

**IPEC Reflections on current strengths and weaknesses in the
West Africa Cocoa/Commercial Agriculture Program to Combat
Hazardous and Exploitative Child Labour (WACAP)**

27 June 2005

Education and Vocational Training

How does WACAP support the development of better quality education for children?

While education certainly is a localised issue for individual children, it is also a national issue. WACAP is working at several levels to improve the quality of education curricula, relevance and teachers' training at the local level. At national level, together with other IPEC projects, it aims to advocate for more and better education that is accessible to all children on rural farms. The role of WACAP, in collaboration with other concerned partners, is to help authorities and parents to increase the possibilities that are offered to children.

WACAP has been working with the ministry of education in each project country. Many fruitful discussions and workshops have taken place with these ministries and public agencies on the educational structure/system in the countries - including questions of quality and integration of ex-child labourers and vulnerable children in education. This has led to actions such as reviews, drawing up of plans of action and implementation of action programmes to improve the quality and delivery of education to all children. In Côte d'Ivoire, for example, the SAA (an agency under the Ministry of Education) has been operating mobile schools (through a WACAP programme) to aid in providing qualitative education for children in rural areas, especially ex-child labourers and vulnerable children. The SABOU project in Guinea is also an example.

In all project-countries WACAP has initiated, or has planned to work with the educational system in an effort to improve education delivery and standards, as well as to involve the communities in the education of the children. In Guinea and Nigeria, the Ministries of Education are about to draft a plan of action aimed at incorporating child labour issues into educational policy.

How does WACAP assess what type of education is most appropriate for a child to follow?

The project follows a systematic approach in dealing with children in which each withdrawn child's educational level and health is assessed. The child is asked about his/her interests, for example, whether or not the child wishes to attend formal education or learn any particular trade or skill. The child's wishes are then taken into consideration during placement. Some programmes begin with providing all the children with non-formal/transitional education before a placement. Children who choose and are considered to be capable of entering/returning to formal education are in some instances offered catch-up/vacation classes to prepare them for re/entry into formal education.

All very young children are steered into formal education. Formal education and vocational schools and apprenticeship centres are chosen with care, taking into consideration the children's interests, the quality of education/instruction, the distance of the institution to ensure continual attendance (or innovative measures are used as in the case of the mobile schools in Cote d'Ivoire), etc. The options and choices, of course, are limited by ground realities of the educational system.

How do teachers contribute to the elimination of child labour?

Discussions, sensitisation and counselling sessions are held with head-teachers, teachers, and master-craftsmen of targeted institutions to ensure that in general all children are protected against child labour, in particular the vulnerable and ex-child labourers. These sessions are also provided to ensure that withdrawn children are given the special attention they need to get into the flow of their studies. Head-teachers/teachers/master-craftsmen are asked to follow-up on

children placed in their institutions and WACAP's implementing agencies and other partners also monitor the children's progress. Efforts are made to ensure the children are successful in their respective institutions.

Regarding vocational training, WACAP staff and implementing agencies have looked for possibilities, but have found them to be limited both by the area and the target group. Local artisans provide a viable option as they have a respectable technical level and pedagogic approaches. In general, they are admired by the community members because they are able to earn a living through their own work. It is a preferred option by the families as it enables children to continue living with their parents and prevents them from being removed from their home area.

WACAP's decision to support public schools

The problem with the educational system is institutional and a national problem for all public schools in each of the WACAP country. While innovative linkages on child-centred educational options are non-existent in most countries, where they do exist, they themselves are experimental, small-scale, in need of resources and generally not in the same geographical areas.

WACAP faced the following dilemma: in a scenario where IPEC did not have a commitment from donors for second phase funding, would it be better, on the one hand, to set up high quality non-formal education centres for a limited number of children, knowing well that the centres would certainly have no resources to continue after the project terminates; or, or on the other hand, in a project period that is too short to mobilize local resources, would it have been better for the project to opt for strengthening the weak public (or other existing) education system and advocate with the government and other agencies for improving it?

Considering the duration and resources of WACAP, the project and stakeholders in each country opted for integrating the children into public schools rather than establishing high quality but unsustainable non-formal centres. Given the situation, the project decided to work with the public schools at the community level and to work at the national and the district levels with the education ministries, departments and other agencies to start to improve the system down to the community level. In addition to this, the project is working with the ILO offices and other IPEC projects in the countries to bring the issue to the donor level and to impact on the UNDAF (United Nations Development Assistance Framework), the PRSPs and other development opportunities. In the long-term, this has been considered to be a more sustainable and feasible approach.

Child Labour Monitoring (CLM)

What is CLM?

Child Labour Monitoring, as developed under WACAP, is an outcome of innovative networking and coordination between the communities, the districts and at the national level. The system is capable of providing concrete, reliable and verifiable information on child labour in general and child labour in the cocoa/agriculture sector in particular in selected geographical areas. It is currently in an initial phase and will be improved based on the pilot experience in Ghana.

What is the Objective of CLM in WACAP?

The objective of CLM is not only to raise public awareness and enhance the understanding of the problem of child labour but also to:

- Identify and monitor at regular intervals child labourers in the coverage areas, particularly those engaged in cocoa and commercial agriculture farming and determine the risks they are exposed to;
- Refer the children to social protection service providers;

- Verify that the children so engaged are removed from the labour situation or that the risk has been removed (for those children who are at a legally working age);
- Track children removed from child labour to ensure they have satisfactory alternatives, and that workplaces (farms or plantations) that engages children are progressively free of the practice; and
- Make the system available to partners and stakeholders working on child labour issues to carry out CLM so the coverage can be expanded.

What are the main components of CLM?

CLM has two main components: a baseline component and a monitoring component. Under each of the components information is collected from 4 main sources:

1. Child labourers (all working children in the geographical area)
2. Children receiving social protection support (WACAP support and from other sources)
3. Employers (including farmers)
4. Schools, institutions

What is the coverage of CLM?

The WACAP CLMS (child labour monitoring system) is not restricted to information on children receiving support under the project but collects information on all working children in the area covered by the CLMS. As a result, it is possible to gather information on all forms of work children might be engaged in. In Ghana, for instance, section 2 of the child labourers' questionnaire asks questions on child employment that provide information on the type of work children do specifically in Ghana, such as truck pushing or *kayayoo* (porterage).

The roots of the WACAP CLMS are at the community level where community members lead and participate in the monitoring through child labour committees (CLC). It is an ongoing process, which means that the number of child labourers can increase as they are identified in the process of continuous monitoring. It can show trends on various indicators, such as hazards faced by children, or children receiving support, and others. Conclusions on the incidence of child labour in areas covered by CLMS can be drawn from the database.

Where do the responsibilities for CLM lie?

The CLMS was developed in consultation with the district and national offices and the communities and is based on the reality on the ground. It is modular in the sense that there are distinct actions, processes and responsibilities at the community, district and national levels. Each layer or module is entrusted with responsibilities within their competence and there is a clear linkage between the different modules. While CLMS can be said to have a certain complexity to accommodate the three levels, it has not been judged as cumbersome by those who use it and is perceived as reliable, effective, verifiable and replicable. Provided the resources and commitment, it can easily be extended to other administrative districts.

Who can support child labourers identified through CLM?

As the ownership of the data at the district level is with the district assembly, support for identified child labourers can come from beyond ILO/IPEC projects. Any agency wishing to support the identified children can do so by contacting the district assemblies. This is illustrated by the offer of COCOBOD (Ghana Cocoa Board) to support a number of children identified. During a recent National Steering Committee meeting in Ghana, discussions focussed on elaborating/developing a social protection and response system together with other partners.

Can CLM be used in the cocoa certification system?

Countries including Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire are finding that CLM provides reliable and useful information that will be fed into the cocoa certification system the cocoa industry and some African countries are embarking upon. The extent to which it will be suitable for the certification process remains to be seen and can be determined only when it becomes clear what form the cocoa certification will take.

How can CLM be used?

CLM is intended to contribute to efforts of having accurate information and data on child labour in the countries where WACAP is operational. Its success in this was illustrated by the first CLM report in Ghana. Moreover, the enthusiastic debate and discussion that ensued following the presentation of the report in the National Steering Committee Meeting in Ghana bears testimony to the relevance of CLM for policy, reporting and compliance matters.

IPEC, through WACAP and its other projects and advisory services, is working with Governments, donors and other agencies in the countries to put child labour in the cocoa/agriculture sector on the development agenda and the aim is to have some of the models, such as CLMS, taken to scale. Recently, for example, resources from the private sector in Cote d'Ivoire have become available to scale up the CLMS model developed by WACAP.

Participation and Co-operation with other agencies

How does WACAP co-ordinate with other agencies?

In order to operationalise WACAP's objectives, planning processes for action involved all key stakeholders in the country, national, international, UN agencies and others. All major public and private sector agencies, including potential implementing agencies, participated in WACAP planning meetings in all five countries. Farmers were represented by farmers' and producers' associations and by trade unions, e.g. ANAPROCI in Cote d'Ivoire and GAWU in Ghana. Once specific sites were selected, the implementing agencies consulted with all key stakeholders in those areas, including the farmers, concerned children as well as village leaders and others. The actual implementation of Action Programmes is generally carried out by national/local agencies.

The NGOs WACAP is working with range from community level to key national-level ones. Moreover, in addition to NGOs and public agencies, WACAP, as an ILO programme, is working with employers' and workers' organizations as well and this facilitates IPEC's efforts at mainstreaming the issue of agricultural child labour in education, poverty alleviation and development policies and programmes

As per IPEC's modalities of working in countries, WACAP's collaboration with international NGOs is of a good level. They are represented on the PTACs (Project Technical Advisory Committee), are invited to important meetings, including planning meetings and consultations and stakeholder workshops. Some such NGOs are CARE International and ICI (International Cocoa Initiative) representatives (Ghana), Plan International and Friedrich Ebert Foundation (Cameroon), ICI representatives (Côte d'Ivoire), Save the Children, IRC, Terre des Hommes, ICRC and MSF (Guinea). Beyond this, WACAP field offices have provided support in the form of documentation and information to the ICI as it tried to set itself up in the various countries. WACAP has also kept in contact with interested foreign missions in the respective countries and participated in meetings and invited them to participate in project events. As one of IPEC's aims is to strengthen the capacity of local/national agencies, resources are not provided to international NGOs working in the countries.

Capacity Building

How does WACAP contribute to capacity-building in the implementing agencies it works with?

There are questions as to which type of implementing agencies IPEC works with, whether the project contributes to building their capacities, and whether the level of resources provided to them is sufficient. WACAP works with the traditional partners of the ILO (representatives of government, employers' organizations and workers' organizations) as well as NGOs, such as CEDEP in Ghana or SABOU in Guinea, and cooperatives such as COPICO in Côte d'Ivoire. Training is provided to all implementing agencies aimed at building their capacities, not only in procedural matters but also in substantive child labour and related development issues. Additionally, WACAP has welcomed and responded to requests, questions and queries from implementing agencies at anytime and provided support as needed.

Following the initial planning meetings in each country, project staff was advised to develop Action Programmes with selected implementing agencies. However, as many of these agencies were developing child labour interventions for the first time, the design of large-scale Action Programmes took a long time. It also would have involved higher targets, perhaps covering a larger geographical area and a longer period of time. IPEC realized that many of these agencies had not tested the strategies before and without this experience it would be more efficient to do smaller-scale Action Programmes as pilots and in the meantime assess their performance and assist them with developing larger-scale programmes. From a management point of view this was perceived to be a sounder approach than waiting to develop large-scale programmes with implementing agencies whose capacities had not been tested. It was also less risky not to tie up heavy resources.

In Ghana, where the major implementing agencies had prior IPEC experience, the Action Programme budgets were larger, ranging up to \$93,000. Cote d'Ivoire has tested well the approach of starting with small pilots and moving on to larger Action Programmes. For instance, the NGO FEMAD started a pilot with about \$19,000 and went on to a programme of \$74,000, the NGO RENCAF started with \$4,000 and moved to \$98,000, while the Ministry of Education started with a small-scale programme and moved to one of \$66,000.

Knowledge Base

How is the knowledge base created by WACAP being used?

IPEC recognizes that the rapid assessments carried out by various agencies under the project lack validity if they are to be used as basis for quantitative statistical information and wide extrapolation. Therefore, these studies have not received IPEC's technical clearance. They have, however, proved extremely valuable in helping to get the key stakeholders in the country to engage in a debate on the issue and focus on it, which are essential steps in moving towards policy action and further quantitative research. Data generated, for example, by WACAP OSH (Occupational Safety and Health) studies, such as in Ghana, show a wide range of hazardous activities on ALL types and sizes of cocoa farms.

Innovativeness

How innovative are WACAP's activities?

Initiatives for awareness raising, social mobilisation, setting up of Child Labour Monitoring Committees (which have enormous potential), linking communities to the district level to prevent and stop child labour are all innovative first-time measures for the participating communities, as is the training of farmers on child labour issues. Such community development measures are crucial and IPEC makes an effort to ensure that globally tested models take root indigenously so that they are not perceived as imported and foreign.