Stronger in combination: Effectiveness of awareness-raising and other support measures under CLMRS

Data insights from ICI-supported CLMRS

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Context

Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation Systems (CLMRS) are child-centred support systems, designed to identify children in, or at risk of, child labour and provide support to improve their situation.[1] As part of the system, CLMRS Personnel, sometimes known as monitors, agents or field officers, visit households and farms. If a child is found in child labour, support is provided to the child, their household and/or the community to address underlying vulnerabilities and reduce households' reliance on child labour as a coping strategy. CLMRS Personnel conduct regular follow-up visits to monitor the situation of children and check whether their situation has improved.

Support activities within CLMRS can take many forms, both immaterial and material. One key element of support is **raising awareness of the potential harm child labour can cause** to a child's physical and mental development, and of the importance of education. **Other types of support** provided by a CLMRS aim to give households **access to practical alternatives and services which help protect children** and support their schooling. Common examples include providing children with school kits, helping children obtain birth certificates, providing cash transfers to households, facilitating access to health insurance, setting up adult labour groups within the community, offering bridging classes for out-of-school children, offering adult literacy classes, refurbishing local primary schools, or setting up Village Savings and Loans Associations. The decision about which type of support to provide is typically determined by several factors, including the needs of the child and household, service access in the community, the child's age and schooling situation, but also logistical and cost constraints.

Question of analysis

To invest resources most effectively, CLMRS implementers need to know what types of support, and which combinations, are most effective to get children out of hazardous work. However, using CLMRS data to understand the effectiveness of different types of support is challenging. While CLMRS data reveal associations between type of support received and subsequent child outcomes, they cannot be used to establish causal effects of specific support interventions. This is because support measures are chosen based on the needs and situation of the community, the household, and the child. This means that differences in outcomes may reflect not only the type of support provided, but also the underlying situations that led to different support choices in the first place.

However, since awareness raising is typically provided to most households in the system and is thus provided independently of the situation of the household, the child or the community, we can compare outcomes for

[1] More specifically, according to the ICI Core Criteria, a CLMRS is defined as follows: "Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation Systems (CLMRS) are child-centred support systems. They identify children in, or at risk of, child labour, provide ongoing support (directly and through referral) to improve their situation and follow children's progress over time. CLMRS aim to prevent and reduce child labour, mitigate its harmful effects, and ultimately prevent it from being passed down into the next generation. When resourced adequately, CLMRS include interventions which strengthen the protective environment around children and tackle the root causes of child labour, as well as providing support to make right harm already caused by child labour."

children who have benefited only from household-level awareness raising against outcomes for children who benefitted from other types of support, or from a combination of both.

We analysed ICI CLMRS data to answer the question: **To stop children's engagement in hazardous work, should CLMRS prioritise awareness-raising, other types of support, or a combination of both?**

Data

Our analysis uses data from ICI-supported CLMRS in cocoa and coffee supply chains in Côte d'Ivoire. The data includes child interview records collected during CLMRS household visits over a 10-year period between 2015 and 2025 (during which ICI has been implementing CLMRS at scale).

The outcome of interest is **whether children previously identified in hazardous child labour were no longer engaged in hazardous work during 2 consecutive follow-up visits**. We have outcomes for 21'552 children who had been identified in hazardous child labour during a household visit and received at least 2 follow-up visits. If a child no longer reported any hazardous work during two consecutive follow-up visits, the child is considered to be no longer in hazardous child labour.

For this analysis, support provided to the child or their family is grouped into two broad categories:

- awareness-raising,
- all other types of support aimed at improving the child's situation, such as material support, training, and assistance to access services.

We then examine how each category is associated with the outcome of interest.

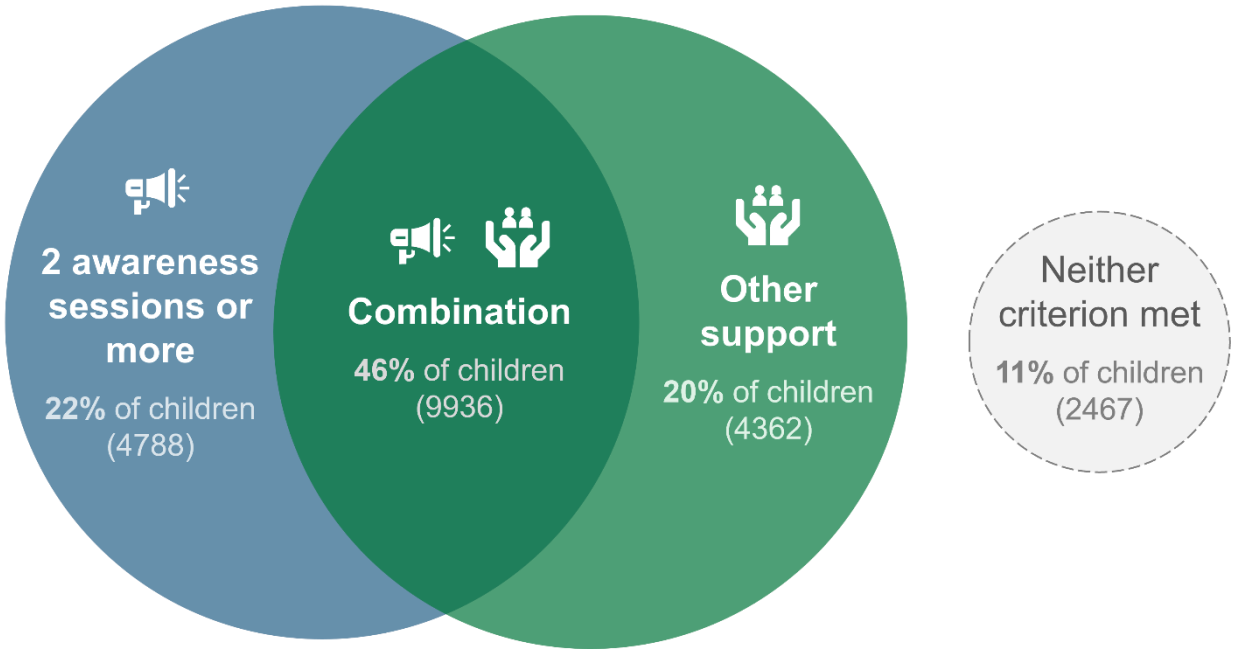
Because CLMRS aims to address different drivers of child labour, most children benefit from more than one type of support in addition to awareness-raising. Children in the sample each received an average of 3.75 support services or items.[2]

Awareness-raising is offered to all families whose children are in or at risk of child labour. The theory of change for CLMRS assumes that awareness creation and behaviour change among households is a process which needs time and ongoing dialogue between CLMRS personnel and families. For the analysis, we therefore consider a child having benefitted from awareness-raising only if **at least two household-level awareness sessions** have been provided.

Hence, our sample was divided into four groups:

- Children who benefitted from at least two household-level **awareness-raising sessions**, but did not receive any other type of support
- Children who **received other types of support**, but did not benefit from at least two household-level awareness-raising sessions
- Children who benefited from a **combination** of at least two household-level awareness sessions *and* some other type of support
- Children who received **neither** two household-level awareness-raising sessions nor any other type of support

[2] In most ICI-supported CLMRS, awareness raising and other types of support are provided to children and families following identification visits; and before agents return for follow-up visits. While this sequence can vary in reality, we do not account for such deviations in this analysis.



In the sample of children, the average age at their most recent follow-up visit is 11.5 years. Around 57% of the children are boys. The sample covers 98 cocoa and coffee cooperatives. It is spread across 1'427 localities in 18 regions of Côte d'Ivoire.

On average, the likelihood for children to not be in hazardous child labour anymore after two consecutive follow-up visits is 41%.

Method of analysis

Regression analysis was used to analyse the data. The method allows to quantify the effects of awareness raising, other types of support, and a combination of the two on the likelihood that children stop hazardous work.[3] At the same time, it allows to separate out other factors that may influence both the allocation of support and a child's likelihood to stop working, such as the child's age and gender.

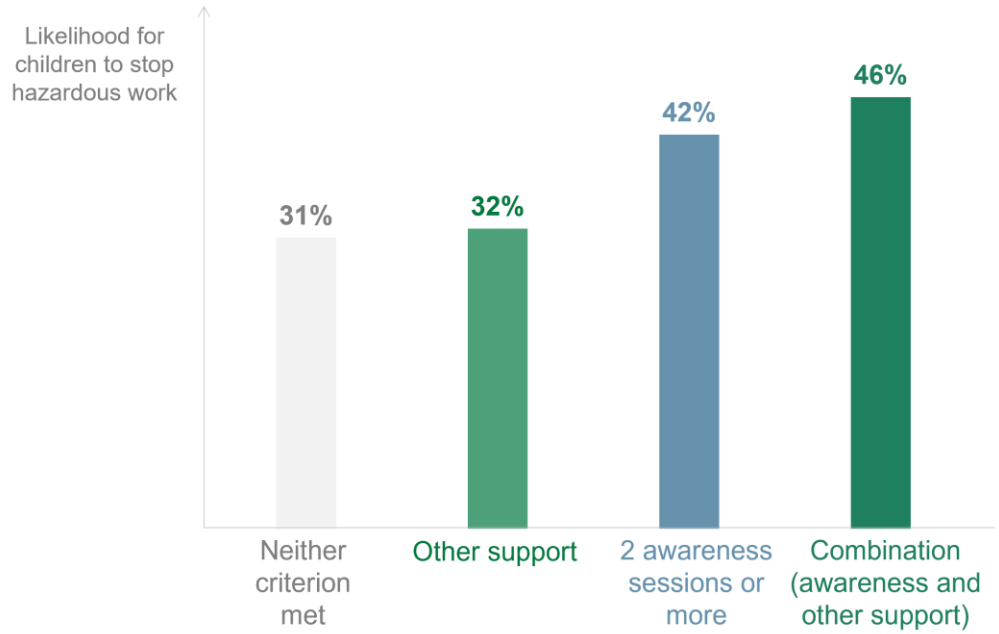
[3] A logit model was used, where the dependent variable is a binary indicator whether the child no longer reported hazardous work during two consecutive follow-up visits. Control variables included in the model are the child's age and gender, and indicators for the year in which the last follow-up visit took place. Standard errors are clustered at the level of the cooperative.

Results

The predicted likelihood of a child stopping hazardous work varies depending on the support they receive. The analysis shows that:[4]

- When children receive **neither** two household-level awareness-raising sessions nor any other type of support, the predicted likelihood that they stop hazardous work is 31%.
- When children benefit from less than two household-level awareness-raising sessions, but receive some **other type of support**, the predicted likelihood of stopping hazardous work increases by less than 1 percentage point, to 32%.
- When children benefit from at least two household-level **awareness-raising sessions**, but do not receive any other type of support, the predicted likelihood of stopping hazardous work increases by 11 percentage points, to 42%.
- When children benefit from a **combination** of at least two household-level awareness-raising sessions and some other type of support, the likelihood that they stop hazardous work increases by 15 percentage points, to 46%.

Figure 1: Predicted likelihood for children to stop hazardous work under different support scenarios within the CLMRS



In other words, the data indicates that in the absence of awareness-raising, the effectiveness of other types of support is limited. By contrast, repeated awareness-raising seems to have considerable effects, even when no other type of support is provided. **Overall, we see the highest likelihood for children to stop hazardous work when they have received a combination of at least two awareness-raising sessions and other types of support.**

Another insight from the data is that even when children do not receive any support (not even one household-level awareness session), the likelihood that they stop hazardous work is around 19%. Given that cases of

[4] Because the sample of children who do not benefit from awareness raising is small as a comparison group some of the marginal effects are not statistically significant.

children who receive no support and no awareness-raising occur only exceptionally in practice and are very rare in the sample, this figure should be interpreted with caution. Nevertheless, the figure suggests that repeated household visits themselves may influence families' decision-making to some degree, as the interview naturally initiates discussions about child labour and raises awareness of the issue.

Conclusions

The findings suggest that awareness-raising is a crucial element of support provided under CLMRS to get children out of hazardous work. CLMRS should not treat awareness-raising and other types of support as alternatives, but as complementary measures. While continuous sessions of household-level awareness-raising already seem to be quite effective by themselves, the strongest results are achieved when they are combined with other types of support.

These results indicate that effective CLMRS require both practical support that addresses households' economic and service-access constraints, and efforts to strengthen awareness of the harms of child labour and the value of education.

Repeated awareness-raising at household level should be an integral part of all efforts to tackle child labour through CLMRS or comparable systems.