

CLMRS self-assessment checklist



Tool

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Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation Systems (CLMRS) are the most widely used approach to tackling child labour in the cocoa sector, covering more than 1.17 million households in 2024. However, these systems are complex to design, implement and evaluate. Regular assessment is useful to identify strengths and weaknesses, and to guide continuous improvement.

ICI has developed this self-assessment checklist to support CLMRS implementers in monitoring system performance and the quality of implementation. It provides guidance on the specific checks to be conducted, the rationale behind them, and how to identify areas requiring further improvement.

This document is structured in three parts:

- **Section 1** explains what the checklist is and how to use it
- **Section 2** presents the checklist itself
- **Section 3** provides guidance on interpreting results and planning improvements

1. About the CLMRS self-assessment checklist

What is the CLMRS self-assessment checklist?

The CLMRS self-assessment checklist describes how implementers can perform a desk-based assessment of a CLMRS and consists of simple checks that can be performed on a CLMRS database. It is structured around the [Core Criteria for CLMRS](#), which define the minimum standards for system design and implementation, including key metrics, required activities, and essential definitions. This checklist focuses on key indicators that can be used to monitor system performance and the quality of implementation.

Why use the CLMRS self-assessment?

The checklist can be used to conduct internal self-assessments on a regular basis (e.g. annually) to identify areas for improvement, or to prepare for a third-party assessment or audit.

Throughout the self-assessment process, the [CLMRS Manual](#), which includes detailed explanations and examples of good practice, can be used as a guide and reference.

How was the CLMRS self-assessment checklist developed?

This checklist draws on ICI's experience conducting in-depth CLMRS assessments of many of the systems currently operating across West Africa. An in-depth CLMRS assessment is a complex exercise, tailored to each implementer's needs.¹

This self-assessment checklist focuses on a selection of key indicators relating to system performance and implementation quality.

All checks are aligned with the [Core Criteria for CLMRS](#) (the most recent minimum standards for CLMRS implementation) and the [CLMRS Manual](#), which contains practical guidance on how to design, strengthen, and operate effective systems.

What do you need to conduct a CLMRS self-assessment?

To conduct a CLMRS self-assessment, you need **a raw extract from your CLMRS database**, in which each record (or line in a database) relates to an **activity** (such as a visit or support provided) conducted on a given **date**, for a given household, child or community, identified by **unique and immutable identifiers** (IDs).

Where possible, the information used should cover the past 24 months to allow the greatest number of checks to be performed. If the system has been operating for less than 24 months, data should cover the period from the start of implementation.

Based on this data extract, the self-assessment checklist performs checks across the following information:

- **Households targeted** by the CLMRS at any point during the two-year period

¹ ICI conducts CLMRS assessments on demand, tailored to the specific needs and interests of members. Typically, these assessments include a more detailed analysis of CLMRS data, as well as a review of the CLMRS strategy, data collection tools, standard operating procedures and awareness-raising material. Assessments include interviews with different individuals involved in system.

- If the list of targeted farmers has changed during this period, the reference list of households targeted should be made up of the unique farmers present *at any time* during the past two years
- Information collected during **monitoring visits** and **farm visits**, including interview data collected from both adults and children
- Details of **support provided** to farmers, children and communities, including the type of support and dates delivered
- Information collected during **follow-up visits**, including interview data collected from children

Who should be involved in a CLMRS self-assessment?

At a minimum, the self-assessment requires the following people to analyse and interpret the information required for the exercise:

- The **CLMRS database manager**, or another individual with a good understanding of the content and structure of the database and the ability to run the different queries outlined below
- The **CLMRS program manager**, or another individual with a good understanding of how the CLMRS is implemented in practice, to support interpretation of the findings and guide the definition of next steps

We strongly encourage the wider participation of staff involved in the design, implementation and management of the system to examine the findings and collectively determine strategies for improvement, where needed.

What are the CLMRS self-assessment steps?

Conducting a CLMRS self-assessment is a desk-based exercise that can be completed by following the steps outlined below:

1. Gather a project team to prepare for the exercise, explaining the aims and objectives of the assessment
2. Prepare the database extract
3. Conduct the checks outlined in the table below
4. Discuss the results with the project team and identify concrete measures to address the areas for improvement identified. Section 3 of this document provides details on how to interpret the results. In addition, refer to ICI's [CLMRS Manual](#) for more detailed guidance and examples of good practice.
5. Create an action plan to put in place the measures identified and monitor implementation.

The self-assessment should be possible to complete in around a month. The most time-consuming activity is likely to be the data assembly, preparation and analysis to perform the checks detailed below.

2. The CLMRS self-assessment checklist

The CLMRS self-assessment checklist is made up of six checks that assess key indicators of CLMRS performance and implementation quality. Each check includes one or more questions used to assess these indicators, along with guidance to support interpretation of results and the identification of areas for improvement.

Check 1: Unique IDs link individuals to activities over time

Question	Interpretation guidance
<p>How many household IDs <i>cannot</i> be linked to a record related to a visit or activity for a household included in the list of targeted households?</p>	<p>Each household should have a unique and immutable ID. If not, there are ID issues with serious consequences on operations and the reliability/feasibility of any subsequent checks.</p> <p>If >5% of household IDs cannot be linked to the list of targeted households, further improvement is needed.</p>
<p>How many child IDs are <i>not</i> linked to a household through a household ID?</p>	<p>Each child should be associated with a household ID, which should allow them to be linked to a specific household. If this is not the case, household IDs are not reliable or are incorrectly assigned, with serious consequences for operations and for the reliability and feasibility of any subsequent checks.</p> <p>If more than 10% of children cannot be linked to a household through a household ID, further improvement is needed.</p>
<p>How many of the children who received follow-up visits <i>cannot</i> be linked to a previous monitoring visit?</p>	<p>Each child should have a unique and immutable child ID. Child IDs enable all the activities conducted over time to be linked with the same child. If not, there are ID issues, with serious consequences on operations and the reliability/feasibility of subsequent checks.</p> <p>If >5% of child IDs cannot be linked, further improvement is needed.</p>

Check 2: Coverage as of the end of the past 24 months (or since the beginning of the current 2-year “wave”)

Question	Interpretation guidance
<p>What percentage of targeted households received a monitoring visit in the past 24 months (or were assessed as <i>low risk</i> by a risk model in the past 12 months)? (# unique household IDs monitored + unique household IDs designated as <i>low risk</i>) / (# unique household IDs in the list of targeted farmers)</p>	<p>Ideally, around 100% of the households targeted by a CLMRS should be covered within 2 years.</p> <p>If >20% of targeted households cannot be counted as covered in this timeframe, and in the absence of a strong turnover, further improvement is needed.</p>
<p>What is the average number of unique child IDs interviewed per household?</p>	<p>The ratio # children covered / # households covered is useful to check the system’s capacity to capture all the 5-17-year children of a given household.</p> <p>When ≤ 1.2, improvements are needed.</p>

Check 3: Child labour identification rate during the past 24 months

Question	Interpretation guidance
<p>What percentage of children interviewed during monitoring or farm visits were found to be in child labour in the past 24 months? (# of unique children found in child labour during monitoring and plantation visits / total # unique children interviewed during monitoring and plantation visits)</p>	<p>Identification rates lower than 15% are likely to be under-identifying child labour and should be scrutinised further.</p> <p>It is useful to disaggregate this figure by cooperative or even monitoring agent to flag irregularities locally. I.e. Are there any cooperatives with identification rates of <5%? Or above 80%? Do some individual monitors identify <5% or >80% of children in child labour? If so, these figures are concerning and should be scrutinised further. Very low identification rates suggest questions may not be being asked properly; while very high identification rates suggest that only children found in child labour are being recorded in the system, rather than all children.</p>

Check 4: Children followed up over the last 24 months (or since the beginning of the current 2-year “wave”)

Question	Interpretation guidance
<p>What percentage of children found in child labour received at least one follow-up visit in the past 24 months? (# of unique children followed up once and linked by their ID with a monitoring visit / # unique children found in child labour)</p>	<p>All children identified in child labour should receive at least two follow-up visits. A percentage below 50% should be considered concerning.</p>
<p>What percentage of children found in child labour received at least two follow-up visits in the past 24 months? (# of unique children followed up twice and linked by their ID with a previous follow-up visit and monitoring visit / # unique children found in child labour)</p>	
<p>Average time between identification and first follow-up visit, for children with at least one follow-up visit. (review distribution to identify: (a) % children who received a first follow-up visit within less than 3 months of identification in child labour (b) % children who received a first follow-up visit >6 months after their identification in child labour</p>	<p>The first follow-up visit should take place at least 3 months and at most 6 months from the date a child is identified in child labour. If over 5% of first follow-up visits are carried out too late or too early, improvement is required.</p>
<p>Average time between identification and second follow-up visit, for children with at least two follow-up visits. (review distribution to identify: (a) % children who received two or more follow-up visits within less than 6 months of identification in child labour (b) % children who received two follow-up visits >12 months after their identification in child labour</p>	<p>The second follow-up visit should take place at least 6 months and at most 12 months from the date a child is identified in child labour. If over 5% of visits are carried out too late or too early, improvement is required.</p>

Check 5: Children identified in child labour in the past 24 months who received support

Question	Interpretation guidance
<p>Percentage of children in child labour who received support in the past 24 months (# of children found in child labour during monitoring or plantation visits who are linked by their ID to a support activity / # of children found in child labour during monitoring and plantation visits)</p>	<p>All children identified in child labour should receive at least one type of support (child, household or community level). A percentage below 50% should be considered concerning.</p>
<p>Average time between identification and delivery of the first support activity</p>	<p>Support should be provided as soon as possible following a child's identification in child labour, ideally within 6 months. If over 10% of children identified in child labour received their first form of support more than 6 months after identification, further improvement is needed.</p>

Check 6: Children no longer in child labour

Question	Interpretation guidance
<p>Percentage of children previously identified in child labour who reported not working at their most recent follow-up visit. (# of children followed up once and linked by their ID with a previous monitoring visit who declared no to be in child labour at the most recent follow-up visit / # of children followed up at least once and linked by their ID with a previous monitoring visit)</p>	<p>Any percentage above 50% is unlikely to be correct (the most effective child labour interventions typically reduce child labour by around 30%²). Any percentage of 100% is impossible and should be considered highly concerning.</p> <p>It is useful to disaggregate this figure by cooperative or even agent to flag irregularities locally.</p>
<p>Percentage of children previously identified in child labour who reported not working at their two most recent follow-up visits. (# of children followed up twice and linked by their ID with a previous monitoring visit who declared no to be in child labour during the last two consecutive follow-up visits / # of children followed up at least twice and linked by their ID with a previous follow-up visit and monitoring visit)</p>	

² See for example: ILO (2023) [Meta-analysis of the effects of interventions on child labour](#)

3. Interpreting the results

Each of the checks above includes a defined threshold, beyond which further analysis and action are needed to better understand the issues and make improvements. Once the checks have been completed, each of these “challenge” areas should be discussed with the project team in more detail. Consider asking the following questions:

- What are the possible explanations for this result?
- What practical actions could be taken to improve?
- Who needs to be involved to make these changes, and what are the resource implications?

Based on the answers to these questions, develop an action plan for improvement, including who is responsible and accountable, with clear timeframes for each action required.

Some explanations and actions will be simple, while others may be much more complex.

ICI remains available to provide ad-hoc technical support to members to help interpret results, support the action planning process, or to conduct a full CLMRS assessment³, where needed, to understand complex datasets, dig deeper into results and support the partners involved in system implementation to find solutions.

³ ICI conducts in-depth CLMRS assessments on demand, tailored to the specific needs and interests of members. Typically, these assessments include a more detailed analysis of CLMRS data, as well as a review of the CLMRS strategy, data collection tools, standard operating procedures and awareness-raising material. Assessments include interviews with different individuals involved in system implementation and management to assess strategy coherence and identify challenges and can also include data collection from households covered by the system to gather their perspectives.