAN, birth registration, social protection including targeted cash transfers. • Settle Partnership Agreements with cocoa producing countries with the objective of strengthening capacity for national child protection measures. This includes further support to various governmental services such as social workers, labour inspectors, police/justice officials, border officials, agricultural extension workers. • Support the development of National Child Labour Elimination Plans for Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana for the period 2021-2026. • Ensure the integration of the CLMRS and other mechanisms into national child labour systems. • Explore opportunities for innovative financial schemes such as Impact Bonds (DIB) and Sustainable Impact Bonds (SIB). • Development of planning of landscape approaches. • Act as mediator between all actors in view of aligning corporate practices in value chains and national priorities, e.g. through multi-stakeholder platforms such as the EU Cocoa Talks. <p>ICI, ILO, UNICEF, FAO and the World Bank are listed as key entities with which the EU should be directly collaborating with, in view of implementing concrete actions on the ground. It also describes ICI as the most directly focused organisation on the subject matter and highlights the role it can play in supporting the implementation of many of the recommendations, “notably in terms of mediating stakeholder dialogue, innovation, learning, advocacy, most of the capacity building required, as well as the due diligence and community development aspects”.</p>
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