

Handbook for community-based grievance committees to address forced labour risks in cocoa

International COCOA Initiative

The work you do as a **community-based grievance committee** is important to help protect human rights and labour rights in your community.

This handbook aims to support you in your role as a member of the community committee.

The handbook includes the following sections:

1. What is the role of the community committee
2. Handling grievances
    - How to handle grievances
    - Contacts for referral
    - How to keep information confidential
    - How to fill in the grievance recording workbook
    - How to assess if a case involves forced labour
    - Examples of common grievances
3. Conducting prevention activities
    - How to raise awareness
    - How to encourage contract signature
    - How to fill in the activity register
4. Annexes
    - Brochure to raise awareness about contract benefits
    - Grievance register and activity register forms

1. What is the role of the committee

As a member of the committee, your role is to help protect human rights and labour rights in your community. The committee does this through the following activities:

Receive and handle grievances



You listen to farm-related grievances from community members, such as disputes between farmers and employers, and work to resolve them or refer cases when needed.

> Go to page 6 for more guidance

Conduct prevention activities



Raise awareness about labour rights

You organise awareness-raising sessions to inform community members about their rights and responsibilities.

> Go to page 39 for more guidance

Facilitate contract signing between workers and farm owners

You encourage workers and farm owners to sign contracts to prevent disputes and misunderstandings.

> Go to page 40 for more guidance





2. Receiving and handling grievances

How to handle grievances

Receive a grievance from a worker, a farm owner or a witness or a community member

Explain to them **who will have access to their information** and **what will happen next**.

Tell them that the committee's help is **free of charge**.

Inform the committee chair about the case — *Immediately*

The secretary **records** the grievance in the grievance recording workbook

If the complainant is concerned about disclosing their identity, the secretary fill in their initials. Go to page 10 for more guidance.

The president organises a meeting with the committee to **assess** the case — *Within 48h*

At least **5 members** should meet in person. If 5 members are not available to meet in person, the chair contacts those who aren't available by phone.

The committee assesses the case **anonymously**.

① Does the person face immediate danger to their safety?

Signs of immediate danger:
- Physical or sexual violence
- Cannot leave / restricted movement
- Identity documents taken
- Threats (e.g. deportation)
- Forced substance use
- Feels unsafe

NO / YES

② Does the case fall outside the committee's scope of action?

Within the scope:
- Work disputes (wages, contracts, conditions)
- Harassment or abuse
- Child labour, child protection, or child trafficking (if applicable)

Outside the scope:
- Cooperative-related disputes
- Community-level disputes

NO / YES

③ Is the case too complex for the committee to handle?

A case can be too complex if:
- Many people involved
- Multiple issues combined
- Requires specialised support
- Sensitive cases (children or adults in situation of vulnerability)

Handle the case internally — NO / YES

Refer the case to the relevant actors

The committee meets with all the parties involved in the case individually to **listen** to all perspectives and gather additional information — *Within 72h*

All committee members should be involved in handling the case. If this is not possible, at least **5 committee** members should be involved.

Exceptional: If the complainant is concerned about disclosing their identity, a committee of 3 members can be appointed to handle the case. If the complainant is not comfortable with this solution and wants to remain fully anonymous, the committee can only play an advisory role at this point. The secretary should fill out the register anyways.

The committee organises joint **mediation** meetings between the parties involved — *Within 48h of individual meetings*

Mediation may require several meetings. The committee meets as much as needed.

Exceptional: If parties do not wish to meet jointly, the committee organises separate meetings.

The committee, together with the parties, jointly develop a **response plan** with agreed solutions — *within 24h of the last mediation meeting*

The response plan may include one or more of the following measures:

- Signing a contract
- Financial compensation
- Restitution of wages owed
- Termination of the working relationship
- Share-cropping arrangements (farm or beans)
- Provision or return of equipment
- Return of identity documents
- Referral

Members **support and follow up** on the implementation of the response plan

The committee **closes** the case

If at any stage parties refuse to engage or cooperate, **refer** the case to the relevant actors

What to do when **referring** a case?

1. Inform the complainant or affected person, when safe to do so
2. Refer the case
3. Inform ICI staff
4. Inform the coop or LBC (if the case is against a coop or LBC member). See page 9 for more information
5. Follow-up with the complainant or affected person

Contacts for referral

Some grievances cannot be handled by the committee and must be referred to the appropriate authorities.

You can fill in the contact details of the authorities or partners you may need to contact or refer cases to.

Child protection services / Social Welfare Department

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Labour inspector

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Police

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Health services

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Human rights commission

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ICI

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Other

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In cases of immediate danger, referral must be made without delay

Collaborating with cooperatives, buyers and LBCs

The committee might collaborate with cooperatives, buyers and LBCs and share information about cases with them in three different situations.

① Referring a case

If a case falls outside of the committee's scope of action and is linked to their operations, the committee may refer the case to the cooperative, buyer or LBC, so they manage it internally.

In this situation, the committee may share all the details about the case once the complainant has consented.

② Informing about a referral

If a grievance that has been referred to the relevant authorities involves a member of a cooperative, buyer or LBC, the committee may inform the management about the referral.

When informing about a referral:

- Inform the complainant before sharing information
- Share only: the type of issue and the name of the person against whom the grievance was raised
- Do not share information about the complainant, unless they have given consent
- Only the chairperson or secretary should share information

③ Sharing general information

Beyond referrals, the committee may also share general anonymised information with cooperatives, buyers, or LBCs, such as:

- the **number** of cases received against their members
- the **types** of issues reported

Contacts of cooperatives, buyers or Licensed Buying Companies

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How to keep information confidential

When handling grievances, you deal with very **sensitive information**. It is important to protect this information to **keep people safe** and **maintain trust** in the committee.



When receiving a grievance...

- ✓ Explain clearly how the information will be used
- ✓ Reassure the complainant that their information will be protected



When assessing the case...

- ✓ Only the receiving member, chair and secretary know personal details
- ✓ Other members only know the type of issue, not identities



When discussing cases...

- ✓ Discuss cases in a private setting
- ✗ Do not talk about cases outside the committee
- ✗ Do not share information with friends, family, or community members



When handling documents and records...

- ✓ Keep grievance forms in a safe place
- ✗ Do not leave documents unattended
- ✗ Do not take photos or share documents outside official procedures



When sharing information externally...

- ✓ Share information only when necessary
- ✓ Share only with authorised actors (e.g. authorities, ICI, cooperative)
- ✗ Do not share the identity of the complainant without their consent (unless required to protect their safety)
- ✗ Do not let external individuals take photos

If the complainant wants to remain anonymous...

- Do not record personal or identifying details in the grievance recording workbook.
- Offer the complainant that their case is handled by a smaller group of 3 members instead of 5. If the complainant is not comfortable with this solution and wants to remain fully anonymous, the committee can only play an advisory role at this point.

Confidentiality charter

As a member of the committee, you commit to the following confidentiality charter.

Preamble

In the course of your duties as members of the committee, you are required to collect and manage sensitive information, including details related to rights violations, testimonies, and personal data concerning victims, witnesses, or other stakeholders. To ensure the protection of these individuals, safeguard yourselves, and preserve the integrity of the committee, each member commits to signing and strictly adhering to this Confidentiality Charter.

1. Absolute confidentiality

I commit not to disclose any confidential information to which I have access in the course of my activities within the committee, unless expressly authorized by the persons concerned or in case of a legal obligation.

2. Respect for dignity and privacy

I commit to protecting the identity and privacy of victims, witnesses, and individuals involved in cases handled by the committee, and to ensuring their protection against any form of retaliation.

3. Non-disclosure of sensitive information

I commit not to reproduce, transfer, or use for personal or external purposes any information gathered in the course of the committee's activities.

4. Protection of documents and materials

I commit to keeping any documents or materials containing confidential data in a secure manner and to returning them to the committee upon termination of my duties.

5. Individual responsibility and conflict of interest

As all complaints are handled with complete impartially, I commit to declaring any private or professional interest that could bias my judgment, and to recuse myself from any analysis or decision-making related to a case in which I am directly involved.

I acknowledge that any breach of this charter may endanger individuals' safety and compromise the committee's credibility, and may result in disciplinary measures.

6. Exclusion from the committee

In the event of non-compliance with this confidentiality charter, I understand that I may be excluded from the committee.

Committee members can add their names and signatures here. If members leave the committee, cross them out and add the names and signatures of the new members.

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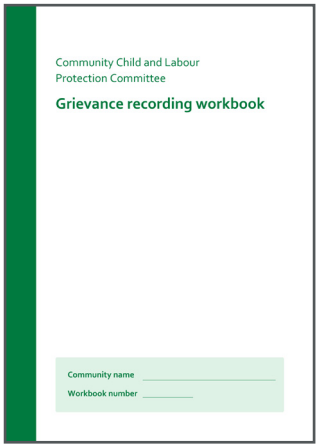
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How to fill in the grievance recording workbook

What is the workbook?

The grievance recording workbook is used to record and **track all grievances** received by the committee.



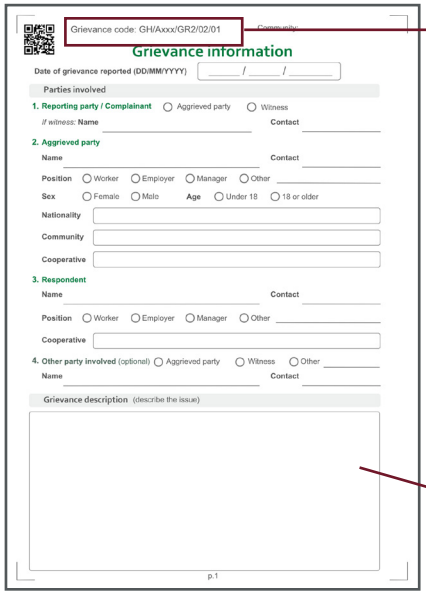
What is inside the workbook?

It is made up of **grievance forms**.

Each form is made up of 4 pages.

How to fill out the workbook?

Complete one grievance form for each grievance received.

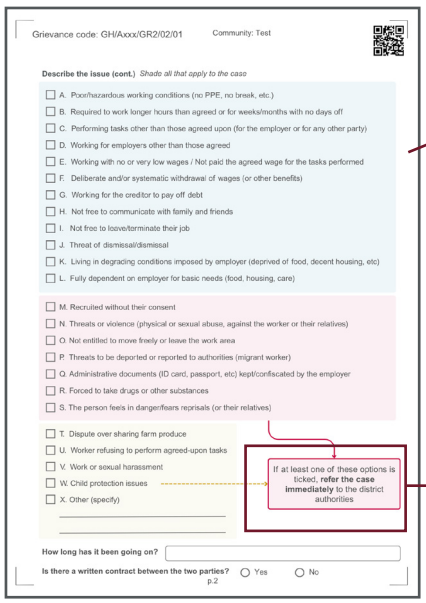




Each form has a **unique grievance code.** Share it with the complainant.

Fill in the information on the **people** involved.

- *If the complainant is concerned about disclosing their identity, only fill in their initials.*
- *If they want to remain anonymous, don't fill any identifying information.*
- *If more than one aggrieved party, add the details of other parties in the description box below.*

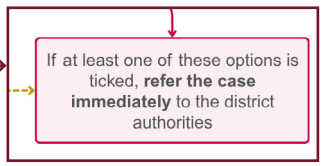


Describe the **grievance**.

If the complainant wants to remain anonymous, specify it in the description box.

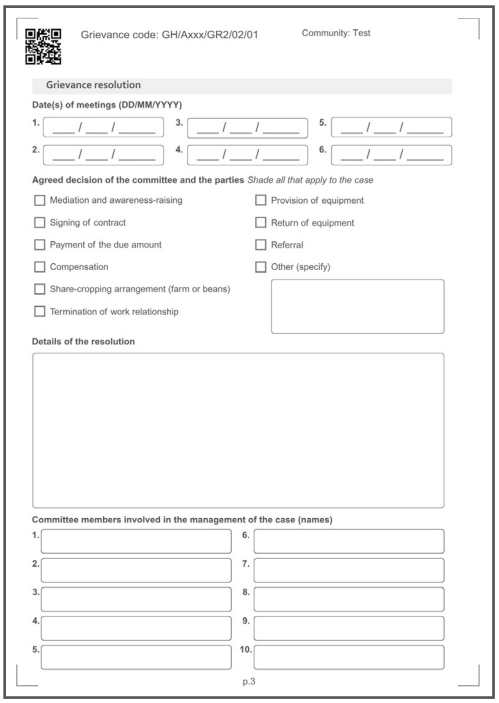
Page 2 includes a list of possible situations. Shade the options that best describe the case.

> If you are unsure which option to tick, go to **page 17** for more guidance



The form points out to which cases need to be **referred.**

Fill in information about **resolution** and **follow-up**.


Grievance code: GH/Axxx/GR2/02/01 Community: Test

Grievance resolution

Date(s) of meetings (DD/MM/YYYY)

1. ___/___/_____ 3. ___/___/_____ 5. ___/___/_____

2. ___/___/_____ 4. ___/___/_____ 6. ___/___/_____

Agreed decision of the committee and the parties *Shade all that apply to the case*

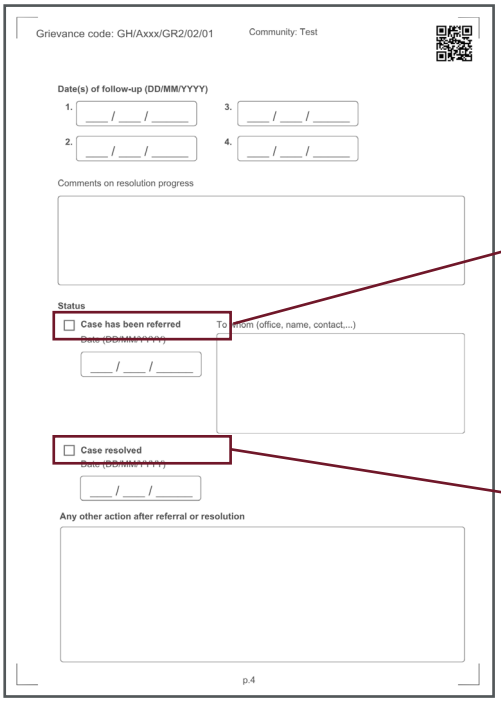
- ☐ Mediation and awareness-raising
- ☐ Signing of contract
- ☐ Payment of the due amount
- ☐ Compensation
- ☐ Share-cropping arrangement (farm or beans)
- ☐ Termination of work relationship
- ☐ Provision of equipment
- ☐ Return of equipment
- ☐ Referral
- ☐ Other (specify)

Details of the resolution

Committee members involved in the management of the case (names)

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

p.3


Grievance code: GH/Axxx/GR2/02/01 Community: Test

Date(s) of follow-up (DD/MM/YYYY)

1. ___/___/_____ 3. ___/___/_____

2. ___/___/_____ 4. ___/___/_____

Comments on resolution progress

Status

☐ Case has been referred To whom (office, name, contact,...)

Date (DD/MM/YYYY)

___/___/_____

☐ Case resolved

Date (DD/MM/YYYY)

___/___/_____

Any other action after referral or resolution

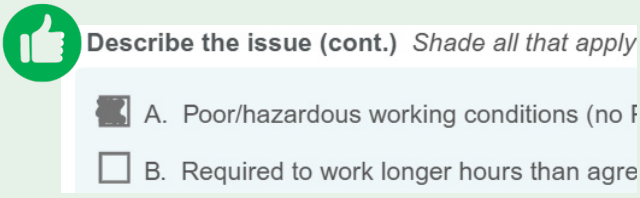
p.4

Shade the **referred** box only when authorities have acknowledged the case and are working on it. The case can be considered “closed”.

Shade the **resolved** box only when the solution has been implemented. The case can be considered “closed”.

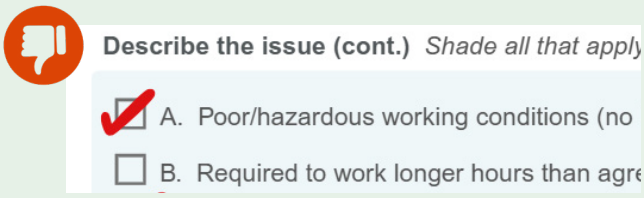
How to complete the form correctly?

- ✓ Write with **black or blue pen**
- ✓ Write in **CAPITAL LETTERS**
- ✓ **Shade in** the boxes **(do not tick or cross)**


Describe the issue (cont.) *Shade all that apply*

A. Poor/hazardous working conditions (no

B. Required to work longer hours than agre


Describe the issue (cont.) *Shade all that apply*

A. Poor/hazardous working conditions (no

B. Required to work longer hours than agre

- ✓ **Record information as narrated** by the complainant
- ✓ **Update the form** as the case progresses, even when the case has been referred
- ✓ **Record actions taken and outcomes**
- ✗ If the complainant wants to remain anonymous, **do not record personal details** (name, contact details, nationality)

How to assess if a case involves forced labour

What is forced labour?



Involuntary work

Any work undertaken **without the free and informed consent** of the worker.

Work that a worker has not freely chosen, and would like to refuse or escape from but cannot.

+

Coercion

The means used to **compel someone** to work without their free and informed consent.

The "force" preventing a worker from refusing or fleeing a job when they wish to do so.

Involuntary work and **coercion** can occur at any stage of the employment cycle: during recruitment, on the job or at the time of desired separation.

When is a case forced labour?

Forced recruitment - Was the worker recruited against their will or through deception?

NO / YES

Involuntary work at recruitment - Was the worker recruited under conditions they did not freely agree to? *For example: deceptive or false promises or recruitment linked to debt*

NO / YES

Involuntary work during employment - Is the worker being made to work under conditions they did not freely agree to? *For example: hazardous or degrading conditions, excessive working hours, abusive demands, degrading work-related living conditions, sexual abuse*

NO / YES

Involuntary work at separation - Is the worker prevented from leaving the job or ending the employment? *For example: withholding wages, intimidation, debt*

NO / YES

Not forced labour

Coercion - Is the worker being threatened, pressured, controlled, or intimidated?

NO / YES

Not forced labour

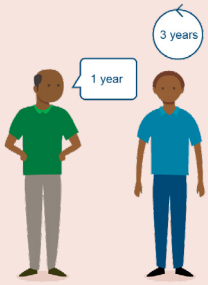
Forced labour

Source: International Labour Organisation, Hard to see, Harder to Count: Handbook on forced labour surveys

What are signs of forced labour?

The International Labour Organization has identified common **signs or clues** that may indicate forced labour. On their own, these signs or indicators may represent labour rights violations. When several signs or clues occur together, they may indicate forced labour.

Signs of involuntary work



Deception

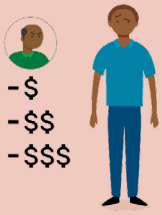


Abusive working and living conditions

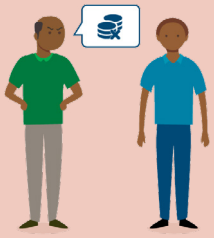


Excessive overtime

Signs of involuntary work *or* coercion



Debt bondage



Withholding of wages

Signs of coercion



Physical and sexual violence



Restriction of movement



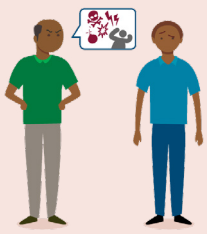
Abuse of vulnerability



Retention of identity documents



Isolation



Intimidation and threats

How to identify a case of forced labour?

① Check if there is a problem

Ask yourself 3 simple questions:

- Is the worker unable to leave freely?
- Is the worker afraid?
- Is the situation unfair or harmful?

If yes = potential problem

② Look at the combination of signs

A single sign may point to a labour rights problem. However, when several signs occur together, they may indicate a situation of forced labour.

- 1 sign = potential problem > warning!
- 2 or more signs = high risk / serious problem > assess the situation carefully
- Not working voluntarily + coercion or pressure = forced labour

③ Understand the situation fully

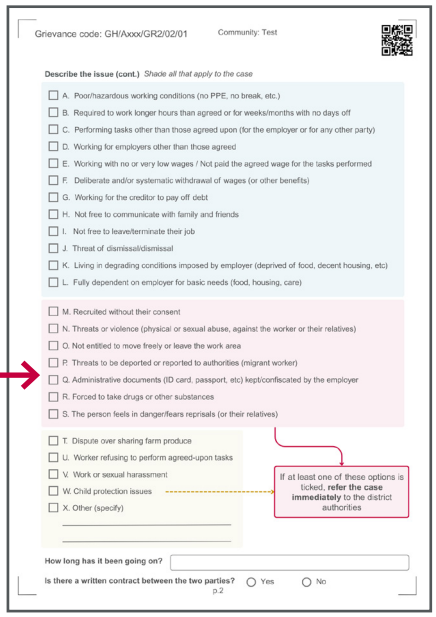
Every situation is different: Don't judge too quickly, listen to the person and ask questions

If in doubt...

- Discuss it within the committee
- Seek advice from ICI, the labour office, or other relevant actors
- **If the person is in danger**, **alert the authorities** immediately

Page 2 of the grievance form helps you identify and note down all the issues linked to a specific grievance. By shading all the issues that apply, you can better understand the nature of the case and decide how it should be handled.

The form also helps you identify which cases must be referred to the relevant authorities. If the case includes any of the issues highlighted in **red**, it should be **referred immediately**.



Examples of common grievances

The examples in this section focus on labour-related grievances, particularly issues between workers and employers. However, the committee may also receive other grievances linked to farming, such as complaints about the unsafe use or disposal of pesticides that affects neighbouring households, farms or water sources. The examples will help you understand which situations in the grievance form correspond to different types of labour-related grievances.

A. Poor or hazardous working conditions



Example

Kofi is 19 years old and works on a cocoa farm. He has asked his manager for protective equipment, but the manager said it is too expensive and told him to spray chemicals without gloves or a mask.

The manager closely monitors Kofi throughout the day and does not allow him to take breaks.

One day, Kofi becomes ill after inhaling the chemicals. Despite this, he continues working because the manager expects him to finish his tasks.

This is a case of **abusive working conditions.**

Other examples of abusive or hazardous working conditions

- Working conditions that pose serious risks to the health and safety of the worker
- Degrading or humiliating working conditions
- Work involving risk of criminal conviction
- Work while seriously debilitated by sickness or injury

This is a sign of **involuntary work**

B. Required to work longer hours than agreed / No days off



Example

Ama was hired by a cocoa farmer with the agreement that she would work six days a week from 8:00 to 16:00.

However, during the harvest season, she is asked to work every single day, including Sundays, and to stay until late in the evening. She hasn't had a day off in over three weeks and is mentally and physically exhausted.

This is a case of **excessive overtime**.

Other examples of excessive overtime

- Working long hours leaving little or no time to rest
- Working all day without breaks
- Working every day for weeks or months without a day off

What does Ghanaian law say?

- A worker should not work more than 8 hours per day
- A worker should not work more than:
  40 hours per week over 5 days, or
  45 hours per week over 6 days
- Workers should have at least 11 hours of rest between working days
- Workers should have at least 1 full day off every week

This is a sign of **involuntary work**

C. Performing tasks not agreed to



Example

Yaw was employed to work on a cocoa farm. After a few weeks, his employer starts asking him to also take care of his maize farm. He is also regularly sent to fetch water and firewood for the employer's household. Yaw is thus conducting extra work tasks outside his regular job and workplace.

While these tasks were never part of his agreement, he continues to do them because he fears losing his job.

This is a case of abusive additional demands and of **abuse of vulnerability.**

This is a sign of **involuntary work**

D. Working for employers others than those agreed



Example

Akwesi was hired by Mr. Mensah to help maintain a cocoa farm. But soon after starting, Mr. Mensah sends him to work on a neighbour's farm as well. Akwesi doesn't know this other farm owner but he works there anyway, even though he never agreed to work for anyone else.

Akwesi is conducting this work outside his regular job and usual workplace and isn't paid extra for it.

These constitute abusive additional demands and an **abuse of vulnerability**.

This is a sign of **involuntary work**

E. Working with no or very low wages / Not paid the agreed wage



Example

Efua was promised 30 cedis per day for weeding and harvesting. After two weeks of work, her employer only pays her 10 cedis per day, claiming that the price of cocoa is low.

Efua feels deceived but does not know what to do, as she needs the money. She continues working, hoping the pay will improve, but it doesn't.

This is a case of **withholding of wages.**

What does Ghanaian law say?

In 2026, the legal daily minimum wage is set at GH₵21.77 for someone working full time.

This is a sign of **involuntary work**

F. Deliberate and/or systematic withdrawal of wages or benefits



Example 1

Emmanuel has been working on a cocoa farm for three months. His employer tells him that his wages will be kept safe and paid at the end of the season. When Emmanuel asks to leave the job early to take up another opportunity, the employer refuses and says he will not pay him if he leaves. Emmanuel feels trapped. If he quits, he loses three months' pay. So he stays, even though he wants to leave.



Example 2

Kwame works on a cocoa farm and is paid a monthly salary. At the end of the month, when he asks for his wages, his employer tells him that he must first take care of his sheep and go chop some wood. When Kwame refuses, the employer says he will not pay him unless he does the tasks. Kwame feels forced to do the work just to receive his rightful salary.

These two examples constitute withholding of wages.

These are signs of **coercion**

G. Working for the creditor to pay off debt



Example

Frank borrowed money to pay for his children' school fees. In return, he agreed to work on a cocoa farm to repay the debt. After several months of hard work, his employer tells him that the debt is still not paid because of "interest" and other costs.

Frank receives no payment for his work and does not know when the debt will be cleared.

This is a case of **debt bondage.**

Other examples of debt bondage

Debt may be considered abusive when:

- A worker takes a loan in exchange for work, and the debt increases due to high interest or additional costs
- The debt comes from recruitment fees or related costs that are illegal or too high
- The worker receives a salary advance from a recruiter or employer, but repayment takes a long time because the work is undervalued
- The debt is linked to unagreed or excessive charges or fines for supposed violations or failures

Did you know?

Even if a worker has a debt with their employer, they still have the right to be paid. There are 2 acceptable ways to repay debt:

- Repayment in instalments - The worker receives their full salary and repays a small agreed amount over time.
- Salary deductions - A fixed amount is deducted from the worker's salary, only if agreed.

These repayments should be reasonable (not more than 20-40% of the salary), so the worker can still meet their basic needs.

The repayment terms should be clearly agreed and recorded in writing, including the duration and amount.

This is a sign of **involuntary work**

H. Not free to communicate with family and friends



Example

Akua moves from another village to work on a cocoa farm. Her employer takes her phone, saying she is there to work and not to play. She is also not allowed to receive visitors or speak with people from the neighbouring village. Akua feels isolated and monitored, but she is afraid of losing her job if she does not follow these rules.

By restricting her communication, Akua is being isolated by her employer. This can lead to further abuse.

Isolation often constitutes a way to control the worker.

This is a sign of **coercion**

I. Not free to leave or terminate employment



Example

Osman has been working on a cocoa farm for 6 years. Over time, he realises that he is not able to save money due to his working conditions. He decides to leave the job at the end of the season. His employer is not happy with this decision. He threatens to report Osman to the police for theft and claims that Osman owes him money for tools and equipment.

Afraid of being arrested and thinking about his family, Osman feels he has no choice but to stay and continue working.

This constitutes **intimidation and threats**, preventing the worker from leaving.

This is a sign of **involuntary work**

J. Threat of dismissal or dismissal



Example

Clement is a migrant worker employed on a cocoa farm. His employer asks him to carry out additional work, which was not part of their agreement. Clement explains that he is not willing to do the extra work without additional pay. In response, the employer threatens to dismiss him without pay if he does not comply.

Clement depends on this job and cannot afford the journey back home. Afraid of losing his income, he feels forced to accept the task.

This is an **abuse of vulnerability**, through **intimidations and threats.**

Other examples of abuse of vulnerability

- Threat of dismissal, especially when the worker depends on the job for their livelihood or legal status
- Threat of losing housing provided by the employer
- Threat of losing access to land provided for cultivation
- Threat of deportation or being reported to the authorities

This is a sign of **coercion**

K. Living in degrading conditions imposed by the employer



Example

Tetteh employs four workers on his cocoa farm as annual workers. According to their agreement, he provides them with three meals a day, accommodation, and medicines. Their wages are paid at the end of the season.

After some time, Tetteh reduces their meals to once a day, and sometimes they receive no food at all. The workers are also made to live in a single room on the farm, without access to safe drinking water. The conditions and housing imposed are not tolerable. They are abusive, unhygienic, unsafe, overcrowded, and lacking in privacy.

These constitutes degrading and **abusive work-related living conditions**.

Other examples of abusive work-related living conditions

Degrading and abusive work-related living conditions usually involve a lack or deprivation of basic needs, including food, water, care, sleep, decent housing, hygiene, and security.

This is a sign of **involuntary work**

L. Fully dependent on employer for basic needs



Example

Esi works on a cocoa farm. Her employer provides her with food, a decent place to sleep, and occasional medical care, but does not pay her a monthly salary. She is told that she will be paid at the end of the season, after deducting the cost of her daily expenses.

After 2 seasons of work, Esi has not received any salary and has not been able to save any money. When she asks for payment, her employer tells her that her needs are already being covered. Without money, family nearby, or access to transport, Esi is unable to leave or support herself independently. She feels she has no choice but to continue working.

When an employee is fully dependent on their employers for basic needs, this can lead to situations of **abuse of vulnerability**.

Did you know?

In the cocoa sector, dependency often occurs when workers live with their employer, who provides food, shelter, and medical care. However, it is important to remember that:

- Payment in kind (such as food or housing) should not fully replace wages
- In many countries, only a limited part of wages (usually 20–40%) can be paid in kind
- Payment in kind should not create dependency on the employer

The following examples illustrate situations that should be referred to the relevant authorities.

M. Recruited without their consent



Example 1

Abanga owes Yaa Manu and is struggling to repay the debt. To settle it, he agrees to send his 19-year-old son, Adamu, to work for Yaa Manu for five years. Adamu, who was unaware of this arrangement, is sent to work there at his father's instruction. Although he is unhappy with the situation, he feels unable to leave out of fear that his father might harm him or reject him.

This constitutes a case of forced recruitment, and is considered **forced labour**.



Example 2

Yeboah is a young man looking for work. Mr. Twumasi offers him a job as a shop salesman with a salary of GHS 1500 per month and free accommodation. Yeboah accepts the offer and travels with him. When he arrives, he finds that the job is different from what was promised as he will be working on a cocoa farm. He is told he will receive only GHS 500 per month, and that accommodation will be provided for 6 months only.

This constitutes deception and can lead to **forced labour**.

N. Threats or violence against the worker or their relatives



Example

Hallo has been working on a cocoa farm for 2 years. During the first year, his working relationship with his manager was good. In the second year, the manager begins to treat him with disrespect. He shouts at Hallo, insults him, and criticises his work. He also becomes angry about Hallo's interactions with other community members. At one point, the manager threatens to have Hallo beaten if he continues to speak with others. Hallo feels afraid and intimidated.

This constitutes **intimidation and abuse.**

Other examples of physical and violence and intimidation and threats

Threats and violence are often used as a tool of control and humiliation, to instil fear, shame, isolate and silence people. It can take the form of:

- Physical violence or threats of physical violence against the worker or their family
- Sexual violence or threats of sexual violence
- Other forms of punishment, such as deprivation of food, water, or sleep
- Witnessing violence against others to intimidate or create fear

This is a sign of **coercion**

O. Not entitled to move freely or leave the work area



Example

Sumaila works as a caretaker on a cocoa farm. At the start of his job, his employer asks him to move his family to the farm. Sumaila declines, as he wants his children to stay in his hometown where they have access to education. Unhappy with his decision, the employer begins to restrict his ability to travel or even to leave the plantation area.

6 months later, after completing most of his work, Sumaila asks to visit his family for 3 weeks. The employer refuses again and warns him that if he leaves, he will be replaced and will not receive any payment. Afraid of losing his job and benefits, Sumaila decides to stay, even though he has not seen his family for months. By restricting his freedom of movement, the employer is isolating Sumaila and pressuring him to comply.

This is a case of **restriction of movement.**

Other examples of restriction of movement

In cocoa, restriction of movement may be used as a tool of control. Such control may not involve physical confinement or surveillance, but can take more subtle forms, such as denying workers the ability to travel or maintain contact with their families.

- Workers are not allowed to leave the workplace freely (for example, to travel or take leave)
- Workers' time away from the workplace is strictly controlled or limited
- Transport between accommodation and workplace is controlled by the employer, especially in remote areas
- A curfew is imposed

This is a sign of **coercion**

P. Threats of deportation or reporting to authorities (migrant workers)



Example

Frenchman is a migrant worker from a neighbouring country. He has been working on a cocoa farm for over a year but has not received any pay. He repeatedly asks his employer to pay him, but nothing changes. When he insists, the employer threatens to report him to the immigration authorities saying he does not have the required documentation. Fearing arrest or deportation, Frenchman feels unable to seek help or report the situation.

This constitutes **intimidation, threats, and an abuse of vulnerability.**

Other examples of threats

Migrant workers are particularly vulnerable to threats of deportation or reporting to authorities. Typical forms include:

- Exploiting their potential irregular migration or work status (e.g. “I will report you to the authorities and you will be deported”)
- Taking advantage of their limited knowledge of rights and laws (e.g. false claims that leaving the workplace would lead to arrest)

However, these threats are not limited to migrant workers. Threats of being reported to authorities may also be used against other workers, for example by accusing them of wrongdoing or threatening legal consequences if they refuse to comply.

This is a sign of **coercion**

Q. Administrative documents kept or confiscated by the employer



Example

Adjei works for a cocoa warehouse company, helping with packaging and loading cocoa beans. To prevent workers from stealing or leaving with cocoa beans, the company requires all workers, including Adjei, to hand over their identity documents, such as their Ghana Card. They are also asked to give a large sum of money to the employer as a guarantee.

This constitutes **retention of identity documents** and personal assets and is not allowed.

Other examples of retention of documents

- Payment of a large “runaway fee” to the employer or recruiter at the start of the job
- Depositing assets (such as property documents) with the employer
- Handing over identity documents (e.g. passport, ID card, residence permit) and not being able to get them back when requested

Did you know?

Keeping workers’ identity or travel documents is a common way to control them, especially for migrant workers.

Without their documents, workers may feel unable to seek help from authorities, fear arrest or deportation, or be unable to change jobs or access services.

This is a sign of **coercion**

R. Forced to take drugs or other substances



Example

Bob has been working for his employer for 3 years. At first, Bob only smoked “weed” occasionally, usually during long workdays to cope with fatigue. Seeing that Bob worked longer hours when using drugs, his employer began regularly supplying him with different substances. Over time, Bob became dependent and felt unable to work without them.

When Bob later tried to stop because of the negative effects on his health, his employer pressured him to continue using. He would even provide the substances early in the morning. Bob now feels unable to stop, he has become addicted and fears he will no longer be able to work — or keep his job — without taking drugs.

This constitutes **an abuse of vulnerability and a form of violence.**

Did you know?

Forcing workers to take drugs or other substances can be a way to control and exploit them. It may be used to:

- Increase productivity or make workers work longer hours
- Create dependency so workers feel unable to leave or refuse work or orders
- Keep workers under control by threatening to report their drug use to authorities later on

This is a sign of **coercion**

S. The person feels in danger/fears reprisals (or their relatives)

Whenever a complainant expresses concerns about their own safety or that of their relatives, the committee should immediately **refer the case** to the appropriate authorities to safeguard everyone.

The committee may also receive other labour-related grievances that are not signs of forced labour. The following examples illustrate some of these situations.

T. Dispute on sharing farm produce



Example

Kwaku has been working for a year on a cocoa farm under a sharecropping agreement with the landowner. At the end of the harvest, they had agreed to split the cocoa bags equally. However, the landowner decides to keep a larger share, claiming the yields were low. Kwaku disagrees, as he worked hard throughout the year.

This constitutes a **breach of the agreement**.

U. Worker refusing to perform agreed tasks



Example

Kwame was hired by Ana to maintain her cocoa plantation, including weeding and land clearing, bush burning, spraying, and harvest. However, one day, Kwame refuses to clear the plantation, claiming that this is too tiring and that this should be done by one of the new seasonal workers. Ana explains that this is part of the job and of the agreed tasks he should conduct. However, Kwame continues to refuse.

This constitutes a **breach of the agreement**.

V. Work or sexual harassment



Example

Efua works on a cocoa farm where the supervisor often makes inappropriate comments about her appearance. One day, he tells her she could get easier tasks if she agrees to spend time alone with him. The next days, he continues to pressure her, reiterating his advances. Efua feels uncomfortable and threatened but fears losing her job if she refuses.

This constitutes **sexual harassment**.

Did you know?

Sexual harassment includes any unwanted sexual comments, gestures, or requests at work.

It can also include pressure for sexual "favours" in exchange for benefits, like easier tasks or promotions.

Work harassment includes repeated bullying, intimidation, or unfair treatment that creates a hostile or unsafe work environment.

W. Child protection issues

Child protection issues include:

- Child labour
- Mistreatment
- Abuse

Source: International Labour Organisation, Hard to see, Harder to Count: Handbook on forced labour surveys



3. Conducting prevention activities

How to raise awareness

Activities to raise awareness about forced labour and labour rights are important as they help ensure that workers and employers are aware of their rights and responsibilities.

Awareness sessions can be of different types:

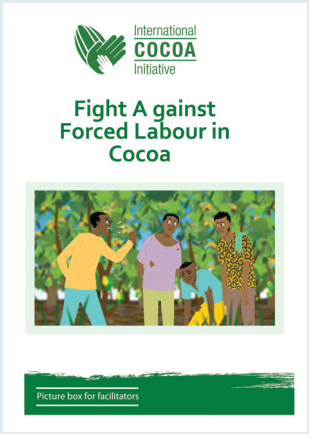
- Household sessions
- One-on-one sessions with a worker or farm owner
- Community sessions
- Broadcasting messages through radios or community information center

Use visual materials for your awareness sessions, including:

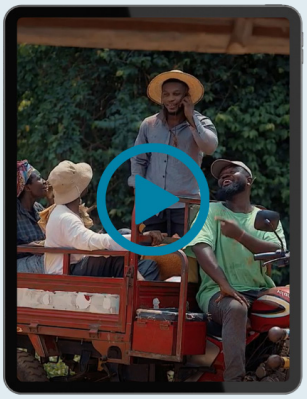
Flipbook



Posters or flexy banners



Films



Fill out the activity register for each awareness-raising session the committee conducts. Go to page 43 for guidance on how to do this.

How to encourage contract signature

Promoting the use of formal employment contracts can help clarify roles, responsibilities, and working conditions. It helps protect workers' rights and reduce their vulnerability to abuse.



Distribute contract templates

- After **awareness-raising sessions**, share contract templates with workers and farm owners and encourage them to sign them
- Ask **community leaders** to encourage workers and farm owners to sign contracts

Facilitate contract signing

Workers and farm owners might ask you to support them when signing a contract.

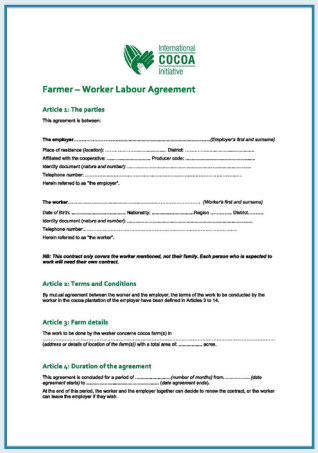
When doing so:

- Explain the **rights and responsibilities** to the worker and the farm owner
- Explain the **role of witnesses**
- Use the brochure on page 44 to support your explanation

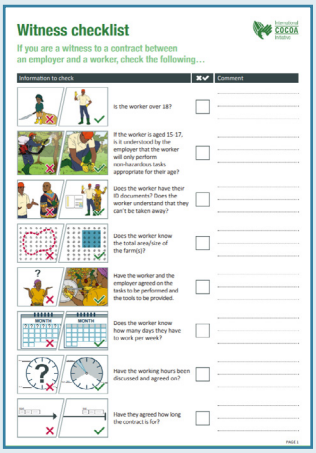
Available materials



Visual contract template



Written contract template



Witness checklist



Brochure
(see page 42)

How to fill in the activity register workbook

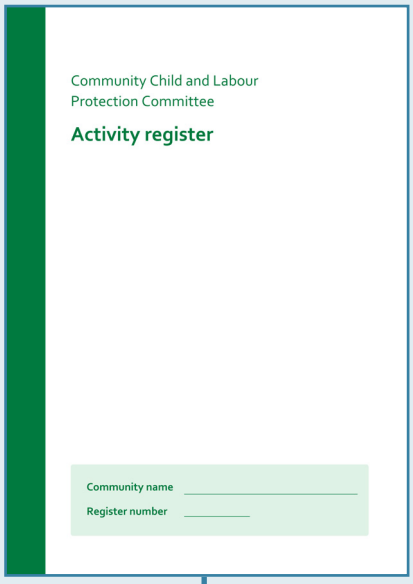
What is the activity register?

The activity register is used to record all the prevention activities conducted by the committee

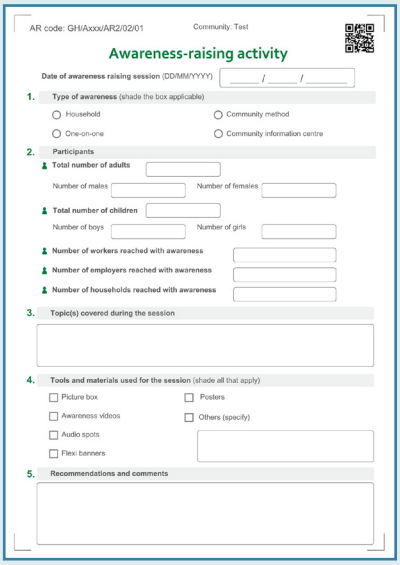
It is made up of two forms:

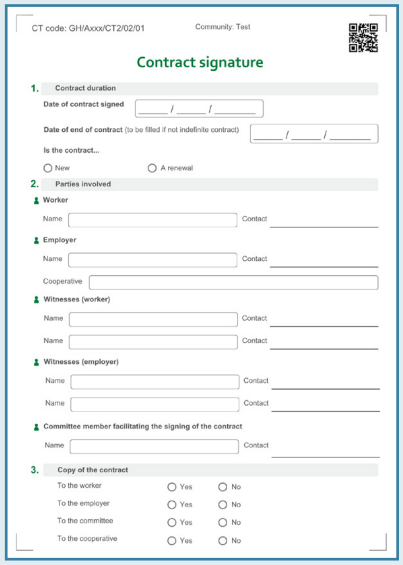
1. Awareness-activities
2. Contract signature activities

A form must be completed for each activity conducted.



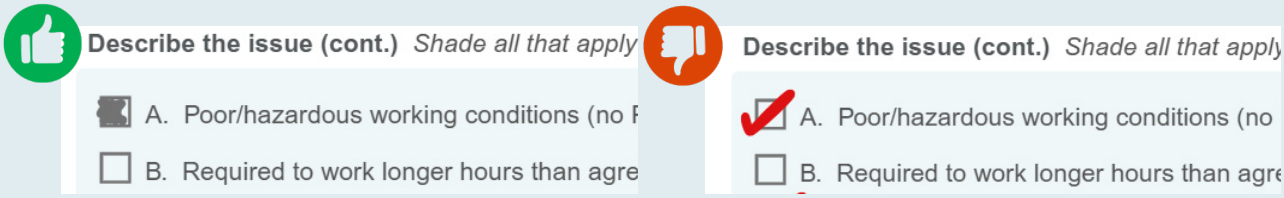
① ②





How to complete the form correctly?

- ✓ Write with **black or blue pen**
- ✓ Write in **CAPITAL LETTERS**
- ✓ **Shade in** the boxes **(do not tick or cross)**



Signing a contract benefits both workers and employers

International COCOA Initiative

A contract is an agreement between a worker and an employer.

It helps protect labour rights and makes sure both sides understand and respect what was agreed.

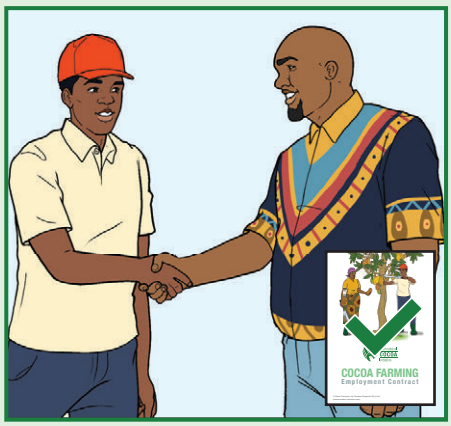


Use ICI's written and visual templates

Contracts are **for everyone**. This is **your right**. They are made to **protect you**!



Free of charge



Clarity on tasks, rights and responsibilities



Reduce conflicts

Why use contracts?

Both workers and employers have rights. A contract protects both sides:

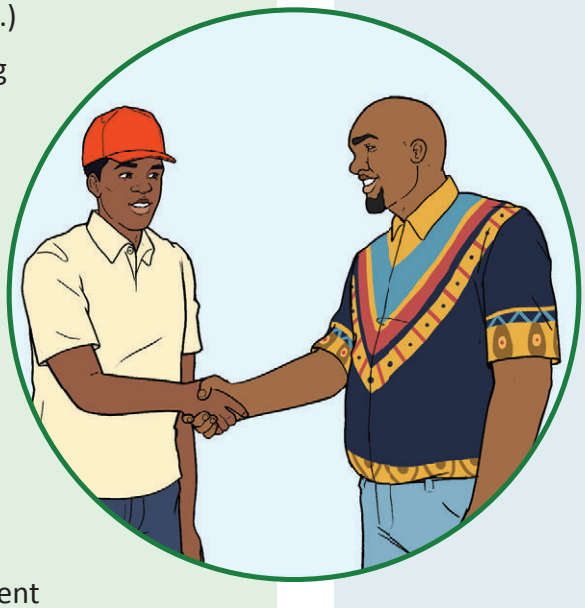
It makes things **clear, fair, and agreed**.

It helps **avoid or resolve problems and conflicts**.

It reduces **risks of forced labour and abuse**.

For workers, a contract helps you…

- Know the job and conditions (tasks, hours, pay, benefits…)
- Have better working conditions (rest, safety…)
- Be protected from being treated unfairly or not getting paid
- Have more stable work (less risk of suddenly being dismissed)
- Reduce the risk of abuse and exploitation
- Build trust with the employer
- Feel safe and respected
- Have proof of employment



For employers, a contract helps you…

- Agree on what work the worker will do
- Reduce the risk of workers refusing agreed tasks
- Make sure work is done well and as agreed
- Protect goods or produce from being stolen (beans, equipment…)
- Reduce risk of conflicts, complaints, or legal issues
- Increase motivation from workers and enhance relationship with them
- Improve service delivery and productivity
- Find workers more easily in the future

- ✓ **Know your rights and responsibilities**
- ✓ **Protect good reputation of both parties**
- ✓ **Prevent disputes**
- ✓ **Help resolve conflicts easily and for free – ask the CCLPC for help!**

Understanding tasks and rights

A contract includes many elements. Two important ones are the worker's tasks and rights.

Tasks =

What the worker must DO

Example:
weed the farm,
harvest cocoa,
carry bags





Rights =

What the worker must GET or is entitled to

Example:
salary, rest,
safety equipment

Who can use contracts?



Any **employer** who wants to hire a worker (permanently, temporarily, or seasonally)



Any **worker** who wants to work for an employer (permanently, temporarily, or seasonally)

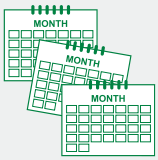
Who is a worker?

A worker is anyone who is engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit, according to the instructions and under the supervision of another party.

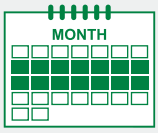
This includes people who work:



Full-time or part-time



Permanently or temporarily



For a short time or a season

For example…



Farm caretaker or sharecropper (Abusa or Abunu systems)



Farm manager (usually regular or permanent worker on a farm)



Seasonal worker on a farm (e.g. engaged for specific seasonal tasks such as weeding, harvesting, etc.)

Who is involved in signing a contract?

The Employer

The Worker



IMPORTANT:
Middlemen or recruitment agents linking prospective workers to employers are not party to the contract and have no mandate to influence the process.



What are witnesses for?

Witnesses are people who are present when a worker and an employer sign a contract. They help make sure the agreement is fair and protect labour rights.



Who can be a witness?

Witnesses are **adult** volunteers – they are **not paid**.

Both the worker and the employer choose **two** witnesses each.

They should **choose the witness freely**. No one should force a witness on the worker or the employer. It is a personal choice. They can be...

- Friends, family members, co-workers, or a community member
- Anyone **you trust** to support you in the signing of the contract

Witnesses should be trustworthy, honest and fair.

What witnesses DO:

- ✓ Witness the **signature** of the contract
- ✓ Can guide the parties through the **provisions of the signed contract**, in case of future disagreement
- ✓ Advise the parties to **contact the CCLPC**, if a dispute arises
- ✓ Can provide **evidence** about the contract signed in case of dispute
- ✓ Help ensure contracts are **fair**, **understood**, and **do not breach** labour rights, thanks to the **checklist**


Witness checklist

If you are a witness to a contract between an employer and a worker, check the following…

Information to check	✓✗	Comment
Is the worker over 18?	☐	
If the worker is aged 15-17, is it understood by the employer that the worker will only perform non-hazardous tasks appropriate for their age?	☐	
Does the worker have their ID documents? Does the worker understand that they can't be taken away?	☐	
Does the worker know the total area/size of the farm(s)?	☐	
Have the worker and the employer agreed on the tasks to be performed and the tools to be provided.	☐	

What witnesses DON'T DO:

- X They don't mediate, solve or handle disputes.
- X They don't represent any official or legal authority.
- X They don't have any share in what is being paid or given to the worker.
- X They don't get paid.



Ntawantawa no mu nsɛm

BrƐ/Da a ntawantawa no bƐtɔɔ mo anim (da/bosome/afe) _____ / _____ / _____

Wɔn a asɛm no fa wɔn ho

1. Nipa a ɔde asɛm no baeɛ/ Kwɛɛdubɔfoɔ ◯ Nipa a asɛm no fa ne ho ◯ ɔdanseni/Adansefoɔ

Sɛ ɔdanseni: **ne din** _____ **telefon noma** _____

2. Nipa a asɛm no fa ne ho

ne din _____ **noma** _____

Dibrɛ ◯ Odwumayɛni ◯ Adwumawura ◯ Nhwɛsoni ◯ Biribi foforo _____

Ne bɔbea/Bɔbeasuo ◯ ɔbaa ◯ Bɛrima **Ne mfeɛ** ◯ ɔnnuu du nwɔtwe ◯ Du nwɔtwe ne nia Ɛboro sa

Oman a wofiri mu

Kuro a ɔte mu din

Ne kokoo kuayɛ kuo a ɔdɔm din

3. Nea yabɔ no kwɛɛdu

ne din _____ **noma** _____

Dibrɛ ◯ Odwumayɛni ◯ Adwumawura ◯ Nhwɛsoni ◯ Biribi foforo _____

Ne kokoo kuayɛ kuo a ɔdɔm din

4. Nipa foforo a asɛm no fa ne ho ◯ Nipa a asɛm no fa ne ho ◯ ɔdanseni/Adansefoɔ ◯ Biribi foforo _____

ne din _____ **nɔma** _____

asɛm no mu nkyerekyeremu

asɛm no mu nkyerekyeremu *Fa nea ɛfata nyinaa*

- ☐ A. Adwuma ho nhyehyeɛ a ɛnni mu anaa sɛ tebea a asiane wɔ mu (onni nneɛma a adwumayɛni de bɔ ne ho ban wɔ adwuma yɛ mu, anaa adwuma yɛ a ahomdwe nni mu)
- ☐ B. Sɛ wo yɛ adwuma mmrɛ bebree atra nneɛ mohyehyɛ yɛ no so anaa naawɔtwe/bosome bebree a wo nnwo w'ahome
- ☐ C. Wo yɛ adwuma foforo a ɛnyɛ ɛno ne nhyehyeɛ no (ama adwuma wura no anaa nipa foforɔ)
- ☐ D. Wo yɛ adwuma ama adwumawura foforo a ɛnka nhyehyeɛ no ho
- ☐ E. Wo yɛ adwuma a akatua biara nni mu anaa akatua no sua/Anaa yɛ mma wo akatua a ɛfa adwuma a wayɛ no ho
- ☐ F. ɔde anidaho anaa woafa kwɛti kwan bi so asi w'akatua anaa wo mfasoɔ ho kwan (anaa mfaso foforɔ bi a Ɛwɔ wo)
- ☐ G. Wo yɛ adwuma ama obi a wode no ka de atua ka no
- ☐ H. Wo nni akwanya sɛ wo ne w'abusuafoɔ anaa wo nnamfo nom bɛkasa
- ☐ I. Wo nni ho kwan sɛ wo bɛgyae adwuma no
- ☐ J. Adwuma mu ayidie ahunahuna
- ☐ K. Adwumawura ahyɛ wo sɛ tena beaɛ bi a ɛmmfata anaa ɛnyɛ beaɛ papa (ɔmma wo aduane anaa ɛdan papa ntena mu)
- ☐ L. Wo dan adwumawura wɔ bibiara a ɛhia wo ho (aduanesɛm, ɛdan asɛm, anaa sɛ biribiara a wo hia ho)

- ☐ M. Ya fa wo adwuma a w'ammfa w'adwene amma anaa woampene so
- ☐ N. Yɛ hunahuna wo sɛ yɛbɛ yɛ wo ayakayakadeɛ (honam mu anaasɛ ɔbaa ne ɔbɛrima nda mu ayakayakade, atia adwumayɛni no anaa ne ho nipa bi)
- ☐ O. Wo nni akwanya sɛ wo bɛkɔ bɛbiara anaa sɛ wo bɛfiri bɛbia adwuma no wɔ
- ☐ P. Yɛ hunahuna wo sɛ yɛbɛtu wo afiri ɔman no mu anaa yɛbɛbɔ wo kwɛɛdu akyerɛ ɔman mpaninfoɔ (ɛdwumayɛni a ɔyɛ ɔhɔhoɔ)
- ☐ Q. Adwumawura agye wo ahyɛnsodeɛ anaa agyapadeɛ bi ho nkrataa asie na ɔmmfa mma wo (nipa ahyɛnsodeɛ, ɔman foforɔ so akwantuo krataa ne nea ɛkeka ho)
- ☐ R. Yɛ hyɛ wo sɛ mom nnuru bɔne anaa nea ɛtete saa
- ☐ S. Nipa no suro sɛ biribi bɔne bi bɛto no anaa obi bɛyɛ no bɔne atua no ka (anaa ne ho nipa bi)

- ☐ T. Akasakasa a efa afuom nnobae kyɛ ho
- ☐ U. Odwumayɛni no nnyɛ adwuma a w'agye atum wo nhyehyeɛ no mu no
- ☐ V. Adwuma mu anaa ɔbaa ne ɔbɛrima nna mu ateetee
- ☐ W. Mmofra banbɔ ho nsɛmsɛm
- ☐ X. Biribi foforo (kyerɛkyerɛ mu)

_____

_____

Sɛ wo fa ɛyi nom baako koraa, fa kɔ dan mansini no mu mpaninfoɔ anaa bɔ wɔn amanie ntɛm

Nsɛm yi akɔ so mmerɛ dodoɔ sɛn nie?

Adwuma yi ho nhyeyeɛ no, mo atwerɛ agu nkrataa so anaa? ◯ Aane ◯ Daabi

Menasepɔ/Ntawantawa nsiesie

BrƐ a mo hyeaƐ siesie asƐm no (Da/Bosome/Afe)

1. ____ / ____ / _____ **3.** ____ / ____ / _____ **5.** ____ / ____ / _____

2. ____ / ____ / _____ **4.** ____ / ____ / _____ **6.** ____ / ____ / _____

Abadwafoɔ ne afa nu no gyinasie a mo agye ato mu *Fa nia Abedwafoɔ no agye atom nyinaa*

- ☐ Nsiesie ne nkyerɛkyerɛ
- ☐ Yɛde yɛn nsa ɛhyɛ/timtim yɛn nhyehyeɛ nkrataa ase
- ☐ Sika biara ɛsɛ sɛ wo tua
- ☐ Mpatadeɛ
- ☐ Afuo anaa nnobae kyɛ ho nhyehyeɛ (sɛ mo kyɛ afuo no anaa sɛ nnobae no)
- ☐ Adwumayɛ nketahodie no mu twa
- ☐ Adwuma no ho nneɛma/akadeɛ ne nya
- ☐ Fa nneɛma a wo de yɛ adwuma no bra
- ☐ Fa asɛm no kɔ dan mpanimfoɔ
- ☐ Biribi foforo (KyerƐ mu)

Nsiesie no mu nkyerɛ mu

Badwafoɔ a mo tenaa ase siesie asɛm no (ne din)

1. **6.**

2. **7.**

3. **8.**

4. **9.**

5. **10.**

Da a mobɛtu asɛm no ho anamon (Da/Bosome/Afe)

1. ____ / ____ / _____
2. ____ / ____ / _____
3. ____ / ____ / _____
4. ____ / ____ / _____

Nea wo wɔ ka fa nsiesie ne nkɔsoɔ ho

Asɛm no mpɛnpɛnsoɔ/gyanabea

☐ **Yɛde asɛm no akɔdan**

BrƐ a mo siesie asƐ no (Da/Bosome/Afe)

____ / ____ / _____

Dwumakuo a yɛde asɛm no akɔdan wɔn (wɔn din, telefon noma)

☐ **YƐsisie asƐm no**

BrƐ a mo siesie asƐ no (Da/Bosome/Afe)

____ / ____ / _____

Anamɔntuo foro a yƐbƐ tu wɔ asƐm no nsiensie akyi

Dawurubɔ ho dwumadie

DDa a dawurubɔ ho dwumadie no kɔɔ so (Da/Bosome/Afe) _____ / _____ / _____

1. Dawurubɔ dwumadie no su (kyere adaka a efata)

- ◯ Abusua nketewa/nkuma mu
- ◯ ɔman nhyiamu
- ◯ ankorɛ ankorɛ
- ◯ ɔman dawurubɔ afidie so

2. Nipa dodoɔ a ɛbaa yɛ

Mpaninfoɔ dodoɔ

Mmarima dodoɔ

Mmaa dodoɔ

Mmofra dodoɔ

Mmofra (mmarima) dodoɔ

Mmofra (mmarima) dodoɔ

Adwuma yɛ foɔ dodoɔ a duwurubɔ no duu won nkyɛn

Adwumawura foɔ dodoɔ a duwurubɔ no duu won nkyɛn

Abusua nketewaa dodoɔ a wɔtee duwurubɔ no

3. Nsɛmpo a yɛ kasa faa ho

4. Nneɛma a bɔɔ dawuru no (Fa nea ɛfata nyinaa)

- ☐ Dawurubɔ mfoni
- ☐ Dawurubɔ mfoni krataa nketewaa
- ☐ Dawurubɔ kasa mfoni
- ☐ Biribi foforo (Kyerɛ mu)
- ☐ Kasa a yɛde agu mfidie so
- ☐ Dawurubɔ mfoni krataa akɛseɛ

5. Nsusueɛ ne nea wo wɔ ka

Adwumayɛ nhyehyeɛ krataa san

1. nhyehyeɛ no mmrɛ dodoɔ/tenten

Adwumayɛ nhyehyeɛ mfitieaseɛ da _____ / _____ / _____

Adwumayɛ nhyehyɛe no awieɛ da (twerɛ brɛ a adwuma nhyehyeɛ no nyɛ afebɔɔ anaa ɛnyɛ nhyehyeɛ a ɛnni awieɛ) _____ / _____ / _____

Adwumayɛ no nhyehyeɛ no yɛ...

◯ Foforɔ ◯ Dada

2. Afanu a adwumayɛ nhyenyeɛ no fa wɔn ho

Adwumayeni

Din _____ telefon nomba _____

Adwumawura

Din _____ telefon nomba _____

Ne kokoo kuayɛ kuo a ɔdɔm din _____

Adwumayeni Adanseni

Din _____ telefon nomba _____

Din _____ telefon nomba _____

Adwumawura Adanseni

Din _____ telefon nomba _____

Din _____ telefon nomba _____

Kɔmetee nii a ɔboa ma afanu no yɛɛ adwumayɛ nhyenyeɛ krataa no

Din _____ telefon nomba _____

3. Yɛde adwumayɛ nhyenyeɛ krataa a afanu no asensan no bi ama

Adwumayeni	◯ Aane	◯ Daabi
Adwumamura	◯ Aane	◯ Daabi
Kɔmetee	◯ Aane	◯ Daabi
Ne kokoo kuayɛ kuo a ɔdɔm din	◯ Aane	◯ Daabi



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