

The way forward

In the following months, ILO will strengthen its action in the following areas:

- * Improving attendance through the provision of complementary education (Catch-up scheme/after school and alternative/transition education /Non-formal to return dropouts to school;
- * Developing and implement Community Action Plans (CAPs) with a focus on education, health, livelihoods, Child Labour & GCLMS;
- * Improving educational infrastructure (e.g. Classroom, sanitation & establishing community schools)
- * Improving quality of education through teacher training in pedagogic, child labour, girls' vulnerability and provision of teaching and learning

materials such as desks and blackboards to schools in deprived schools

- * Enhancing agriculture livelihoods in cocoa and non-cocoa (e.g. livestock, oil palm, vegetables, etc) and training in productivity, Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) and formation of farmer groups and cooperative societies;
- * Promoting employment in non-agriculture through training in entrepreneurship and provision of start-up tools (e.g. soap-making, beekeeping, food processing);
- * Referral and provision of services to 3,500 children in or at high risk of the WFLC;
- * Action by Workers' and Employers in policy, codes of conduct and programming on child labour;
- * Strengthening Cocoa and Agriculture Extension Service;
- * Extending Labour Inspection Service to 40 communities.



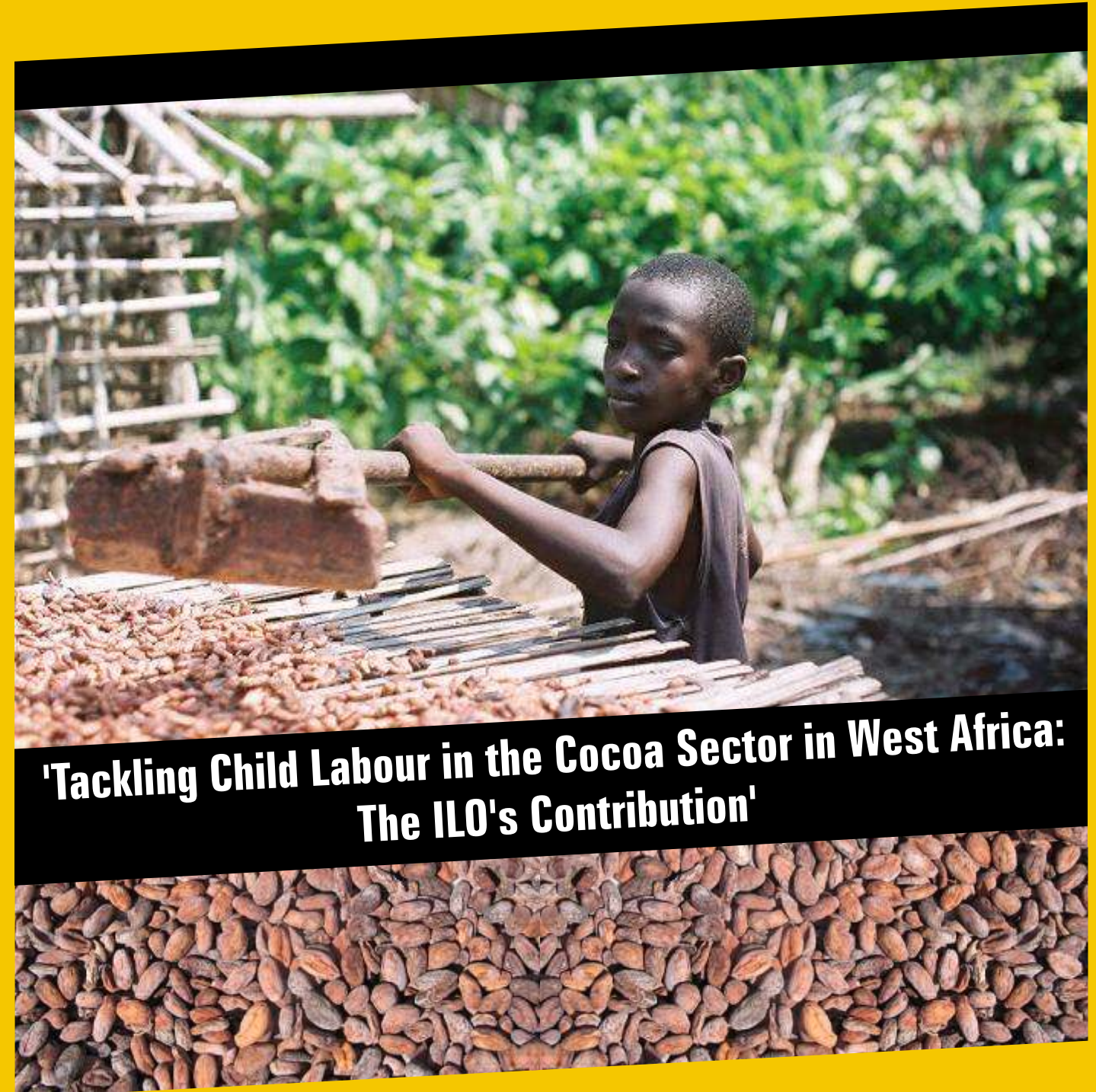
International Labour Organisation

The Story of Hope

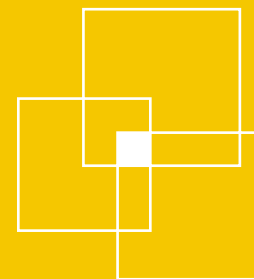


Hope

Hope is a 15 year old son of a migrant family working in a cocoa farm in Jenu, a community in Aowin-Suaman district of the Western Region which is the highest cocoa producing area in Ghana. Much of Hope's life was a routine of exploitative labour, with a camouflage of school attendance. He found himself clearing land and felling trees using dangerous equipment, working with agrochemicals in the application of farm fertilizer, climbing cocoa trees to remove mistletoe (pest) and carrying heavy loads of fermented cocoa beans, inter alia. During peak cocoa seasons Hope, was altogether kept from school to do farm work all day. He worked from 8am till after 2pm. Now hope has been identified by an ILO-IPEC project in collaboration with Kuapa Kooko, and has been withdrawn from hazardous work, provided with educational services such as non-cash scholarship. Today, rather than spending his productive life in child labour, he has access to quality education for a brighter future; and is thankful to all who have made this possible, hoping that many more children will receive such opportunities.



'Tackling Child Labour in the Cocoa Sector in West Africa: The ILO's Contribution'





Reducing the engagement of children in the Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL)

Identification of girls and boys in or at risk of Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL): By July 2011, up to 550 children in or at risk of WFCL had been identified in 15 communities in the Bia, Aowin-Suaman and Juaboso districts of the Western region. This was done in collaboration with community leaders, local civil society organisations and local government operatives. Because many children in rural cocoa communities engage in work that is exploitative and detrimental to their welfare, and yet not all work done by children is child labour, there is need to correctly identify child labourers. ILO Projects do this by applying criteria informed by international and domestic standards such as the ILO Convention on minimum age for employment (C138), the Convention on WFCL (C 182) and the Children's Act of Ghana.

Removal from the WFCL: Identified child labourers between 6 and 14 years (i.e. below the minimum age for work/15 years) are physically removed from work and enrolled in school, with the provision of non-cash scholarships including school uniforms, sandals, school books, etc.

Protection from hazards: In the case of older children (15 years and above), who are permitted by law to perform non-hazardous work, ILO protect such children from work hazards by for example reducing their hours of work or the weight of load carried, providing knowledge and skills training on occupational health and safety and information on rights at work.

Prevention of Children at High Risk (CAHR): In many cocoa growing communities, children are initially enrolled in school but drop out to work on farms because of various reasons, including lack of interest in school due to a poor understanding of the long term benefits of education, lack of school supplies and learning materials and parental pressure. The project provides these children with non-cash scholarships such as school uniforms, school sandals and bags, exercise books, pens, pencils and mathematical sets to keep them in school and prevent them from work.

Addressing Poverty Reduction

A major factor in child labour is poverty. ILO-IPEC projects apply an integrated cohort of interventions, including improved productivity and social protection, to promote resilient family livelihoods and sustainable community development.

Improved productivity: in collaboration with the Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG) and the Ministry of Agriculture, the project supports farmers to access and apply improved technology in the production of cocoa. Farmers in the targeted communities are introduced to the Cocoa Hi Tech Programme which involves the use of fertilizers, improved planting materials and the application of insecticides and fungicides on cocoa farms. The adoption of the Hi Tech Programme is expected to help increase the productivity of most cocoa farms. In addition, the project is in consultation with local representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and COCOBOD on the deployment of cocoa extension services to farmers in project areas.

Enhanced Livelihoods and Social protection: cocoa households are strengthened to access health insurance and economic empowerment, formation of small business associations and cooperatives. In communities in Juaboso district, beneficiary children have been linked to the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). This makes it possible for them to have free medical care when they need it. In other communities, efforts are underway to register young adults who have completed basic school with the National Youth Employment Programme.

Strengthening Participation and National Ownership

Today, the fight against child labour in Ghana is driven by local actors, from the highest level of national leadership to the lowest point of community engagement. The Presidency has led cabinet to, for the first time, adopt a comprehensive National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Child Labour (NPA) which covers all the key interventions required for the elimination of the Worst Forms

of Child Labour. The NPA is mainstreamed into the routine development plan, budget and M&E systems at both national and sub-national levels; more than 200 national and district agencies are active in its implementation. Furthermore, the NPA is integrated into the United Nation Development Assistance framework (UNDAF) for Ghana, having gained the confidence of development partners to support its implementation. ILO has been instrumental in facilitating all this.

Establishing Child Labour Monitoring

Fresh impetus has been brought by the ILO on child labour monitoring by the establishment of the Ghana Child Labour Monitoring System (GCLMS), with 13 key national agencies signing a Memorandum of Understanding to effectively participate in its implementation. True to their word, agencies including the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare, Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, Ghana NGO Coalition on the Rights of the Child and the Ministry for Local Government and Rural Development, Employers and organised labour are committing human and institutional resources for the implementation of the GCLMS. For example, district officers of these agencies have constituted District Child Protection Committees that work with community actors to ensure that children engaged in WFCL are identified and removed from work into school.

Promote social dialogue to tackle child labour

Social dialogue refers to consultative negotiation between social partners concerning labour and employment relations. Many cocoa farm families are share-croppers (employees), working for the real owners (employers) of the cocoa farm. Because of the higher cost of adult labour and the relatively low share they receive from farm owners, these share-croppers use children to beat down cost of production. Through social dialogue, the ILO is exploring the creation of platforms for cooperatives (formed by group of share croppers) to negotiate improved terms with

farm owners in a manner that helps them to hire adult workers rather than children to work on the cocoa farms. ILO has worked with the Ghana Employers Association (GEA) to train 110 members of business associations in social dialogue and its application against child labour, with a view of extending the strategy to the cocoa sector.

Accelerated commitment to International Standards

In June 2011, Ghana ratified, inter alia, ILO Convention on Minimum Age Convention, 1973(No. 138). This achievement can be partly attributed to the consistent advocacy efforts deployed by the ILO vis-à-vis the Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare (MESW). The ratification of this convention has increased the confidence of local partners in the government's commitment to the fight against child labour. By this achievement the momentum to properly situate national legislation into the international context is expected to be revived.

Communication for effective behavioural change.

Through continuous community campaigns, farmers, parents, children and other community members are beginning to understand that the fight against child labour is not a threat to farm work. Now they appreciate that not all work done by children is unacceptable. Their fears of legal and trade sanctions have been removed because they are able to discriminate licit work of children from hazardous work. Now children are working fewer hours and attending school regularly. For children above the minimum age for work the hazards, rather than the work, is being removed. Children are being sensitized on their rights and adults are encouraged to accommodate the rights of children as fellow humans. Efforts to empower share-croppers through the knowledge and realization of their rights, including their acquisition of skills in Collective bargaining have been deployed.