



INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO)
International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)

ILO/IPEC West Africa Cocoa/Agriculture Project (WACAP)
for the
Prevention and Elimination of Hazardous Child Labour
(Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Ghana, Guinea, and Nigeria)
An Overview

INTRODUCTION

The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) is a technical cooperation programme of the International Labour Organization (ILO). The aim of IPEC is the progressive elimination of child labour by strengthening national capacities to address the problem and by promoting a worldwide movement to combat it. IPEC partner agencies in a country include ILO's traditional constituents, that is the ministries of labour, employers' and workers' organizations, as well as other concerned partners in the public and private sectors. IPEC support is given to partner organizations to develop and implement measures which aim at preventing child labour, withdrawing children from hazardous work, providing alternatives and improving the working conditions in non-hazardous and non-exploitative work for older children as a transitional measure towards the elimination of child labour.

The ILO reports¹ that of the 353 million children engaged in economic activity worldwide, 246 million – one in every six children aged 5 to 17 – are involved in child labour, which the ILO says should be abolished.

The report notes that child labour often assumes serious proportions in commercial agriculture associated with global markets for cocoa, coffee, cotton, rubber, sisal, tea and other commodities. Studies in Brazil, Kenya and Mexico have shown that children under 15 make between 25 and 30 per cent of the total labour force in the production of various commodities.

Even though work in agriculture as such may not seem to be harmful for children, there are varying degrees of hazards in the work they do, by virtue of the nature of the task or the conditions under which the tasks are performed.

In early 2001 there were persistent reports that children were being used to work in cocoa production in West Africa, particularly Cote d'Ivoire, and that these children were being trafficked from other countries in the region. Amidst these reports, the Government of Cote d'Ivoire has taken some action to prevent the occurrence of this phenomenon and the chocolate and cocoa industry have resolved to address the child labour problem and to improve the livelihoods of farm workers. The donor community, including the United States and international organizations, the ILO among others, are extending support to address the problem of child labour and trafficking in the production of cocoa and other agricultural sub-sectors in Cote d'Ivoire and in selected countries in West Africa. The United States Agency

¹ *A Future Without Child Labour*, ILO, Geneva, May 2002

for International Development has broadened the scope of its Sustainable Tree Crop Programme (STCP) to include child labour and labour issues.

In September 2001 “*A Protocol for the Growing and Processing of Cocoa Beans and their Derivative Products in a manner that Complies with ILO Convention 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour*” was ratified. Representatives of the worldwide chocolate industry signed the protocol and the document was witnessed by members of the US Congress, international labour organizations and other organizations that act as advocates for child labour rights. Various steps are being undertaken as a result of the Protocol, among them the establishment of a Foundation.

The ILO/IPEC project, with funding of US\$5 million confirmed by the United States Department of Labor and US\$1 million confirmed by the Cocoa Global Issues Group (GIG), will aim at the prevention and elimination of hazardous child labour in the cocoa and other selected agricultural sub-sectors in Cote d’Ivoire, Cameroon, Ghana, Guinea, and Nigeria. The ILO/IPEC West Africa Cocoa Agriculture Project (WACAP) overall objective is to prevent and eliminate the worst forms of child labour in the cocoa and other selected agricultural sub-sectors. WACAP will support the efforts of USAID/STCP and of the cocoa/chocolate industry in improving the well-being of cocoa farmers and ensuring that cocoa is grown responsibly.

For the purposes of C. 182, the term *the worst forms of child labour* comprises:

- (a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- (b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
- (c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;
- (d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

Sustainable Tree Crop Programme (STCP)

USAID jointly developed and supports the STCP with the global chocolate manufacturing industry. The STCP includes five countries: Cameroon, Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, and Nigeria. The programme focuses on cocoa in West Africa, but also includes coffee and cashew. (Together these commodities account for over 50 percent of foreign exchange from agriculture in West Africa).

The STCP’s objective is to raise economic and social standards of rural households. Programme activities to achieve this objective include: *a)* creating capacity and motivation of farmer association-owned grower and business support services to assist smallholder tree crop farmers, *b)* increasing the availability and use of environmentally friendly technology to raise profitability and productivity of smallholder tree crops systems, *c)* promoting regional market and information systems to enhance the efficiency of the tree crops sector, and *d)* promoting the institution of policy options that increase the efficiency of the tree crop sector. The STCP framework endeavored to address social issues, such as poverty, related to tree crop systems. The ILO/IPEC West Africa Cocoa/Agriculture Project will implement the Child Labour Component of the STCP.

ILO/IPEC PROJECT COMPONENTS AND THEIR STRATEGIC CHARACTERISTICS

THE IPEC COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED APPROACH TO CHILD LABOUR ELIMINATION

IPEC's worldwide experience shows that as child labour is a complex problem, action to combat it must be holistic and multifaceted in approach so as to result in positive and sustained impact. While undertaking isolated measures have value in that they enable IPEC and its partners to test and demonstrate strategies, impact is best achieved through the dynamics of a whole array of critical sets of action. It is not sufficient merely to have a programme that withdraws children from work or that rescues them from situations of the worst forms of child labour. On the one hand, it is imperative that these children are provided with viable developmental opportunities, including education and training, so that they do not return to the same kind of work or enter other, possibly worse, forms of child labour. On the other hand, it is equally important that credible and cost-effective systems be put in place to ensure that "new" children do not replace those withdrawn from the workplace.

IPEC programmes also reflect the fact that the causes of child labour are generally several and varied and so its solutions would need to come from many groups and their perspectives. With this premise, the programmes work at the level of the children, their families, communities, the employers and adult workers, the government and society in general.

WACAP will be a sub-regional project to combat hazardous child labour in the cocoa and other agricultural sub-sectors (through linkages with STCP) in the project countries and prevent the trafficking of children for labour exploitation (through linkages with the IPEC sub-regional trafficking project). Funds for the project have been confirmed by the US Department of Labor and the Cocoa Global Issues Group (GIG). The project will include five country components. Over 30 action programmes (i.e. sub-projects/pilot projects) will be implemented to (i) mobilize the participation and strengthen the capacity of various social partners; (ii) carry out intensive awareness-raising campaigns; (iii) demonstrate a comprehensive package of social protection measures including counselling, education and training (iv) establish a credible and cost-effective child labour monitoring system, and (v) enhance the knowledge base on the issue and disseminate information, including experiences and lessons learned. At the sub-regional level, consultative and coordination meetings will be organized on a regular basis with the STCP Regional Network and the IPEC sub-regional project on child trafficking. WACAP will participate in the processes being set up through the IPEC trafficking project for multilateral and bilateral agreements to prevent trafficking and provide protection and rehabilitation to the victims.

More specifically, WACAP will include the following key components:

I. CAPACITY BUILDING

- *enhanced capacity*, of public and private partners and concerned agencies at all levels (national and local, institutional, organizational, community), to plan, initiate, implement, monitor, and evaluate action to combat child labour;

- *support to the labour inspectorate* to implement the country's laws effectively and to understand international labour conventions on child labour, bonded labour and agriculture²;
- *involvement of employers* (producers, owners, sub-contractors), in the programme;
- *involvement of workers*, including young workers, in the programme; and
- *encouraging policy debate and adjustment* so policies are conducive to the prevention and elimination of child labour, particularly hazardous child labour in the cocoa/agriculture sector.

II. AWARENESS RAISING

- *increased awareness* among the children, families and communities and concerned public and private agencies on issues related to child labour, particularly to hazards for children working in the cocoa/agricultural sector; and
- fostering a meaningful debate on the issues.

III. SOCIAL PROTECTION

- *systematic removal* of children from work and provision of appropriate options (as opposed to immediate and unplanned dismissal of child workers);
- *the establishment and support of community social protection interventions* to provide rehabilitation services, such as non-formal and vocational education, counselling, linkages with local medical and community services; training for adult members of the families and older children, linkages with credit/loan/savings facilities; and other services such as prevention of child labour through awareness raising and community mobilization, and non-formal education for younger siblings of working children;
- *'family approach'* which will enable other members of the working child's family to avail of the services provided. This means that if the working child is targeted for withdrawal and social protection, the parents - and in some cases adult siblings - may be targeted for community mobilization, group formation and training in income-generation activities. For the cocoa sector this will likely include access to improved agricultural technology and services, improved marketing of family produced commodities. The younger siblings can be targeted for education in the centres and then efforts made to mainstream them into formal schools;
- *reliance on viable income replacement mechanisms*; (i.e. training of parents in income generation skills and then arranging for credit, loans, savings, etc. or advising them on improving their production processes). Income generating activities in many cases will occur in cooperation with related STCP activities aimed at families of working children; and
- encouraging social dialogue with other groups such as employers and professionals (teachers, physicians and nurses, journalists, and others) in the community.

IV. CHILD LABOUR MONITORING

- strong focus on the *prevention* of child labour;
- design and implementation of a *feasible, credible and transparent* child labour monitoring system through community groups, with the involvement of relevant public players;

² particularly Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, Convention No. 138 on Minimum Age, and Convention No. 29 on Forced Labour

- ensuring through *child labour monitoring* and improved *labour inspection* that workplaces from which children have been removed continue to remain free of child labour; and
- ensuring that children removed from work are participating in the social protection services provided under the project or others.

These are activities that will all be essential elements of any systems of certification.

V. KNOWLEDGE BASE AND INFORMATION

- *emphasis on action-oriented research, monitoring and evaluation*, and systematic feedback of results into programme implementation;
- assessing the hazardous forms of child labour in the cocoa/agriculture sector in the project countries; and
- documentation of experiences and their dissemination.

PROJECT FRAMEWORK

The WACAP will be guided and advised by Project Advisory Committees (PAC) at the national levels, composed of the STCP National Networks and any other members that are deemed relevant and significant for the project. The ILO/IPEC WACAP will be coordinated with the programmatic framework of the STCP and ILO/IPEC programme in the region and at the national level.

LINKAGES

With Sustainable Tree Crop Project, West Africa

- The issue of child labour will mainstreamed in the STCP National Network program. Activities will include training, education, information, and sensitization activities of STCP National Networks. IPEC will provide training to the STCP agencies, develop or make available existing training materials and advise in the large-scale sensitization and training of farmers and their communities.
- IPEC will introduce the issue of child labour into social dialogue at all levels throughout the supply chain including the farmer, workers, children and family, buyers of cocoa, truckers, port workers and exporters of cocoa. In addition these groups will work with government, local communities, and producer groups to establish best practices that lead to the elimination of the worst forms of child labor.
- The IPEC project will encourage other STCP components to bear on the IPEC project target groups for development services, such as improvement of farm income, access to market information, credit and loan facility, appropriate agricultural production technology transfer, formal and vocational training and others that could meet the needs of these target groups.

With IPEC on-going projects in the Region

ILO/IPEC West and Central Africa Project on Child Trafficking³

IPEC initiatives to combat the worst forms of child labour in West Africa include a sub-regional programme to combat the trafficking of children for labour exploitation, with funds from the US Department of Labor and (Denmark DANIDA). At country level, demonstration projects are implemented to (i) carry out intensive awareness-raising campaigns; (ii) mobilize the participation and strengthen the capacity of various social partners; (iii) strengthen networking and coordination strategy among key actors; and (iv) provide multi-disciplinary preventive and rehabilitation programmes (health care, counselling, education and training, social integration, and provision of alternatives for children at risk and their parents). At sub-regional level, inter-country mechanisms will be set up through multilateral and bilateral agreements to prevent trafficking and provide protection and rehabilitation to the victims. Until bilateral agreements are in place, collaboration and exchanges among key actors (i.e., NGOs, police) across the borders will be promoted. As part of the process, sub-regional consultative and coordination meetings will be organized on a regular basis.

The ILO/IPEC WACAP will have linkages to the Trafficking project. These will include:

- Sharing of information on the children and their families, and research information;
- Aligning strategies for identification, rehabilitation and reintegration;
- In locations where Trafficking project sites exist, children identified under the WACAP will be accommodated to participate in the services provided by the Trafficking project;
- Sharing of expertise and project implementation tools that are developed by either project; and participation in meetings; and
- The Trafficking project will be represented in the WACAP Project Advisory Committees and vice versa.

IPEC Country Programmes in the Region

Of the countries to be covered by the WACAP, IPEC has broad-based country programmes in Ghana and Nigeria. Linkages will be established, particularly in the sharing of information and expertise. The experiences of these programmes will be taken into consideration when establishing the WACAP in these countries.

³ The geographical scope of the Trafficking project is: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Gabon, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Nigeria, and Togo.