



Tackling Child Labor

2019 Report



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Continuing our collaboration

The partnership between Nestlé and the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI) has changed the way that the cocoa sector tackles the issue of child labor. We are proud to present this second report on tackling child labor, which documents our progress and shares the insights we have gained.



A message from Nestlé leadership

Identify the challenges, engage with others and measure progress. We believe that addressing issues transparently is essential. In this light, we invite you to read our second report on 'Tackling Child Labor'. We want to ensure that cocoa is sustainably grown, sourced and managed across our supply chain. This is the right thing to do for everyone - from the farmers who grow the cocoa to the consumers who enjoy our chocolate around the world.

This is the right thing to do for everyone - from the farmers who grow the cocoa to the consumers who enjoy our chocolate around the world.

Our future is tied to the value we create for society. That is why we launched the Nestlé Cocoa Plan in 2009: to make cocoa farming more sustainable, improve the lives of farmers and enhance the quality of our products. We have invested CHF 224 million over the last 10 years to help make this a reality.

A key part of the Nestlé Cocoa Plan is addressing the issue of child labor. Child labor is unacceptable. Children are very vulnerable. They should be protected and they deserve the chance to fulfill their potential. This is why we were the first company in the industry to introduce a comprehensive Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System (CLMRS) in 2012.

Since 2017, when we published our first report, the reach of the CLMRS has almost doubled –covering 78,580 children today. We are not proud to have found just over 18,000 children doing hazardous work, but thanks to our system, we have been able to make a difference in their lives. Through the CLMRS, we are helping children to stop doing unacceptable activities and, where needed, helping them to access quality education.

While we have made progress, we will not stop here. This report describes how we are learning and adapting our approach with our partners. It also outlines our commitments to continue to raise awareness and expand the CLMRS to other communities.

We will continue to help more children and families. Our goal is to source all cocoa for our confectionery products from the Nestlé Cocoa Plan by 2025. In parallel, we will continue to expand the reach of the CLMRS across our supply chain in West Africa.

To contribute to ending child labor in cocoa communities, we must work together with governments, NGOs, our industry peers, suppliers and the communities and children themselves, with determination, transparency and understanding.



Magdi Batato
EVP,
Head of Operations,
Nestlé SA



Alexander von Maillot
SVP, Global Head
Confectionery &
Ice cream Strategic
Business Unit,
Nestlé SA



Introduction to this report

ABOUT THIS REPORT

The data in this report come from ICI’s Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System database. Using mobile data collection, every visit to a household or individual child, awareness-raising session, and remediation activity is logged in the system. Each child is assigned a unique code, allowing us to follow his or her progress over time. The structure of the database allows us to link each child to information about their household, community and cooperative, helping us to understand the factors that make some children more at risk of child labor than others. It also enables us to analyze the impact of different remediation activities.

INTRODUCING OUR SECOND TACKLING CHILD LABOR REPORT

In October 2017, we published the industry’s first comprehensive report describing how we are tackling child labor in our cocoa supply chain. At that time, our Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System (CLMRS) had been in place for five years, from 2012 to 2017.

During this development phase, we reached 40,728 children in Côte d’Ivoire, of whom 7,002 were identified as undertaking hazardous work over the five-year period. We were able to report that, following awareness raising, remediation support and monitoring, 51% of these children were no longer participating in dangerous activities.

These findings, and the industry’s response, gave us confidence to rapidly expand the CLMRS, which now has double the reach and covers 78,580 children in Côte d’Ivoire. We have increased the scope and scale of our remediation activities, most notably in providing access to education and improving the quality of education.

We believe that better and faster progress will be achieved with honest and open communication. We are proud to present our 2019 Tackling Child Labor Report, which documents the new insights, challenges and achievements of the past two years.

The analysis in this report is based on data collected through our CLMRS since 2012 and includes all children who have ever been monitored, as of 1 September 2019. In some places, we also talk about children who are “currently in the system”, since some children have turned 18, moved away from Nestlé Cocoa Plan communities, or are no longer affiliated with a cooperative that supplies Nestlé.

Our data and the case studies in this report show that there are children who were identified in child labor, received home visits and/or remediation, and continue to do hazardous work. At the time of this report’s publication, all of their families are continuing to receive visits, support and appropriate remediation from our Community Liaison People.

The Nestlé CLMRS is fully aligned with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and in particular Principles 17 to 21 on human rights due diligence:

Carry out human rights due diligence (UNGP 17)	<p>The CLMRS covers the risks of child labor that we are linked to by our business relationships in the cocoa supply chain (p.24-27)</p> <p>The structure and size of the CLMRS (p.10-11 and 17) is based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The scope of our sourcing activities in Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana- The level of risk of child labor in the cocoa sector in these two countries in particular <p>The CLMRS is an ongoing process, allowing us to capture change over time, including new risks and challenges, and to measure progress of remediation (p.16-21).</p>
Assess actual and potential human rights impacts (UNGP 18)	<p>The CLMRS has helped us identify and assess actual and potential child labor cases rooted in our cocoa supply chain (p.10-13).</p> <p>The CLMRS draws upon internal expertise at the local and global levels in the areas of human rights and cocoa. External expertise is provided by the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI, p.3), our implementing partner, and the Fair Labor Association (FLA). We consult and engage with additional global and local organizations and experts in these areas on a regular basis.</p> <p>Ongoing engagement and consultations with farmers, farm workers and community members, including children and their parents, is at the core of the CLMRS (p.17).</p>
Integrate and act upon the findings (UNGP 19)	<p>The responsibility for addressing child labor is clearly distributed among the different actors of the CLMRS (see p.17), including Nestlé. A dedicated Human Rights Manager is based in Côte d’Ivoire to oversee the system and reports directly to the global Head of the Nestlé Cocoa Plan. A specific budget is dedicated to the implementation of the CLMRS (see p.10).</p> <p>The CLMRS is fully embedded into Nestlé’s cocoa supply chain. This allows us to leverage the relationship with our suppliers to implement the CLMRS (p.16-17).</p>
Track the effectiveness of responses (UNGP 20)	<p>Quantitative and qualitative indicators (p.16-21) used to monitor the effectiveness of the CLMRS are provided in this report. They draw on the information and data collected by the Community Liaison Person from farmers, farm workers and local communities.</p> <p>Each child identified as having performed hazardous tasks is regularly visited in order to assess the impact of our interventions (p.12-13).</p>
Communicate how impacts are addressed (UNGP 21)	<p>We report on progress and challenges annually through our Nestlé in Society report. In addition, we have issued two specific reports (2017 and 2019) that provide detailed monitoring and remediation information and data, as well as case studies.</p>

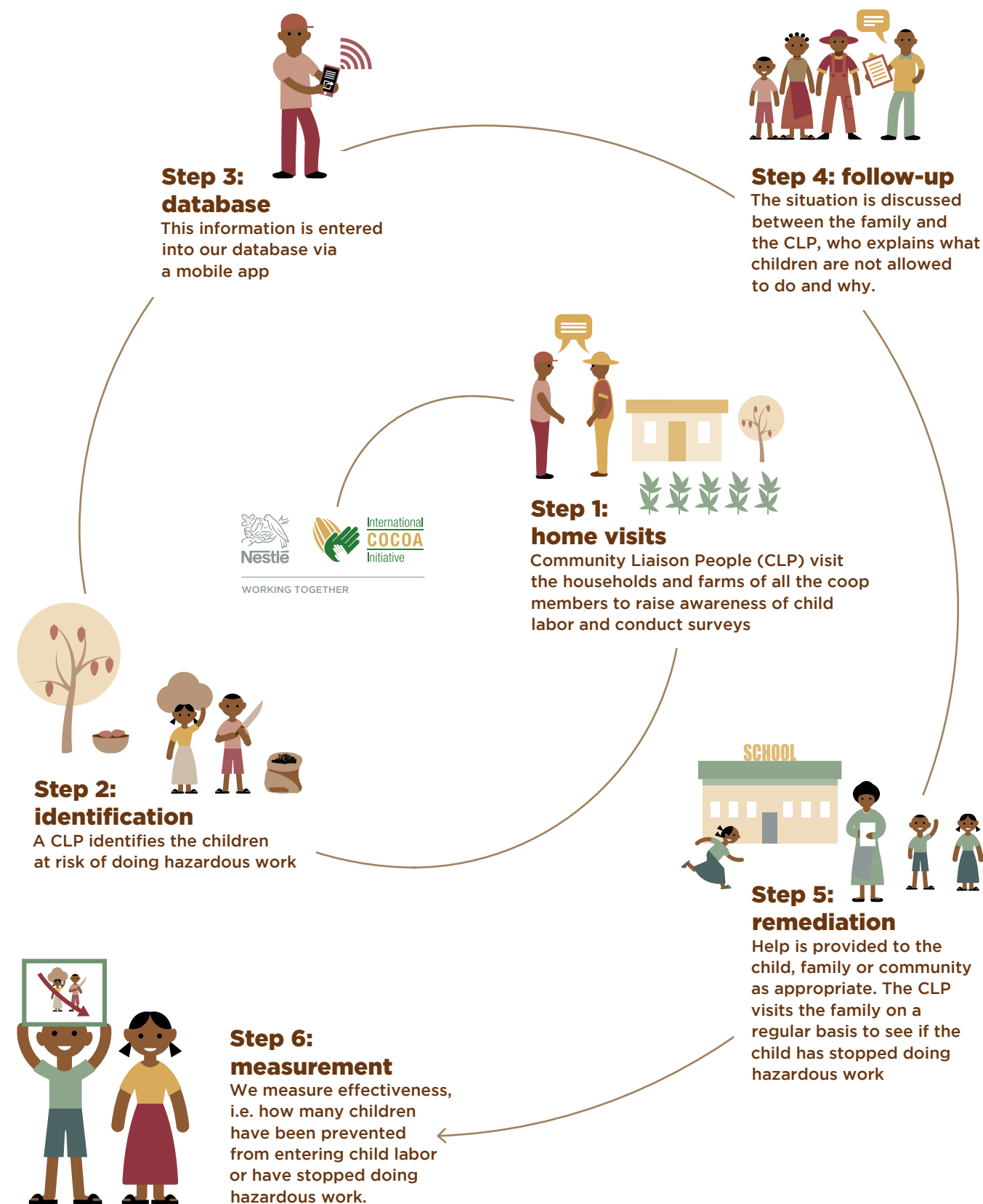
About the Nestlé CLMRS

Community-driven, holistic and embedded into the heart of our supply chain, the Nestlé Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System is an effective way to approach the problem of child labor.

This was the first program of its kind in the cocoa sector.

Our Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System

How it works





Impact

Now present in over 1,750 communities in Côte d'Ivoire, our CLMRS database encompasses over 24,000 more farmers than in 2017 and almost double the number of children. Encouragingly, analysis of the data indicates that the system seems to be working as effectively at scale as it did during its development phase.

As anticipated in the 2017 report, we have also implemented our CLMRS in Ghana, although progress has been slower than expected: as of August 2019, 82 Community Liaison People (CLPs) cover 2,859 farmers and 2,430 children. Going forward, we will further expand the system in Ghana using community-based risk assessment and direct income support, in collaboration with the Swiss Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), in the framework of the Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa.

Scaling up the system



CHF224m

invested to date in cocoa sustainability under the Nestlé Cocoa Plan, including in global partnerships, certification and farmer training

of which we invested

2012-2016

CHF9.9m

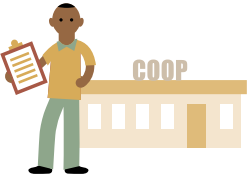
2012-2018

CHF19.3m

in our CLMRS and school building

2017 refers to the data published in the Tackling Child Labor 2017 Report, for which the reporting period closed June 30, 2017. 2019 data is as of 1 September 2019.

Cooperatives in our CLMRS



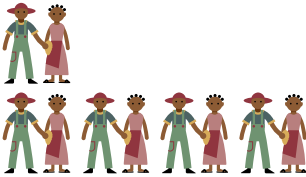
75

2017

87

2019

Farmers monitored by our CLMRS



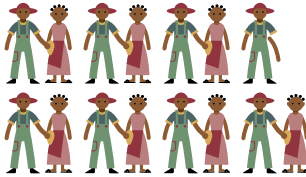
2017

48,496

in the database

25,775

for whom a household survey was conducted



2019

73,248

in the database

45,272

for whom a household survey was conducted

Reach of the system

	2017	2019
Number of children aged 5-17 being monitored	40,728	78,580
Number of children identified in child labor and currently in the system	7,002	18,283
Child labor rate	17%	23%
Number of children who received at least one form of remediation	Not measured	15,740

Number of CLPs



1,246

2017

1,640

2019

Communities covered by our CLMRS



2017

1,553

2019

1,751

Community members educated about child labor



2017
(cumulative)

163,407

attendees

5,877

sessions

2019
(cumulative)

593,925

attendees

56,183

sessions

Understanding our impact

Our 1,640 Community Liaison People (CLP) are members of the cocoa communities who are nominated to identify and record cases of child labor and monitor each child’s progress thereafter. They do this predominantly through home visits, observing activity within their community, and on visits to farms.

As no universal methodology exists for determining whether a child has stopped doing hazardous work and can be classified as no longer participating in child labor, we have developed a simple and practical approach with our partner ICI.

After a case of child labor has been identified, the child, family or community receives a remediation. Subsequently, the CLP follows up the child to determine whether the child has stopped doing hazardous tasks.

Effectiveness

Our 2017 report showed that the Nestlé CLMRS had helped 51% of children to stop doing hazardous work (an estimated 3,571 of the 7,002 children identified). This was based on a representative sample of children who were interviewed once as part of an internal evaluation. As of 2019, not only has

the system expanded, but we can use the full data set to calculate impact. This year’s data demonstrated that on the same basis 55% of children, i.e. 7,981 of 14,511 identified in child labor, were no longer doing hazardous work at their most recent follow-up visit.

Impact rate

	2017	2019
Direct comparison vs 2017	51%	55%
Under revised Ivorian law*	not applicable	49%

* Applying new Ivorian law which classifies use sharp tools as hazardous work.

In 2018, legislation introduced by the government of Côte d’Ivoire expanded the list of activities that are considered hazardous for children. Specifically, they added the use of sharp tools such as the machete and ‘daba’ or hoe. It will take time for this information to filter down to farmers and for habits to change. Based on the new legislation, the rate of children who have stopped hazardous work drops slightly to 49% with one visit as there are children who use sharp tools on a day-to-day basis for a variety of activities.

Now that we have followed up a substantial number of children over time, we see that one visit is not enough to know if a child has

stopped doing hazardous work long term. The reality (as illustrated by two of the case studies in this report) is that some children will relapse and start doing hazardous work again. However, we learned that children who have not done hazardous work after a second follow-up visit rarely go back to doing hazardous work again. Using this higher benchmark, 29% of children are no longer doing hazardous work (see graph opposite).

This is encouraging as we are fighting an uphill battle – children are increasingly likely to do hazardous work as they get older. It sounds obvious, but children get older with every visit.



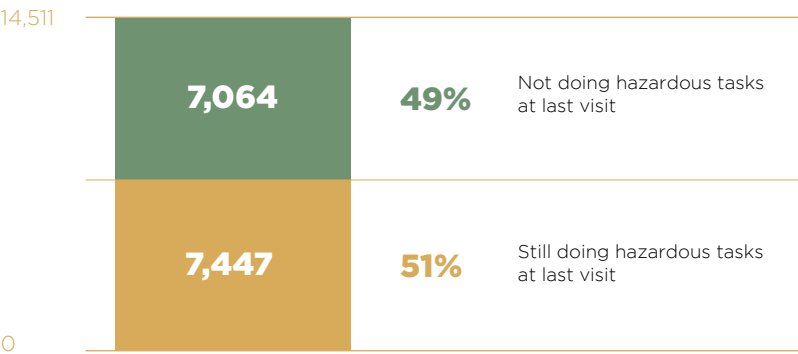
Measuring long-term impact

Our latest data set, extracted at 1 September 2019, allows us to analyze the status of 14,511 children who have had at least one follow-up visit and 8,549 children who have had at least two follow up visits by a CLP. This analysis is based on the revised Ivorian list of hazardous tasks that are prohibited for children in cocoa cultivation, which includes the use of sharp tools.

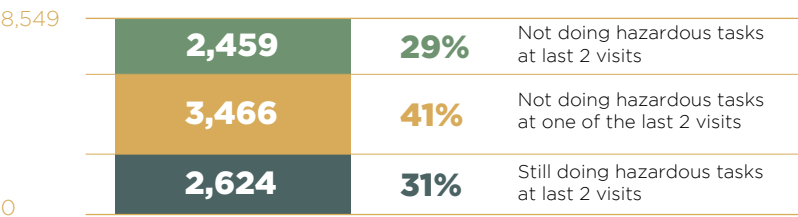
Children who have been identified as continuing to do hazardous work after two

consecutive home visits are considered difficult cases to solve, and there were 2,624 of those identified in our data. An example of this can be seen on page 63 of this report.As Dr Kristy Leissle argues on page 28, this poses the question of how success can be reframed and defined when it comes to tackling child labor. At the time of this report’s publication, all of these children are continuing to receive visits, support and appropriate remediation from our Community Liaison People.

When we look at the latest follow up visit



When we look at the latest two follow up visits





Remediation












Remediation activities are at the heart of our efforts to tackle child labor. Remediation is about supporting children, their families and communities to remove children from a situation of risk. The purpose is twofold: to try and prevent children from doing hazardous work in the first place, and to help children who are engaged in hazardous work to stop.

The majority of remediation activities to date have focused on education, activities to improve family income and assistance with farm-related work.

87,925

children within and outside the Nestlé Cocoa Plan have received prevention or remediation support since 2012

Since 2012, 593,925 attendees have taken part in our awareness-raising sessions. We have helped 87,925 children, both within and outside our direct supply chain. See below the main types of remediation activities delivered by our CLMRS.

Type of remediation	Brief description	Number of beneficiaries (cumulative total to 2019)
 School kit	Materials needed at school on a daily basis, without which children cannot attend school	19,152 children
 Birth certificates	Official state documentation so that children can complete primary school and enroll in secondary education	5,756 children
 Tutoring	Additional academic support for children who need it	1,225 children
 Bridging classes	Classes for out-of-school children to help them reintegrate into mainstream education	2,140 children registered
 Schools built or refurbished	Building primary schools where they are needed and refurbishing schools and facilities to help with enrollment and retention	49 schools benefiting 20,000 children
 School canteens	Meals offered to school children to help with enrollment and retention	2,148 children benefited from support given to canteens in 48 communities
 Vocational training	Non-academic education supported by the Jacobs Foundation	62 children enrolled
 Parental literacy training	Reading and writing lessons for adults, a key factor in reducing child labor	979 women, caring for 1,860 children
 Income-generating activities	Ways for households to increase their income outside of cocoa farming, reducing the pressure on a single crop	4,090 adults, caring for a total of 8,180 children.
 Community service groups	Trained groups of adults that can undertake tasks such as land maintenance and pruning, reducing the need for children to do this type of work	157 groups created in communities where 5,921 children live or lived
 Wheelbarrows	Traditional wheelbarrows to reduce the risks associated with carrying heavy loads	2,462 households where 5,319 children live

Every case of child labor is different. This is why most children in the remediation system receive multiple forms of support tailored to their individual needs.

Effectiveness of remediation

Based on seven years' implementation of our CLMRS, we now have enough data on children to examine the effectiveness of different types of remediation.

One form of support the CLMRS brings to children in child labor is awareness-raising. When children are interviewed, at home or on the farm, this is a form of awareness-raising in itself. Following their identification, many children receive targeted awareness-raising, together with their families. A child who receives remediation support in addition to awareness-raising is 9.5 percentage points more likely to stop participating in hazardous work.

The majority of remediation activities demonstrate a fairly similar rate of success for all children on average.

One of our foremost objectives is to understand which types of remediation are most effective for which children. This can help us offer the most effective help and support to children identified in child labor. Taking this type of systematic approach should help improve the effectiveness of the system overall.

Work on this has already begun. For example, in terms of gender, regression analysis shows that the provision of birth certificates, tutoring and targeted awareness-raising are more effective for girls than for boys. Income-generating activities and community service groups for adults are more effective in stopping boys from doing hazardous work.

When we look at remediations in terms of the age profile of the children, awareness raising, income-generating activities and adult literacy classes for parents are more effective at helping younger children than older ones. The other types of remediation, based on our experience to date, seem to be similarly effective for children in all age groups. Overall, it is more difficult to stop older children from doing hazardous tasks.

A major risk factor is having illiterate parents - particularly illiterate mothers. However, we find that for children of illiterate mothers, certain types of remediation are particularly effective: this is the case for bridging classes, birth certificates, interventions in schools (such as renovating classrooms) and tutoring.

As the amount of data in our system grows, this information has the potential to help us make more informed decisions when offering remediation.





Increasing insights

Child labor: what it is and what it is not

Forced labor

The vast majority of child labor cases we discover are children working within their own communities and almost always with their own families. Cases of forced labor are rare in Nestlé’s cocoa supply chain.

Since 2012, we have uncovered three violations of forced labor guidelines and immediately took action to report and remedy them. The cases were identified in 2013, 2014 and 2015.

Since the publication of the 2017 Tackling Child Labor Report, no further instances of forced labor have been identified. This does not mean that forced labor does not exist - it may be that we are not good enough at identifying it. ICI is conducting a pilot project to fine tune training material and data collection tools to ensure that we can better detect and tackle forced labor risks.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), child labor is:

‘Work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development.’¹

In Côte d’Ivoire, the government has specified hazardous tasks in cocoa cultivation which fall into eight broad categories that are strictly forbidden for children to do.

Importantly though, as the ILO points out: ‘not all work done by children should be classified as child labor.’² This means that there are some age-appropriate tasks that children can legally do to help their families. For example, in the cocoa drying process, children can help their parents spread the beans out evenly over a large table so that they dry properly. This task is in no way hazardous to their health, nor does it interfere with their schooling if done only occasionally.

Child labor by type

62% of all cases of hazardous child labor uncovered involved the carrying of heavy loads, such as cocoa beans, firewood or water.

Hazardous activities associated with cases of child labor in cocoa cultivation

	Carrying heavy loads	62%
	Working with sharp tools	25%
	Land preparation	15%
	Exposure to agro-chemicals	13%
	Bush burning	7%
	Hunting	7%
	Charcoal production	6%
	Using motorized farm machinery	2%

Note: Children may be involved in more than one kind of hazardous activity.

Ivorian government prohibited activities for children in cocoa cultivation³



Note: The use of sharp tools is a new classification introduced under Ivorian law in 2018

Identifying children at risk

The causes of child labor are unique to each child, which makes it a challenging issue to address. While every case must be considered individually, there are some root causes and indicators that can be examined collectively.

Poverty and demographics

Poverty is a significant problem for cocoa farmers. The average cocoa farmer in Ghana earns less than \$1 per day, well below the extreme poverty line of \$1.90 per day⁴. As young adults leave rural communities to study and work in urban areas, the farming demographic is ageing. There are fewer young professional farmers in rural areas in Côte d’Ivoire to sustain cocoa growing communities.

Against this backdrop of an ageing farming population are contrasting countrywide demographics. In Côte d’Ivoire, 53.5% of the population is under the age of 19.⁵ These demographic trends create a fertile environment for child labor to exist. They also help explain why, in so many cases, farmers maintain that they need their children to help them in the fields.

Education and infrastructure problems

In rural areas, there is an acute lack of schools, with children often having to walk several kilometers to the nearest one – if any are reachable at all. Those schools that do exist are often overcrowded and lacking in resources.

Moreover, with only 36.5% of the rural population having access to electricity in Côte d’Ivoire, many students are unable to study in the evenings because of a lack of light.⁶

Given its proximity to the equator, sunset in Côte d’Ivoire is at around 6pm every day, exacerbating the problem. Issues like these have a cumulative effect on children’s attendance and performance at school.

Culture and tradition

Many farmers involve their children in work because they intend to provide them with useful, practical training for potential future careers as farmers. These parents usually undertook the same tasks themselves when young, so do not perceive them as wrong.

Additionally, there is a lack of awareness involved. For example, it is common for parents to think that carrying heavy loads will help build the muscular strength of their children. However, it has been proven that carrying heavy loads can impair the normal development of a child’s spine.⁷ Very few parents would deliberately inflict this on their children.

“There is a belief in Côte d’Ivoire that life is tough, and children must be deliberately placed into difficult situations so that they become tough too.”

Mathilde Koua N’Godo Sokoty,
Nestlé Cocoa Plan
Human Rights Manager, Côte d’Ivoire

40%

of the world's cocoa is supplied by Côte d'Ivoire⁸

57 years

Life expectancy at birth in Côte d'Ivoire⁹

45

Average age of cocoa farmers in Côte d'Ivoire¹⁰

5.2

Years spent in education on average in Côte d'Ivoire¹¹

60%

of adult women in Côte d'Ivoire are illiterate¹²

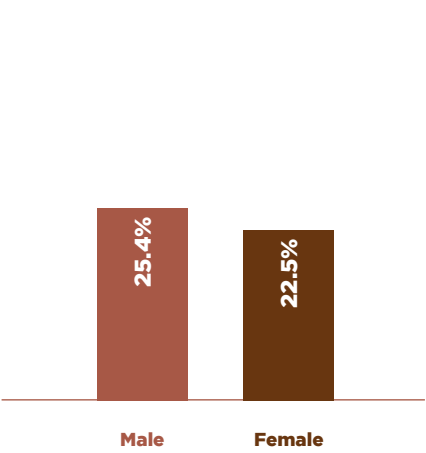
Identifying children in child labor

Data analysis shows us the relationship between the rate of children identified doing hazardous work and specific household and community characteristics.

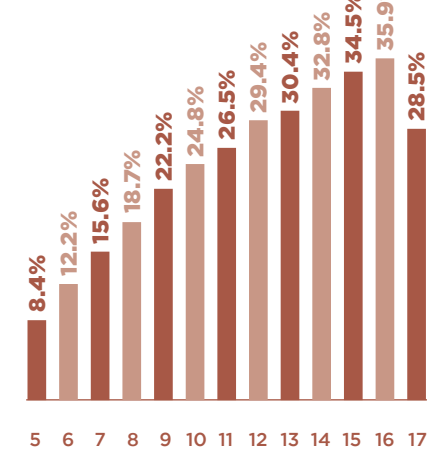
Age and gender of children

Child labor rates are higher among boys and older children

Gender

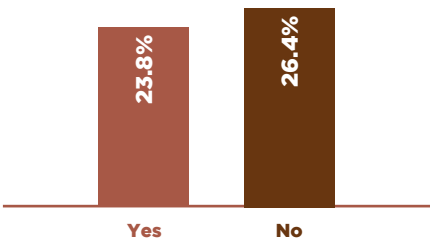


Age



Primary school present in the community

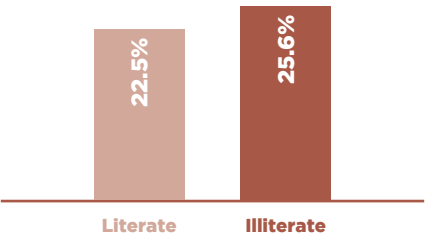
Child labor rates are 11% higher where there is no primary school in the community



Literacy levels

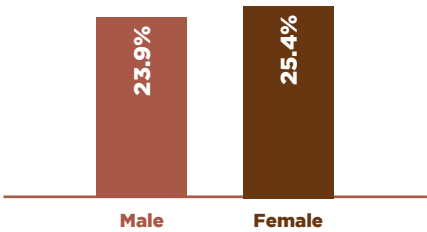
Child labor rates are influenced by the literacy of the adults in the household, particularly the women in the household. The rate is 14% higher when the male adult is illiterate and 16% when the female adult is illiterate

Male head of household



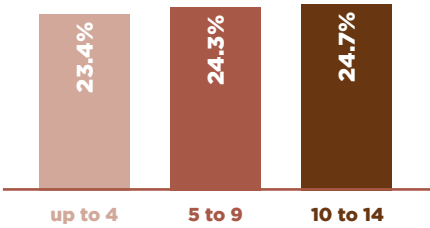
Gender of head of household

When the head of the household is female, there is a higher rate of child labor

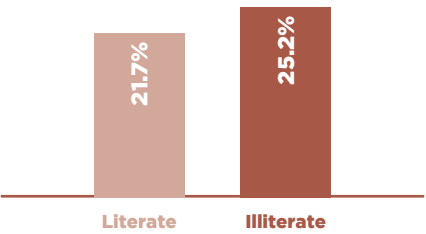


Size of household

The child labor rate is marginally higher among children from larger households

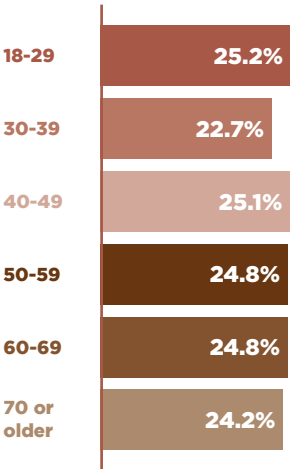


Wife of household head or female head of household



Age of household head

Age of the head of the household is a marginally influencing factor, with higher rates of child labor when a younger person or a person over 40 is in charge of the household





Dr Kristy Leissle is an interdisciplinary scholar on the politics, economics, and cultures of the cocoa and chocolate industries, focusing on West African political economy and trade. Based on research and experiences across sub-Saharan Africa since 1997, her work has contested stereotypical representations of Africa in cocoa and chocolate industry discourse. Dr Leissle lives in Ghana, where she is researching cocoa value addition.

In my research, teaching, and public scholarship on Africa over twenty years, I have seen that many people start with a preconceived idea about what life is like here, and don't necessarily have access to evidence that broadens their thinking beyond stereotypes. Discussions about child labor are among these. The term often evokes an image of work gangs of illegally conscripted children toiling on plantations in a constant state of danger. When this notion of child labor prevails, the solution seems clear: arrest the law-breakers who created this scenario and return the children to the safe havens in which they lived before.

Though there are cases of trafficked children working in cocoa, there is usually a different reality. Most children involved in hazardous activities are working on their families' land, and they undertake that work for many reasons that can change over time. A single circumstance does not always force a child into harmful labor, nor provide a way out of it. **As the case studies in this report show, child labor in cocoa is complex, individual, shifting, and vulnerable to forces beyond the child's or their family's control.**

Reframing success

An external perspective by
Dr Kristy Leissle, Co-Founder of the
Cocoapreneurship Institute of Ghana
and Affiliate Faculty, African Studies,
University of Washington.

The importance of language

Even using the term “child labor” poses a challenge. It forces us into a binary way of thinking, whereby a child is either clearly “a laborer” or not. Such thinking suggests that children can “move out” of labor into a permanent state of non-labor, for which a proxy term is often “in school.” Over the course of this report’s production, the team and I had an ongoing conversation about the language we were using, so that it would best reflect the realities of children’s lives based on learnings from our respective research and field studies.

What is the best language to describe, for example, a child who is not currently doing any hazardous work, but who has done so in the past and whose circumstances may lead him or her back into potential harm? How do we categorize the 70% of children who are involved in harmful labor, but who also attend school? To take an example from my own fieldwork: how should I write about the young teenage boy from a caring family, well-nourished and educated, who walked with me and his father to the family plot, carrying a bucket of liquid pesticide that a professional sprayer then applied to the trees? Is he, or is he not, a “child laborer”?

I raise this point about language because the terms we use to describe and define child labor impact how we measure success in reducing it. **If we rely solely upon a binary classification of “permanent child laborer” or “never child laborer,” it will seem as if little progress has been made.** One of the important contributions of Nestlé’s Tackling Child Labor Report is raising awareness of the

We must reject a binary notion of success, in which only children who have demonstrably moved permanently out of any labor scenario are “counted.”

complexity of child labor through sensitive, honest case studies that illustrate a range of situations and outcomes.

In the course of my fieldwork in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, farmers have repeatedly told me that they wish people outside of West Africa would not rush to assume that they are deliberately inflicting harm. To paraphrase a comment that an Ivorian farmer recently made to me, not without frustration: “We are also parents. We don't want children to be in danger, either.”

People along the cocoa supply chain, from farm to port, have with great patience and clarity helped me to see what child labor looks like from their points of view, embedded within the rural realities that define their lives and livelihoods.

When we are discussing its economic importance, farmers often tell me that cocoa enables life improvements that would otherwise not be possible. Foremost among these is children’s education. Many farmers have a story to tell about how cocoa earnings paid not only for the costs associated with primary or secondary schooling, but for an older child to attend trade school or other professional training. These achievements can improve circumstances for not only the child, but also for parents, siblings, and, eventually, the educated child’s own children.

Child labor interventions must reflect and respond to rural realities. My discussions with farmers, as well as people working in remediation, have helped me to understand that progress may be incremental, indirect, or even unseen. **Harm reduction may look very different from village to village, family to family, and child to child.**

Reframing success

This does not mean that we should give up on measuring success. It does mean that we must reject a binary notion of success, in which only children who have demonstrably moved permanently out of any labor scenario are “counted.” While there is much left to be learned, the constellation of family circumstances, local infrastructure, and farming realities that make it more or less likely that a child will be involved in hazardous work are broadly understood. When a program or intervention addresses even one of these circumstances, then that is progress.

A good example from the Nestlé Cocoa Plan is the maternal literacy program. When a mother learns to read and write, she can invest in herself and her family in ways that correlate with a reduction in child labor. While women’s literacy alone will not stop all children doing hazardous work, it likely reduces the probability and makes it more likely that remediation activities that provide access to and retention in education will be beneficial. That is success.

Child labor in cocoa will not be eradicated overnight. But as cocoa farmers have explained to me, and as this report demonstrates, reducing its incidence is not only possible, it is already happening. We need to redefine the parameters by which we measure this progress. With sensitivity, constant learning and ongoing investment, a more secure future lies within reach for children in cocoa.

This article has been edited for length purposes. The full unabridged version is available on www.nestlecocoaplan.com

44,665

children have been supported
in their education by the Nestlé
Cocoa Plan in Côte d'Ivoire*

* Children benefiting from school building
and refurbishment, school kits, bridging
classes, tutoring and canteens

Education



Most people intuitively think that getting children into school will reduce the risk of them becoming involved in hazardous work. It is a logical assumption, and with some caveats, we now have data to prove that this is true.

Unsurprisingly, outcomes are improved across the board when communities have better access to education. Education for adults and children can help prevent child labor from ever taking root in a family. But it is also important for children who have already been found doing hazardous work.

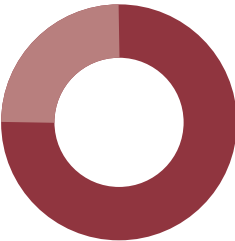
That's why we have focused on appropriate and well-targeted educational initiatives since the launch of our CLMRS in 2012, such as building and renovating schools and funding bridging classes. We have learned a lot along the way, and together with our partners, we continuously test and adapt our approach, scaling up the remediation activities that the evidence shows work best.

School enrollment and child labor

Around 70% of children who do hazardous work are also enrolled in school. However, these children spend on average 45 minutes less a day and one day less per week doing hazardous work than children who do hazardous work and are not enrolled in school. So while school enrollment is not a guarantee that a child will not engage in child labor, it certainly creates a better situation for the child.

-45 minutes

per day spent in hazardous work when a child is enrolled in school



-1 day

per week where hazardous work is performed if a child is enrolled in school

A child's right to education

Education is included in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Without education, children are deprived of their ability to realize their human potential. That's why, in addition to tackling child labor, the Nestlé Cocoa Plan directly supports activities that improve access to education for entire communities.

Education and child labor

There is a direct correlation between the presence of a primary school in a village and a lower risk of child labor. Where children have lengthy walks to get to school, or when there is no school within reach, there is a higher risk of child labor.

+7% points

The rate of children who stop doing hazardous tasks is 7 percentage points higher in villages with a primary school, compared to those without.

However, it isn't just the children's education that matters. We now know for certain that there is a reduced likelihood of child labor in households where the head of household is literate. This is particularly true when the mother is literate. Unsurprisingly, there is a correlation between villages without a primary school and parents who are illiterate.

+3% points

The rate of children who stop doing hazardous tasks is 3 percentage points higher when the head of household is literate

+4% points

The rate of children who stop doing hazardous tasks is 4 percentage points higher when the mother is literate

Remediation activities

A number of our remediation activities prioritize education



2012 - 2017

42

Schools built or refurbished

2012 - 2019

49

Schools built or refurbished



2012 - 2017

5,578

School kits delivered

2012 - 2019

19,152

School kits delivered



2012 - 2017

17

Bridging classes

2012 - 2019

98

Bridging classes, benefiting 2,140 children



2012 - 2017

4,517

Birth certificates issued

2012 - 2019

5,756

Birth certificates issued

Building schools

Under the Nestlé Cocoa Plan, we have built or refurbished a total of 49 schools in Côte d’Ivoire since 2012. This investment has improved access to education for over 20,000 children and young people.

Building and refurbishing schools is much more than a corporate social responsibility activity. It is an integral part of our child labor remediation strategy in communities where the lack of educational facilities contributes to the prevalence of child labor.

School refurbishment is helping to address the particularly challenging school conditions in rural areas. At a national level, in rural areas in Côte d’Ivoire, 88% of schools lack electricity, 71% lack waterpoints and 63% lack toilets.¹³ These factors undermine educational quality and contribute to drop-out rates.

Building toilets

With so many schools lacking adequate toilets in rural areas, some children, especially girls, journey back home or to a relative’s house to use the toilet. Others are forced to venture into the bush,

despite risks from wildlife or harassment. This undermines girls’ education and contributes to absenteeism and drop-out.¹⁴

Investing in sanitation

Many of our investments in sanitation have been made possible through Nestlé’s longstanding Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) partnership with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). Together, we have delivered clean drinking water, sanitation facilities and hygiene training for more than 316,474 people in West Africa since 2005.

In Côte d’Ivoire between 2007 and 2016, the WASH program built or repaired 118 toilets and 390 hand-washing facilities in schools, established 93 school hygiene clubs and delivered hygiene awareness training to 71,465 children.

Nestlé and IFRC are now working to scale up the approach and its benefits in Ghana through the Gha-WASH initiative.

Opening canteens

Having food available at schools means that children no longer need to make the journey home for a meal at lunchtime. School canteens can help with retention and attendance, preventing pupils dropping out and also boosting children’s ability to concentrate.

To date, 2,148 children have benefited from school canteens provided by the Nestlé Cocoa Plan in partnership with the Jacobs Foundation’s TRECC (Transforming Education in Cocoa Communities) program.

Virtual classrooms

Eneza Education is a social enterprise providing access to learning through mobile technology for students who need additional support, or who cannot access school. Founded by a group of Kenyan teachers, Eneza delivers personalized educational content through text message. Used to supplement, not replace formal schooling, they are the largest virtual classroom in Africa with over 4.9 million learners. Through our partnership established in 2019, 500 children in Côte d’Ivoire have gained access to Eneza virtual classrooms. The results are being closely monitored to see if the program could be further rolled out across the Nestlé Cocoa Plan.

Birth certificates

Without a birth certificate, children are unable to complete their primary school examinations and apply for secondary school. Many births in rural Côte d’Ivoire go unregistered for cost reasons, or even because of superstition. In addition, many families lost their children’s birth certificates while fleeing the violence of the civil war. We collaborate with local authorities to issue birth certificates to the students who need them. Since we began in 2012, 5,756 received birth certificates, increasing their chance of continuing schooling.

School kits

Many families cannot afford school uniforms or basic school supplies and must make financial sacrifices to acquire them. Sometimes the lack of these items can prevent a child from going to school or can cause them to be sent home.

We have delivered 19,152 school kits to children since the launch of the Nestlé Cocoa Plan, including items such as chalk, pens, course books, and erasers. There are six types of kit with content corresponding to a child’s age and educational needs.

Bridging classes

Children who start education late, or who have dropped out and subsequently attempt to re-enter school, can find they have fallen too far behind to keep up. A bridging class is designed to help children make up lost ground without experiencing social stigma (see case study on page 43).

We partner with the Jacobs Foundation to deliver these nine-month courses in cocoa farming communities throughout the country. Together, we have offered 98 bridging classes, in which 2,140 children have enrolled to date.

School management committees

With our partners, we help with the set-up, training and support of school management committees. These committees advocate for the importance of education in their communities and monitor teacher attendance – a common challenge. The committees also promote parental involvement in their children’s education.

Partnering with the Jacobs Foundation

The Nestlé Cocoa Plan partners with organizations that have expert knowledge of the challenges facing cocoa-growing communities and a proven record of delivering meaningful results.

One of our key partners in education is the Jacobs Foundation whose TRECC (Transforming Education in Cocoa Communities) program is aimed at improving the quality of education, particularly in rural areas, which is key in reducing the risk of children entering child labor.

As our partner, we rely on their extensive educational experience to help us deliver effective bridging schools in Côte d’Ivoire.

“The children were sat five or six to a bench and that made learning difficult”

– Bamele Yao, Headteacher, Didoko 4 primary school

THE POWER OF BUILDING SCHOOLS

The town of Didoko, in the Divo Department of Côte d'Ivoire, already had four primary schools when the Nestlé Cocoa Plan was launched. However, they were over-crowded, their infrastructure was crumbling and learning conditions were difficult. One of the schools, known as Didoko 1, was built in 1957. In places, its roof is falling down. The headteacher Denis explained that sometimes the school floods when it rains, and the school has to shut, so the children missed learning time.

Another of the schools, Didoko 4, effectively had to improvise classrooms as best they could. “We had problems with seating and teaching conditions,” explained Mr Bamele Yao, the school’s headteacher, with a measured degree of understatement. “The children were sat five or six to a bench and that made learning difficult.”

In 2016, Nestlé built a new school building for Didoko 4. “With the new school, the children feel comfortable,” explained Mr Yao. “There is enough space, it makes learning easier and the children always come to school. The results have improved. They are much better now than they were in the past. We used to have a 37% – 47% pass rate. But the new school allowed us to reach 70% – 80% [within a year of opening].”

A positive side effect of the new school building was the impact that it had on the town’s other schools, which were able to transfer some of their pupils to the new Didoko 4 school. In the three years since Didoko 4 was opened, the other schools have also seen an academic improvement, with teachers enjoying more manageable class sizes and more time to focus on each child.

Child labor rates are lower in communities where a primary school is present. We also know that the presence of a school increases the chance that a child identified in child labor will stop doing hazardous tasks. However, improving school infrastructure is time-consuming and expensive, so unless large numbers of children are identified at risk, more targeted interventions are usually prioritized.



A BRIGHTER FUTURE



Of all the dangerous tasks that children are found doing, carrying heavy loads is the most common

62%

of children identified doing hazardous tasks were carrying heavy loads

“School means success,” says Paul, a 54-year-old cocoa farmer from a village in Côte d’Ivoire. “I want my children to be successful so I send them to school.”

But that hasn’t always been easy for Paul. He has eleven children and bringing up such a large family would put a strain on any family’s resources. Yet putting his children through school remains a priority for him. Perhaps this is because he is literate himself, and he values the opportunities that education can offer his children in the long term.

But life is hard here. There is a lot of work to do in the fields and having children help out is deeply ingrained in the local culture. When the local Community Liaison Person visited Paul’s household, three of his children had been carrying heavy loads in the last six months.

Of all the dangerous tasks that children are found doing, carrying heavy loads is the most common. It can cause real problems for spinal development. We usually ask for details and have found that less than a third of loads lifted are actually cocoa. Instead, most were wood, water or food.

One of the children identified as carrying heavy loads was Paul’s son Ezechiel – a happy little eight-year-old, who loves reading books on his mother’s knee. Unsurprisingly, children in school are less at risk of being involved in child labor.

Like many children, Ezechiel didn't have a birth certificate. Without one, taking the final primary school exam and enrolling in secondary school is not possible. The United Nations estimated in 2013 that 2.8 million children in Côte d'Ivoire do not have birth certificates¹⁵. We certainly see this problem a lot on the ground, where a lack of paperwork prevents children from going to school, leaving them at risk of child labor. In this case, we helped provide Ezechiel with his birth certificate.

Nestlé has also taken action in D. at a community level, building a new school in the town. This has massively relieved the pressure on the town's four older schools, which were badly overcrowded (see page 36).



What goes in a school kit?

There are six types of school kit that are issued according to a child's age and school level.

However, typically we may include items such as the following:

- A schoolbag
- French and mathematics textbooks
- Notebooks and protective covers
- Stationery such as pens and pencils, erasers and sharpeners
- Blackboard and chalk
- Mathematics set

"The construction of the school by Nestlé has been very beneficial to this village," agreed Denis, the headteacher of one of the older schools. Some of our students have been moved to the new school. Because there are fewer students, the teachers have a more global view of the children and they can go into more detail with them – it makes it much easier to get the message across."

"Ezechiel came to our school last year," he continued. "He's a good boy and pays attention in class. Like every child from a low income background, the support he gets at home is limited because his parents don't have a lot of money. But you can see that he really wants to study. He's a nice kid – he's sociable and plays with his friends. In terms of grades he's average, so overall, he's doing fine. With some support, I think he could go quite far in his studies."

Ezechiel's older brother Ghislain, 16, had also been identified doing hazardous work carrying heavy loads at the same time as attending school. A brilliant student, Ghislain received the second-highest grades in his class over the last academic year. "I like Spanish," he explained, "and I want to become a Spanish teacher."

To assist Paul in meeting the costs of keeping Ghislain in school and out of the fields, we provided a school kit. "The school kit helped me because it helped my dad too," Ghislain explained. "To help children you have to help their parents cover expenses."

"The construction of the school by Nestlé has been very beneficial to this village"

"To help children you have to help their parents"



Looking to the future, Paul has high hopes for his son. "My dream for Ghislain is that he becomes a teacher or something like that. My hope is that he will be someone important in the village."

Ezechiel meanwhile says he likes school and he has big plans of his own for the future. "When I am big, I want to work in an office so I can buy a car and come and visit my parents," he says. His dad smiles. He doesn't have any specific hopes for Ezechiel yet. "He's still little," he explains "but I hope that he is successful."

One year on and neither Ezechiel nor Ghislain have undertaken any dangerous tasks again. This seems to have been, at least for now, a relatively straightforward and successful way to prevent child labor. But the case of their other brother Raoul, (see page 63) has not been as easy to resolve, highlighting the complexity of remediation.



Deep in Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa belt, the small village of T. is normally quiet during the day because most of the men and women are working in the fields. Some of the children go to the local school. To reach it, they walk along the village's heavily potholed, unsurfaced roads. The few cars that do pass through have to slow down to a bone-juddering crawl.

Not every child goes to school though. Even though primary education is compulsory in Côte d'Ivoire, fees, uniforms and basic equipment are beyond some parents' financial means, particularly for large families.

Adissa's father is a cocoa grower supplying Nestlé, while Aliman grows Arachis (peanut plants). She would give Adissa little tasks to do around her field to keep her occupied. Aliman would then either sell the nuts or crush them into a paste, to cook dishes like kedjenou – a spicy slow-cooked stew. She didn't realize that asking Adissa to help her weed the field with a daba (a small, sharp-edged wooden hoe) constituted hazardous child labor. In Aliman's defense, weeding with a daba used to be considered an acceptable task for children until a law change in Côte d'Ivoire in 2018, which prohibited the use of sharp tools.

Across the village, another girl of the same age was in a similar position. Emmanuella had never been to school either – for the same reason. At that time, her father was not a supplier to the Nestlé Cocoa Plan – though now, two years on, he has started the certification program to become one. She was also spotted using a daba by our local Community Liaison Person.

A BRIDGE BACK TO LEARNING

“We couldn't afford to send her to school”

That was exactly what happened to ten-year-old Adissa. “I have nine children,” her mother Aliman explained, “three boys and six girls. Adissa was the eighth. We couldn't afford to send her to school.” Yet Adissa couldn't be left alone in the village all day either. And so, like most other mothers in the village, Aliman brought her daughter to the field with her. She had been doing this since Adissa was a baby tied to her back, so it was all Adissa ever knew. School starting age came and went. By the age of ten, she was too old to enroll.

A bridge into mainstream education

Samou used to weigh the villagers' cocoa before it was sent to the local coop – so he knew most of the producers in the area personally. That was why he was selected by his coop to become a Community Liaison Person.

It was Samou who first spotted Adissa and Emmanuella scraping the weeds in their mothers' fields. He alerted their parents to the fact that the Nestlé Cocoa Plan and the Jacobs Foundation had just opened a bridging school in the village, and he filled out the enrollment forms for them.

“The bridging class brings together children who have not been able to access education, either because they dropped out or never had the chance to start with,” says the bridging schoolteacher. “It's very welcome because it integrates children back into the education system and stops them from going to the fields.”

The course delivers two years of national curriculum in just nine months

The course is highly focused on each child's development and delivers two years' worth of national curriculum in just nine months. Class sizes are small and the standard of the children graduating is high. They generally integrate well into the mainstream school system following the course – their grades are comparable to those of their peers, despite years of missed schooling. Adissa and Emmanuella both excelled here and moved into mainstream school the following year.

"There are lots of students from the bridge school that are in our classes now," explains Adissa's teacher at the village primary school. "Looking at the results of the children that come through the project we have a lot of hope for them. They are really at no disadvantage compared to the other children in terms of grades."

Adissa, he claims, is a perfect example of this. "Adissa is a brilliant student," he says, his face lighting up. "The results are clear to see. Overall, she had the second-best grades in the class last year. She loves verbal exercises and math the most. Her ability to express herself verbally really is excellent – the best in the class in fact."

Reflecting on her daughter's progress, Aliman smiles widely. "I'm so happy she goes to school now," she sighs. "I really am." As for Emmanuella, she hopes to continue her education and go on to become a doctor. "Doctors give people injections and help deliver people's babies", she explains smiling shyly. "I want to be able to give people injections one day."





**Supporting
livelihoods**

Large households, limited access to the financial system, the lack of a social safety net, and falling yields from ageing trees can all put financial pressure on families.

The Nestlé Cocoa Plan seeks to help communities address as many of these issues as possible across its three pillars of activity (see page 50). We encourage income diversification and women's empowerment, teach better farming practices and enable access to basic financial services.



Better lives



In July 2019, the Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana governments introduced a USD 400 per tonne 'Living Income Differential' (LID) to help support farmers through a higher price for their cocoa.¹⁶ This will be for the 2020/21 crop.

We strongly believe cocoa farmers should earn an income that allows them to maintain a decent and adequate standard of living for them and their families. Price is one of the levers to achieve this, and we have started buying the 2020/21 crop, including the LID.

In order to achieve a decent standard of living, we also help farmers to improve their yields from their cocoa trees, as well as diversifying income sources to grow

other crops or raise animals. Beekeeping is another activity we have begun to explore. In Ghana, 13 farmers have been given beehives, equipment and training.

Keeping bees is relatively low cost, good for the environment and does not compete with other crops for land use. We hope that the pilot will allow farmers to extract more value from their land and help ease cashflow between cocoa harvests.

We have also helped found women's groups, supplying machinery and tools to help them generate their own incomes, independent of their husbands and outside of cocoa.

Better farming



Disease, climate change and ageing trees frequently impact cocoa yields.

While the farmers in our supply chain are independent farmers who make their own decisions, we can support them a lot by encouraging them to implement best agricultural practices. For example, teaching more effective pruning practices can increase yield per tree and reduce the risk of disease, by allowing more air to circulate. Similarly, ageing cocoa

trees have smaller yields and are more susceptible to disease, which is why we have distributed 14.5 million healthy new cocoa trees to farmers to help protect their yields and support their long-term income generation.

We are also planting 2.2 million shade trees. While these will have minimal impact on incomes in the short term, these large native tree species will make cocoa production more sustainable in the long term. They provide protection from the sun, help regulate humidity, help maintain soil fertility, provide more biodiversity and absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. This will all help to protect cocoa farming from the effects of climate change.

Financial training and access



In January 2018, along with one of our suppliers Cocoonect, we launched a capacity-building initiative called the Farmer Business School in Ghana. Participating farmers learned skills aimed at helping them to better manage their finances and to diversify their livelihoods. Having started with 180 farmers, by the end of 2019 we expect to have trained 500.




Currently, 3,000 female farmers and wives of farmers within the Nestlé Cocoa Plan are participating in Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs), which we helped establish and which are managed by the community. In rural areas where there is often no electricity, let alone banking services, VSLAs allow members to save money in a loan fund. Members

can also borrow in small amounts from the fund at times of need. The interest accrued on the members' accumulated savings is distributed back to members annually. These facilities have the potential to give farmers more control over their finances, encourage saving and can ease cashflow before harvests when costs are highest, and savings are often running low.

In a similar vein, we have established several community service groups within coops. These are made up of local farmers or hired laborers who are available to help producers at harvest time. They are paid for their work by the coop, yet the farmer in question can have the service on credit and wait for the sale of his cocoa before repaying the cooperative. This, in particular, can reduce the need to call on children to help in the fields, while providing job opportunities for the community.

All of these activities help to improve farmers' financial situations, which in turn, help to tackle one of the underlying causes of child labor.

A holistic approach: the Nestlé Cocoa Plan pillars and their role in reducing child labor

			
	Better farming	Better cocoa	Better lives
What is the goal?	Help cocoa farmers maximize the value of their crop	Assurance of the provenance of cocoa	Empower communities, especially women and children
Why is this important in tackling child labor?	Reduces the need for children to help in the fields and to contribute to the family's income	Gives us confidence that we are sourcing from farms where the risk of child labor is responsibly managed	Equips communities to thrive today and in the future with education, training and alternative income streams
How do we do it?	<p>Farmer training to improve agricultural practices</p> <p>Farmer business schools to help professionalize operations</p> <p>Better quality trees and plantlets to improve crop yield and disease resistance</p> <p>Respecting the environment to avoid deforestation</p>	<p>Building long-term loyal customer-farmer relationships</p> <p>Supply chain traceability back to the farmer</p> <p>Rewarding NCP farmers for certification and good quality cocoa</p> <p>Independent External Monitoring and Social Impact Assessment</p>	<p>Women's literacy and income-generating activities</p> <p>Financial education and access to loans and savings schemes</p> <p>Access to water, sanitation and hygiene</p> <p>Access to education initiatives</p>
Who are our partners?	Cocoa bean suppliers and cocoa processors	<p>UTZ/Rainforest Alliance</p> <p>Fairtrade</p> <p>Fair Labor Association (FLA)</p>	<p>International Cocoa Initiative</p> <p>Jacobs Foundation</p> <p>International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies</p> <p>Eneza Education</p>

Empowering women through literacy



UNESCO reported in 2018 that just 47% of people aged over 15 years in Côte d'Ivoire are literate. They also found significant gender disparities, with only 40% of women able to read and write compared with 53% of men.¹⁷

Neither the total nor the gender gap is ideal. As explained on page 27, data from our CLMRS indicates that there is a correlation between higher literacy levels and reduced incidences of child labor. This is particularly true in the case of women's literacy. This hints at just how impactful improving women's literacy could be in cocoa communities.

On the ground, we have certainly noticed examples of mothers engaging more with their children's education (especially reading with them and checking their homework), and several notable cases of the new skills being directly involved in improving women's earning potential.

We view this as a preventative measure. The women who attend our classes are not necessarily the mothers of children identified as having undertaken hazardous tasks. But we believe the program has the potential to strengthen the communities in such a way that they can help reduce the likelihood of child labor over the long term.

In our 2017 report, we stated that we hoped to reach 900 women by the end of 2018, and we have reached this target.

Number of women taught basic literacy and numeracy



The Nestlé Cocoa Plan began women's literacy and numeracy classes in 2016 and has since expanded the program. To date, together with our partners the Direction de l'alphabétisation et de l'éducation non-formelle, which is part of the Ivorian Ministère de l'Education Nationale, de l'Enseignement Technique et la Formation Professionnelle, we have helped almost a thousand women learn to read, write and perform basic math.

A number of studies have found that adult literacy courses 'improve self-esteem, personal autonomy, creativity and critical thinking' and offer 'returns both for its direct beneficiaries and for society as a whole.'¹⁸

Focus on empowering women

- Our initiatives to empower women include:
- 1. Maternal literacy programs
 - 2. Supporting the establishment of women's cooperatives
 - 3. Gender equality training
 - 4. Alternative income-generating activities



WRITING YOUR OWN NAME



“There is a cultural weight that stops girls getting access to education as easily as boys.”

Béatrice tuts gently at her son Roméo. Softly shaking her head, she indicates that he’s made a mistake. He tries reading the word again and does a little better. She nods, pretending to be stern with him but she can’t help letting a little smile escape when he looks back into his book. Reading together is still a novel experience and they are both enjoying it, even though Roméo is already 12.

Two years ago, Béatrice opened a small store in the center of B., a large village of around 1,000 buildings that are home to perhaps ten times as many people. Most of the jobs here are in farming – cocoa mostly but crops like coffee are grown as well. The village is big enough to support other kinds of work too and Béatrice decided that running a store was more her kind of thing.

You could walk across her whole shop floor in a couple of large strides, but it is tidy and well cared for – the simple wooden structure brightened on the outside by a flash of brilliant blue paint that is typical of the region. Béatrice decided to focus on selling cosmetics and to use the small front porch to install a sowing machine. She is a talented seamstress, and people from all over the village quickly began coming to her for repairs and dressmaking. But there was a problem.

“When clients came, I had no idea how to measure them,” she said sadly. “My parents didn’t send me to school. I couldn’t read. I couldn’t even write my own name. In January, a friend told me that there was a new course for adults where I could learn to read and write. So, I went along and enrolled.”

“Now I can.”

The class Béatrice had joined was a new women’s literacy program set up by the Nestlé Cocoa Plan. In almost all cocoa-producing villages in this region of Côte d’Ivoire, there is a high level of illiteracy. Most adults didn’t go to school. There are multiple reasons for this: cost, distance or even the lack of a school rank quite highly among them. But there are also traditional and cultural reasons why people didn’t go to school.

“Often it wasn’t considered necessary to send every child to school,” says Nathan Bello, Nestlé Cocoa Plan Manager, Côte d’Ivoire. “It was often just the village elite, and then the rest didn’t go. That’s especially true for girls. Traditionally, girls were encouraged to focus more on gaining domestic skill-sets at home. Actually, that is often still the case today. In terms of reaching higher education, girls often get married young as well. So, there is a cultural weight that stops girls getting access to education as easily as boys.”

Yet, our CLMRS data clearly show us that there is a negative correlation between women’s literacy and the likelihood of child labor. Women who can read and write are less likely to allow their children to engage in dangerous tasks.

Nathan explains, “all the actions we take are designed to reduce child labor. Women’s literacy classes are effectively a prevention activity. We hope that they will make it less likely for children to undertake dangerous activities and more likely that they go to school. Roméo wasn’t specifically found undertaking dangerous tasks. But the fact that his mum has learned to read and write reduces the likelihood that he ever will be. This kind of preventative work, done at a community level – and looking beyond the scope of our supply chain – is also important.”

Béatrice’s teacher takes up the story: “I think that learning to read and write helps the community. It can transform it educationally. Béatrice was among the first 35 women we took in the class this year. She was a little shy at first, I had to push her a bit, but she is very intelligent. She worked hard and was highly motivated. She was among the best students in the class. In fact, she came top in most of the tests.”

Béatrice has only been learning for a year, but she already says the new skills have made a big difference in her life. “Now that I’ve started learning to read and write, I can take measurements and note them. I can write the price on the products in my shop. When my son comes home from school, I can take his exercise book and look at how he is doing. If he has been working, I can tell and if he hasn’t, I see that too.”

It has also made her more optimistic for the future. Now that she and her son are both learning to read, she feels his prospects are very different. “I didn’t go to school, so it was hard for me. Now I hope that my son gets the chance to take a professional role – to become a doctor or something like that.”

She returns to her work, cutting a small strip of fabric and gluing it into her order book. Underneath it, she writes the customer’s details and the length of the cloth required to fulfill the order. All this from a woman who just last year was still quietly dreaming that one day she would be able to write her own name. “Now I can,” she says.



Key achievements:**198,000**

Tonnes of sustainable cocoa sourced in 2018 through the Nestlé Cocoa Plan

17.3mTrees planted: 2009-2022
(14.5 million replacement cocoa trees and a planned 2.8 million shade trees)**114,000**

Farmers covered by the Nestlé Cocoa Plan around the world

979

Adult women taught to read and write in Côte d'Ivoire over last 3 years

Around the world, millions of people buy chocolate every day, but their enjoyment can be tainted by concerns about the social and environmental footprint of their confectionery. Consumers tell us that they feel increasingly uneasy about issues like deforestation, farmers' income and child labor. At Nestlé, we share many of these concerns and we are also worried about the potential impact of climate change, lack of youth interest in farming as a livelihood and the prevalence of crop disease on the long-term sustainability of cocoa farming.

We want to make chocolate better for everyone involved.

These problems are not simple to solve. They are often deeply interwoven for one thing: untangling one issue is impossible without addressing others. Sometimes the problems are made worse by global trends that are completely outside of our control. Yet effective action can, and must, be taken.

We needed a holistic, joined-up response to the complex issues in cocoa. That's why, in addition to many other efforts, we launched the Nestlé Cocoa Plan and built it around three pillars: Better Farming, Better Lives and Better Cocoa.

Since its launch, the Plan has proven itself to be an effective approach to addressing many of the entwined issues we are facing. Of course, we do still face challenges; the underlying problems have not just gone away. But as we continue to refine the Nestlé Cocoa Plan, and to engage with external experts and partners as widely as possible, we believe that we can make a real difference to those who need it most and make chocolate better for everyone involved.

To learn more about the Nestlé Cocoa Plan visit www.nestlecocoaplan.com

THE NESTLÉ COCOA PLAN: GOING BEYOND TACKLING CHILD LABOR



Challenges

We are often asked why we cannot achieve more progress, faster. Here we have described some of the challenges we face in tackling child labor. Some are related to our CLMRS itself, but there are other factors too.

Underlying challenges

Awareness and understanding

Certain aspects of the laws surrounding child labor can be confusing for farmers and can directly conflict with their beliefs and traditions. For example, a 16-year-old cannot use a machete to harvest cocoa, but primary schools sometimes ask young children to use them to weed the school grounds. This kind of discrepancy makes it difficult to convince farmers that there is a real safety issue to be addressed. Understanding is fundamental to the behavior change that is needed to effectively tackle child labor. It is for this reason that conducting community awareness raising is high on our agenda, with over half a million attendees reached to date. It is also why our CLPs come from the local communities and understand the context. They are equipped with information to share with every family on every farm that they visit.

Changing cooperative and household dynamics

Cooperative membership is fluid. People join and leave (and re-join again) on a regular basis. This means we need to very regularly update the database, as well as visiting and training members who have newly (re)joined.

Keeping track of each child of 73,248 farmers is a huge and complex task. This is why we have expanded our team of CLPs, who each manage an average 45 farming households within their communities.

Reaching people

The sheer isolation of some of the farms and villages in West Africa means it can be difficult to get to the places where help is needed most. It can be challenging to reach some households to identify children who are doing hazardous work, and to monitor them and to implement remediation activities. With our partners, we are looking for new ways to overcome the challenges posed by infrastructure, such as the virtual learning program offered by our partner Eneza Education.



Remediation challenges

Individual cases

Every child is an individual and each case of child labor is unique. There is no “one-size-fits-all” approach that can be applied in a broad sense. Family illness, the death of a parent, a case of child abuse or divorce may render a remediation irrelevant, ineffective or both. Each of our CLPs is trained to follow these continually changing dynamics, to offer appropriate advice and support, and to tailor remediation as needed. This is why over two-thirds of the children who we help with remediation support receive three or more different types of remediation activity.

Self-reporting

Self-reporting, as a way of identifying cases of child labor, is the most accurate way to gather data at scale but people are not always totally accurate in what they tell us - so sometimes we don’t get the full picture. This is partially offset by the CLPs living in the villages and being part of the community. They can see if there are discrepancies between what is reported and what they see.

Helping older children

Older children are harder to help. They require more bespoke remediations such as vocational training. These are often expensive, with a single remediation for an older child needing the same budget as it would take to get 10 to 12 younger children into school.

We would like to explore opportunities to link the Nestlé CLMRS with Nestlé’s Global Youth Initiative in order to train more “agripreneurs” and provide apprenticeships to others. This would have the dual benefits of providing educational/ vocational support to older children and could help to address the current deficit of young people who want careers in cocoa farming.

Important note regarding “challenging” cases

Our data, and the case studies in this report, show that there are children who were identified in child labor, received home visits and/ or remediation, and continue to do hazardous work. At the time of this report’s publication, all of these children are continuing to receive visits, support and appropriate remediation from our Community Liaison People.



“I had already signed all the papers to enroll him, so that disappointed me”

Paul, cocoa farmer and father,
Côte d’Ivoire

LEARNING THE TRADE

It can’t have been an easy thing to explain to his father. But Raoul had decided to drop out of his carpentry apprenticeship. The 16-year-old is one of the 11 siblings and two wives that cocoa farmer Paul supports by cocoa farming. Money is tight at home. Carpentry would have been a solid career – a trade that could have helped ease the family’s financial situation. It would also have helped keep Raoul away from doing hazardous work.

When our local Community Liaison Person visited his home, Raoul admitted to having first carried heavy loads along with his two brothers Ezechiél and Ghislain (see page 38). While keeping his brothers away from undertaking hazardous tasks proved fairly straightforward, Raoul’s case was more difficult.

He has seen enough of school to know that he doesn’t mind math but hates French. He also knows, like many teenagers his age, that further study isn’t for him. Unlike his brother Ghislain, he struggled academically, and he wants to get out and start earning. “I like working”, he explained.

Compulsory education lasts until 15 in the Côte d’Ivoire. It is much more difficult to stop children at this kind of age from doing hazardous work. Culturally, if not legally, they are already considered adults to a large degree. They are expected to contribute to the family – as they are in many other parts of the world. Yet they are still not legally allowed to undertake many of the core tasks required in cocoa agriculture.

So it makes sense to attempt to find alternatives, such as vocational training. This is what we tried to do for Raoul. Mathilde Koua N’Godo Sokoty, the Nestlé Cocoa Plan’s Human Rights Manager for Côte d’Ivoire, explains, “since he wasn’t going to school, we spoke to him and his father to see if he would like to learn a trade. He decided he wanted to try carpentry.”

“Things don’t always work out. It really shows how complex remediation is”

Mathilde Koua N’Godo Sokoty, Nestlé
Cocoa Plan Human Rights Manager,
Côte d’Ivoire

“It wasn’t easy to organize,” Mathilde continued. We had to identify a master carpenter who would take him on and guide his learning. We had to be sure that once he had been trained, he would be able to set up his business. In addition, we had to provide him with all the tools he needed to learn the trade in the meantime. It’s not easy to organize this kind of thing in a rural area. It’s quite a complex and relatively expensive process for an individual intervention.”

For a while, it looked as though things were going well for Raoul. But then suddenly, he dropped out. His father Paul was furious. “He was misguided by his friends and decided to quit carpentry. I had already signed all the papers to enroll him, so that disappointed me. He asked to go back to school, I let him and then he failed the year. I asked him if he wanted to continue and said he has now decided that he wants to become a mechanic. He should have picked that from the start rather than saying he wanted to be a carpenter.”

“Life is hard here,” Paul continued. “I don’t have enough money to send him on a mechanics course – it’s expensive. So that is the problem I’ve got at the moment.” His frustration is fueled by concerns that would be recognized by parents everywhere. “Some kids are left to roam the streets,” he says. “That can lead

them into trouble, which only comes back to bite the family. So, I want my children to get jobs.”

Yet Raoul isn’t a bad kid. He just changed his mind about what he wanted to do with his life, in the same way that many of us have. The father and son tension this created is probably familiar for a lot of people. But during all this upheaval Raoul began helping out at home, and ended up carrying heavy loads again.

“For the other brothers in this family the remediation we put in place worked well. They have continued going to school and have had very good results,” says Mathilde. “Raoul, on the other hand, has had a more difficult time. That shows that even within the same family and even with a much more expensive form of remediation, things don’t always work out. It really shows how complex remediation is. We have more than 18,000 cases to deal with. Each is unique. Each is specific. And that is the scale of the challenge we are facing.”

Raoul’s father Paul sighs deeply. “If he really, genuinely wants to become a mechanic, then that is what I want for him too. I hope he succeeds.”

Raoul is shy but thoughtful. “In life, you have to do what your heart tells you,” he says. “That’s the best way to succeed.”





“It’s not easy now at my age – it wears me out.”

In the porch of his father’s house 15-year-old Assamadou shows us the machete he has been using. Rain is hammering on the corrugated iron roof and everyone in the town has ducked under some kind of cover. Assamadou looks out at the scene thoughtfully and explains that he knows he isn’t supposed to be in the fields with a machete, but he doesn’t feel he has a choice.

Assamadou’s father Daouda did not go to school. He immigrated from Burkina Faso when he was a child and, with his older brother, headed south to Côte d’Ivoire in search of opportunities. Eventually, his older brother returned home, but by then Daouda had bought land outside the town of D. where was growing coffee and cocoa. So, he decided to stay and raise his family.

But he admits that tending to his field is getting harder. He is getting old. His field is a long way from the village. Distance is measured in time not kilometers here. Local people tell us that walking to the field would take a couple of hours – and that is before the actual work begins. With a tired nod, Daouda sums it up “it’s not easy now at my age” he says, “especially the weeding and harvesting – it wears me out.”

Daouda has ten children, seven boys and three girls. The eldest have left home to find jobs in the city. Two are chauffeurs, another is a tailor. The youngest though is still a toddler and is sitting happily on his lap. He isn’t exactly sure how old Assamadou is because they never registered the birth, but he guesses around 15 years old.

SETBACKS ALONG THE WAY



According to preliminary analysis,

10 to 20%

of children who have stopped doing hazardous work return to child labor*

“My older brothers help us financially,” says Assamadou, “but not all the time.” One of them has been paying for Assamadou to go to school. His grades are only average, but he is unusual in having stayed in school for as long as he has.

“I love school, especially French,” he says. He normally speaks Mossi with his father and Bambara locally in the village, so French is his third language and he is already fluent in it. “It’s a language I love, and I learn it faster than the other subjects at school,” he says.

But by the time we visited in mid-September, the autumn term had begun and Assamadou still hadn’t gone back to school after the summer break. Instead he had been helping two of his older brothers work their father’s field, because it was the cocoa harvest season.

“The Community Liaison Person has been to see me and my father at least five times while I’ve been present – and he’s been some more times when I’ve not been here as well. I did learn a lot of things from him, like children shouldn’t weed the fields, light bonfires, hunt, or do difficult tasks. But I do it because my father is old. He isn’t strong enough anymore. So, I don’t have any other choice. I weed the field and open the pods to get the seeds out. Once the cocoa is harvested, I’ll go back to school, but I haven’t started yet because my old man can’t afford it.”

Armand, the Community Liaison Person, confirms Assamadou’s story, adding that at first the awareness raising was effective and the boy initially stopped working in the fields. “He didn’t receive any remediation but we spoke to him and his father. We went to his house and showed him images to help him understand that carrying heavy loads like that when you are young can have serious consequences. Seeing the images, the farmer understood and Assamadou stopped doing these tasks for a while. But his dad is quite old, he finds it hard to breathe and he can’t get on his bike to go to the field very much anymore, so Assamadou wants to help him.”

Assamadou puts the machete back under the bench on the porch. He tells us with a grin he dreams of joining the army when he is older, but that story will have to wait for now. The clouds have begun to clear and he leaves to check that his bike is ready for tomorrow.

“The Community Liaison Person has been at least five times. But my father is old. I don’t have any other choice.”

* Finding out how many of the children who declared to be no longer performing hazardous tasks but are identified in child labor at a later stage is crucial to understanding the long term impact of our CLMRS. We currently estimate that 10 to 20% of children who had been taken out of the category ‘in child labour’ end-up performing hazardous tasks again.



Give children a voice to help stop child labor

An external perspective from Dr Amanda Berlan, a Senior Lecturer specializing in the ethics and socio-economic sustainability of cocoa production at De Montfort University.

Dr Amanda Berlan is an anthropologist specialising in cocoa production. Since 2000, she has worked extensively on issues relating to children's rights, community development and global value chains. She has undertaken fieldwork in West Africa, India and the Caribbean, and she has a keen interest in promoting an evidence-based approach to tackling sustainability problems.

When I started my PhD research on child labor in cocoa, which was before the issue hit mainstream news, a chocolate industry executive told me that the subject was inconsequential both to industry and consumers, and he questioned whether the practice even occurred at all. Almost 20 years on, the landscape has changed beyond recognition - with enormous corporate investments, multi-stakeholder partnerships, sustained media interest, certification initiatives, company policies and much consumer pressure. However, while it is clear that a lot of progress has been made, significant challenges remain.

Many observers express frustration that the sector-wide objective of eliminating child labor, or at least the commitment to reduce it by 70% by 2020, will not be met. This is indicative of the vast and ongoing disparity between the lives of local communities and Western-based expectations which, in spite of the changes in the last two decades, still needs to be resolved.

From an academic perspective, such timelines are problematic because they are at odds with the reality on the ground and

they fuel the expectation that change can occur fast. My own experience of working with cocoa farmers, their children and wider communities does not support the view that deadlines, especially those set by outsiders in different continents and with different worldviews, can easily be implemented.

“The root causes of child labor in cocoa are varied and complex”

Complex causes

This is because the root causes of child labor in cocoa are varied and complex. In my own fieldwork in Ghana I saw the enormous practical hurdles that needed to be overcome to address child labor as well as the significant cultural sensitivities around the subject.

For example, many of the children I interviewed worked because they were hungry. Farm work gave them access to water and fruit, whereas the school environment offered hunger, boredom and corporal punishment to children who were too tired and hungry to concentrate, especially when taught in English, which many children did not understand.

In our discussions about the use of machetes, children also questioned why Westerners would not want them to use them on cocoa farms. This is because they used them in many other areas of their lives, including as protection against snakes and scorpions. Even at school, children were often required to undertake farming duties with machetes.

The lack of toilet facilities in most rural schools, and the possibility of sexual harassment was a deterrent for girls to be in education. Both sexes were at risk of labor exploitation due to broken marriages, following which single mothers could not afford education for their children, or they remarried and stepfathers refused to pay for their stepchildren's upkeep.

The lack of childcare options in rural communities also meant that caregivers had to take children to farm with them. This provided the children with an early and unfortunate exposure to farm work and normalized their involvement in the eyes of their communities in a way that cannot be easily reconciled with external notions of childhood.

The significance of this is to illustrate that child labor does not operate within a single causal framework and as a result, it cannot be rectified easily or within a specifiable timeframe. A holistic approach to tackling child labor based on community remediation programs is necessary. However, this is not a quick process, and it takes time to gain traction and deliver benefits for the communities involved.

“Children's perspectives have been neglected in favor of top-down approaches based on external perceptions of needs and solutions”

Giving children a voice

A key part of building successful programs to address child labor must, in my opinion, place children center stage. Until now, the perspectives of children, their caregivers and wider cocoa communities have been neglected in favor of top-down approaches based on external perceptions of needs and solutions. Consultation has been limited to industry-commissioned research relying heavily on surveys, with some limited use of qualitative research methods such as focus groups. In some cases, research on child labor in cocoa has not included any direct contact with children.

While adopting a child-centric and more participatory approach may seem a lofty aspiration, in practical terms, this is achievable. As a starting point, it involves using a different set of methodologies with children, young people and adults in order to gain a better understanding of the issues critical to unlocking change. Depending on the age of respondents, using a participatory approach based on a range of tools such as open interviews, life stories, drawings, photography and games, and supplementing these with more conventional methods such as focus groups, would provide much more revealing insights into the root causes of child labor as well as signal practical ways to address it.

For example, a clear link between child labor and chronic hunger/malnutrition emerged in my own fieldwork with cocoa communities using such methods. This showed that a school feeding program would have a real impact on child labor in this context. Similarly, using participatory

methods showed that a child's biological age (typically a cornerstone of Western-based interventions on child labor), was not a helpful frame of reference in cocoa communities. However, these methods also brought to light alternative ways of engaging with local communities on this issue.

Using participatory methods is a way of promoting engagement and learning from the ground up. However, including children's voices does not only make for better policymaking; it also brings businesses into line with UN recommendations on the rights of working children. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child agreed in 2009 that working children, "have to be heard in child-sensitive settings, in order to understand their views of the situation and their best interests. They should be included in the search for a solution, which respects the economic and socio-structural constraints as well as the cultural context under which these children work. Children should also be heard when policies are developed to eliminate the root causes of child labor, in particular regarding education."

Towards a better future

As I reflect on the journey of the last two decades, it is clear that corporate investments have led to positive changes in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, where there are now high levels of awareness – if not compliance – on the issue of child labor

in cocoa. While the aim of a 70% reduction in child labor by 2020 may not be met, there are many success stories, as this report shows.

We can say with confidence that we have moved on from, and will not return to, the state of ignorance we were in regarding children's involvement in cocoa production in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. Moreover, publications such as this show that the chocolate industry has become more open to holistic approaches to tackling child labor.

Given the unrelenting media interest in stories of child labor in chocolate, and the ongoing criticisms from external observers, we urgently need to redefine the prevailing discourse on child labor. We cannot wait decades for the industry to adopt more inclusive approaches in their interventions. A long-term child-focused approach that is pragmatic and illustrative of a genuine commitment to children's rights (as broadly conceived in UN policies and recommendations) must form the bedrock of action going forward.

I commend Nestlé's Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System, and the conceptual and practical shifts that have characterized interventions in recent years. However, real change still lies ahead of us. Now we must focus on achieving it.

This article has been edited for length purposes. The full unabridged version is available on www.nestlecocoplant.com





Looking ahead

By 2025, we aim to source 100% of the cocoa for our confectionery products through the Nestlé Cocoa Plan. A fundamental part of the Nestlé Cocoa Plan in areas with a high risk of child labor is to implement our CLMRS. We will therefore implement the CLMRS across all of our sourcing in West Africa. This represents a major commitment to ensuring our chocolate is sustainable.

Towards 100% sustainable cocoa

By 2025, 100% of the cocoa used in our confectionery products will be sourced through the Nestlé Cocoa Plan



The Nestlé CLMRS is successful in tackling child labor in just over half of cases. That is great but it is not good enough.

We have shown in this report how each child's situation is different and that some cases are very hard to solve. Dr Kristy Leissle reminds us that we should see child labor holistically. To eliminate child labor we need far-reaching changes in society, industry and policy, and we can't do this on our own. Rural villages in West Africa need better water supply to reduce infant mortality and to reduce the need to carry heavy loads. They need electricity to improve the quality of life, and available labor to ease pressure on older farmers. They need more schools so that children have an alternative to working in the fields, and those schools need to offer quality education.

We will continue to be driven by results, by these simple criteria: are we finding the children who are doing hazardous work? Are we helping them? And are we preventing future cases? Are we providing better opportunities to children in the communities we source cocoa from?

We will continue to measure our remediation activities against success in child labor reduction, while acknowledging this is not the only success factor. We also need to know: are people's attitudes changing? Are the communities more able and willing to address these issues? Are local people shocked when they see a child carrying out a hazardous activity?

We will continue to improve the system's efficiency. We are experimenting with how many villages a CLP can cover, and we are also trying full-time rather than part-time CLPs in order to cover a larger area.

Education is particularly effective in preventing and reducing child labor, and so improving access to quality education will continue to be a key focus of our programs. Having established with our partner the Jacobs Foundation that bridge schools work well, we will set up a further 60 bridging classes to help over 1,500 children become literate and numerate so that they can reintegrate into mainstream schooling.

We're also taking up Dr Amanda Berlan's suggestion to listen to children more. In rolling out the system at scale we have probably sometimes missed their perspective, and we need to get that back.

We want to improve links with other aspects of the Nestlé Cocoa Plan and involve all our partners in implementing remediation. We need to innovate more, piloting new remediation activities and scaling up what works.

A holistic approach also means improving livelihoods in cocoa-growing communities. We will work with farmers and experts to understand the levers to achieving a living income and help an increasing proportion of farmers to achieve it.

I'm delighted that we will be sourcing all our cocoa for Nestlé confectionery products through the Nestlé Cocoa Plan by 2025. This represents a doubling of our volume. Our CLMRS is a key component of the Nestlé Cocoa Plan where there is a high risk of child labor. We will implement the CLMRS in all our sourcing from West Africa by 2025.

We commit to putting all of our effort behind the system, being open about our success and challenges, and to continue to report publicly. Annual numbers will be reported in our annual Nestlé in Society report, as well as on the Nestlé Cocoa Plan website, together with updates and blog posts.

Final thoughts

The very process of producing this report has given us the chance to reflect on our progress, do a deep dive into the data and to meet some of the children and their families face to face. It's been frustrating at times, enthralling at others, it has brought us delight and has brought us tears. We know we're on a journey. It's brought some clarity and we've felt emboldened to make some difficult decisions, and it's brought home the immense work still to do.

Darrell High, Head of the Nestlé Cocoa Plan

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Thank you to the communities in the villages and schools for allowing us to take photography and conduct interviews for the case studies.



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