

Overview: Training for spraying service providers on protecting children from pesticides

Background

In West African cocoa-growing communities, children are exposed to pesticides not only when helping their parents in the fields but also in their daily domestic environment, particularly when playing outdoors. Exposure can occur through pesticide vapours stored in homes or newly treated fields. Toxic particles can remain in the air for several days after spraying or can end up as residues in empty packaging or on protective equipment. Toxic substances can also pass from mothers to their unborn or breast-fed babies. Even small doses of pesticides can be harmful to children's health.

Protecting children from exposure to pesticides is therefore the responsibility of all members of cocoa-growing communities, but spraying service providers have a particularly important role to play.

Community Service Groups (CSGs) have been set up in many cocoa-producing communities to provide labour services, including spraying, to local farmers at affordable prices. Although they have received training in good agricultural practices, they are not always aware of children's vulnerability to pesticides and of measures to prevent children's exposure before, during and after spraying.

With this in mind, ICI has developed a training module for CSG members on protecting children from exposure to pesticides through their responsible use, from purchasing to managing spraying equipment and empty pesticide packaging. The aim is to complement the basic training CSGs receive to strengthen their capacity and their contribution to protecting children in cocoa-producing communities.

This document outlines the objectives, programme and methodology of the training module and includes additional resources for those interested in delivering this training.

What are the objectives?

This module:

- Explains the short- and long-term health risks of pesticide exposure for children and how pesticides can enter the body
- Strengthens the knowledge and practices of CSG members and actively involves them in identifying and promoting appropriate measures to better protect children from pesticide-related health risks
- Helps participants adopt practical measures for better pesticide management.
- Provides first aid instructions in the event of exposure to pesticides

This module complements basic agronomy training. It is designed for participants who already have some knowledge of the responsible use of pesticides (types of pests in cocoa farming, product dosage and preparation, spraying techniques, etc.).

Who is the training for?

The training module is designed for members of Community Service Groups (CSGs), or any other spraying service provider.

CSGs are labour groups made up of adults from the community who provide agricultural services, including pesticide spraying, at an affordable rate. Many sustainability programmes in the cocoa sector support the establishment of CSGs and provide them with training in good farming practices and group management, along with essential agricultural equipment. These programmes aim to provide cocoa farmers with an affordable source of professional adult labour, promote good farming practices, and reduce reliance on child labour.

The module was tested in cocoa-producing communities in Côte d'Ivoire where CSGs were already in place.



Who can deliver the training?

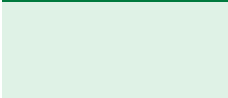
Professionals with experience in community development or farmer training can facilitate the training sessions. Before delivering the training, the facilitators must:

- Participate in a two-day Training of Trainers course based on the training manual, which contains comprehensive advice on training methodology
- Acquire a basic knowledge of pesticides and the risks to children's health; a minimum curriculum is included in the manual's appendix, with additional resources recommended for further reading

How is the training structured?

The full training lasts 4 to 5 hours and consists of 4 sessions, the content of which is as follows:

	 Duration and timing	 Contents
Session 1	120 minutes	Overview of pesticides commonly used in cocoa-growing communities to assess the level of knowledge of CSG members and encourage their participation.
Session 2	110 – 120 minutes	Key concepts relating to the harmful effects of pesticides on human health (toxicity, residues), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Points of contact of pesticides with the body • Vulnerability of children and pregnant women • Symptoms/illnesses linked to pesticide exposure
Session 3	120 minutes	Measures to be put in place to protect the health of all members of the community, particularly children and pregnant women, before, during and after spraying. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before spraying: Who is involved in buying and transporting pesticides? Where are they stored? • During spraying: How are sprayed fields marked? What are the components of personal protective equipment (PPE)? What do the danger pictograms on the labels mean? • After spraying: What to do with the pesticide residues in the packaging after spraying? Where is PPE washed after spraying?
Session 4	45 minutes	Identifying five key safety measures to adopt after the training
Session 5		First aid guidelines
Follow-up session	2-3 weeks after the training session	An opportunity to discuss the extent to which the resolutions have been achieved, compliance with the good practices



learned, the challenges and some solutions to be implemented

What is the methodology?

The training uses a participatory approach, where participants engage in dialogue and are invited to contribute their knowledge and experience in each session. Session 3 culminates in a group resolution, consisting of 5 actions that they jointly define as priority objectives to be put into practice in the context of their spraying service provision, to better protect themselves, children and their households from exposure to pesticides.

Support materials

- Training manual to guide the Training of Trainers
- Slides for training the ToT
- [Visual aids for large-format printing for use at CSG sessions](#)