

ICI summary of the Ghana Accelerated Action Plan Against Child Labour (National Plan of Action for Elimination of Child Labour) 2023 - 2027

Introduction

Building on the [2009-2015](#) and the [2017-2021 National Plans of Action](#) (NPA), the [Ghana Accelerated Action Plan Against Child Labour 2023-2027 \(GAAPACL\)](#) sets out the framework for the national strategic and implementation plan for combating the worst forms of child labour (WFLC) in all sectors. It identifies the need for updated measures based on lessons learned from previous NPAs with the objective of accelerating national actions and efforts towards the elimination of child labour. It also aims at helping to achieve the SDG 8.7 agenda within the required timeframe, in addition to, more largely, enabling the country to reach its aspiration of becoming a child labour free nation and an Alliance 8.7 pathfinder country.

This GAAPACL is intended to provide Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA), Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs), development partners, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), the private sector, researchers, and the general public with an overview of implementation approaches in various sectors of the Ghanaian society where child labour exists. It also offers policymakers and other decision makers an opportunity to better understand targeted interventions on child labour.

The document has been developed with support from UNICEF, ICI, Verité and LAWA Alumni Inc.

Progress so far and remaining challenges

The document notes that if the Government of Ghana, in partnership with industry and CSOs, has made efforts to tackle child labour over the past two decades, local institutional capacity remains limited, resources have been inadequate while child labour is emerging and/or growing in some sectors. The GAAPACL outlines progress made so far, such as

- **The ratification of international laws and Conventions** (such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and Recommendation (No. 146), the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) and Recommendation (No. 190), the ILO Forced Labour Convention (No 29) and the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention (No. 105), the ILO Convention on Labour Inspection (No. 81). However, enforcement of child labour and child protection laws has been challenging.
- **Legal frameworks** for the elimination of child labour and the protection of children in Ghana.
- **Coordination of interventions by** various ministries and/or through inter-ministerial collaboration, including the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR); the Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development (MLGDRD); the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA); the Ministry of Interior; the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General; the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection; the Ministry of Education; and finally the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD).
- **Ghana Child Labour Monitoring System (GCLMS)**, under the MELR. It defines the child labour monitoring process that ensure that observation is in place and coordinated, noting also that so far,

private and CSO players used their own monitoring system (CLMRS) without any alignment with the GCLMS.

- **The Integrated Social Services (ISS)** and the **Social Welfare Information Management System (SWIMS)**, developed with support from UNICEF, USAID, FCDO (Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office) and Global Affairs Canada with the objective of strengthening linkages between social protection, child protection and health service providers.
- **Child Labour Free Zones (CLFZ)**, whereby protocols and guidelines have been developed and tested in certain regions which are currently being revised.

Vision and core principals

Findings from the review of the previous NPAs were discussed with a variety of stakeholders, with the support of UNICEF and ICI, and led to the identification of relevant child-rights based and child-centred interventions and approaches to prioritise to contribute to the **vision of “empowered communities where child labour is eliminated, and children reach their full potential”**, and with the objective of **reducing the child labour incidence rate from 27.9% according to MICS 2018 to 19% in 2027**.

The interventions shall align with the following **core principles** to which stakeholders have to adhere and make commitments to:

- Consider coordinated, harmonised and inter-sectoral approaches to effectively address the root causes of child labour in all its forms in various sectors;
- Build capacity of the frontline service providers and foster local and community-led actions;
- Build institutional capacity and systems to oversee, coordinate and implement actions nationwide;
- Leverage innovative public private partnerships through which technical, financial and logistical resources will be pooled;
- Deploy social behaviour change communication tools for norm changes, community engagement and empowerment;
- Facilitate Research, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (RMEL) for scaling-up of best practices and sustainability, including by using the Ghana Child Labour Monitoring System (GCLMS)¹ or other Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS) linked to the GCLMS as a way to harmonise data collection and align remediation interventions and strengthen its interoperability with the SWIMS².

Strategic objectives and indicators

The GAAPACL defines six strategic objectives and a related M&E framework with specific indicators for each of the expected outcomes, including, among others:

Strategic Objective	Examples of indicators
1. Strengthened institutional capacity of MELR and other relevant agencies to oversee the elimination of child labour in Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of identified stakeholders reporting on child labour activities to the MELR. • Proportion of identified priority sectors covered in annual national child labour reports. • Proportion of organisations adopting proper programme design and implementation methods for child labour interventions.

¹ Owned by the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR)

² Led by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection

2. Effective coordination of multi-stakeholder efforts on child labour and child protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of sub-national structures (regional, district and community structures) that are coordinating implementation of anti-child labour and forced labour activities. • Proportion of government MDAs, MMDAs and Development Partners who are using GAAPACL in planning and implementing child labour interventions.
3. Improved financing, resource mobilisation and allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % increase in government resource allocation for work on child labour • % increase in development partner resource for work on child labour
4. Improved quality and delivery of integrated social services, including child protection, social protection, education, decent youth employment and skills development support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of identified frontline workers with improved knowledge on the usage of standard procedures and child labour related information management systems. • Roll out the implementation of GCLMS and ensure its interoperability with private sectors CLMRS and SWIMS • Proportion of districts using the information management systems (GCLMS, SWIMS) for their work on child labour. • Proportion of identified children in child labour successfully withdrawn. • Proportion of children and families at risk of child labour provided remediation. • Proportion of identified communities with improved educational infrastructure and learning outcomes. • Proportion of identified and eligible children who have undergone training to enhance employability.
5. Strengthened communities, increased awareness raising and behaviour change to prevent and remediate child labour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of communities implementing Community Action Plans on Child Labour • # of communities declared as Child Labour Free Zones
6. Improved research, documentation and knowledge sharing of best practices and innovations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of organizations reporting the adoption of best practices from research and knowledge shared in designing programmes and approaches to combat child labour. • Proportion of groups adopting labour savings technologies that reduces propensity to rely on children for additional labour.

Governance, operational and coordination arrangement

As sector ministry and coordinator of all the child labour efforts, the MELR will guarantee the strategic direction and have oversight responsibility over the National Child Labour Coordinating Secretariat (NCLCS), a new body intended to replace the Child Labour Unit (CLU) of the labour department. The National Steering Committee on Child Labour (NSCCL), an inter-ministerial committee with the MERL as the Chairman, will be the highest decision-making body over the NCLCS. It is also expected to ensure that all partners consult the GAAPACL in their programming to avoid duplication of efforts, ineffective coordination and waste of resources.

Harmonised planning and reporting tools will be developed for implementing partners and stakeholders to use in planning and reporting their child labour actions to the NCLCS.