



Learning into action:

Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation Systems in cocoa

This brief provides recommendations for implementing effective Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation Systems (CLMRS). It draws on over 10 years of experience implementing CLMRS in cocoa-growing communities in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. The good practices outlined in this brief can be adapted and applied to other supply chains where commodities are grown by smallholder farmers.

What are CLMRS?

Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation Systems (CLMRS) are child-centred support systems. They are designed to identify children in, or at risk of, child labour, provide support to improve their situation, and follow their progress over time. CLMRS aim to prevent and reduce child labour, mitigate its harmful effects, and ultimately prevent it from being passed down to the next generation. CLMRS include interventions which strengthen the protective environment around children and tackle the root causes of child labour.

Child labour monitoring systems were first developed in the 1990s by the International Labour Organisation. Today, the approach is used in many parts of the world by governments, civil society organisations and businesses. Many cocoa and chocolate companies are using CLMRS as part of their efforts to tackle child labour in their supply chains.

How do CLMRS address child labour?

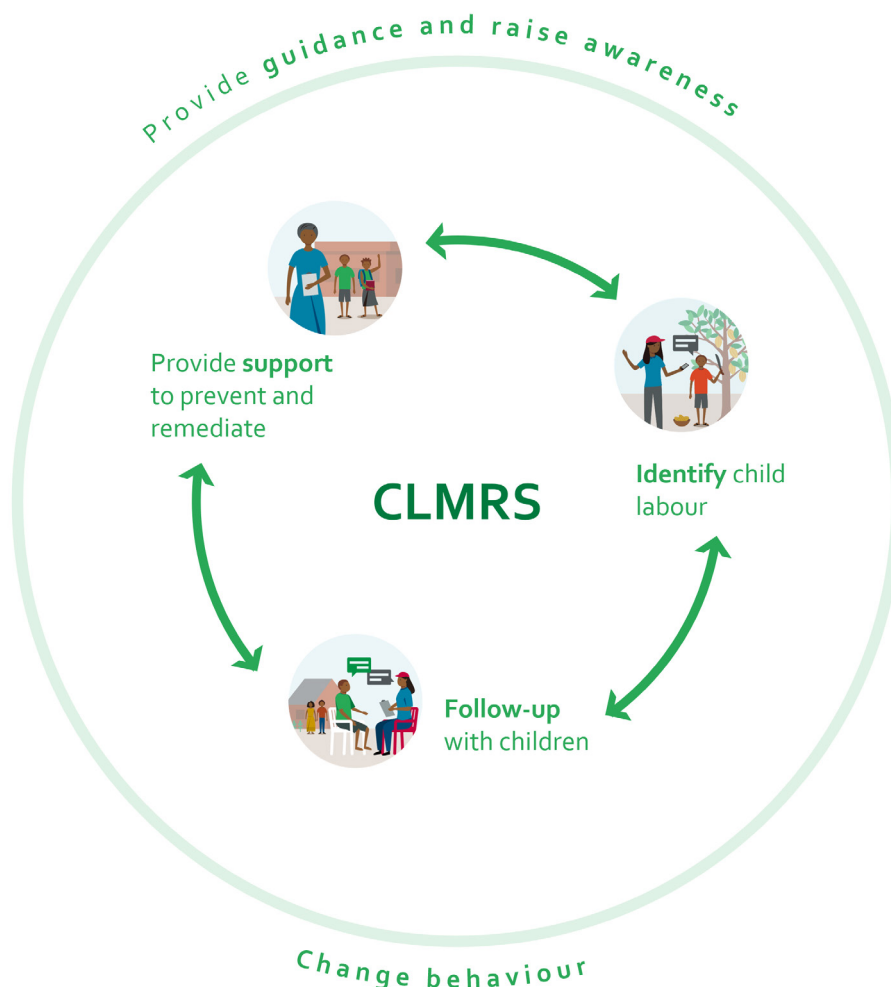
CLMRS provide ongoing guidance and support to enable households to change their behaviour in ways that better protect children from child labour.

This ongoing guidance and support is channelled through CLMRS Personnel, sometimes known as monitors, agents or field officers, who visit households, raise awareness of the dangers of child labour, and identify children in child labour. If a child is found in, or at risk of, child labour, CLMRS Personnel record it in a database, and support is provided to the child, their household and/or the community. This support aims to encourage households to stop child labour, promote an environment that supports children's healthy development, and help households manage without resorting to child labour. In parallel, CLMRS Personnel

conduct regular follow-up visits to guide households and monitor the situation of children until they are no longer found in or at risk of child labour.

A CLMRS must be able to provide support to prevent and remediate child labour, identify child labour, and follow up with children on a long-term basis. In parallel, CLMRS raise awareness and provide guidance to cocoa-growing households to change behaviour.

Each of the actions of a CLMRS contributes to guiding and supporting households through the process of behaviour change. They are part of a cyclical and iterative process, and there is no fixed order in which they must occur.



What works to tackle child labour?



Activities to encourage households to stop child labour

- Raising awareness and changing social norms
- Strengthening parental literacy and skills
- Promoting gender equality



Activities that support children's healthy development

- Increasing access to education
- Improving the quality of education
- Supporting access to apprenticeships



Activities that support households to do without child labour

- Strengthening household resilience
- Increasing access to adult labour

Why invest in a CLMRS?

- **Reduce child labour.** By addressing the root causes of child labour and providing ongoing guidance and support for households to change their behaviour, CLMRS can help reduce child labour. Data from ICI-implemented CLMRS show that, on average, up to a third of children found in child labour are no longer in child labour after two consecutive follow-up visits within a year.
- **Mitigate harmful effects.** The earlier a child is removed from child labour the less harmful effects it will have on their development. CLMRS enable early identification and provide protective support, minimising harm to children and helping them thrive.
- **Protect children.** By supporting households and communities and promoting the healthy development of children, CLMRS can make communities more protective of children and their rights.
- **Break the cycle.** Child labour is a symptom and a cause of intergenerational poverty. CLMRS encourage a change in cultural norms that helps prevent child labour from being passed down to the next generation and supports children to reach their potential.
- **Meet due diligence obligations.** CLMRS help companies meet their due diligence obligations of identifying, preventing and remediating child labour in agricultural supply chains, and reporting on the impacts of their efforts.

What works to implement effective CLMRS?



Invest in people.

CLMRS Personnel are the cornerstone of a CLMRS. They provide ongoing guidance and support that helps households change behaviours regarding child labour. Investing in professionalising the role, providing regular training and coaching, and recruiting more women as CLMRS Personnel can significantly increase the impact of a CLMRS and help more children to stop working.



Encourage building positive and enabling relationships between CLMRS Personnel and households.

Changing behaviours and social norms linked to child labour takes time. A positive and continuous relationship allows CLMRS Personnel to guide households through this process and offer encouragement and new perspectives. Assigning one CLMRS Officer to a household, instead of having different people at each stage, helps build trust and contributes to households feeling supported over time. Read [ICI's learning report](#) to understand how personal relationships affect interactions between CLMRS Personnel and farmers and their children.



Streamline awareness-raising efforts.

Awareness-raising is one of the most effective ways of tackling child labour. It is an integral part of the ongoing guidance and support a CLMRS provides to households at each visit. Using the local language and adapting the content to each household and community helps get the message across more effectively. Likewise, adapting the format to the context and finding innovative ways to raise awareness can help engage communities more effectively. Access ICI's awareness-raising materials [here](#).



Provide holistic support.

When parents or caregivers make decisions about whether to engage their children in child labour, it is often the result of various factors. Support should focus on addressing multiple root causes of child labour and be tailored to meet the specific needs and circumstances of each child, household and/or community. It should be viewed as a component of the ongoing behaviour change process rather than a one-off action that can remediate child labour on its own.



Communicate around support.

When a household receives support, such as help with school-related costs, it must be accompanied by clear messages to encourage behaviour change. Households should understand that they receive such support to better protect their children.



Ensure regular follow-up.

Follow-up visits play a crucial role in encouraging and consolidating a household's decision not to involve their child in child labour and are a key element of ongoing guidance and support. They also help monitor a child's situation, assess the effectiveness of previous support, and identify whether additional support is needed.



Use child-centred interviewing techniques.

Use child-centred interviewing techniques to collect accurate information regarding a child's situation and ensure they receive the appropriate support. Training CLMRS Personnel in effective child-centred interviewing techniques, adapting questions to the child's age, and using innovative approaches is key as obtaining accurate information about children's involvement in child labour is a challenging exercise.



Invest in data management.

Invest in data management to monitor a child's situation over time, plan interventions based on verifiable information and evaluate their impact on child labour and child protection. Standardised data collection forms and digital tools help ensure consistency in data collection and contribute to centralising information both at the company and national levels. At the company level this enables CLMRS Personnel and program managers to access up-to-date data, allowing for timely decision-making and better coordination of ongoing interactions with households. At the national level, centralisation supports better coordination of national plans and policies. To support this, ICI has developed standardised data collection tools; [contact us for personalised support](#).

As we continue to scale up CLMRS, additional efforts in these areas are essential to make these systems more effective and impactful.





Want to learn more?

Learning into action: [Recruiting and retaining female agents](#)

Learning report: [Child labour monitoring through locally based agents](#)

Effectiveness review of CLMRS in the West African Cocoa Sector

[Awareness-raising materials](#)