

# **Situational Analysis of Child Labour in the Cocoa Sector of Ghana.**

*(Final Report)*

**Submitted to: The International Cocoa Initiative (ICI)**

**Submitted by: Dr Leslie Casely-Hayford,  
Associates for Change**

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## Acronyms

ACHD	African Centre for Human Development
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
ASHANGO	Ashanti Region Network of Non-Governmental Organisations
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CERGIS	Centre for Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Services
CHRAG	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
COCOBOD	Cocoa Marketing Board
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRIG	Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana
DFID	Department for International Development
GAWU	General Agricultural Workers Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNCC	Ghana National Commission on Children
GNCRC	Ghana National Coalition on the Rights of the Child
GOAN	Ghana Organic Agriculture Network
GLSS	Ghana Living Standards Survey
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ICI	International Cocoa Initiative
IITA	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IPEG	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
IUF	International Union of Food
JSS	Junior Secondary School
MOWAC	Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs
NFED	Non Formal Education Division
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisations
NYCG	National Youth Council of Ghana
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PBC	Produce Buying Company
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PROMAG	Programme Management Network
PTA	Parent/Teacher Association
SMC	School Management Committee
SSS	Senior Secondary School
STCP	Sustainable Tree Crop Programme
STEP	Self Training and Entrepreneurship Programme
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WACAP	West Africa Cocoa/Commercial Agriculture Programme
WAJU	Women and Juvenile Unit (of the Police Service)
WERENGO	Western Region Coalition of Non Governmental Organisations
YES	Youth Education and Skills Programme

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## Executive Summary

The following report is a situational analysis of Child Labour in the Cocoa Sector of Ghana. The study was carried out by Associates for Change<sup>1</sup>, on behalf of International Cocoa Initiative (ICI) as part of a process for developing an overall strategy and initial programme plan for 2004. The specific objectives of the research were to:

- provide ICI with a comprehensive situation analysis that will inform the development of an overall ICI intervention strategy in Ghana;
- suggest to ICI appropriate and suitable programmatic options, partners and modalities for effective implementation of intervention programmes and projects.

The Ghana Situational Analysis involved the selection of areas (communities, districts and regions) where there is high and low cocoa production and where the research team had familiarity with the communities. Eleven communities in six districts (Suhum-Krobo-Coaltar, Hohoe, Wassa Amenfi, Ejusu-Juaben, Effiduase and Asikuma Odoben Brakwa) were chosen from the Eastern, Volta, Western, Ashanti and Central regions respectively. The research took a qualitative approach using mainly focus group discussions with a cross section of community and district stakeholders including chiefs and elders, in school and out-of-school children, farmers, teachers and assembly people. At the district level interviews were held with heads of departments, district planning and coordinating officers, youth development officers, agriculture and district education officers. At the national level, the research covered government, non-government and private sector institutions including: the Ministry of Agriculture, Ghana Cocoa Marketing Board, ILO/IPEC country office, Ghana Coalition on the Rights of the Child, Universities and other agencies working on child rights.

The research team spent considerable time holding discussions with Networks of Non-governmental Organizations (NGO's) based at the regional and district level which were working in cocoa producing areas, and interested in child labour issues.

### Key Findings:

Ghana's agricultural sector is a major employer engaging over 60% of the rural population of which a large majority are subsistence farmers and women. The agriculture sector contributed 40.5% to Gross Domestic Product in 1998 and 43.8% in total export earnings (Oduro, 2000). The sector provides livelihoods for about 56.9% of the total population of Ghana and received between 8.5 to 12.4% of aggregate credit to the economy during the period between 1992 to 1998 (Oduro, 2000).

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<sup>1</sup> Associates for Change is a research and consulting firm focused on social development issues in Africa and based in Ghana, West Africa (email: [comdev9@yahoo.com](mailto:comdev9@yahoo.com), Box 7726 Accra-North, Ghana). The field team included Mr Welford Quarcoo, Ms Vivian Fiscian, Mr George Kuto, Mrs Sheila Tetteh Noye and Mr Joseph Adjei Sowah.

The cocoa sector has also played a vital role in Ghana's Development. Ghana is the world number three cocoa producer; the Government derives 15% of GDP from Cocoa exports and a larger percentage of foreign exchange from cocoa production. National cocoa production increased within the last two years from 350,000 tonnes to 445,000 tonnes. Revenue targets were exceeded by over 900 billion cedis increasing the amount of funds available for national development and securing three months of foreign currency reserves for importation requirements. There are five major growing areas of the country, which include the Western, Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Eastern and Central regions. The Volta region of the country has not had the level of output in recent years and therefore some of the farmers have been migrating to the areas where there is a higher level of production (i.e. Western, Ashanti).

Poverty studies reveal that cocoa farmers are among the most vulnerable occupational groups in Ghana; a large proportion of cocoa farmers are below the poverty line (US\$ 100) due to small farm sizes, low yields and large family sizes resulting in a high dependency ratio. Fieldwork revealed that cocoa farmers engaged in export promotion are vulnerable to poverty due to fact that they are not farming enough food crops to sustain the family nor are they using sustainable agriculture practices to secure their future livelihood. Migration patterns by seasonal labourers are also shifting and increasing labour scarcity and the cost of labour in many communities; this is partly due to the change in behaviours of the traditional labour pool (Northerners) and preference for farming their own land.

#### Characteristics of Children in Cocoa Growing Areas

There are five major typologies or categories of children which emerged from the research and can be described as being involved in "child labour" practices. The categories are as follows:

- Children in school and engaged in cocoa farming during their off-school hours some of whom are performing hazardous activities on the farm but are not removed from school.
- Children who are in school but occasionally taken out in order to perform farming activities on the cocoa farms during peak seasons such as harvest time.
- Children who have dropped out of school before the end of completing basic education (JSS 3) due to lack of economic support by parents, death in the family etc; these children are involved full time in cocoa farming with their families and sometime hire their labour out.
- Children who have never attended school and are engaged in cocoa farming.
- Children, particularly from the North, who are engaged in cocoa farming by a relation and/or then given out to a neighbour, friend or cocoa farmer for farming purposes.

Mulls (2003) study revealed that " children of cocoa farm owners generally appear to fall into the category of child workers largely attending school and performing limited work tasks after school and on weekends. However, the children of sharecroppers and migrant children, who work as hired labourers attend school on a limited basis or not at all and are largely performing all tasks during the cocoa production process. The children of sharecroppers and of migrant families from northern Ghana and Togo appear to begin work at an earlier age, are engaged in work for longer hours each day and are performing job tasks that are more hazardous including pesticide application (p.27)."

**Regionally:** The Ghana Situational Analysis revealed a higher incidence of child labour in high cocoa producing areas than in areas where the cocoa is no longer the major economic activity. For instance, in parts of the Volta, Central and Eastern Regions where there are pockets of cocoa producing areas, communities do not have as many full time child labourers working on their farms as compared to the Western and Ashanti regions where there are higher levels of cocoa production. The study also found that in some cases there are abusive child labour practices taking place. For instance, in the Central and Volta regions, teachers themselves were found to engage children on their farms during school hours. There were also reports across the regions that some children had died from carrying heavy loads and breaking their neck.

**Intra-regional variations:** within the Western and Ashanti regions where there is the highest intensity of cocoa farming all categories of children exist and a higher incidence of child labour was found particularly in the highest producing regions/districts where there are mixed settler farming communities; these communities have a high proportion of migrants from the Upper East and Northern Regions of Ghana. Other communities contain a high proportion of mixed migrant (ethnic) groups such as the Brong's, Ashanti's, Ewe's, Krobo's and Ga Adangbe's. The ILO Baseline Study (ACHD, 2004) also revealed that the highest proportion of migrant cocoa farmers are from the Upper East and Northern regions followed by other ethnic groups. The vast majority of caretakers are from the Upper East and Northern regions.

The situational analysis revealed that children engaged in cocoa farming are exposed to hazardous tasks. Children interviewed across the communities spoke of some of these hazards such as carrying heavy loads, exposure to fertiliser and the use of the "soso<sup>2</sup>" when plucking cocoa pods. Snake bites were also common as well as cuts and lacerations when going to farm.

There was a high demand for labour in communities where cocoa is still being farmed (i.e. Eastern Region-Suhum, Western Region and parts of the Ashanti Region). In areas where people were no longer farming cocoa but had diversified their activities other child labour problems were apparent (i.e. fishing in the Volta region etc).

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<sup>2</sup> A long pole with the knife at the end to pluck the cocoa.

## Factors related to Child Labour

Some of the underlying reasons for child labour as outlined in the GSS Child Labour Study (2003) are:

- Poverty and lack of income
- Lack of sustainable livelihood practices (both cash cropping and food cropping practices)
- Lack of alternative forms of livelihood
- Poor parental care and break-up of family,
- loss of parent due to death /stress in the family
- Poor quality of services (i.e. education and health).

Children in the cocoa growing areas of Ghana are faced with the harsh realities of rural poverty and food insecurity. The regular practice of children working on cocoa farms is a natural way of life for cocoa farmers who for a variety of reasons want to train their children and at the same time use them in order to reduce labour costs on the farm. Children are caught in the cycle of poverty which requires they assist their family survive and at the same time attempt to use formal education as a means to break out of the cycle. This pattern prevalent across rural Ghana has been documented in many other studies (Casely-Hayford, 2000; CARE, 2003). The poverty pattern prevents children from attending school on a regular basis and often engages them in activities, which may be defined, as “hazardous” by international standards but is a livelihood/survival strategy due to the current socio-economic reality faced by children in cocoa growing communities.

In most of the communities studied, large numbers of children go to school. A few children had dropped out or have never attended school. Reasons for this vary but poverty is the common theme that runs through all explanations that parents gave for their inability to send their children to school. Those children who go to school, especially those between the ages of 12 and 16, combine their schooling with farm work. Some parents were found to pull their children out of school for a week or two in order to assist them on their farms. In spite of their approval of children's involvement in cocoa farming activities, parents believe in education and prefer having their children in school to keeping them at home and on the farm. Parents did not want to waste the children's time in schools where the teaching and learning environment is poor; that is, where there are no teachers or where teachers do not attend classes regularly; where there are no teaching and learning materials (books, tools etc.) and where the infrastructure is poor. Parents argued that they cannot risk keeping their children in poor quality schools only to end up, “*illiterate and ignorant, and without farming skills, or any other skill that can build their future*”.

The scarcity of land and food insecurity were major problems in the communities visited. Cocoa farmers were finding it difficult to finance labourers to work on their farms since seasonal migration patterns were changing and not as many northerners were available to work the cocoa farms. There were some signs that children are

being brought from the Northern regions to work on the cocoa farms as labourers but more research is needed to confirm the extent and nature of this pattern.

### **Child Labour Legislations**

There are a number of laws and legal instruments, which have been enacted in Ghana to protect the rights of the child. Ghana has passed the Children's Act (1998 Act 560) in satisfaction of its treaty obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and in accordance with international standards. The Act, which defines a child as a person below the age of 18, has the following as its major components: a list of the rights of the child and parental duties, provisions for the care and protection of the child, rules prohibiting numerous forms of child labour and rules regarding legal apprenticeship. The Children's Act recommends light work for children of thirteen years or below. However, Ghana is yet to establish how "light work" is defined within the country context. There is the need to clearly define and contextualise what constitutes light work for the purposes of enforcement and implementation of existing laws.

The 1992 Constitution of Ghana has specific provisions to ensure that:

- every child has the right to be protected from engaging in work that constitutes a threat to his health, education and development;
- the child is not subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
- no child is deprived by any other person of medical treatment, education or any social or economic benefit by reason only of religion or the belief.

The Ghana Government has taken a number of steps to create a favourable environment for the protection of the rights of the child. These include the amendment of the Criminal Code, which increased the age of criminal responsibility,

- the creation of a Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs to formulate policies that would advance the interest of women and children,
- the submission of a Juvenile Justice bill to the legislature which, when passed, will help to protect the rights of young offenders in accordance with the CRC and the UN standard and Minimum Rules of the Administration of Juvenile Justice.

Despite all the legal provisions, little practical action targeted at improving the conditions of children, has been taken to directly boost their standard of living and survival. The most likely and feasible way forward is to strengthen mechanisms at the district and community level for protecting children's rights. This would involve the strengthening and activation of District Assembly sub-committees, and Child/Family Panels focused on children. It would also require more involvement of traditional leaders in the education of the population regarding legislation and byelaws enacted by national and district institutions. Education should be targeted at civil society stakeholders including NGO's, on the provision of the Children's Act of Ghana (Act 560) in order to ensure its implementation by districts.

## Strategies and Programming Options

There are several gaps within the ongoing child rights programming environment, which are related to the “prevention side” of child labour and child trafficking issues in Ghana. The review of ongoing programmes and projects under this consultancy suggests that there is still a great need to provide more social education and public awareness campaigning against harmful child labour practices throughout the country. This would include a stronger focus of programming on the child sending communities (Upper East and Northern) as well as the communities, which are receiving children (Western and Ashanti). A more preventive approach would also consider the socio-economic and socio-cultural context of child labour within Ghana and look at more sustainable solutions. Primarily, this would involve a consultative phase of start up activities focused at district and community level engaging district assemblies, traditional leaders, farmers and civil society stakeholders in the proposed districts.

The following are some of the programmatic gaps and potential areas for intervention identified during the programme mapping exercise.

- Consider more sustainable livelihood approaches, which include a more thorough participatory analysis of the needs of cocoa farmers in order to ensure food security throughout the year.
- Improve the quality of education at school level by empowering teachers through in service training in effective instructional approaches for literacy and numeracy, support to volunteer teachers and providing teaching learning materials particularly books for classrooms.
- Support counselling and social services in cocoa growing areas in order to guide youth and provide career counselling for JSS children at the JSS 2 and JSS 3 levels.
- Consider culturally sensitive, community development and moral leadership approaches which engage parents and community members in reflective processes on parental control, discipline and parental care in order to curb teenage pregnancy, truancy, alcoholism, school dropout, HIV/AIDS and child labour.
- Educate, train and empower youth leaders, civil society, district assembly, traditional authorities and cocoa purchasing companies on the rights of the child and the child labour conventions; review the impact harmful child labour practices will have on industry particularly at the district and regional level.
- Develop mass media and information campaigns on a district and regional wide scale on the negative impact of child labour practices on the child, family and community.

Several programmes exist today that aim at eliminating harmful child labour practices in cocoa growing areas of the country but most of these are small-scale pilot programmes which last only a few years. Some programmes are targeting children without looking at the social and economic context in which child labour exists. Improving the quality of education within communities is an important strategy for preventing parents from pulling their children out of school. But this strategy alone may not be effective. Cocoa farming and agriculture in general, demand more socio-economically sensitive approaches to intervention, taking due cognisance of context.

More comprehensive approaches are needed to prevent and eliminate child labour on a wider scale. There is also a need for the extension of both consumption and production assistance to farmers and their families for improving their livelihoods and ensuring food security. These strategies should form an essential part of an overall strategy for intervention in eliminating the use of children on cocoa farms. Dialogue and consultations on definitions and better understanding of standards are also necessary at all levels for the achievement of realistic and sustainable solutions to the problems of poverty and child labour in cocoa farming communities.

## **Recommendations**

ICI's programme strategy in Ghana should take a phased approach targeting three of the highest cocoa growing regions/districts of the country in the first phase. Communities, which are high cocoa producing areas containing a high proportion of migrant farmers, should be given priority for ICI programming. ICI's strategy should have a district focus and consider districts, which do not have other child rights programming available in order to broaden the coverage areas (i.e. Western, Ashanti and Brong Ahafo and parts of the Central Region).<sup>3</sup>

Using a district-based focus will enable ICI to systematically develop, learn and implement a strategy to eliminate harmful practices of child labour in the cocoa growing areas of Ghana. ICI will also raise the awareness of key stakeholders within Government, provide evidence based research and develop sustainable strategies, which help to enforce laws at the same time tackle the underlying socio-economic context of child labour within the community. More importantly, ICI will begin a learning process with its northern and southern constituency, which brings to light the global, national and local policies needed for child protection and the need to improve sustainable rural livelihoods and quality education as a key vehicle for change.

Since communities see child labour as a normal livelihood strategy to meet the daily needs of the family, changing patterns and practices which "remove children" or force parents to change, will require a deeper understanding of the causes and reasons behind the practice. It will also require much more research into a variety of factors surrounding the practice in order to identify sustainable solutions. ICI will have to engage in consultation with stakeholders at all levels but particularly at district and community level in order to identify feasible and lasting interventions. A

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<sup>3</sup> IPEC felt that ICI should consider working in the Brong Ahafo region since not as many agencies are operating there.

start up period of operational engagement at district level is required as well as community-based action research using participatory methods of community reflection (i.e. PLA/PRA) as one way forward. The main recommendations for ICI programmatic activities at the district and community level include the following:

- ICI should conduct one more (phase II) piece of research in Ghana for the selection of districts which would be most suitable for its interventions
- ICI should present the findings of this study and the proposed strategy to the West African Cocoa/Commercial Agriculture Programme (WACAP) for its study, comments and contributions;
- ICI should set up a small in-country (Ghana) office and recruit a local co-ordinator to manage its operations;
- ICI should share the findings of its studies with stakeholders at the national and district levels to increase awareness of the problem and causes of child labour in Ghana's cocoa sector;
- ICI should train NGO's and other civil society partners in the basic legal and constitutional framework which protects the rights of the child in Ghana.

### **District-based Interventions**

At the district level, ICI should pilot an approach, which attempts to reach a significant number of farmers and their families:

- ICI should collaborate with the Ghana National Commission on Children to ensure that District Assemblies selected for intervention set up and use their district assembly sub-committees on children;
- ICI should collaborate with District Assemblies to undertake poverty mapping exercises for the identification of areas where there is the need for ICI intervention;
- ICI should support a Rural Education Volunteer Programme to help place more teachers into the school system and support the training and monitoring of these teachers in order to improve the quality of education at the basic level;
- the ICI should engage the NGO sector and government agencies at the district level to design a sustainable livelihood programme for farmers and their families, particularly targeted at women and youth.

Traditional leaders, parliamentarians and the private sector (particularly buying agencies) should be actively engaged in the education process of their constituencies, particularly as they relate to child rights, labour standards and provisions. Innovative ways should be found to educate the population in order to improve child welfare and protection. The strengthening of the Department of Social

Welfare, Youth Council and the Ghana National Commission on Children at the district level are integral and should be at the forefront of any change process.

## **1.0 Introduction to the Study on Child Labour in the Cocoa Sector of Ghana**

The following report is a situational analysis of Child Labour in the Cocoa Sector of Ghana. The study was carried out by Associates for Change<sup>4</sup>, on behalf of International Cocoa Initiative (ICI) as part of a process for developing an overall strategy and initial programme plan for 2004. ICI has commissioned the research in order to provide a thorough and informed analysis of abusive child labour practices within the cocoa sector in Ghana and as part of its overall strategy towards the elimination of child labour. The study reviews the broad context of child labour within the cocoa sector in order to understand the particularly harmful practices which are at work in some of the areas and inform ICI of strategic programming options.

The situational analysis includes national, regional and community level analysis to ensure that diverse contexts and challenges of producer areas are taken into account. The issues of child labour are also put into the broader context of poverty reduction and related efforts in order to provide a strategic options framework for ICI consideration. A wide range of partners were consulted during the study including Government, Donor, Civil Society and Private Sector in order to begin a process of engagement, analysis and programme development. The proposed study attempts to assist ICI develop an overall strategy that will inform and guide a more detailed country-based programme start up phase in the coming months.

The report is divided into five main sections. The first section addresses the political, economic and socio-cultural context of child labour. It also outlines the complexities of agricultural systems in general, land tenure and cocoa production in particular. Section two explores the incidence and characteristics of child labour, and child work within the cocoa sub-sector based on existing data and studies.

Section three considers in more depth the characteristics of children within the cocoa growing areas of Ghana. It addresses the issues of “forced labour and the worst forms of child labour and attempts to shed light on work activities which prevent children from reaching their full potential.

Section four provides the institutional and legal framework based on international and national obligations related to child labour. It reviews the constitutional legislative instruments, child rights obligations and protective frameworks developed within Ghana. The section also provides an analysis of the different governmental, private and non-governmental actors involved in addressing child rights within Ghana.

Section five reviews the key strategies, programming options and best practice identified within Ghana drawing on international best practices. It also considers potential geographic areas for programme start up and potential partners.

Section eight explores the causal relationships and considers ICI’s added value in developing child rights and protection programming in Ghana. The section considers

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<sup>4</sup> Associates for Change is a research and consulting firm focussed on social development issues in Africa and based in Ghana, West Africa (email: [comdev9@yahoo.com](mailto:comdev9@yahoo.com), Box 7726 Accra-North, Ghana). The field team included Mr Welford Quarcoo, Ms Vivian Fiscian, Mr George Kuto, and Mrs Sheila Tetteh Noye and Mr Joseph Adjei Sowah.

the strategic options for ICI using an in country risk analysis, and considers the current needs of the country. It also reviews ICI's opportunities and challenges in the Child labour arena. The final section also presents overall recommendations to ICI related to programming options, entry strategies, and scope of programme options, target groups, potential partners, and research needs.

## **1.1 Key Research Objectives**

The overall objective of the Situational Analysis is to assist ICI develop appropriate country level strategies and present programmatic options for the implementation of these strategies. The specific objectives of the research included:

- Providing ICI staff with a comprehensive situational analysis of the country under study.
- Contributing to the development of an overall ICI strategy.
- Presenting ICI with appropriate and suitable programmatic options, partners and modalities to implement the country strategy.

Phase one of the research involved developing a strong contextual and situational analysis focused on child labour in general and cocoa production and processing in particular. A Phase two of work was also foreseen involving a deeper analysis of the programming approaches, mapping out realistic modalities, and partnership arrangements for start up activities.

## **1.2 Methodology**

The methodology for the field research and data collection took a qualitative approach and was participatory in nature, engaging several different levels of actors within the country context. The initial mapping exercise involved a survey of existing documentation and research analysis, which was conducted within Ghana. It also included an extensive review of existing documentation internationally, and nationally on the issues of child labour, child work, education and human development issues (i.e. IITA, World Bank Studies, USAID, STCP reports, WACAP reports etc). The first phase of research involved interviews with the following key stakeholders at the national level:

- Ministry of Agriculture (Extension Services Division, Statistics and Research Division, and Farmers Field Programme including the Sustainable Tree Crop Programme).
- Ghana Cocoa Board Officials (Quality Control and Research and Development Division).
- Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment (includes the Department of Child Labour).
- ILO/IPEC representatives in Country.

- Cocoa purchasing agencies and Private Sector Companies involved in Cocoa industry.
- Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG).
- University of Ghana (Department of Agriculture) and the University of Cape Coast, Centre for Development Studies, (Director and Labour Unit Specialists).
- Ghana Commission on the Rights of the Children (GNCRC).
- Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ).
- NGOs/CBO's working on Child Rights, Agriculture and National Resource Programming (i.e. Coalition on the Rights of the Child, African Centre for Human Development).
- NGO's working in the Cocoa areas of the country (Friends of the Nation, CARE, NGO's working in the Western, Ashanti, and Volta Regions of Ghana).

### **Regional, District and Community Based Research**

Fieldwork commenced following the literature review and interviews at the national level involving a team of researchers who conducted initial community based research in three regions of Ghana (Volta, Central and Eastern). The researchers were familiar with the study areas and had a keen awareness of child related issues in cocoa growing areas of Ghana. The research team developed a field instrument to guide interactions and focal group discussions at the community and district level (see annex 4 and annex 5). Field researchers spent two days in each community (see Annex 3 field schedules); discussions were held with key stakeholder groups focusing on cocoa production, labour needs and child related issues in a non-threatening manner.

The field guide was designed to assist researchers conceptualise the issues, providing entry points into discussions on agriculture, family well-being and challenges to agricultural development/ cocoa production before launching into child related issues. Most of the field work used a child welfare and well-being analysis within the cocoa sector as a major frame of reference; in this manner, communities and opinion leaders opened up and assisted the team understand the challenges of cocoa farmers, their children and families in a non defensive mode of interaction. It also assisted the research team understand the problems of cocoa farmers and their families within a socio-economic and cultural context.

### **District Selection**

Districts, engaged in various levels of cocoa production were selected for study. Selection was based on considering non-researched areas where the ILO and IPEC baseline study had not covered; the districts were in close proximity to the high producing areas (i.e. Edjisu Juaben and Wassa Amenfi). Districts selected were in high to medium cocoa producing areas but were not targeted by STCP or Creative Associates, or other donor support related to child labour. The district selection was also based on the team's knowledge of areas and ability to engage with existing

NGO's, which have a field presence and long standing relationships with communities in order to achieve quick rapport.

District level interviews were carried out after the community-based interviews in order to feed back findings to the district level stakeholders. Some of the other agencies at the District level included in the study were: the District Planning Officers, District Youth Development, Community Development and Civic Education Officers, Cocoa Services and Agriculture Extension and Heads of Department.

### **Community Level Interviews**

At the community level, the research team held focal group discussions with Traditional Chiefs and elders, Assemblymen and women, Chief Farmers, Children and Women's Groups. Focal Group discussions were also held with youth, school dropouts and children engaged full time within the cocoa sector. Household interviews were conducted in order to develop case histories of families involved in cocoa farming from diverse socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds; family cases of migrant farmers from the North and those from the Volta region were also included in focal group discussions. The Volta region was included based on studies, which had suggested that future research include medium to low producing areas in order to assess the issues of child labour (IITA, 2002). Selection of communities was based on proximity to district capital, absence of other donor interventions (i.e. STCP) and ethnic mix.

Given the sensitivities inherent in child labour issues in West Africa, a non-threatening approach using indirect interviewing methods at district and community levels was adopted; this involved probing issues concerning rural livelihoods, education status of children and environmental degradation. Key informants were used to study the issues which surround cocoa farmers particularly Assemblymen and farmers representatives who were key to unravelling the sensitive issues concerning child work, child health, and educational status.<sup>5</sup>

Community level interviews were focused on interviews with children and mothers in the community. Children in school and out of school were interviewed using a focal group approach. Cross-referencing among key stakeholders enabled the team to confirm key findings within the various communities and within the District itself. Focal group discussions were also held with teachers in the areas in order to track the numbers of children out of school children and identify trends and patterns of absenteeism on a seasonal basis, which could confirm child labour patterns, identified in community focus group discussions. Deeper probing was conducted with selected children, particularly those who had dropped out of school and were involved in cocoa farming.

The research method took a qualitative approach by focusing on general livelihood and educational issues of out of school children in order to naturally elicit discussion

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<sup>5</sup> This indirect approach to interviewing was suggested from the IITA study due to the highly sensitive nature of child labour issues in Ghana and across West Africa.

on child labour. Key to the process was the level of rapport developed between the researchers<sup>6</sup> and the selected communities.

### **Civil Society Stakeholder Analysis**

Close collaboration was developed with the Ghana National Coalition on the Rights of the Child (GNCRC) particularly at the regional level in the Ashanti and Western Regions. All the coalitions submitted names of NGO's engaged in the cocoa sectors of the country. A key validation mechanism was meetings with the NGO networks active in the Ashanti and Western regions. The Ashanti Regional NGO Coalition (ASHANGO) and the Western Regional Coalition of NGO's (WERENGO) organised two large stakeholders meetings with their membership to enable the research team to interact with those active in the region. NGO's working on child rights, child welfare, and environmental and rural development issues in the cocoa growing areas were invited. Many of these NGO's were also members of the Regional Coalition on the Rights of the Child.

The meetings provided a platform for the team to discuss their findings, validate and discuss trends, which emerged from the fieldwork. It also afforded the opportunity to discuss the causes of child labour in the regions, existing interventions, potential strategies and further work which was needed to eliminate child labour in cocoa growing areas. The findings from these meetings are presented in section 8.0.

Organisations attending these meetings completed organisational profiles, which are summarised in Annex 6. The meetings assisted the team identify capacity issues, existing programming interventions and helped to identify potential partnerships particularly from a geographic perspective.

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<sup>6</sup> Identification of community workers who are completely familiar with the communities or youth from the communities will be involved in the community level research.

## **2.0 The Contextual Analysis of Child Labour in the Cocoa Growing Areas of Ghana**

This section reviews the political, economic and social context of child labour within Ghana and provides a poverty analysis of cocoa farmers describing their land tenure and agricultural practices in these areas. The section also provides an overview of the contextual factors, which characterise the life of children in cocoa growing areas of the country.

### **2.1 The Political and Economic Profile of Ghana**

Kwame Nkrumah was one of the founding fathers of Ghana's independence and in 1957 became the first African leader to govern an independent democratic state. His rule lasted only nine years. There were two other democratically elected Governments after Nkrumah interspersed with a number of military coups; it was during the mid 1980's when Ghana, under the leadership of J.J. Rawlings, began to work again towards holding democratic elections, the first of which was held in 1992.

The current governing party in Ghana is the National Patriotic Party (NPP) under the leadership of President J.A. Kufour. Over the last three years the NPP has demonstrated its ability to turn Ghana's economic, social and political life into a nation ready to tackle issues of poverty reduction and indebtedness. Their national policies and programmes are beginning to have far reaching effects in the business, banking, and social spheres of the country. President Kufour, as Chairman of ECOWAS, is also taking a lead role in promoting peace in both Liberia and the Ivory Coast.

In 1957 Ghana was considered one of the most developed countries in Africa in terms of income and infrastructure. "Economic growth continued into the 1970's until late in the 1970's when political instability and unfavourable external terms of trade coupled with severe famine and draught led to a devastating recession for the country (ILO/WACAP, 2004)." Ghana's economic liberalisation began in the 1980's with the introduction of structural adjustment programmes, which opened Ghana's markets and exposed farmers to competition on the global market. Structural adjustment and economic liberalisation policies have continued to characterise Ghana's macro economic environment causing much debate related to their social equity and economic effectiveness.

Ghana has a mixed economy dependent primarily on agricultural produce, small-scale farming and subsistence rain fed agriculture systems. The country hosts a small service and manufacturing sector. Over 60% of Ghanaians are involved in the informal economic sector, which includes service providers such as petty trading, small artisans, business people and agriculturalists (CEPA, 2001)<sup>7</sup>. New areas of growth include the non-traditional export and tourist sectors, which are contributing higher levels to Ghana's Gross Domestic Product. The Gross National Income per capita is currently at \$270 as of 2002. "In 2002, agriculture contributed to 35.9% to

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<sup>7</sup> The Centre for Policy Analysis (CEPA) study on the informal sector in Ghana.

the Gross Domestic Product and industry contributed 24.9% and services 30% with indirect tax constituting 9.27% of the GDP (ACHD, 2004). The main exports are cocoa, gold, timber, tuna, bauxite and aluminium.

## **2.2 The Agriculture and Cocoa Sectors**

Ghana's agricultural sector is the major employer involving over 60% of the rural population of which a large majority are poor subsistence farmers of which a high proportion are women. The agriculture sector contributed 40.5% to Gross Domestic Product in 1998 and 43.8% in total export earnings (Oduro, 2000). The sector provides livelihoods for about 56.9% of the total population of Ghana and received between 8.5 to 12.4% of aggregate credit to the economy during the period 1992 to 1998 (Oduro, 2000).

The sector however, suffered from low production and several constraints, which have made growth in the sector difficult over the last 10 years falling short of the projected targets of 4-6% growth (CEPA, 2001). This has had serious implications for the poor since without the projected targets within the agriculture sector, the poor are unlikely to benefit from the liberalised economy and the economic "take off" since the private sector is not large enough to replace support from the state sector. This is particularly true when considering the private sectors capacity for marketing and distribution of basic agricultural inputs. The agriculture sector has been seen as the second most important sector next to education in assisting the poor escape from poverty.

### **The Cocoa Sector**

The cocoa sector has also played a vital role in Ghana's Development. Ghana is the world number three cocoa producer; the Government derives 15% of GDP from Cocoa exports and a larger percentage of foreign exchange from cocoa production. National cocoa production increased within the last two years from 350,000 tonnes to 445,000. tonnes. The President believes that it is possible to reach 500,000 tonnes this year (2004) and 600,000 tonnes by 2005 due to the mass spraying exercise and the increase in the producer price from 40% to 67% of the world market price. Revenue targets exceeded by over 900 billion cedis increasing the amount of funds available for national development and securing three months of foreign currency reserves for importation requirements. The Government has also secured financing requirements totalling 600 million dollars from banks within and outside Ghana<sup>8</sup> for the purchase of cocoa.

There are five major growing areas of the country, which include the Western, Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Eastern and Central regions. The Volta region of the country has not had the level of output in recent years and therefore some of the farmers have been migrating to the areas where there is a higher level of production (i.e. Western, Ashanti).

The Western region has been identified as the region with the highest production, making up over 50.5% of the current output (see maps in annex 8). Districts within

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<sup>8</sup> Graphic Newspaper, November 29, 2003

the Western Region with the highest production include Sefwi Wiawso, Amenfi, and Juobasu Bia. The detailed maps present the cocoa areas along district assembly and cocoa district boundaries based on national and regional production levels using the latest Cocobod data (January 2004). These maps depict the high and low growing areas of the country, which have become a key factor in considering child labour patterns.

The majority of studies have focused on analysing child labour studies in high producing areas; there has been little analysis at comparing the child labour issue comparing between high and lower producing areas (IITA, 2003; ILO/WACAP, 2004)<sup>9</sup>. The situational analysis did attempt to take this into consideration comparing some of the lower producing areas with the higher areas of cocoa production.

### **Ghanaian Cocoa Farmers across Ghana**

The typical Ghanaian cocoa producer earns his/her livelihood from a diversified number of activities on a mixed family farm with revenues from the cocoa enterprise accounting for about 55% of household income. Regionally, the cocoa sector attains the most importance in the Western Region of the country where it accounts for nearly two thirds of household cash income. Cocoa farms are largest in the Western region and smallest in the Eastern region with an average acreage between 5-10 and 2-4 respectively.

Yields are highest in the Eastern Region per acre of land although the cocoa producing area is smaller than in other areas. The family labour input on a per hectare basis (as measured by adult labour equivalents) is nearly double the level seen in the Western Region where yields per hectare are significantly lower (Abenyega and Gockowski, 2001). Some studies have revealed that cocoa farmers on average have family sizes as large as nine persons of whom almost 50% are children (Abenyega and Gockowski, 2001).

### **Labour Issues for Cocoa Farmers**

An important determinant of labour demand on the cocoa farm is the plantation age and the degree of canopy closure on the cocoa farm. Young plantations often require more weeding and more frequent slashing than mature farms in which the canopy has closed and there is limited sunlight inhibiting growth of the underbrush. The reported number of weeding events in the Western region is significantly higher than in other regions of the country reflecting the need for more weed control on younger cocoa farms (Abenyega and Gockowski, 2001).

There are seven major labour tasks associated with cocoa production which include:

- 1.1 Clearing and weeding the under storey of cocoa farms
- 1.2 Agrochemical (pesticide) application
- 1.3 Harvesting cocoa pods
- 1.4 Cocoa pod breaking

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<sup>9</sup> The IITA study was conducted in four countries across West Africa including Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon and Cote d'Ivoire. In Ghana, 85 villages were involved in the study.

- 1.5 Field transport of cocoa beans
- 1.6 Fermentation
- 1.7 Drying.

Several of the labour tasks outlined above involve children and are often hazardous to children of a certain age. These tasks will be explored in section 2.0 under hazardous forms of child labour in cocoa farms in Ghana. The issue of child labour in the cocoa sector has become extremely sensitive and there is a significant level of underreporting. The clearing of cocoa fields by youth between 10-17 for several hours a day is considered a part of the social development process. The study suggests that since Ghana recently imported a significant number of knapsack sprayers, which will be distributed to cocoa farmers in order to fight the cocoa black pod disease, this development could lead to increased levels of child involvement (Abenyega and Gockowski, 2001).

### **Land Tenure Systems**

There are two major land tenure systems operating in the cocoa growing areas. The “*abusa*” land tenure system requires that the landowner provide all the inputs for the land preparation and the tenant farmer provides all the labour inputs for farming. The caretaker or sharecropper is expected to receive 1/3 of the farm proceeds from production with 2/3 going to the landowner. The “landowner is often absent and not dwelling on the farm. The caretakers by contrast reside on or near the farm and often can come from another area of the country.

The second major system of land tenure is the “*abunu*” system of share cropping and is more common among absentee landlords and when the migrant farmers/ better known as the “caretakers” provide support to the landowner by taking care of the farm over an extended period of time. Here the caretaker is expected to give 1/2 of all proceeds from the farm back to the landowner and must jointly pay for the upkeep of the farm, continuing to be responsible for most labour inputs.

In most cases migrants from the northern regions were found to practice the *abusa* land tenure system for the first few years and then move to the *abunu* system of sharecropping after they had developed some rapport with the landlord. This trend is apparent among caretakers who have established a close rapport and trust with the landowner. Some of the landowners also divide the land into two and expect the caretaker farmer to farm both sides of the land with one half of the land proceeds remaining with the caretaker and the other half of farm proceeds going to the land owner.

The *nnoboa* system of farming is a method used to organise work groups whereby each farmer is able to obtain enough labour for large pieces of farm work which often require hired labour. The *nnoboa* system appears more popular in areas where there are close community ties, and where there is good rapport within the community and between farmers.

## 2.3 Characteristics of Cocoa Growing Households

Children in rural agricultural areas of Ghana are more economically active at a younger age than their urban counterparts. According to the Ghana Child Labour Survey (GSS, 2003) over 70% of rural children between ages of 5 to 9 are involved in agriculture and over 62% aged between 10-14 are involved in agricultural activities in rural Ghana.

The recent rapid rural appraisal conducted under the ILO's/IPEC (WACAP)<sup>10</sup> programme and carried out in four districts of the country explores the characteristics of families and children, who are sometimes involved in abusive child labour patterns within the cocoa growing areas. The study was carried out in four districts of the major cocoa growing regions of Ghana including the Ashanti, Western and Eastern Regions and included over 42 communities<sup>11</sup>. The key findings from the study revealed the following:

- **Acreeage:** The vast majority of cocoa farmers (39.1%) across the regions were farming cocoa farms from between 1-4 acres followed by farmers/caretakers managing farms (32.4%) between 5-8 acres.
- **Income:** The majority of parents and guardians (51.9%) earn an average income between one million and ten million cedis (1,000,000 to 10,000,000)<sup>12</sup> per year. While 45.1% of parents/guardians earn less than one million cedis per year. Only 3% of people earn between twenty and twenty five million cedis per year. This reveals that a high proportion of cocoa farmers are just on or below the poverty line in Ghana in today's terms. The majority of caretaker incomes (44.7%) range between 1-10 million cedis per annum while 33.3% of caretakers earn less than 1 million cedis per annum.
- **Size of families:** the vast majority of cocoa farmers (21.2%) have 6 children while 20.1% have 3 or fewer children. There were many cases of parents having large families in order to assist on the farms. The majority of employers (37.1%) have 4-6 children; those with 1-3 children constitute 25.2%. There were also several families with between 7-9 children (22.4%). Large family sizes were seen as another poverty factor since income levels could not sustain the large family sizes often compelling families to use their own children as labourers to generate income and conserve family resources.
- Of the number of children who assist on the farm the study found that 35% are female and 65% are male. Most of the children (60.2%) reported having been brought by their parents or a parent and 36.9% said they were sent by a friend or relative to work in the cocoa growing areas.

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<sup>10</sup> IPEC (International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour) and WACAP (West Africa Cocoa/Commercial Agriculture Programme).

<sup>11</sup> Methods used in the study included: structured questionnaires, interviews, PRA/PLA techniques and focal group discussions.

<sup>12</sup> A large % of farmers earn between US\$ 111 and US\$ 1111. The current cedi rate is 9000 cedis per US dollar.

- Sources of Labour: The study revealed that the cocoa farmers have different sources of labour: some use their spouses, children, hired labour and communal labour. The findings also suggest that a large proportion of labour is provided by themselves (30%) while spouses provide (15.2%), hired labour make up 27.6% and communal labour make up 6.47% and children make up 14.1% of the labour force.
- The study revealed that 34% of parents/guardians use their sons as farm labourers; 21.6% use their daughters as farm labourers and 9.3% use other relatives. Only 6.2% of farm owners use non-relatives.
- Prevalence of child labour: The highest proportion of child labour was found in the Sefwi Wiawso, Western Region (19.04%) and Amansie West Districts, Ashanti Region (17.8%). Surprising a much lower proportion of "self" and hired labour was used and higher proportion of communal labour was being used in these areas.
- The study found that 63.8% of employer's<sup>13</sup> surveyed use between 1-3 of their children on the farm, 33% mentioned using 4-6 children and 3.2% mentioned using 7-10 children on the farm. The study did not go into specifics on whether these children are full time or part time on the farm. This will be looked at in more detail in section 2.0.
- The study found a low percentage of children being trafficked by relatives or other people. The vast majority of children (63%) either live with their parents or a relative. The study found that the majority of children were engaged in child work either assisting on the cocoa farms after school or during holidays while only a few children could be considered being involved in "child labour activities".

The field research conducted under this consultancy revealed that there were a significant number of female cocoa farmers who had inherited land from a deceased husband and were attempting to farm cocoa. There were other instances in which a divorce had occurred in the family and the wife was left to fend for herself with the children. More information is needed to determine the gender trends particularly concerning female-headed households in cocoa growing areas of Ghana.

## 2.4 Poverty Trends in Ghana

Poverty is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, which affects all aspects of life and family welfare, including: life expectancy, health, nutrition, access to social and economic services and participation in civil society. Poor communities in Ghana are characterised by low income, ill health, malnutrition, powerlessness, and a sense of fatalism and isolation (Korboe, 1998). The characteristics of poverty interact thus keeping households and at times, entire communities in a state of *persistent poverty*. Bortei Doku (2000) draws attention to the intergenerational nature of poverty arguing that the dynamics of poverty are often reproduced and passed on to the younger generation.

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<sup>13</sup> Employers refers to landowners who are employing caretakers to take care of their cocoa farms.

All regions of Ghana experience some sort of poverty but there are noticeable variations. Poverty is greatest in the rural savannah (mid to northern zone) and rural forest areas of the country including cocoa growing areas, which account for over 60% of total poverty (GSS, 2000). The poorest area is the rural savannah, but given the weight of numbers, the rural forest area contributes most to total poverty. A similar picture emerges from the socio-economic groupings in the Ghana Living Standards Studies where all categories of people experience some level of poverty, but food crop farmers experience the highest incidence of poverty. The least affected are formal-sector wage employees (especially those in the private sector). Poverty is clearly a major problem for farmers, the non-farm self-employed and those employed in the informal sector. Poverty among food-crop farmers represents more than half of total poverty in Ghana (GSS, 2000).

The following section provides an analysis of the incidence and depth of poverty as it relates to the cocoa growing areas of the country; poverty is characterised as a rural phenomenon and mainly involves farmers. Increasing evidence from the Ghana Living Standards Surveys<sup>14</sup> (GLSS) and more qualitative data suggest that poverty in Ghana is caused by poor agricultural practices and further deepened by the inability of subsistence agro-based activities to release the poor from the poverty cycle. A MOFA/DFID synthesis of pro poor policy within the Agriculture sector revealed how poor farmers are both victims of poverty due to poor agricultural development policy and a cause of sustained rural poverty due to their poor farming practices and low productivity (Casely-Hayford, 2001a; 2001b). Similar trends were found during ICI field work in the cocoa producing areas in Ghana where farmers were on average using two to four acres of land and not producing enough cocoa to sustain their families' food requirements over the course of the year (ICI fieldwork, January 2004).

### **Regional Disparity**

The incidence of poverty in Ghana is not evenly distributed. Some regions experience an increase in the incidence of poverty while others experience declines. Figure 1 summarises the regional distribution of the incidence of poverty in Ghana.

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<sup>14</sup> The Ghana Living Standard Survey has been used to investigate different dimensions of household living standards. There have been four rounds of the GLSS--1987/88, 1988/89, 1991/92 and 1998/99 have an enumeration base of over 20,000 households. In the GLSS-4 the standard of living of an individual was measured as the total consumption expenditure per adult within the household expressed in constant prices (Ghana Statistical Service, 1999). The first three rounds of the GLSS defined the poverty line as the ratio of mean household expenditure not consumption per capita (Ghana Statistical Service, 1995).

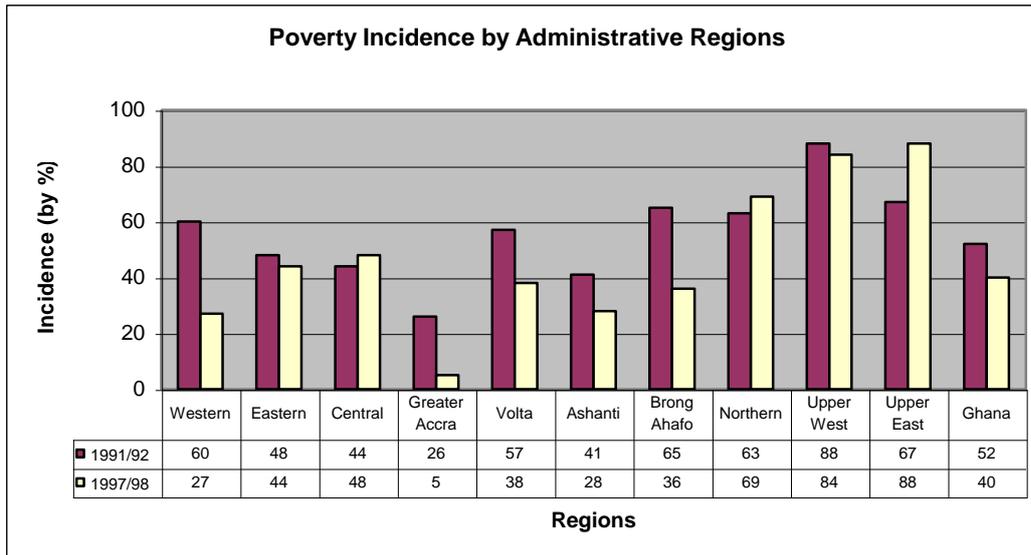


Figure 1: Source (GSS, 2000)

The decline in the incidence of poverty was concentrated mainly in the Western, Greater Accra, Volta and Brong Ahafo regions. The Central, Northern and Upper East Regions experienced increases in poverty. The incidence of poverty increased in the Central region by 4%, in the Upper East by 21% and 6% in the Northern region. The Upper West and the Eastern region did not record any significant changes in the incidence of poverty.<sup>15</sup> Overall, poverty in Ghana is lowest in the Greater Accra region and is highest in the three northern regions. More than 70% of people in the three northern regions are under the poverty line. Although the incidence of extreme poverty declined in the entire country, it increased in three regions of the country Central, Upper East and Northern region.

## 2.5 The Incidence of Poverty Across Agro Ecological Zones

The most relevant data concerning poverty in the cocoa sector is the incidence of poverty across the agro-ecological zones. Incidence of extreme poverty increased in the rural Savannah from 58% to 59% between 1991/92 and 1998/99 respectively. The incidence of extreme poverty in Ghana declined from 35.7% to 29.4%. The incidence of extreme poverty also increased slightly or remained the same in the urban coastal, urban forest and urban Savannah localities within this period<sup>16</sup>. The highest declines in the upper poverty line were recorded in Accra and the rural forest zone falling from 45% to 24%<sup>17</sup>. More than half of the population in the rural Savannah region is classified as extremely poor. Figure 2, shows the incidence of poverty across the various localities in Ghana.

<sup>15</sup> The Central and Eastern regions are both cocoa-producing areas.

<sup>16</sup> Figures were different from the GSS 1999, consultative report preliminary analysis and the GSS, 2000 poverty trends.

<sup>17</sup> These areas include the high cocoa producing areas of the country.

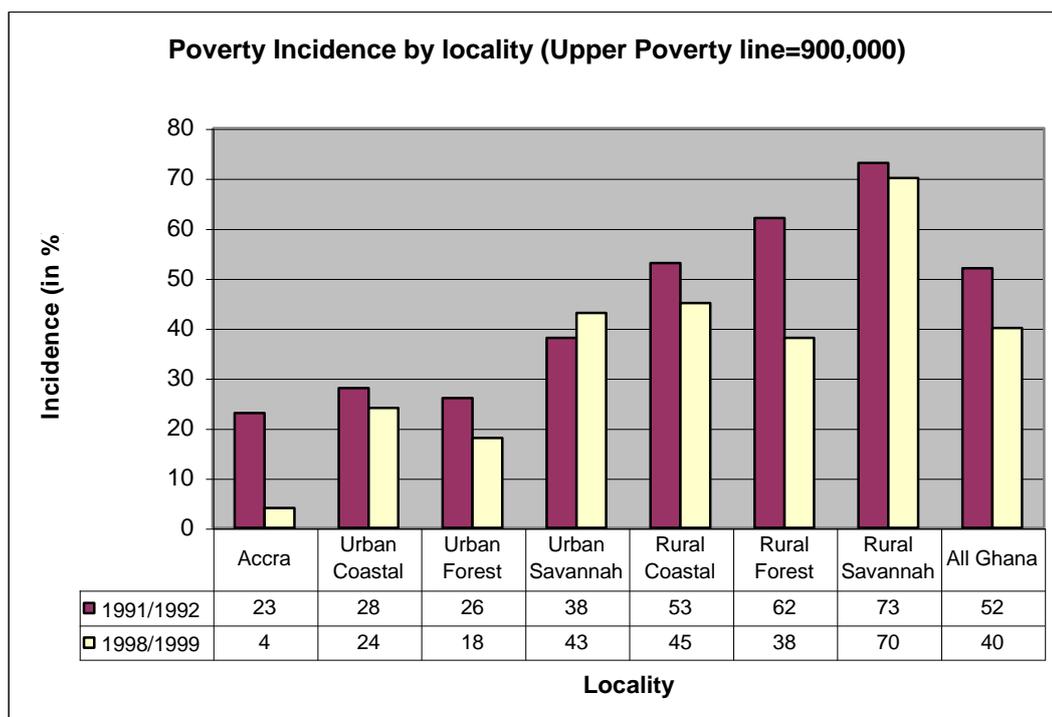


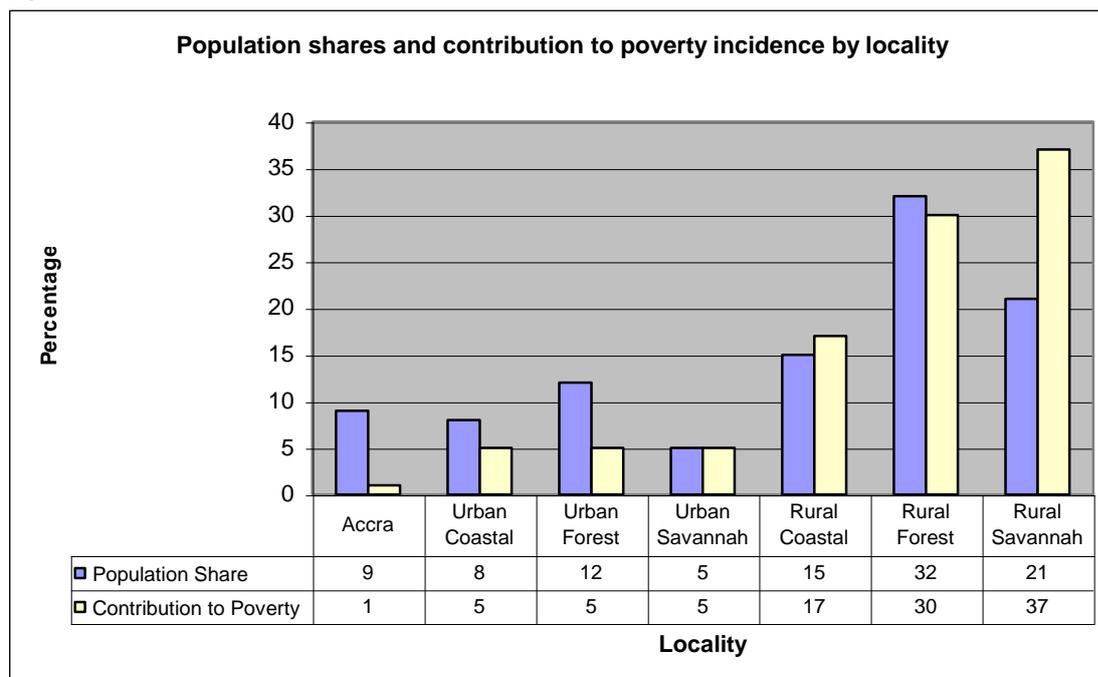
Figure 2  
(GSS, 2000)

## 2.6 Poverty in Cocoa Growing Areas of Ghana

Among the areas with the highest incidence of poverty in the country were the rural forest areas, which contain the vast majority of cocoa farmers. Although significant improvements have been made over the last ten years, these areas still contribute the highest proportion of people under the poverty line as compared to other areas across the country.

The rural savannah made the highest contribution to poverty incidence in Ghana at 37% in 1999, with a 21% share of the population. The rural forest zone where cocoa is grown and with a 30% population share contributed 30% to national poverty incidence (GSS, 1999). The rural savannah, and rural forest zones combined contributed 67% of the incidence of poverty in Ghana and account for about 51% of the population. Figure 3, captures the population shares and contribution to the incidence of poverty across various regions of the country.

Figure 3



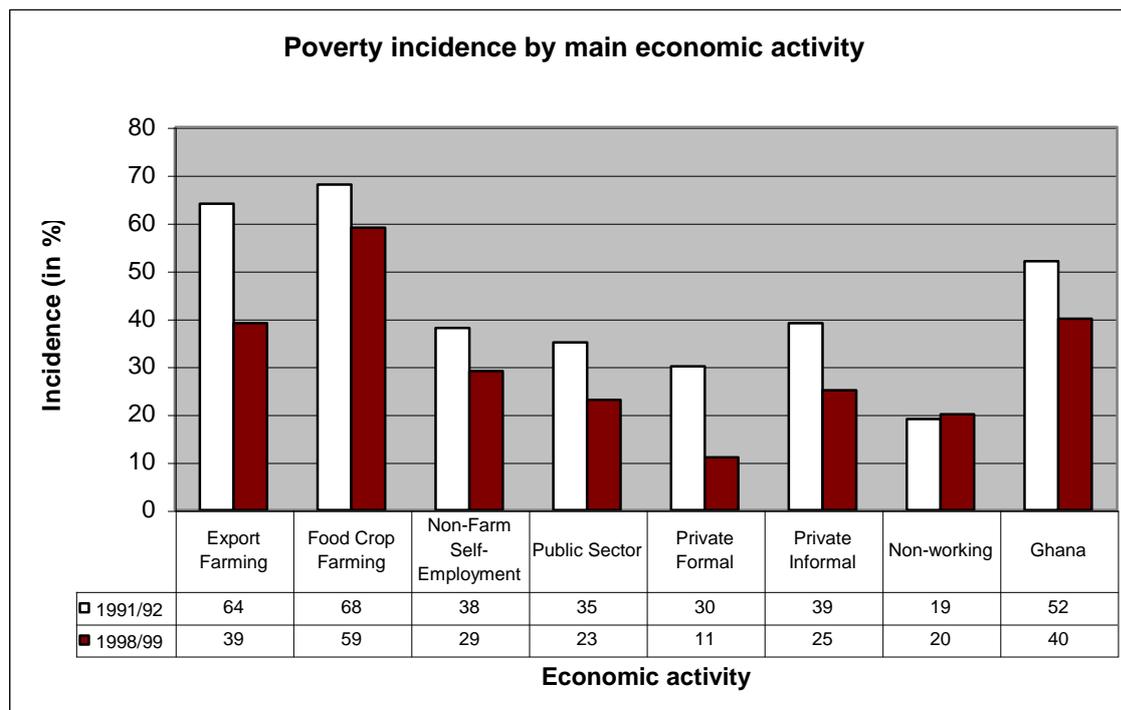
(GSS, 2000)

Fieldwork in the high cocoa producing areas revealed that these were not the “wealthiest areas” in the country since the communities in the very high cocoa producing areas often imported foodstuffs in order to maximise cocoa production off the land (Western Region Findings). This pattern often left farmers and their families vulnerable to food insecurity since they were not farming enough food crops and experienced periods when food was expensive and funds received from cocoa farming could not cover household needs. More balanced mixed farming patterns were able to sustain families within basic food security levels throughout the year (Ashanti and Eastern Regions Findings).

## 2.7 Disparity among Different Economic Activity Groupings

The incidence of poverty was not equitably distributed across the different economic groupings. Food crop farmers experience the highest incidence of poverty followed by export crop farmers and the non-farm self-employed. 60% of food crop farmers have consumption expenditure levels that fall below the poverty line. This group contributes approximately 58% to the poverty in Ghana (GSS, 2000). The disparity among the main economic activity groupings is captured in fig.4.

Figure 4



Source: (GSS, 2000)

Export farmers (including cocoa farmers) and wage employees in the private formal sector experienced the largest reductions in poverty. Poverty also fell amongst wage employees in the public sector and non-agriculture self employed. Food crop farmers experienced the least gains and remained the worst affected by poverty. According to the National Development Planning Commission (2001) smallholder farms dominate the sector accounting for about 80% of total agricultural production. The smallholder is also geographically dispersed making it difficult and expensive to provide support services and innovative approaches.

Despite the extra earning power of cocoa farmers in the forest zone, they still are among the occupational groups with the highest incidence of poverty next to food crop farmers. Fieldwork and the latest ILO base line survey (ACHD, 2004) of child labour in Ghana confirmed that the majority of Cocoa farmers have the following profile:

- Ghanaian Cocoa Farmers (especially caretakers) manage farms between 1 and 4 acres of land.
- Have an average family size of between 4-6 children
- The vast majority (62.1%) of cocoa land owners/employers earn between 1,000,000 and 10,000,000 cedis per annum<sup>18</sup>.
- The vast majority have reached Junior Secondary School

The large family size places a high financial burden on the families often resulting in higher vulnerability to poverty compelling parents to use their children on the farm.

<sup>18</sup> Equivalent to 110 US to 990,000 cedis at the current rate of exchange.

This was a trend, which permeated much of the fieldwork conducted as part of the ICI Ghana research.

## **2.8 Educational Status of People in the Cocoa Growing Areas**

Apart from the poverty status of cocoa farmers across the country, data on the literacy rates of people within the forested regions where cocoa production is the highest reveal similar trends. The Western Region of the country has one of the highest illiteracy rates in Ghana for both men and women and has the fewest number of female teachers per community. Trained female teachers often do not accept posting, to the Western Region due to its harsh rural nature and lack of basic facilities including health clinics, water and sanitation facilities (Casely-Hayford with Wilson, 2001).

There is also a low level of literacy throughout rural areas of Ghana particularly among women which is a major factor related to children's attainment within the education system. Illiteracy among parents has been correlated with illiteracy among children particularly girl children. The Ghana Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire (GSS, 1988) found that the female literacy rate in the Western Region is 33.6% and 70.4% for males. Over 35% of people above 15 years of age have never attended school of which 50% are women. Only 34% of the population completed Junior Secondary School. The main reasons given for not attending school in the region are the need to work on the farm or in the home (41% of respondents), and that school is too expensive (42% of respondents) (GSS, 1998).

## **2.9 Socio-Cultural Trends in the Cocoa Growing Areas**

The traditional and cultural patterns of communities and their populations were a significant factor, which emerged across the research areas. The majority of cocoa growing areas contain a mixture of several ethnic groups including the Akan, Kusasi's from the Upper East, the Ewe's from the Volta region and the Krobo's from the Eastern region and the Ga Adangbe's from the Southern Coastal areas surrounding Accra.

The Akan people are the main ethnic group found in Ghana's cocoa farming areas and often are the "employers or the landowners" particularly in traditional cocoa farming areas. Although there are a high number of migrants involved in cocoa farming from the Northern and Upper Eastern Regions of Ghana, the Akan often make up the predominant group of landowners. One of the key relational factors, which was associated with child labour, was the lack of parental care and indifference of some parents towards their children, manifest in several of the Akan speaking communities. The pattern was defined as "child neglect" by several social development agencies working in the region and was often related to the inheritance patterns found within the Akan ethnic group. Within the Akan tradition, children are the property of the wife's family and less interest is taken by the father in bringing up his children since ultimately they will inherit from the wife's brother. Several interviews with both community members and district stakeholders revealed that this

inheritance pattern and tradition often results in fathers neglecting their parental responsibility towards the child<sup>19</sup>.

Several studies on Ghana indicate an increasing incidence of parental neglect across ethnic groups at the household and community levels (DFID, 2001; Casely-Hayford, 2002). Several children in the research areas complained of not being properly cared for and even questioned whose responsibility was their care (see interviews with children in the Volta region). Fieldwork in the community areas revealed that Ewe's and Krobo's as well as other migrant families sometime leave their children back in their original communities while they establish themselves in the cocoa growing areas. The high incidence of divorce and separation is another cause of child neglect in the cocoa growing areas (see section 4.0).

Much more research is needed to determine the extent to which socio-cultural factors impact on parental responsibility and child upkeep/ care. Field work in the cocoa growing areas did reveal that these factors plays a significant role in child labour practices along with poverty and other economic considerations (see causal factors in section 8.0). The following example provides some insight into the complex issues within the family and community setting:

#### **Kofi (Apemso Community, Ashanti Region)**

Kofi started his primary schooling in the Juaben Township and went up to primary 4 levels when his mother could no longer make ends meet and could no longer pay his school fees, and buy his books and uniform. She sent him to Apemso where he lived with his father's mother. Later he moved from the Grandmothers house to live with his uncles' wife where he is currently living. His mother still lives in Juaben and his father lives in Apemso.

Kofi's father did not look after him and he cannot remember anything that the father ever did to indicate he was making an attempt to care for him. When Kofi was sent to Apemso to continue schooling he thought that his father would look after him, instead when the school fee payments fell into huge arrears, and his books did not come—he decided to stop schooling.

Kofi's father is a cocoa farmer in Apemso where he takes care of his wife's cocoa farm and grows cassava. Kofi has made a vow never to help his father on any of his farms since he believes that the "old man does not deserve it". Kofi is now a freelance farm labourer and sees it a duty to take care of his aunt's cassava farm for free since she was the one who brought him up. He has a pool of clients who come from Juaben (the nearest town) who hire him to work on their cocoa and food crop farms. He normally makes 50,000 cedis per week, which is used to pay for his clothes and daily food needs. He says he often suffers from cutlass wounds, sprains and lacerations.

Kofi is now 16 years of age and wishes he could go back to school because he feels that with a little more education at least up to JSS—he could go into apprenticeship and quickly and easily acquire a skill. He thinks he was born to be an electrician and dreams of receiving training in electrical installation. He explains that many of the dropout children in the community are engaged in hunting.

<sup>19</sup> Interviews with female-headed households revealed that the mother is left responsible for the upkeep of the family particularly after break up or divorce in the family. She will struggle to maintain the children because she knows the " children are for her". Boakye (1997) study on school drop outs in Ghanaian Basic Schools reveals that lack of parental care is one of the major reasons for school drop outs.

## 2.10 Migration and Labour Patterns

Migration and labour patterns are also important factors when considering the cocoa sector. Historically, cocoa farm labour was often readily available and provided by migrants from the Northern Regions of Ghana. People from the Upper East and Northern Regions travelled down seasonally to the south (Volta, Eastern, Central, Ashanti and Western Regions) when their labour was most needed on the cocoa farms. Interviews with communities in the Volta, Central and Eastern Regions reveals that these patterns are changing, since in some areas the northerners have acquired land where they have settled and are farming their own cocoa farms (Ashanti and Western Regions). Fieldwork revealed that there is a shortage of labour in many of the areas, which traditionally received seasonal labour from the north. Seasonal migrants were mainly found in the high production areas particularly in the Western Region. Children were also part of this seasonal flow of labour in some areas of the Western region. Fieldwork revealed that northerners have moved away from simply offering their services on cocoa farms and have acquired access to land through the *abusa* system of sharecropping with some even purchasing the land (Ashanti and Western region).

These migration patterns make it difficult for people in the Eastern, Volta and Central regions to get labour to work on their land, thereby placing a high price on labour. The "by day" labour rate which is the term used for people working cocoa farms on a daily basis has increased from 12,000 cedis (2003) per day to 15,000 cedis per day (2004). Farmers complained that "by day" workers are now only working half the day (from 8:00 am to 11:00 am).

### Conclusion

Ghana's economy has been characterised by economic structural adjustment and trade liberalisation over the last 20 years in an effort to correct macro-economic deficits. Ghana is still attempting to tackle issues of poverty and indebtedness accumulated over the years through its Ghana Poverty Reduction Programme and Presidential initiatives.

Although agriculture is increasingly taken as a key pillar of economic development, agricultural practices remain outmoded and based on rain fed agriculture. The agriculture sector is the major employer of the rural population employing over 60%. The cocoa sector also plays a vital role in the country's development accounting for 15% of overall exports. Traditional land tenure practices are another inhibiting factor to the scaling up small cocoa farming outputs.

Poverty studies reveal that cocoa farmers are among the most vulnerable occupational groups to poverty in Ghana; a large proportion of cocoa farmers are below the poverty line (US\$ 100 per year) due to small farm sizes, small cocoa yields and large family sizes resulting in a high dependency ratio. Fieldwork revealed that cocoa farmers engaged in export promotion are vulnerable due to fact that they are not farming enough food crops to sustain the family nor are they using sustainable agriculture practices to secure their future livelihood. These farmers

often obtain less than 10 bags of cocoa per season and farm only 3-4 acres of land. Migration patterns by seasonal labourers are also a cause of increasing labour scarcity and high labour costs in high demand communities; this is partly due to a change in behaviours of the traditional labour pool (Northerners) and the preference for farming their own land.

### **3.0 A Profile of Children in the Cocoa Sector**

The following section considers in more depth the characteristics of children within the cocoa growing areas of Ghana. It considers not only the issues of “forced labour” or the worst forms of child labour but attempts to shed light on the subtle presence of work activities which restrict children’s full educational and human development in general. This approach was taken in order to take into consideration the overall context of child work activities taking cognisance of the highly sensitive context surrounding the term “child labour”.

#### **3.1 Socio-Cultural Context of Child Labour within Ghana**

Working children are not a recent phenomenon in Ghana. There are socio cultural values and norms, which have traditionally been passed on from one generation to another through socialisation of the child within the family. Studies in Ghana suggest that the family, and kinship groups help to establish and maintain social values, which are perpetuated through socialisation patterns (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1994; Oppong and Abu, 1987). For instance in Northern Ghana recent studies suggest that parents rear their children with traditional values and occupations in order that they are capable of survival in the often harsh environments which they face as children and then as adults (Oppong, 1971). This traditional training process involves acquiring indigenous knowledge of farming patterns, livestock maintenance and general farm management and is often matched to the physical strength of the child (Casely-Hayford, 2000). Unfortunately, there are very few studies on child socialisation patterns available in forest contexts where cocoa farming is prevalent. Fieldwork by the WACAP/ILO team and interviews by this research team suggest that similar livelihood training exists among cocoa farmers. The indigenous training of children at household level is a natural way of life for people in most parts of Ghana where a child learns the occupation of his mother or father since he/she is expected to assist in the household and with occupational chores in order to sustain the family.

Socialisation patterns in child rearing therefore involve children performing certain tasks depending on the age of the child, gender and physical strength. This means that children at an early age are often involved in the farming and commercial activities of their parents as well as many of the social activities of the community. Although the nature and magnitude of the roles performed by children in Ghana vary due to cultural diversity (i.e. language, religion, ethnicity, technology and other values) the common pattern is for children to be initiated into some form of occupation role. This occurs in order for them to become responsible and contributing adults in the community in order to perpetuate the culture and sustain the livelihood of the community. The family is therefore seen as a unit with collective learning responsibilities to teach the child and prepare them for adulthood and survival in whichever environment they may find themselves (Casely-Hayford, 2000; Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1994).

Indeed in many parts of Ghana a child is considered deviant, lazy or having poor upbringing if he or she cannot perform basic household chores like fetching water, washing pots, sweeping and running errands. In most cases females assist their

mothers in the household duties such as childcare and preparation of meals while the boys are expected to play a larger role in assisting their fathers on the farm or in the family business. The situation has become even more pronounced in areas, which are predominantly agricultural, where subsistence farming is still a way of life. The training of children was also the responsibility of the extended family, which can also mean that some children are fostered out to their uncles or aunties in order to be trained. Studies in Ghana indicate that the worsening economic status of the family and deeper poverty trends particularly in the northern regions has meant that the traditional training period of children is becoming a necessity for family survival whereby children are becoming an even more valuable economic asset to the family and "child rearing" may be losing way to child labour (Casely-Hayford, 2000).

### **3.2 The Socio-Economic Context of Child Labour**

Apart from the socio-cultural traditions of child rearing within agrarian societies of Ghana, children are also considered a vital element to the families' household survival, the economic welfare and food security of the household. Most children either supplement household income, reduce the costs of expenses of paying for outside labour and the need for labour. More research is needed to determine the extent to which children contribute to the family income since most Ghana Living Standard Surveys do not tell us the extent to which children contribute to the family income. Some studies are beginning to reveal that children are paying a substantial portion of their own upbringing as poverty deepens in some areas across the country and family breakdown is experienced (ACHD, 2004; DFID, 2001).

Formal education has increased the cost of training and preparing a child to acquire the basic skills needed for productive work in subsistence farming communities. In traditional societies, the training and preparation of children was free. In the "modern" society, formal education accounts for a high proportion of the families consumption expenditure (GSS, 2000). The poor quality of formal education particularly in rural areas is an issue of growing contention among parents and school authorities. Since a vast majority of families in Ghana are below the poverty line, children are sometimes expected to help support themselves in the payment of school fees and ensuring that the basic needs of the family including food are sustained. Children are also expected to spend a large majority of their time out of school in performing tasks and traditional roles, which often contribute to the well-being of the entire family. These include activities such as working to generate needed income to support their education and family welfare including farming, both subsistence and cash cropping (GSS, 2003). According to the latest Ghana Living Standards Survey the family spends as much as 80% of its income on food leaving little in excess for other activities (GSS, 2000).

The Ghana Child Labour Study (2003) conducted by the Ghana Statistical Service revealed that the poorer the family the more likely they are to use the child for farming and commercial activities in order to supplement and contribute to household income<sup>20</sup>. This trend was substantiated in fieldwork carried out by this team. Cases of children being taken out of school to work on cocoa farms were

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<sup>20</sup> This study was conducted in 500 enumerated areas including 222 urban and 278 rural areas. Over 10,000 households were interviewed across Ghana. The methods used were questionnaire/interviews.

most prevalent among families which had lost a breadwinner and could be considered female headed, orphaned or migrant labourers who were often farming large tracts of land to sustain the family.

The opportunity cost of losing a child to the school is very high cost for poor farmers particularly in areas where there are visible indications that the quality of education is also poor. For instance in some of the areas visited where teachers were not at post, and children were left in the school to fend for themselves, parents were much more likely to take the child out of the school in order to use on the farm compared to areas where teachers refused to release their pupils to assist parents with their farming activities. The attitudes and behaviours of teachers were a key factor in ensuring that children were not deprived of basic education once the child was enrolled in the school. In some parts of the Western and Volta region, teachers were also actively engaged in using children in farming and income generating activities during school hours. While in other schools in the same areas head teachers stood up to parents requesting that their wards assist them on the farms.

### 3.3 The Profile and Characteristics of Children involved in Child Labour

The Ghana Child Labour Study (GSS, 2003) conducted by the Ghana Statistical Service reveals that more than 1,273,294 children, approximately 20% of the child-aged population in Ghana are involved in some form of “child labour”. The study revealed that there are a high proportion of children, engaged in harmful child labour practices particularly in the fishing and small-scale mining industry of the country. Table 1 presents the key findings from the GSS study:

Table 1: Statistics from the Ghana Child Labour Study

Details	Actual Numbers of Children based on Census	Percentage
1.0 Estimated population of children in Ghana	6,361,111	35.5% of national population
2.0 Working Children <sup>21</sup>	1,984,108	31.2% of children
2.1 Children in child labour as a percentage of working children	N/A	64.2%
3.0 Children in Child labour	1,273,294	20% of children

(GSS, 2003)

The study on "Labour Practices in the Cocoa Sector of Ghana with a Special Focus on the Role of Children" revealed that: “Family children are the eighth most frequently reported labour type engaged on cocoa farming” (Abenyega and Gockowski, 2001). Family children were also the most frequently reported type of child labour. The study found that for households who employed them, family children contributed a significant amount to the farming enterprise. The study also found that “the average producer employing family child labour (10% of the sample of 1000 households interviewed) received an estimated 100 days of labour annually

<sup>21</sup> Working children are those children who are often conducting domestic chores at home and who are unpaid.

from all children employed. Older children between 10 and 17 years of age, accounted for 90% of the total labour supplied. The amount of labour supplied by girls was almost equal to that of boys” (Abenyega and Gockowski, 2001).

One of the most recent studies, which provides a closer look at a smaller cohort of communities is the ongoing research carried out as part of the YES programme in Sehwi Wiawso in the Western Region<sup>22</sup>. All of the communities targeted for the programme have a very high proportion of migrant labourers who have now settled in the district and are working cocoa farms based on the 'abunu and abusa' share-cropping arrangements. The YES baseline study found a high proportion of children in school in communities and also working on cocoa farms. A total of 900 children in school were involved in cocoa farming, 399 were females and 501 were boys. The study also found that 222 children were out of school and fully engaged in cocoa farming (PROMAG, October 2003). In a more recent survey conducted by Promag in the same 15 communities over 400 children between the ages of 12-17 have been registered as out of school.

### **Categories of Child Labourers**

There are five major typologies or categories of children who can be described as being involved in "child labour" practices. These emerged from interviews with NGO's involved in child labour issues in the cocoa sector and from fieldwork in the cocoa growing areas of the country. The categories are as follows:

1. Children in school and engaged in cocoa farming during their off-school hours some of who are performing hazardous activities on the farm but are not removed from school.
2. Children who are in school but occasionally taken out in order to perform farming activities on the cocoa farms particularly during peak seasons such as the harvest time.
3. Children who have dropped out of school before the end of completing basic education (JSS 3) due to lack of economic support by parents, death in the family etc, and are involved full time in cocoa farming with their families and sometime hire their labour out.
4. Children who have never attended school and are engaged in cocoa farming.
5. Children, particularly from the north, who are engaged in cocoa farming by a relation and/or then given out to an extended family member, neighbour/friend or cocoa farmer for farming purposes.

Most of these categories of children were prevalent to a greater or lesser extent in communities visited during fieldwork. In the high cocoa producing areas we found a higher incidence of all the categories and in the lower cocoa producing areas the first

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<sup>22</sup> YES stands for the Youth Education and Skills (YES) Project, which is being implemented by PROMAG, a local Ghanaian NGO based in Sefwi Wiawso with technical support from Creative Associates and CARE Ghana.

two categories were most prevalent. The third, fourth and fifth categories of children are mainly prevalent in communities which have a high proportion of migrant farmers from the Upper East who have brought children from different areas of the country primarily to work on the cocoa farms (i.e. Western Region Fieldwork). The fifth category was rarely found in communities visited (i.e. Upper East).

Children engaged in cocoa farming interviewed across the communities are engaged in hazardous forms of work depending on the activity. The most common hazards are the: carrying of heavy loads, exposure to fertiliser and the use of the “soso<sup>23</sup>” when plucking cocoa pods. Snakebites were also common as well as cuts and lacerations when going to farm.

Mull (2003) found some interesting trends in her study on job tasks children perform on cocoa farms. Mull’s study was based in Sefwi Wiawso District and involved 10 communities. Interview and focal group discussions were conducted with 61 people between the ages of 9 and 32. The study revealed “children of cocoa farm owners generally appear to fall into the category of child workers largely attending school and performing limited work tasks after school and on weekends. However, the children of sharecroppers and migrant children, who work as hired labourers attend school on a limited basis or not at all and are largely performing all tasks during the cocoa production process. The children of sharecroppers and of migrant families from northern Ghana and Togo appear to begin work at an earlier age, are engaged in work for longer hours each day and are performing job tasks that are more hazardous, including pesticide application (p.27).”

Although these categories vary widely depending on the cocoa region and community, there are some similar trends, which the ICI field research team did confirm within cocoa areas of the country. These initial findings will have to be further explored and extended in the second phase of ICI’s proposed research programme. The following section describes the main findings from the field research in Ghana:<sup>24</sup>

**Regionally:** the study team found a higher incidence of child labour in high cocoa producing areas than in areas where the cocoa is no longer the major economic activity. For instance, in parts of the Volta, Central and Eastern Regions where there are pockets of cocoa growing areas, communities do not have as many full time child labourers working on their farms as compared to the Western and parts of the Ashanti regions where there are higher levels of cocoa production. The study also found that in some cases there are abusive child labour practices taking place. For instance, in the Central and Volta regions, teachers themselves were found to engage children on their farms during school hours. There were also reports across the regions that some children had died from carrying heavy loads and breaking their neck.

**Intra-regional variations:** within the Western and Ashanti regions where there is the highest intensity of cocoa farming all categories of children exist and a higher incidence of child labour was found particularly in the highest producing regions

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<sup>23</sup> A long pole with the knife at the end to pluck the cocoa.

<sup>24</sup> A more in-depth presentation of data is contained in section 4.0.

where there are mixed settler farming communities; these communities have a high proportion of migrants from the Upper East and Northern regions of Ghana. Other communities contain a high proportion of mixed migrant (ethnic) groups such as the Brong's, Ashanti's, Ewe's, Krobo's and Ga Adangbe's. The ILO Baseline Study (ACHD, 2004) also revealed that the highest proportion of migrant cocoa farmers are from the Upper East and Northern regions with other ethnic groups coming second. The vast majority of caretakers are also from the Upper East and Northern regions.

Most of the scenarios which the team uncovered from the field research were not cases of forced labour patterns but were naturally occurring due to the inability of people to pay for hired labour, and the tradition of training children and engaging them in routine family farming activities. In some cases children were also involved in cocoa farming due to low economic status within the family and need for children to assist in providing basic needs, including food. Finally, the research also revealed that some children engage in cocoa farming and "by day" work in order to pay for their own upkeep. There were no cases of forced labour or indentured labour found in any of the fieldwork sites across Ghana.

### **Child Trafficking**

Most studies on Cocoa farming have revealed some trends towards child trafficking within cocoa growing areas but the incidence remains low (ACHD, 2004; Mull 2003). This team found some cases of child trafficking within the communities studied but the incidence appeared low. More research using ethnographic approaches to research is required to uncover the extent of this practice. The Field team did not find community members nor children readily open to disclose the extent or nor details of these situations; a longer time frame in conducting a thorough analysis of the extent of trafficking within cocoa growing areas is needed to investigate the patterns and characteristics of the sending communities and families involved in the practice. The following case scenarios are typical of children in cocoa growing areas.

#### **Children in Cocoa Growing Areas:**

##### **Gyedua Kese, and Agona Camp, Western Region**

**Emmanuel** is 14 years old from a family of five. His Father has a small cocoa farm, which he has been working on since his school days. When his parents divorced, his mother had to take him out of school (JSS 2) to assist on the family cocoa farm since the other children were in need of upkeep. Emmanuel is now the main laborer on the family cocoa farm with his mother. His other three brothers and sisters are all in primary school and there is a newborn infant in the family. When Emmanuel is not helping on the cocoa farm he hires his labour out to other community members. Emmanuel is also trying to save enough funds to learn a trade; he wants to be a shoemaker and will try to go to Kumasi next year to be an apprentice for some time.

**Francis** is the son of the village chief and reached JSS3 graduating in 2002. Since his graduation he has been working on his fathers cocoa farm, which is 20 acres in size. He also hires himself out to community members and works for 15,000 cedis per day ("by day") in order to earn some extra income for his upkeep. He was hoping to go to Kumasi to learn a trade; he wants to be a "fitter" (mechanic) but does not have enough money to go.

**Veronica's** mother and father were both cocoa farmers until they divorced leaving Veronica with a neighbor to care for her in the community. She grew up with the neighbour but was not able to complete her JSS2 level before she became pregnant and dropped out of school. When her parents divorced her father traveled and her mother went to the Ashanti region but was not ready to take care of her so left her behind in the community. Veronica wants to learn a trade but does not have the funds to support her through an apprenticeship programme.

### **Children in Agona Camp:**

Abdullah is a young 16-year-old boy who has been working on the cocoa farms for the last 3 years; he dropped out in P3 when his parents could no longer cater for him in Northern Ghana. His brother brought him down to Agona camp in order to assist on the cocoa farm and then gave him to a community member or "tribesman" who was also farming cocoa in the same community. This man is now taking care of Abdullah in exchange for his labor on the cocoa farm and with the assurance that he will be able to work and earn enough money to go back to school and continue his education. There were other boys in the community who had also come from the north but never went to school.

The children from Agona Camp and Gyedua Kese (Western Region) reveal a pattern, which was dominant in most of the communities. Consultations and interviews with chiefs and elders revealed that a large proportion of children in both communities have dropped out of school in the late primary years or early JSS years and are now working on farms. There is also a large proportion of children who have completed Junior Secondary School (JSS 3) but are unable to pursue training in a trade or skill due to lack of finance. Most of these children did not qualify to enter Senior Secondary School and their parents could not afford it even if they did. Consultations with the elders and chiefs of the community revealed a pressing need to find solutions to the high proportion of JSS dropouts and graduates in the community but are not interested in farming.

### **3.4 Underlying Causes of Child Labour in Cocoa Growing Areas**

Some of the underlying causes of child labour as outlined in the GSS Child Labour Study (2003) are:

- Poverty and lack of income
- Lack of sustainable livelihood practices (both cash cropping and food cropping practices)
- Lack of alternative forms of livelihood
- Poor parental care and break-up of family,
- loss of parent due to death /stress in the family

Interviews with NGO's in the Sefwi Wiawso District, one of the highest cocoa producing areas of the country, and fieldwork by the research team revealed there are three prevalent reasons for child labour in the cocoa growing areas of the country. Interviews with different stakeholder groups reveal that:

- The most common reason for using child labour is the parents' inability to engage and hire the services of casual labourers such as "by-day" boys who work for 15,000 cedis per day on the farms.
- Parents also said that they want to train the children in a productive skill such as cocoa farming in case the child is not able to reach a higher level of education.

- Working on the family farm is the responsibility of everyone including children; everyone in the household has to " *pull his/her own weight*" and assist the family in order to survive.
- "Everyone in the community sees the poor quality of education.... Teachers are not willing to live in the communities and we are always short of teachers in the schools; this makes educational quality a big question for us (rural cocoa farmers)." They also don't see many outcomes/results from the education system since many children come back to work on the farms.

The ILO/IPEC Baseline Study (ACHD, 2004) found similar reasons. "According to most employers (43%), the main reason for the use of children on their farm was due to financial constraints, which is making it difficult for them to hire adult labourers and /or to educate their children." The study also found that 18.7% involve children on the farm in order to train them in farming and prepare them for their future. 13.1% of employers explained that children are used on the farm in order to reduce the volume of work on the parents and 12.1% said it was because the children provide cheap, loyal and flexible labour compared to the adult labourers. Other reasons given were that children provide a valuable source of labour particularly when the farm is being expanded and a lot of planting and weeding is required (ILO/WACAP, 2004, p.54).

The ILO/WACAP baseline study also found that about 48.2% of employers were in favour of using children on the farm since it gave the children an opportunity to learn farming and avoided social vices. It also enabled farmers to continue farming and stay in business in the face of expensive adult labourers.<sup>25</sup> Those employers who said the practice was not good (51.8%) said it was due to difficult circumstances that compelled farmers to use their children as labourers on the farms (ACHD, 2004).

Interviews with parents revealed that 26.6% believed that children would become lazy if they did not work, 21.5% interviewed said that working on the farm would enable children to learn farming skills and 12.7% said that the children needed to be taught work as part of other socialisation processes (ILO/WACAP, p.59).

### **3.5 Other Key Factors Related to Child Labour**

Apart from the above reasons there were also several underlying factors, which contributed to the child labour patterns in communities. Please refer to section 8.0 for a visual diagram of child labour from a regional perspective. These include:

Food security and household poverty: one of the critical factors which was aggravating the level of child labour in communities was the high incidence of household and child poverty in the cocoa growing areas of the country. Particularly in the Western region where communities were there was no longer farming enough foodstuffs, a preference for cash cropping, small farm sizes and inability to access

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<sup>25</sup> ICI Ghana Phase 1 Field work in the communities does suggest that the cost of labour has been increasing. Last year a " by day labourer" earned 12,000 cedis per day. This season the "by day labourer is earning closer to 15,000 per day and they are working shorter hours. Many farmers complained that the "bi day" labourer is only working half the day starting at 8:00 am and ending at 12:00 am.

land. These communities found themselves dependent on importing large amounts of food such as rice, maize and yam particularly during the lean seasons (June, July and August). This placed the entire family in a vulnerable situation. Reports from elders and teachers at the school level revealed that children were sometimes going to school hungry since they were not fed at home.

Community focal group interviews revealed that farmers were more involved in cocoa farming and cola farming than food crop farming. They explained that they were not farming large enough tracks of cocoa land (2-5 acres) to ensure food security nor were their cocoa farms producing enough to sustain the family throughout the year. In at least two communities in the Western region, farmers were moving away from cocoa farming to cola farming since it was more lucrative<sup>26</sup>. Cola farming was also less labour intensive.

Quality of Education: One of the factors, which also appear to be an important contributing factor to child labour, is the perceived quality of education in the community, the attitude of teachers and discipline within the school system. In schools with rigorous teaching and learning taking place, and high levels of teacher attendance, parents are less likely to take their children out of school and use them on the farm than in communities where teachers were regularly absent from the school on market days and farming days. For instance, in one community visited during fieldwork, there was only 1 out of 12 teachers found in the two community schools on the day of the visit; when the research team arrived teachers who were engaged in tailoring and other activities when community members called them to attend to the research team at the school. Children in this community reported that they were regularly used on their family farms particularly during the harvest season (see Table 5.0). This trend was not observed in neighbouring communities where teachers were more disciplined, regularly attending school and refused to allow children to be used on the farms (i.e. Gyedua Kese and Asakyerewa).

In some cases where children were used as labourers the teachers were actively involved in encouraging this phenomena explaining that the children were raising funds for the school by working on the cocoa farms (Volta region fieldwork). In other areas the teachers were not able to protect the children from the practice of parents asking to take them out of school since the parents explained that this was the only way they would pay school fees. Teachers feared that parents would withdraw the children if they did not accede to the parents' demands (i.e. Islamic School and DC primary school in Agona Camp). In both these cases teachers were themselves often absent from school on a regular basis. According to NGO's working in the education sector in the Wassa Amenfi district a large proportion of rural schools are closed on market days in the district when school children are actively involved in selling farm produce and other items in the markets for their parents (Fieldwork, Western and Ashanti Region).

Future direction of children in the cocoa growing areas: Lack of self development opportunities after the completion of JSS was another key factor which was causing an increasing number of school drop outs and children engaged in cocoa farming

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<sup>26</sup> One bag of Cola was worth 800,000 cedis at the farm gate while a bag of Cocoa is worth approximately 563,500 cedis (as of January 20, 2004). 16 bags of cocoa make a ton, which is purchased at 9,016,000 cedis.

within the communities visited. Across the Ashanti and Western Regions parents, traditional leaders and teachers complained of that lack of opportunities for their youth once they completed Junior Secondary School. There were numerous reports of children who dropped out of JSS and Primary School because they did not see any future in formal education. Parents also complained of their inability to finance children to higher levels of education such as Vocational, Technical and Senior Secondary School (SSS). At least 50 children in Gyedua Kese were reported to have completed JSS but were idle and unable to move to higher levels of education and training due to lack of finance. This situation was creating social conditions such as early teenage pregnancy, and youth idling in the town, which were visible signs of the lack of future options for junior youth in the communities visited.

Community leaders explained that in most cases these youth were not interested in farming and that land was not any longer available for expansion for their children to pursue cocoa farming and other activities. In most cases youth were moving to the cities to take up apprenticeship training if they had the funds and/or opting to continue working on their parents farms until they saved enough funds to travel out of the community and learn a trade. The lack of interest of youth in farming activities is partly a related to the teachers' inability to recognise and express to the children the important role, which farmers play in the communities' development (Casely-Hayford, 2000). Another major factor is the poor economic returns, which farmers are receiving for their work inputs.

Teachers at the schools complained that there were no teachers for the JSS workshops which were to expose youth to different technical and vocational options; therefore most children were not exposed to vocational skills which could assist them identify options after completion of JSS. The lack of opportunities for youth in the community was a significant worry for parents and community leaders interviewed. They were also unable to find solutions to the problem. Interviews with farmers groups also revealed that they saw the training of children on cocoa farms as an important practice in light of the limited future options for their children. Many farmers expressed the need to train their children on the cocoa farms as part of a normal pattern of livelihood training in order that the child could at least fall back on farming if all other options failed. This livelihood strategy was working based on the majority of JSS school leavers and youth interviewed who were engaged in both cocoa and food crop farming as a means for their own survival.

### **3.6 Age and Activities of Children on Cocoa farms**

The ILO/IPEC Baseline Study (ACHD, 2004) reveals that children<sup>27</sup> start working on the cocoa farms between 6-10 years of age and continue until well into their teens. As many as 27.1% of respondents engage children between 6-10 years of age on cocoa farms while 28.1% use children from 17 years and above. Table 2 summarises the findings:

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<sup>27</sup> In this section children are defined as between zero and 18 years of age. This definition of the child is based on the Government of Ghana's definition of a child.

**Table 2.0: Age Range of Children who are working on Cocoa Farms**

<b>Age range of children who start working on the cocoa farms</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
6-10 years of age	27.1
11-13 years of age	14.3
14-16 years	11.4
17 years and above	28.6

(ILO/WACAP, 2004)

Although the Government of Ghana has provided basic education for children between the ages of 6-14 years of age, it is common practice for district assemblies to impose basic school levies on school going children in order to cover examination costs.<sup>28</sup> Schools often expect children to pay for their uniforms, books and examination fees making the basic education system no longer “free”.

### **3.7 Hazardous Activities Performed by Children on Cocoa Farms**

According to studies and fieldwork conducted by this research team, most children are involved in all aspects of cocoa cultivation from planting to the sale of the dried cocoa beans at the cocoa shed. The ILO/WACAP rapid appraisal confirmed that children are mainly involved in:

- the weeding of undergrowth on cocoa farms (74.2%)
- gathering of cocoa pods during harvesting (15.8%)
- planting of cocoa beans (2.5%)
- carrying of cocoa beans to the house for drying.

The difference between adult and child tasks performed on the cocoa farm is related to the length of time and the volume of work carried out. The study also found that children are engaged in the spraying of chemicals on the farms including the use of lighter spraying machines known as the "Kafukafu".

The most comprehensive study available on the jobs performed by children on cocoa farms was carried out by Mull (Creative Associates, 2003). The study analyses the job tasks and activities performed by children in the cocoa production areas. The study also confirmed that children under the age of 17 were performing tasks regardless of the degree of hazard associated with the job. Table 3.0 below summarises the key tasks that children under the age of 17 performed on cocoa farms and the symptoms experienced following performance of these tasks.

**Table 3.0: Key Tasks Performed by Children on Cocoa Farms**

<b>Key Tasks of Children under 17 years of age</b>	<b>Symptoms or Body Pain Experienced following Performance of key Tasks</b>
Clearing of Virgin Forest	Lower back, shoulders, headaches and dizziness, hands (blisters);
Planting of cocoa seeds or seedlings	Lower back shoulders
Weeding and thinning	Lower back, shoulders, hands (blisters),

<sup>28</sup> The Basic School System includes Primary 1 to Primary 6 for children between the ages of 6 and 12 and Junior Secondary School between JSS 1 to 3 for children between the ages of 13 and 16.

Key Tasks of Children under 17 years of age	Symptoms or Body Pain Experienced following Performance of key Tasks
	headaches
Pruning	Injuries due to wasp stings and falls
Pesticide Application <sup>29</sup>	Headache, nausea, dizziness, dermal rashes, burning and itchy eyes and skin, cough, shoulder and back pain (carry sprayer)
Blocking or plucking with Soso <sup>30</sup>	Neck, shoulders, lower back, arm and elbow pain, eyes burn and hurt (due to dropping debris from trees)
Harvesting pods with long cutlass	Lower back, shoulder and arm
Carrying of pods to central cutting area	Neck, mid-back, lower back and shoulder
Opening of pods with short cutlass	Cut hands and fingers; lower back, neck, shoulder and wrist pain, headaches
Sorting and breaking up the raw beans	Headaches, hands and fingers sore, hand and finger pricks, sore knees
Carrying the raw beans to the fermenting area	Neck, mid-back, lower back and shoulder pain
Fermenting the beans	Lower back pain
Carrying the fermented beans to the drying area	Neck, mid-back, lower back and shoulders
Sorting and drying the beans	Pricks to hands and fingers, pain in lower back and shoulders
Carrying the dried beans to the central shed	Neck, mid-back, lower back and shoulder pain.

(Mull, 2003)

Mulls (2003) study revealed that the major farming tasks for children which were most risky were the pesticide application, the carrying of heavy loads by children and the cutting of cocoa pods with the “soso”. Children were observed playing in close proximity to where pesticides were mixed and also engaged in the pesticide application. Girls were often used as assistants helping to carry the water for the mixing of pesticides and loading the chemicals. No proper protective equipment is used and most people including parents are not aware of the hazards of the chemicals. The study made a number of suggestions regarding curriculum and educational content needed to create awareness in the community and educate farmers concerning hazardous work practices for children (Mull, 2003).

The study found that by age four, Ghanaian children work in the home and look after their younger siblings and perform simple tasks on the farm. By age ten children are expected to fetch water, carry cocoa and firewood, and use a machete or cutlass to maintain the farm. Mull’s (2003) study found that the degree to which children are exposed to hazardous work varies according to the employment status of the parent (farm owner or sharecropper), availability of adult labourers in the household and community for performing tasks and the expectations/attitudes of the family and children.

<sup>29</sup> Pesticides used on the farms include: Cuprous Oxide, Cupric Hydroxide, and Pirimiphos methyl and Chlorinated hydrocarbon).

<sup>30</sup> Local language for a bamboo pole with a one or two edged cutting knife attached at the end of the pole which is used to cut cocoa pods that are out of arms reach in the upper canopy of the cocoa trees.

The Ghana Child Labour Study (GSS, 2003) also suggests that over 32% of rural children have experienced some type of work related injury or illness. The study also found that 95% of children do not use protective equipment. Field work in the cocoa growing areas confirmed many of the findings including the fact that children are engaged in the pesticide spraying particularly in the fetching of water which invariably requires them to stay on the farm where spraying is taking place in order to be available in case the sprayer needs more water. Children reported that they often have red and itchy eyes for several days after the spraying has been carried out.

The most distressing reports were from children (at least two children in two separate communities) who reported cases of children dying of spinal injuries resulting from carrying very heavy loads of cocoa pods on their heads. When asked what was the most dangerous work they do on the cocoa farms children said:

- Plucking of the cocoa pods, which sometimes, falls on them when they are plucking in the farms.
- Carrying heavy loads which gives them chest pains
- Helping with the pesticide spraying which makes their eyes red and causes them to cough for as long as one week.

### **3.8 Length of Time Working on the Cocoa Farms**

The ILO/WACAP Study (ACHD, 2004) revealed that most employers (52.2%) use children on their farms about one to two days per week during the cocoa season. 34% of employers said they use the children between 5-7 days per week, 24.4% of employers indicated that they use children for 5 days per week.

Interviews with children during ICI fieldwork in Ghana indicated that children, particularly those at the upper primary levels (age between 10-15), were used more intensively during the harvest season between September and December. The intensity of child labour also depends on whether the farm has new or old cocoa trees; new farms require more weeding in the early years. Children interviewed said that some children are working as many as three days per week during the harvest season despite the fact they also attend school. Children in Agona Camp said that during the harvest season their parents ask them to farm instead of attend school, about five times per season (about three days each time—see next section).

The vast majority of school going children interviewed said they are farming during the weekends and school holidays. Some children said they are asked to go to farm before school or during school hours particularly during the harvest season and on occasions when they are needed. In two of the four communities visited in the Ashanti and Western Regions, teachers reported that in some cases parents ask for permission to release the children for farming activities. In both cases the teachers released the children since they feared that the parents would not pay their school fees or decide to stop sending the child to school.

### 3.9 School Enrolment and Out of School Children

The ILO/IPEC Baseline Study (ACHD, 2004) also revealed that 84.3% of parents/guardians mentioned that the children who work on the farm attend school. The study stated that at least 11.6% of respondents said their children were not attending school. Enrolment rates varied across the districts in the study for instance 100% of parents said their children attending school were also working on the farms (Suhum Kraboa Coaltar District, Eastern Region). As many as 62.5% of parents interviewed in Sefwi Wiawso said their children were not attending school. The non-attendance of children was therefore much higher in the Western region than the Eastern Regions of the country. The pattern of non-attendance and drop out among children in the cocoa growing areas of the Western region was discussed with NGO's as part of consultations in the Western region. Consultation with members of the Western Regional NGO Network and other district stakeholders confirmed that children are often "left to their own devices in order to find a livelihood and take care of themselves at a very young age". Children are also very active in the "galamsey" or illegal mining activities in the towns. Two of the main factors given for the high level of non attendance of children in the Western region were: the lack of support from parents which stemmed from the poor attitude of parents and the socio-cultural patterns which create a situation of "child neglect and lack of parental care and responsibility towards children" (Western Regional NGO Forum organised as part of the ICI Ghana Research, 2004).

Field research indicated that even children in school are sometimes pulled out to engage in the farming activities particularly on a seasonal basis. Enrolment registers in the communities in the Western Region confirmed that boy's in the upper primary levels were often pulled out of school in the harvest season to work on the farms. Many of the out of school children observed in the Western region were from migrant farming families, which was a finding confirmed in the Mull, 2003 study. Chiefs and elders complained of the large numbers of out of school youth who had either dropped out of JSS or had completed JSS were now "roaming the streets" (Chief and Elders interview, Western Region).

Apart from not attending school on a regular basis those enrolled in school also may not have enough time to complete their homework after classes. Head teachers and teachers in almost all the communities particularly in the Central, Western and Ashanti regions complained of children attending video shows until late in the evenings, as well as social activities such as wake-keeping and funerals without proper supervision. Most disturbing was the high level of teenage pregnancy visible in many of the communities in the Western Region where chiefs and elders said the girls were involved in prostitution in their own communities.

Chiefs and elders in Gyedua Kese complained about the lack of parental guidance and discipline within the community and spoke of the disrespect from both parents and children towards the elders. The field research revealed that some of the chiefs themselves were using their children on the farms and not taking proper care to guide their own children within the community. The heads and teachers in the

Primary School and JSS were improving literacy rates among children through the Olinga Foundation's Literacy programme at the Primary and JSS<sup>31</sup>.

Unfortunately, what appears to be lacking in most communities visited is the guidance and counselling needed for both parents and children to identify alternatives and options for the future. There is a high level of social breakdown, vices and trends, which are interfering with the child's development such as pornographic films, prostitution, teenage pregnancy, drop out and peer pressure. Teachers spoke of the fact that once a child drops out of school, this influences the rest of the children in the school and within the family setting. Girls interviewed in the community refused to go back to school once they were pregnant. Solutions for the declining moral standards in the community were discussed and peer education programmes, guidance and counselling programmes were seen as very important interventions along with improving the JSS workshops and providing youth with viable skills and exposure to different vocations. None of the schools visited had JSS workshops operating due to the lack of trained teachers and equipment.

There is no doubt that the main problem for improving school enrolment also depends on the quality of education at the school level. Several studies within Ghana suggest that the lack of teachers and lack of basic school materials particularly in rural deprived areas are key impediments to improving quality education. (MOE, 2002; DFID, 2001; Casely-Hayford, 2001). All the schools visited lacked reading books in the school. Three of the schools in the Western Region had less than 4 core reading books per classroom with over 30 children present. There is a tremendous need to improve the quality of teaching and learning in existing rural schools through training of teachers in basic literacy skills and support for rural education volunteer teachers<sup>32</sup>.

### **3.10 Payment for Child Services and Child Poverty Trends**

The ILO/WACAP study found that the majority of children (55.2%) working on their parents' farms were not paid directly for their farm work but were clothed and given 'pocket money, food or sweets' as a means of remuneration (ACHD, 2004). 17.9% said they were praised and thanked by their parents. Only 2.2% of children reported that their parents paid for their children's school fees when they worked for them.

Some of the children interviewed hired their services out for "by day" labour and in return were paid. Some of the children (46.3%) said when they earn income they remit it to their parents while 53.7% said they do not. The study indicates that children working on family farms were not seen as labourers but as supporting the general upkeep of the family.

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<sup>31</sup> This programme is used to assist children learn the basics of reading and writings within a one year period.

<sup>32</sup> Rural education volunteer is a term used to describe voluntary teachers who are employed by the community to assist at the school. The REV's are often from the community itself and receive a modest salary/stipend for their work in the school. The programme has been very successful in the three Northern Regions of the country.

The ICI fieldwork in Ghana also indicated that a large percentage of children hire their labour out in order to supplement their basic needs at the household level, particularly to support school fees, clothing and daily food intake. Children in the upper primary grades (P4, P5, P6) in several of the communities visited indicated that they are paying for their own educational fees, pens, pencils, uniform and other school related expenses including sometimes food. Table 4.0 gives an example of children at P5 and P6 in the Islamic Primary School in Agona Camp who was interviewed during fieldwork.

**Table 4.0: Findings from Interviews with Children in Agona Camp**

<b>Name of Children and years of age</b>	<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Number of children in family not attending school</b>	<b>Number of Acres of cocoa farm</b>	<b>Number of bags harvested from land last year</b>	<b>Aspirations for the future</b>
Appiah (11)	Wangara	----	2 acres	---N/A	Doctor
Abukari (15)	Kussassi	1 brother	15 acres	6 bags	Electrician
Haruna (16)	Mamprussie	2 boys	5 acres	8 bags	Driver
David (12)	Grussi	2 sisters	17 acres	---N/A	Bank Manager
Raza (13)	Wasanga	-----	3 acres	3 bags	Doctor
Ali (14)	Kussassi	1 brother	14 acres	5 bags	Minister of State
James (12)	Brong	2 brothers	4 acres	3 bags	Policeman
Augustine (12)	Wassa	3 sisters	17 acres	12 bags	President

(Agona Camp English Arabic School, January, 2004)

All the children interviewed were from households who had migrated primarily from the north of Ghana and were engaged in all aspects of cocoa farming particularly the weeding, planting and haulage of cocoa beans from the farm. The average family size was between 8 to 10 people. The children all reported having other siblings who were not able to attend school but were in the community. Children interviewed said that they were particularly involved in cocoa farming during the harvest season and were on occasion taken out of school to assist on the farms. All the children wanted to pursue their education beyond JSS to SSS level and were hoping they would be able to pursue their education with support from their families

Reports from teachers, parents and children revealed that food was a problem for children in the community since many of the children were sent to school without being fed before classes. The Head Teacher in Apemsu (Ashanti Region) complained that children were often hungry on arrival at school and there was nowhere to buy food. Parents also confirmed that they were having difficulty-feeding children before school since they were importing foodstuffs from outside the village to supplement their own food supplies. For instance, in both Agona Camp and Gyedua Kesse (Western Region) food supplies were brought into the communities on a regular basis such as yam, corn/maize and rice to supplement the low food production in the communities. Annex 7 presents some of the fieldwork excerpts providing insight into the community meetings and focal group discussions, which assisted the team gain insight into the contextual reality surrounding children in cocoa growing areas of Ghana.

## **Conclusion**

Working children are not a recent phenomenon in Ghana. The socialisation process and patterns in child rearing require children to perform certain tasks depending on their age, gender and physical strength. Children therefore, are often involved in the farming and commercial activities of their parents as well as many of the social activities of the community. Indigenous livelihood training exists among cocoa farmers particularly those who expect their children to carry on after their death.

Studies have shown that some of the underlying reasons for child labour include poverty and lack of income, lack of sustainable livelihood practices, lack of alternative forms of livelihood and poor parental care. Children in the cocoa growing areas of Ghana are faced with the harsh realities of rural poverty and communities with food insecurity. The regular practice of children working on cocoa farms is a natural way of life for the cocoa farmer who for a variety of reasons want to train his/her children and at the same time use them in order to reduce labour costs on the farm. Children are caught in the cycle of poverty which requires they assist their family survive and at the same time attempt to use formal education as a means to break out of the cycle. This is a pattern prevalent across rural Ghana and has been documented in many other pieces of work (Casely-Hayford, 2000; CARE, 2003). The pattern prevents children from attending school on a regular basis and often engages them in activities which may be defined as “hazardous” by international standards but is a family livelihood practice and the current reality faced by children in cocoa growing communities.

Since communities see child work and child labour as a normal livelihood strategy to meet the daily needs of the family, changing patterns and practices which “remove children” or force parents to change, will require a deeper understanding of the causes and reasons behind the practice. It will also require much more research into the variety of factors surrounding the practice in order to identify sustainable solutions. The solutions and strategies are not straightforward and will require interventions at both global and local level to alleviate the situation. ICI will have to engage in consultation with stakeholders at all levels but particularly at district and community level in order to identify feasible and lasting interventions. A one-year start up period of operational engagement at district level is required as well as community based action research using participatory methods of community reflection (i.e. PLA/PRA) is one way forward. This will be elaborated further in sections 5.0 and 6.0.

## 4.0 Child Labour in Ghana: A Field Perspective

### 4.1 Introduction

This section is based on excerpts from the fieldwork providing insight into the community meetings and focal group discussions, which assisted the team gain insight into the contextual reality surrounding children in cocoa growing areas of Ghana.

The research was conducted across five regions of the country. Two communities were selected in each region where field workers had an established rapport with the community. Two days were spent in each community meeting with stakeholders such as elders and chiefs, farmers groups, women, children, teachers and parents. The fieldwork was conducted in December and January at the end of the cocoa harvest season. In each community, a qualitative approach was used whereby researchers began by holding discussions with chief opinion leaders and elders followed by focal group discussions with the children in school and out of school. The second phase of focal group discussions included interviews with teachers, parents and farmers in the community. Trends found in the children's focal group discussions assisted researchers move deeper into discussions with other key stakeholder groups. A more detailed presentation of the fieldwork is contained in Annex 6.

### 4.2 The Eastern Region (Suhum Kraboa-Coaltar District)

Ntunkum is a settler village of about 383 people inhabited mainly by Akwapims, Ningo's from the Dangme District of the Greater Accra Region and Ewes from the Volta Region. The second community was Otswebediedua or Otswe, which is about 1.5 miles (2.4km) from Nkuntum towards Suhum, in the Eastern region. The two communities are on the same road. The smallest cocoa farm size is about 5 acres and the largest is about 30 acres for cocoa production, and 0.5 to 2 acres for food crops. The farmers in these communities also engage in oil palm, cassava, maize, peanut and vegetable farming as well as livestock rearing.

Focus group discussions with chiefs, elders and farmers in both communities revealed that their main concerns are that:

- Labour is scarce and expensive
- Agricultural inputs are expensive
- Poverty is widespread and entrenched
- Cocoa farmers find it difficult to access COCOBOD scholarship for their children for no apparent reason
- Electricity will serve as a rapid source of change in the communities
- Some farmers are not benefiting from the government's mass spraying of cocoa farms
- Poverty alleviation assistance has not yet reached them in the community

The communities in the **Suhum Kraboa-Coaltar district** are among the highest producing cocoa areas in Ghana and have some of the last remnants of the famous Tetteh Quarshie cocoa plants. The study revealed that children work on cocoa farms especially on those which belong to their parents by weeding, plucking, gathering and carrying of cocoa pods to central points, among others, depending on the child's physique. The only task which children are not involved in is pesticide and fungicide application. The children are susceptible to all types of injuries such as cuts, blisters and snakebites among others. It was also clear in the study areas that even though about 95% of the children are in school they are not performing well due to the long hours they spend farming.

Poverty was mentioned as a major obstacle to the community and families development. Children in the communities were engaged in "by-day" farm jobs without parental consent in order to earn extra money during school days. Children were also involved in other jobs such as setting traps to catch animals and shoe shining.

The community recommended that more modern modes of farming are needed in order to reduce the risks involved with cocoa farming by children. For instance, the introduction of locally made trailers, which could haul the heavy loads of cocoa from the farms to the household, was seen as very useful intervention. Community members also suggested that collective teams of labourers working together in order to carry out farm tasks on rotational basis on different farms such as the "*nnoboa*" schemes could help reduce the amount of time children spend weeding on the farms. The *nnoboa* system is a traditional approach to ensuring that farmers are able to accomplish all the tasks on the farm by helping one another on a rotational basis on the farm. The study team felt that youth in the communities should be mobilised for these purposes through consultation and education.

#### **4.3 Volta Region Cases Studies (Hohoe District)**

There were two communities visited in the Volta region: Lolobi and Old Baika community. Lolobi Ashambi is about 12 kms from Hohoe, the district capital. There are about 800 people in the community who are mainly engaged in cocoa and food crop farming. The average farm size is about 15 acres. The second community visited was Old Baika, which is 15 kms from the district capital on a different route from Lolobi community. There are about 500 community members. The average size of a cocoa farm is about 10 acres and the main income generating activity is cocoa farming, rice farming and palm oil production.

#### **Key Findings from the Volta Region**

In both communities, land belongs to specific families and not the chief or stool. Consequently land acquisition becomes a problem since the negotiation is not with one chief or individual but the entire family; this means that all family members would have to be in agreement before the sale of land could take place. The "*abusa*" and "*nnoboa*" systems of farming are being used in the communities. The majority of settler farmers use the "*abusa*" method although they prefer to work under the "*abunu*" system where they are paid half of the proceeds from the farm. Farmers

using the “*abusa*” method usually use their children on weekends and holidays. Sharecropping farmers in the area usually enter into one or two farming agreements with different landowners at the same time in order to produce enough cocoa to increase their income.

Some of the farmers participate in communal labour in which neighbouring farmers rotate their collective labour in a system. Farmers in both communities explained that during the harvest season, children between the ages of 10 -15 are used on weekends help to pluck, break, ferment and dry the cocoa pods. Interviews with children in the Lolobi community revealed that children of cocoa producers perform farm work and attend school at the same time; they explained that they work on the farm after school and on weekends. Children were involved in opening pods and carrying cocoa beans; they were however not involved in felling large trees, spraying or clearing virgin forest.

Interviews with school children from the communities revealed the following:

- Some children are forced to go to the farm and bring cocoa to the house before going to school
- Some children are denied lunch if they fail to help on the farm after school
- Teachers force the school children to work on their farms.

*“Our teachers force us to do work which is dangerous to our health. We work too much for the teachers on their farms and homes. As a result some of our parents have sent their children to big towns to continue their schooling. We often cart timber from the bush to the town and the teachers are paid for our labour. We also climb tall palm trees to cut the leaves for making brooms for the teachers to sell. We find it difficult to get school fees and other needs from our parents. Our parents sit down unconcerned to see our teachers treating us this way and we do not like it. Therefore, we are appealing to you to ask our parents who is responsible for our needs: like school fees, books, school uniforms, food and safety?”* (Based on interviews with ten school children between 10 and 13 years of age in Lolobi community). This was confirmed by some of the teachers in the community who were not engaging children on their farms.

Farmers in both communities complained of the poor producer prices for cocoa and requested for higher prices in order to pay for their basic needs such as school fees, clothes and labour charges especially during the peak cultivation and harvest times. The main problems experienced by farmers related to lack of land for expansion, marketing of farm produce, poor health and nutrition and the poor quality of education.

Although children were not directly being used on the cocoa farms, there was strong evidence that the main areas where child labour and hazardous work are evident are related to the fishing sector. About 60% of children are engaged in fishing work, which involves the transport of heavy loads, and an unhealthy environment exposing children to hazardous processes, which can damage their health. Children were also found to work long hours during the night, denying them enough time to learn and rest; this adversely affects their performance in school.

Communities recommended that radio and social messaging activities should be introduced into their communities in order to educate the people concerning the risk of child labour as well as information on government laws and regulations concerning the use of children in work related activities. A holistic approach is

needed in addressing the training, awareness, and community consensus building at multiple levels.

#### **4.4 The Central Region (Asikuma/Odoben/Brakwa District)**

Three communities were selected in the Central region for study: Breman Kuntanasi, Breman Benin and Breman Asuokoo. Breman Kuntanasi is about 5 miles from Breman Asikuma, the district capital. There are about 6,000 people in the community who are mainly natives with a few Gomoa's from the same region as well as Ewes from the Volta region, Akuapems from the Eastern region, Sisalas and Dagartis from the northern regions and Kotokolis from Togo. The community has a record of being the highest cocoa producer in Ghana in 1968 with 2,500 tonnes of cocoa.

Breman Benin is about 6 kilometres from Breman Asikuma, the district capital. There are about 1,000 people living in the community. The people are mostly Bremans or natives, with pockets of migrants from the northern-part of the country. Their main cash crop is cocoa and their main food crops include plantain, maize and cassava.

Breman Asuokoo is about 6 kilometres from Breman Asikuma, the district capital. There are about 600 people in the community and they are mostly natives with few people from the Volta region and Gomoa district in the Central region. The people are mainly cocoa farmers but supplement their income with maize, cassava and plantain farming. The average cocoa farm size is about six acres.

#### **Key findings from the Central Region**

In Breman Asuokoo, the entire land is owned by the paramount chief of the area. The people hold allegiance to him and offer 50% of their total cocoa yield to him at the end of every season; the case is different for the other two communities because most of the land is owned by the families and is controlled by the family heads. Some lands are leased out to native and migrant farmers; proceeds are then shared equally between the farmer and the landowner ("*abunu*"). Most of the work on the farm is done by adult hired labourers who are paid ₵20,000 per half day. Other farmers practice cooperative farming known as "*nnoboa*". The communities practice "*abunu*" sharecropping system in which half of their produce is given to the paramount chief.

Some farmers also use their children to help them on their farms especially during planting and harvesting periods. Most of the children are in school but manage to go to the farm on the weekends, early mornings before going to school, and on Fridays.

Focus group discussions with chiefs and elders in the communities revealed that the people are solely dependent on farm produce with the bulk of their income coming from the sale of cocoa. They however run out of money shortly after the cocoa season due to the meagre nature of their income as well as the mismanagement of funds. Child welfare is therefore a problem in the communities; most of the children work on farms on weekends and at times, during school hours to earn income to support themselves. Interviews with teachers revealed that children's performance is very poor; one of the schools had zero percent (0%) in the 2003 Basic Education Certificate Examination results.

Focal group discussions with farmers also revealed that they have little income coming from farm produce thereby making childcare a difficult task. Parents are not able to cater for their children's needs. The children are therefore left to fend for themselves, which makes them disrespectful and disobedient. Some as a result refuse to go to school but work on people's farms to get money.

**Kofi Adom** is a 12 year old boy from Breman Kuntanasi. He is currently staying with his grandmother and is in primary class 1. He used to attend school but had to stop while in the kindergarten when his mother asked him to take care of his younger sister so that she could have time for her farm. He is now back in school at age 12 and is in class 1 instead of JSS 1. His daily routine includes water fetching, sweeping and cleaning of dishes. He also goes to the farm after school to collect foodstuffs home. On weekends, he accompanies his grandmother and uncle to their cocoa farm to weed. During cocoa harvesting period, he helps in picking pods, scooping beans and carrying cocoa beans during the cocoa harvest. There are times he does not go to school but instead, goes to work for people on the farm for money to support himself.

The study revealed that during the cocoa-harvesting season, children are mostly used to pick up pods, scoop beans and transport beans home for drying. There are few children, both out-of-school and in-school, who due to economic hardship, organise themselves into small groups of four and five and work for people at a fee of ₦10,000 cedis per person.

Some children also weed oil palm plantations as well as wash cars to support themselves. Some of these children reported having injuries after weeding or working on the cocoa farms. Other children reported being bitten by snakes and rushed to clinic, which was far from their communities. There are also cases of children slipping and breaking their legs in the process of transporting foodstuffs, firewood, and cocoa beans from the farm to the village. Child labour is therefore a case of survival for the children since they need to help their families and at the same time fend for themselves.

The study also revealed that the poor quality of education experienced in the area, coupled with the lack of understanding of the importance of education serves as disincentive for parents to continue paying for their children's education. As a result some parents ask for permission from school to send their children to the farm on certain school days of the week in order to work for them. There are other farmers, who due to their meagre income, and lack of access to loans, were unable to hire labour on their cocoa farms. These people reported using their families and children for farming purposes in order to avoid paying high labour fees.

### **Recommendations from the communities**

The community members suggested that sensitisation and awareness creation in the communities on the importance of education should be carried out in order to discourage the use of children on the farm. The people should be made aware of the harm child labour could bring to their children and the entire community. This could be done through community meetings; PTA meetings, film shows and dramatization. Seed money could also be given to women in order to support their children. Farmers could be given training in management, diversified farming and skills training. The community could also be motivated to set bye-laws to protect children. Community libraries could be provided in the areas to encourage children to use their spare time to read. These interventions could be carried out with the assistance

of assemblypersons, community teachers and the identified NGO's in the areas (e.g. Helping Rural Women Entrepreneurs in Ghana).

#### 4.5 Western Region (Wassa Amenfi District)

Two communities were visited in the Western region: Agona Camp and Gyedua Kesse. Agona Camp is about 20 km North of Asankrangwa with a population of about 2,000 people. The inhabitants are mainly from Brong Ahafo, Northern, Upper East, Ashanti, Greater Accra and Volta regions of Ghana. The village was originally a timber camp until the farmers came there in 1961 to plant cocoa and kola. The main livelihood is cocoa farming, kola, and yam farming. According to the community leaders, the farmers leased the land from the Chief of Agona; and pay an annual levy of ₵5,000 on each acre of land.

Focal group discussions with farmers revealed that landowners and the caretakers practice the 'abunu and abusa' systems of land tenure; the 'abunu' system is practiced where the cocoa farms have a poor yield. The smallest farm size in the community is about 6 acres and the largest is about 156 acres; the majority of farmers are farming between 6-10 acres of land. During discussions with farmers and opinion leaders, people complained that, *"the cocoa trees are not yielding enough, because of swollen shoot disease and a kind of red ant which destroys the roots of the cocoa trees in most of the farms. Also Extension officers (from the Agriculture Extension) do not visit us."* Focal group discussions also revealed that only the youth practice the "nnoboa" system of farming. Women however explained that they do not engage in "nnoboa", which makes it difficult to maintain their farms.

**Mahamadu** is 32 years old and has one wife and a four-year-old child. He is from Walewale a town in the Northern Region of Ghana. Mahamadu said his grandfather settled in the Central region to farm cocoa, so he came with him to the village in order to get a job as a caretaker under the "abunu" system. Mahamadu said between February and April each year he goes to the north and brings his other siblings to work on his cocoa farm and that of others. He said the period between June and August are the difficult times for him. During this period he does "by-day" to survive. He said the land is poor, and even though he has a 2-acre food farm, the harvest is poor. (Interview with Caretaker from Northern Ghana).

**Ramatu** has eight children. Three of her children are in school in Bulga (Upper East); two are in school in the village, one is in the Islamic School and the other is in the District Assembly Primary School. Three others are learning a trade in Kumasi. Ramatu felt the D/A school was better than the Islamic Primary School since the teachers are more regular. Ramatu's husband was a cocoa caretaker for 15 years, but has switched to trading in kola because being a cocoa caretaker "was not paying". Ramatu sends her children to help pick kola from the bush. When her husband was a caretaker, he practised the "abusa" method.

**Amina** (another woman from the community) said she has three children in school, and that her husband is a cocoa farm caretaker. She said cocoa farming was labour intensive, and demanded time from their children. She said during the harvest period she asked permission from school to use their children on the farm.

Both women said the *"land was no longer good and that even food crops are not doing well"*. The women said they needed credit facilities to take good care of their children; they also need more advise from Agriculture Extension Officers to help them on their farms.

The study revealed that parents often seek permission from the school to use their children on the farm. Community meetings also revealed that the formal system is not of high quality and many of the children are unable to enter SSS from JSS partly due to financial constraints. The JSS graduates said that the teachers sent to the village do not stay in the community due to lack of food and lack of teacher accommodation.

The community leaders gave the following as solutions to their problems:

- The youth should be counselled to go to school and be helped to find direction and career options after graduation;
- The community should start farming more food crops in order to sustain the family and attract the teachers to stay in the community;
- Invite Agriculture Extension Officers to give technical advice to the farmers.

### **Gyedua Kesse**

Gyedua Kesse is a farming community 18 km North-East of Asankrangwa, the district capital with about 800 people. The village is made up of Wassas, Ashantis, Ga-Dangbes, Ewes and Northerners. The farm sizes are as small as 3 acres and as large as 70 acres. The majority of farmers have between 3 and 5 acres of cocoa farms. The vast majority of the migrants are “caretakers” and some have also acquired the land but pay a fee to the chief on a yearly basis (5,000 cedis per acre); both the ‘*abunu and abusa*’ systems are practiced<sup>33</sup>. Apart from cocoa and kola farms, mixed farming is also practised.

The farmers explained that there is no land for expansion so the youth are not able to go into large-scale production. Most of the youth hire their labour out on a “by-day” basis and charge 15,000 cedis per half-day of work on the cocoa farms. Interviews with the school dropouts revealed that some are willing to continue their education but they are not receiving any support from their parents.

The chief, opinion leaders and teachers in the community explained that the number of JSS graduates who enter the SSS is very small due to poor grades and lack of financial support from parents. The low scores of students at the primary and JSS level are attributed to the lack of teachers. There are only 3 teachers in the JSS and five teachers at the primary level. The study revealed that most of the young girls go into prostitution within the community and often get pregnant. Teachers explained that the community has no JSS workshop and parents do not have enough funds to send their children on apprenticeship in the big cities. Children are also being discouraged to continue schooling since they see their peers “roaming about on the streets”.

Members of the community made the following suggestions during focal group discussions:

- The community needs to recruit more teachers to teach particularly the vocational subjects. Volunteer teachers who have completed SSS should also be recruited.

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<sup>33</sup> Most of the migrants begin working on the *Abusa* system (1/3 of all proceeds from the farm go to the sharecropper) and then move to the *Abunu* method (1/2) of payment for their farm work with landowners.

- Parents should provide the basic needs for their children and encourage them to go to school.
- Parents and the entire community should be counselled on different aspects of their roles and responsibilities;
- Chiefs and elders should get involved in findings solutions to the problem of child labour in their communities.
- Peer educators should be trained to assist the youth in the community and outsider resource people should help to counsel the youth.

#### 4.6 Ashanti Region: Effiduase District

Two communities were visited in the Western region as part of the study: Asakyerwa and Apemso. Asakyerwa is approximately 4 kms from the main road and has electricity and one borehole with a hand pump. The community has three community-based organizations – Bo Woho Moden Kuo (is in group farming) Nua Do Kuo (for mutual help), and Asakyerwa Youth Association (for youth affairs). The population is made up of 95% Ashanti; 15% Fanti and people from the northern parts of Ghana.

Job diversification is poor in the community; *“we only farm cocoa and food crops. Our incomes are therefore very low. Our women do not have much to do; there are no income generating activities from which they will earn some money to supplement family income. Sizes of our farms are small, mostly because we do not have more land for farm expansion or the creation of new ones. The sizes here range from 1 acre to 15 acres, the average size is about 8 acres. The newest farm we have here (the youngest) is about 22 years old and the oldest farms is about 60 years (these are farms on which the Tetteh Quarshie cocoa are grown)”*. Interview with Chiefs and Elders.

*“There are many children out of school in the community, and they are out of school mainly because: they are not academically endowed, they suffered from poor parental-care; and their parents are poor; these are the same children one finds working on cocoa farms, the “by-day” labourers. The best thing that anybody can do to help our out of school children in this community is to establish some kind of vocational/technical school to train the children in areas like carpentry, masonry, electronics, catering, dressmaking etc.”* (Interview with Chiefs and Elders.

Several children were met in the community who a few years ago had dropped out of JSS because their parents could no longer financially support them. One boy dropped out at primary level and the other boy dropped out at JSS level. Both were now farming with their parents on their cocoa farms and hiring their labour out “by day”. Several girls interviewed in the community had also completed JSS but were not able to move to higher levels of education (i.e. SSS); these girls were now selling ice water and helping their mothers. The focal group discussions with children out of school children revealed that they were in need of counselling and guidance to help them identify life options, which included technical and vocational options available within the district and region. Some of the youth were now living alone since their parents had died or moved away; some had lost hope and were in need of a mentor to guide them.

The village of Apemso is about 30km away from the district capital, Ejisu-Juaben. The ethnic groups in the community are: - Ashanti, Brong, Krobo, Fante and Northerners. Main economic activities in the area include: cocoa farming, palm oil production and food crop farming. The average size of the cocoa farms is 3-4 acres.

The community members especially cocoa farmers face financial problems in looking after their children in school. Some of the challenges are the: lack of land for expanding farms, lack of water in the dry season, and cocoa diseases, which are killing the trees. The cocoa farms are old and yield very little. A major problem faced by cocoa farmers in the community is labour, because their income from farming is very low.

According to chief and elders, the children in the community are used on weekends to assist them on their farms. They assist in all the cocoa processes. The average cocoa yield per farmer is about 5 bags<sup>34</sup>. School dropouts and children who have completed JSS and have nowhere to go provide hired labour. They are paid ₵15,000 for 3 or 4 hours work per day. According to the elders there are lots of school dropouts in the community due to poverty. *“Parents cannot pay schools fees and feed them (the children) before attending and after school. These dropouts are engaged in both cocoa and food crops farming on a “by-day system. Others have also left the village and joined their friends in the urban areas.”*

There are a large number of migrants resident in the community from the Northern Regions of the Ghana, especially Navrongo, the Upper East. The settlers had started cocoa farming in the Brong-Ahafo Region over the last 15 to 20 years and then migrated to Apemso to start their own farms because there were *“no lands in Brong Ahafo to expand their farms”*. The migrant farmers denied using children on their farms.

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<sup>34</sup> A farmer will receive approx. 560,000 per bag of cocoa according to buying Company interviews (January, 2004)

## Excerpts from Interviews with Cocoa Farmers in Apemso Community

*"We are mainly farmers and our main crop is cocoa. We also farm cassava oil palm, and vegetables. The average farm size here is 3-4 acres and we depend mostly on "by-day" labour to do our farm work. By-day labour in this village costs ₵12,000 but there is talk in the community about raising it to ₵15,000. Almost every farmer here does their own "by-day" work in order to raise income to supplement household income. We also farm and sell maize, cassava and vegetables for the same reason (cocoa farms are quite small in size)."*

*"The "nnoboa" system of working on farms is not popular in this village; in fact, it is not practiced. We use a lot of family labour, including children on our farms, especially in the months of June and July when the need for labour (weeding) is highest."*

*"It is difficult for us to expand our farm and by that make more profit. The problem is that we have to weed our farms three times in a year and we always have to hire labour the cost of which we cannot easily bear. We also face this problem when it comes to the health of our children and women. The children easily get malaria, convulsion and measles. When we send them to the clinic at Juaben (the district capital) the bills they give us are too high. Also sending our children to school and keeping them in school is not easy for us. The money for buying books, getting uniforms for them, paying fees, is just not there. Most of our children are in school though."*

*"Those not in school are either too young or have dropped out. Dropping out of school takes place mostly at the stage where the child has to move from primary to junior secondary school. And we blame this not only on parent's inability to support the child in school, but also on the fact that there are no continuation (JSS) facilities here. Let us add also that it is not only the difficulties that parents face in bearing the cost their children's education, or the absence of JSS facilities here that account for all the school non-attendance in this community...some of these out of school children are plain daft; nothing goes into their heads and sticks. You can keep them in school for as long as you wish, and they will still end up illiterate. Fortunately, there is a great demand for "by-day" work for them and the other non-school – going children go into this. They also go hunting and have their own vegetable and food crop farms."*

*"Apart from the weeding, snakebites, and falls from which the children suffer.... they also get cuts, lacerations, sprains and snakebite poisoning, we do not do anything on our farms which badly affects the health of our children, we do not even like taking our children to farm on school days, we prefer using them only on weekend and holidays."*

*"And we do not allow children to be employed full time on the farm, but it is also important for us to make it clear here that in this village, no farmer will ever allow his child to stay at home and not go to farm; at the same time, no farmer will pull his child out of school only because he wants him to go to farm and work. Here, children are contributors to family income, and going to help in farm work is that contribution. But we want our children to go to school and become Doctors, Presidents or get jobs that will make them and their families comfortable in life."*

*"In the past, cocoa farming was not all that profitable and many farmers pulled out of the industry. Today, there is good money in cocoa farming. We want to remain in it and expand if we can. We are mainly Ashanti's here. We are also mainly Christians. There is a migrant community, mostly from the northern parts of the country. There is also a very small number of Ewes from the Volta Region and Muslims." (All excerpts based on focal group discussion with cocoa farmers in Apemso community)*

## Conclusion

The scarcity of land and food is a major problem across all the communities visited in the five regions. Cocoa farmers are finding it difficult to finance labourers to work on their farms since seasonal migration patterns are changing and not as many northerners are available on a seasonal basis to work the cocoa farms. Settler farmers are also shifting from cocoa to kola farming in order to improve their livelihoods in the community. Migrant farmers are mainly from the northern regions (Upper East and Upper West) and settled in the communities over 20 years ago to

work on cocoa farms as labourers. Many of their other friends and family relations have migrated to cocoa growing areas in the Brong, and Ashanti when the cocoa started dying and their food crops were destroyed by red ants and termites. There are signs that children are being brought from the Northern regions to work on the cocoa farms as labourers but more research is needed to confirm the extent and nature of this pattern.

There is a great diversity of findings from the communities visited across the regions. There are a number of themes, which emerged from the fieldwork particularly the need to have a strong head teacher to ensure that the quality of the school and the discipline of teachers was consistent. Parents believed in education where they saw it functioning but were disappointed when teachers were not regularly attending school and worried that this was wasting their children's time. The study revealed the very high opportunity cost in sending a child from a poor family to a poor quality school.

There was also a high demand for labour in communities where cocoa is still being farmed (i.e. Eastern Region, Western Region and parts of the Ashanti Region). In areas where people were no longer farming cocoa but had diversified their activities other child labour problems were apparent (i.e. fishing in the Volta region etc).

## 6 The Institutional and Legal Framework on Child Labour

The following section provides a contextual analysis of child labour legislation on an international level and child labour legislation within the Ghanaian Context. The international legislation provides the framework for the Ghanaian standards and assists the reader to understand the global context.

### 5.1 The Legal Framework

The Declaration of the Rights of the Child dates back to the United Nations General Assembly in 1959, in accordance with the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, that “the ideal of free human beings enjoying freedom from fear and want can only be achieved if conditions are created whereby everyone may enjoy his economic, social and cultural rights as well as his civil rights and political rights” and the proclamation that “everyone is entitled to all human rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth and other status”.

The Declaration of the Rights of the Child proclaims “to the end that the child may have a happy childhood and enjoy for his/her own good and for the good of society the rights and freedoms set forth, and calls upon parents, upon men and women as individuals, and upon voluntary organisations, local authorities and national Governments to recognise these rights and strive for their observance by legislative and other measures progressively taken in accordance with the following principles:

**Principle 1** The child shall enjoy all the rights set forth in this Declaration. Every child, without any exception whatsoever, shall be entitled to these rights, without distinction or discrimination on account of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, whether of himself or of his family.

**Principle 2** The child shall enjoy special protection, and shall be given opportunities and facilities, by law and by other means, to enable him to develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially in a healthy and normal manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity. In the enactment of laws for this purpose, the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration.

**Principle 3** The child shall be entitled from his birth to a name and a nationality.

**Principle 4** The child shall enjoy the benefits of social security. He shall be entitled to grow and develop in health; to this end, special care and protection shall be provided both to him and to his mother, including adequate pre-natal and post-natal care. The child shall have the right to adequate nutrition, housing, recreation and medical services.

**Principle 5** The child who is physically, mentally or socially handicapped shall be given the special treatment, education and care required by his particular condition.

**Principle 6** The child, for the full and harmonious development of his personality, needs love and understanding. He shall, wherever possible, grow up in the care and under the responsibility of his parents, and, in any case, in an atmosphere of affection and of moral and material security; a child of tender years shall not, save in exceptional circumstances, be separated from his mother. Society and the public authorities shall have the duty to extend particular care to children without a family and to those without adequate means of support. Payment of State and other assistance towards the maintenance of children of large families is desirable.

**Principle 7** The child is entitled to receive education, which shall be free and compulsory, at least in the elementary stages. He shall be given an education, which will promote his general culture and

enable him, on a basis of equal opportunity, to develop his abilities, his individual judgement, and his sense of moral and social responsibility, and to become a useful member of society.

The best interests of the child shall be the guiding principle of those responsible for his education and guidance; that responsibility lies in the first place with his parents.

The child shall have full opportunity for play and recreation, which should be directed to the same purposes as education; society and the public authorities shall endeavour to promote the enjoyment of this right.

**Principle 8** The child shall in all circumstances be among the first to receive protection and relief.

**Principle 9** The child shall be protected against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation. He shall not be the subject of traffic, in any form.

**The child shall not be admitted to employment before an appropriate minimum age; he shall in no case be caused or permitted to engage in any occupation or employment, which would prejudice his health or education, or interfere with his physical, mental or moral development.**

**Principle 10** The child shall be protected from practices, which may foster racial, religious and any other form of discrimination. He shall be brought up in a spirit of understanding, tolerance, friendship among peoples, peace and universal brotherhood, and in full consciousness that his energy and talents should be devoted to the service of his fellow men. ”

(Declaration on the Rights of the Child, 1959)

Principle No. 9 of the Declaration is particularly relevant to the issues of child labour. The Declaration of the Rights of the Child also considers the Charter of the United Nations to promote universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and freedoms. It also reaffirms that “the child by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care (as stated in the Geneva declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1924) including appropriate legal protection, before and as well as after birth ([www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3](http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3)).

### 5.1.1 International Legislation and Child Labour

Notwithstanding the above legal provisions of rights for all children, there has been a growing consensus to adopt special provisions for particularly children in abusive labour conditions. For instance, the adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is an additional means of protection for children. Adopted in 1989, Article (32) of the CRC is particularly relevant to child labour in the following subsections:

- (1) States parties recognise the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child’s education, or to be harmful to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.
- (2) States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, State Parties shall in particular:
  - a. Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment

- b. Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article.

Child labour is detrimental to the health and well being of all children. It prevents them from enjoying their childhood, hampers their development and often causes a lifetime physical and psychological damage to the individual child. Prior to the early 1990s, there was little or no global consensus on the urgency of dealing with child labour. For fear of negative international reactions, countries were hesitant to admit that the problem existed within their borders. Concerns to the problem of child labour dates back to the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) first conference in 1919, which adopted the Minimum Age (Industry) Convention (No.5) [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org). The Minimum Age concept later culminated in the adoption of the Comprehensive Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138). The International Labour Organisation's (ILO) Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No.138), is the fundamental international standard on Child Labour. The Ultimate goal of the convention No.138 is the total abolition of child labour and remains the bedrock of international and national action against child labour (ILO, Conference Report I [B] 2002).

The interest and need for significant action against child labour gained momentum in 1998, which resulted in several high profile international meetings. Among such meetings was the June 1998 session of the International Labour Conference that saw unanimous support for new standards, which culminated in the adoption of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work. The adoption of the ILO Declaration and its follow-up reaffirmed the framework for member states to respect the principle of effective abolition of child labour. The decision for the adoption of the Declaration was also a manifestation of expression of commitment by governments, employers and workers' organisation to uphold basic human values, which are vital to social and economic lives (ILO, Conference Report I [B] 2002).

The declaration commits member states, whether or not they ratified the relevant conventions, to respect and promote the following principles and rights in four categories:

- Freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
- The elimination of forced labour and compulsory labour;
- The abolition of child labour, and;
- The elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

In 1999, member states again adopted the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182) and its accompanying recommendation (No. 190). The unprecedented rate of ratification reconfirmed the strength of the political will among member states to tackle most extreme forms of child labour as a matter of urgent priority. As at 15 October 2003, 147 countries including Ghana have ratified ILO Convention No. 182, which calls for immediate action to ban the worst forms of child labour (IPEC, 2003). This convention is the fastest to be ratified in the ILO's 82-year history, clearly demonstrating that support for the movement against abusive child labour is growing very rapidly throughout the world.

<http://echo.ilo.org/pls/delaris/DECLARATIONWEB>.

The adoption of convention No.182 provides the framework on the urgency of action to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, which it defines as:

- a) All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.
- b) The use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances.
- c) The use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties.
- d) Work, which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children (article 3).

At the international level, a distinction has been drawn between two categories of the worst forms of child labour as:

- The unconditional worst forms of child labour, referred to in article 3(a)-(c) of Convention No.182 and are so fundamentally at odds with children's basic human rights that they are absolutely prohibited for all persons under the age of 18.
- Hazardous work as defined by national legislation that may be conducted in legitimate sectors of economic activity but that is nonetheless damaging to the child worker (ILO, Conference Report I [B] 2002).

These worst forms of child labour entail violations of children's rights that demand immediate action for their prohibition. The Convention therefore requires all ratifying nations to design and implement programmes of action that will not only protect children, but will also eliminate existing child labour and prevent new ones (ILO-Bitter Harvest, 2002).

Within the broader international framework, the following three categories of child labour have been slated for abolition:

- a) Labour that is performed by a child who is under the minimum age specified for that kind of work (as defined by national legislation within the accepted international standards), and is likely to impede the child's education and full development.
- b) Labour that jeopardises the physical, mental or moral well-being of a child, either because of its nature or because of the conditions in which it is carried out, known as hazardous work.
- c) The unconditional worst forms of child labour, which are internationally defined as slavery, trafficking, debt bondage and other forms of forced labour, forced recruitment of children for use in arm conflict, prostitution and pornography, and illicit activities (ILO, 2002)<sup>35</sup>.

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<sup>35</sup> Eliminating the Worst Forms of Child Labour: a practical guide to the ILO Convention No 182.

Table 5.0 presents the basic distinctions stipulated in conventions No. 138 and 182, which form the basis for international child labour standards.

**Table 5.0: Distinctions between Types of Work according to Age**

Age 18					
Age 15*					
Age 12†					
	Work excluded from minimum age legislation	Light work	Non-hazardous Work	Hazardous work	Unconditional worst forms of child labour

Source: Adopted from ILO, Conference Report I [B] 2002

The illustrations in the diagram present the basic distinctions between the type of work and the age of the child involved that defines the boundaries of child labour for abolition. This is based on International Standards. The shaded areas represent the child labour for abolition. \*The minimum age for admission to employment or work is determined by national legislation and can be set at 14, 15 or 16 years. †The minimum age at which light work such as household chores, work in family undertakings and work undertaken by as part of education, is permissible and this can be set at 12 or 13 years (ILO Global Report 2002). In Ghana, for example, children under 15 years cannot be employed but can do light work if they are 13 years and above.

### 5.1.2 Ghana’s Legislation and Obligations related to the Ratification of UN Conventions and Other Legislation

Ghana is a member of the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU) and is signatory to a several international Conventions on Human Rights. An example of such conventions is the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which the country proudly took the first place to ratify in 1990. In ratifying CRC, the government of Ghana is required by obligation to:

- *Respect and ensure the rights set forth in the convention to each child within its jurisdiction*
- *act, to adopt all appropriate measures (legislative, administrative, social, economic, budgetary, educational or other necessary measures) to ensure the implementation of the convention; and*
- *Submit periodic reports to the committee on the rights of the child, containing the information on the implementation of the convention ([www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)).*

In accordance and recognition of all international treaties on Human Rights and in particular, the Rights of the Child, the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana has made specific provisions on children's rights in Article 28 as follows:

### **Article 28 of the Constitution**

(1) Parliament shall enact laws as are necessary to ensure that –

- Every child has the right to the same measure of special care, assistance and maintenance as is necessary for its development from its natural parents, except where those parents have effectively surrendered their rights and responsibilities in respect of the child in accordance with the law;*
- Every child whether or not born in wedlock, shall be entitled to reasonable provision out of the estate of its parents;*
- Parents undertake their natural right and obligation of care, maintenance and upbringing of their children in cooperation with such institutions as parliament may, by law, prescribe in such manner that in all cases the interest of the children are paramount;*
- Children and young persons receive special protection against exposure to physical and moral hazards; and*
- The protection and advancement of the family as the unit of society are safeguarded in promotion of the interest of children*

- (2) Every child has the right to be protected from engaging in work that constitutes a threat to his health, education or development.
- (3) A child shall not be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- (4) No child shall be deprived by any other person of medical treatment, education or any social or economic benefit by reason only of religion or other beliefs.
- (5) For the purposes of this article, "child" means a person below age of eighteen years.

### **Children's Act**

Ghana has also satisfied its treaty obligation under CRC and has passed the Children's Act, 1998 Act 560 and in accordance with international standards. Included in the Act are:

- A list of the rights of the child and parental duties
- Provisions for care and Protection of the Child
- Rules prohibiting numerous forms of child labour
- Rules regarding legal apprenticeship.

According to the Children's Act, ACT 560 a "**Child is a person below the age of 18 years**". The Act carefully revised most of the laws affecting the rights of children, and

reflects international standards as closely as possible. This is specifically related to international child labour standards are stated in {part V, Sub-Part I} sections 12, 87 – 91 of the Children’s Act, Act 560 as follows:

#### Prohibition of Exploitative Child Labour

- No person shall subject a child to exploitative labour.
- Labour is exploitative of a child if it deprives the child of its health, education or development.

#### Prohibition of Child Labour at Night

- No person shall engage a child in night work.
- Night work constitutes work between the hours of eight o’clock in the evening and six o’clock in the morning.

#### Minimum age for Child Labour

- The minimum age for admission to employment shall be fifteen years.

#### Minimum age for Light work

- The minimum age for light work shall be thirteen years.
- Light work constitutes work, which is not likely to be harmful to the health or development of the child, and does not affect the child’s attendance at school or the capacity to of the child to benefit from schoolwork.

#### Minimum age for Hazardous work

- The minimum age for Hazardous work is eighteen years.
- Work is hazardous when it poses a danger to the health, safety or morals of a person.
- Hazardous work includes:
  - Going to sea
  - Mining and quarrying
  - Portage of heavy loads
  - Manufacturing industries where chemicals are produced or used
  - Work in places where machines are used, and;
  - Work in places such as bars, hotels and places of entertainment where a person may be exposed to immoral behaviour.

#### **Other Legislation**

A good number of actions have been taken to create a favourable environment for the protection of the rights of the child in Ghana. Among these are the following

- The amendment of the Criminal code which increased the age of criminal responsibility; increased protection against the ill treatment and abduction of children; increased protection against sexual offences and which provided the power to search for a child suspected of being detained for immoral purposes,
- The submission of a Juvenile Justice bill to the legislature which, when passed, will help in protecting the rights of young offenders in accordance with the CRC and the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice.

Additionally, a number of far-reaching policy initiatives have also been taken in the social services sector to promote the best interest of the child. For instance, in 1993 the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) was set up to uphold and maintain those human rights provisions. The commission has the mandate of protecting the rights of all citizens, as well as the rights of children. The

establishment of the Child Labour unit in 1999, as part of the Ministry and Employment and Social Welfare to better respond to the needs children in abusive labour situations. The ILO's International Programme on the Elimination Child Labour (IPEC) project works in collaboration with the Unit and activities have been integrated into the activities of the unit. In line with all these efforts, several protective measures have been adopted and implemented to seek the best interest of all children in Ghana.

### **5.1.3 Other Legislation and Protective Measures**

Ghana's efforts at promoting the survival and protection of children dates back to 1979 when the Ghana National Commission on Children (GNCC) was established. The decree 66, section 2 of Armed Forces Revolution Council (AFRC) mandated GNCC:

- To see to the general welfare and development of children and co-ordinate all essential services for children in the country which will promote the United Nations Rights of the Child;
- To make proposals to government from time to time for the enactment or review of legislation in areas of children's rights, privileges and benefits in Ghana;
- To encourage and assist in regulating the establishment of crèches, day-care centres and homes for disabled children.

When Ghana ratified the CRC in 1990, GNCC became the focal point for advocacy on all aspects of the CRC. The Commission has since been instrumental in compiling and preparing reports on the situation of Children in Ghana (UNICEF-Ghana, 2002). The GNCC was also instrumental in getting Parliament to pass the Children's Rights Act (Act 560).

## **5.2 Institutional Responses**

Government responses to the need to protect women and children in the country have been varied. The creation of a Ministry Women and Children's Affairs in 2000 to formulate policies that advance the interests of women and children is a significant effort. The Establishment of a Girls Education Unit in 1997 at the Ministry of Education and the subsequent appointment of a Minister of State for Girls' Education in 2000 are all noteworthy developments.

Under judicial protection the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) has the mandate under CHRAJ Act 1993, Act 456 to promote and protect fundamental human rights in Ghana. The Commission's Activities on the rights of children are carried out within four (4) main areas, namely: public education, complaints resolution, counselling and supervision. Similarly, the Department of Social Welfare also has the mandate to provide social service support to children and oversee the implementation of laws that protect the rights of children. In spite of the protective measures in ensuring the welfare of all children in Ghana, there are also the following legal mechanisms for law enforcement.

**Table 6.0 Type of Mechanism**

Name of Mechanism	Level of Operation
Women and Juvenile Unit (WAJU), Ghana Police Service, Police Service	This has been set up in all Regional Offices of the Ghana Police Service. WAJU has the mandate to arrest and prosecute anyone found guilty of Child Rights' abuses and offences against women.
Family Tribunal, (Yet to be set up in each district under the District Assembly)	According to the Children's Act (Act 560), a Family Tribunal Shall exercise jurisdiction in matters concerning parentage, custody, access, maintenance of children and shall exercise such powers as are conferred on it by the ACT or under any other enactment.
Child Panel (Yet to be set up in each district under the District Assembly)	This is enshrined in the Children's Act, ACT 560 that each district shall establish a Child Panel as the District Assembly may find it necessary. A Child Panel according to the ACT, shall have non-judicial functions and shall mediate in criminal and civil matters, which concern a child as prescribed therein.

**District Level**

Despite all the existing legislative instruments and mechanisms for ensuring child protection, implementation is not widely enforced. There are no signs that child panels are operating in the country. The Ghana National Commission on Children has asked 40 districts to create District Assembly Sub Committees to deal with issues of children<sup>36</sup>. In some of the districts visited during fieldwork the child sub-committees or "child committees" under the District Assembly were actively engaged in ensuring the rights of the child and monitoring child rights issues. One of the districts visited had created a child sub-committee, which had been active in engaging the District Assembly in issues related to children. The GNCC's efforts to start these committees are an excellent mechanism, which can ensure District Assembly engagement on child rights and protection issues. It will also be a good mechanism for ICI entry and coordination of its activities in the district. Close collaboration with the Ghana National Commission on Children at the regional level would ensure harmonisation and strengthening of child rights activities at the district level.

Some District Assemblies have taken it upon themselves to enact Bye-laws, which protect the rights of the child and ensure the child's full development. The Wassa Amenfi District and Cape Coast District have enacted bye-laws, which have specific relation to child labour issues. Apart from the setting of bye-laws the districts use the Traditional Leaders, Members of Parliament and Assembly members to educate the population on their rights and responsibilities in relation to the bye-laws. Some of the Wassa Amenfi District Assembly bye-laws related to child rights are highlighted below.

<sup>36</sup> Ghana's administration is divided between regional, district and unit levels. There are 10 regional councils in the country, and 110 district assemblies, which are in charge of all the developmental and administrative affairs of the population in their areas.

**Wassa Amenfi District Assembly (Control of Child Abuse, Labour and Health) Bye-Law1994).**

- 3a. any child of school going age should be sent to school by the parents or guardians.
- 3c. Any parent or guardian who contravenes section 3 sub section B of these bye-laws shall be guilty of an offence and on conviction shall be liable to a fine not exceeding 100,000 and shall sign a bond to be a responsible parent or guardian a sum of 500,000 for six months.
- 4a. Any parent or guardian should not expose a child to work that would endanger the child's life or health and should ensure that housemaids and boys benefit from non formal education.
- 4b. Any parent or guardian who contravenes section 4 of these bye-laws shall be guilty of an offence and on conviction shall be liable to a fine not exceeding 100,000 cedis or to imprisonment of two months....

### **5.3 Civil Society and Development Agency Responses**

Apart from these Governmental mechanisms to protect the rights of the child and child labour issues in particular there are several other agencies involved in the Rights of the Child in Ghana, which also have child labour programming as part of their mandate. These include: Unicef's Child Protection Unit, Save the Children Fund (UK) and the Ghana National Coalition on the Rights of the Child. A profile of each programme will be highlighted in the next section.

The IPEC/ILO programme has been launched since 2000 and has been assisting Government to combat and prevent child labour through the Ministry of Manpower and Employment and other social partners. The programme has several programmes including: The National Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour focusing on the worst forms; Combating the Trafficking of Children for Labour Exploitation in West and Central Africa; the Street Children component of the Community based Poverty Reduction Project, and finally the West Africa Cocoa Agriculture Programme to Combat Hazardous and Exploitative Child Labour (WACAP). The Child Labour Unit was established at the same time as the ILO/IPEC country programme in Ghana.

#### **5.3.1 Child Labour Programming in the Cocoa Growing Areas**

There are several child labour interventions operational within the Ghanaian context and across different regions of Ghana. Table 7.0 summarises the main interventions.

These three programmes are the main child labour initiatives within the Ghanaian context with a strategic focus in cocoa growing areas. The programmes are achieving a high level of synergy through the efforts of international and national partners. For instance, STCP is implementing a child labour module within their farmer field schools. Radio dramas are also being designed by YES in collaboration with STCP. There is more room for collaboration particularly in the area of

curriculum development for out of school youth, which will enhance the work of YES and WACAP programming.

Apart from the coordination between the various key agency programmes, the ILO/WACAP Technical Advisory Committee also includes most of the key stakeholders needed for guiding national programming. The Advisory Committee includes: Government Officials from MOWAC, GNCC, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, the STCP coordinator, private sector, Cocobod and Union representatives. The WACAP Advisory committee also includes observers from the NGO community including: Creative Associates, PLAN, UNICEF, CARE and others. ICI should consider using this Technical Advisory Committee or creating a similar working group as a national entry point into programme development and monitoring on-going activities in the country. This is discussed in the recommendations section.

### **WACAP/IPEC**

The WACAP programme has been developing a set of curriculum materials, which include language, maths, religious education, life skills education and arts, guidance and counselling content to enhance learning in and outside the formal school system. A team of resource people from the Ministry of Education, Curriculum Research and Development Division, and Non Formal Education Division developed the materials. The curriculum will be printed and distributed in WACAP target districts. The materials and training will be tested within the next three months (before June, 2004) and may be an effective approach for improving quality within the ICI target areas.

WACAP is also involved in developing a monitoring system for child tracking and a database of children who have been removed from hazardous labour situations in the cocoa growing areas. Children who are “withdrawn” and provided with social assistance will be placed on a national database in order to track them. A monitoring system will also be developed within the communities through the selection of people to monitor child trafficking and child labour activities. This may be a very effective approach to empowering communities and helping them monitor their own child labour issues; it should be considered as a potential approach within ICI target districts and communities.

Another interesting intervention, which may be useful in ICI program start up, is WACAPs plan for training social workers in child rights issues under the Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment. IPEC has developed the curriculum, and plans to train other non-governmental organisations across the country. Fieldwork confirmed that the NGO sector needs much more training in basic child rights conventions, approaches and lobby skills particularly at the district and regional level.

The IPEC programme has also developed a national plan of action on child labour for guiding interventions, identifying roles and responsibilities towards the elimination of child labour practices. The national plan was developed in November 1998 and will be updated by IPEC within the next few months using a time bound framework. ICI should be involved in ensuring that its own interventions are part of the revised national plan on the elimination of child labour in Ghana.

Consultation with the IPEC/WACAP coordinator confirmed that ICI should consider focusing on adjacent districts in the same regions in order to avoid duplication of programming and ensure scale within both programmes. There are a number of NGO's involved in the WACAP programme, which are about to receive support both in the Ashanti and Western regions. ICI should consult closely with IPEC in order to identify the NGO's, which have already received funding, and work through the regional coalitions of NGOs' to ensure an efficient approach to NGO identification at district and regional levels.

### **Youth Education and Skills Programme (YES)<sup>37</sup>**

The YES programme has conducted a baseline survey and several other community based studies in order to establish the scope and needs of the communities targeted for intervention. The findings reveal that there are at least 400 youth out of school in the 15 communities in the Sefwi Wiawso District. The majority of youth have either dropped out of school or have never attended school. The average age of youth found engaged in cocoa farming on a full time basis identified was 14-15 years of age. A large proportion of the 400 out of school youth are from the Northern Regions of Ghana, particularly the Upper East and most have never attended school.

The fifteen communities involved in the YES programme are all migrant farmers. The majority are from the Northern, Upper East, Volta, Eastern, Ashanti regions of the country and very few are indigenous to the Western region. These farmers have settled in Sefwi Wiawso over the last 20-30 years.

The literacy, numeracy and life skills components of the programme are being implemented through Non Formal Education Division (NFED) with the assistance of NFED facilitators and/or local community facilitators; the literacy and life skills curriculum was developed in collaboration with CARE and NFED. A radio programme is creating awareness using public announcements on child labour issues. The key collaborators are also developing a radio drama series in collaboration with the STCP programme and Kuapa Kokoo on child labour issues and sustainable farming practices.

The results of this pilot should be carefully considered in guiding/ informing future ICI programming interventions in cocoa growing areas. The initial fieldwork by the Ghana Field team indicated that key strategies for eliminating harmful practices of child labour in cocoa growing areas should include non-formal education approaches. The final conclusions are that ICI should focus more on improving existing educational institutions in order to prevent the flight of children from poor quality schools and prevent parents from using children on the farms. The focus on improving the quality of education in the formal school system is supported by best practice within child labour programming design. The impact and operational effectiveness of the YES programme will assist ICI decide after the first year of operation whether non-formal approaches to education should also be integrated in the overall strategy.

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<sup>37</sup> This is a USAID supported programme implemented by Creative Associates in collaboration with CARE and PROMAG.

## **Sustainable Tree Crop Programmes (STCP)**

The Sustainable Tree Crop Programme is promoting the efficient and effective use of modern cropping practices such as integrated pest management practices in cocoa growing areas. STCP works closely with the Ghana Cocoa Research Institute (CRIG) and has two master trainers who train farm facilitators in charge of farmer field schools. There are currently 30 field schools operational in 23 communities with approx 780 farmers.

The STCP program develops the capacity of producer organisations by assisting cooperatives function more effectively along democratic governance lines. It works closely with Kuapa Kokoo in order to reach a large number of cooperative groups. The STCP programme is educating farmers on the industry requirements to ensuring good practice on cocoa farms as well as ensuring that farms are free of child labour and use sound environmental practices. They have integrated a child labour component across the farmer field school curriculum. The aim is to raise awareness among farmers concerning child labour issues. The three child labour modules in the programme include: what is child labour, what are good cropping practices and the danger of children carrying heavy loads.

The first phase of STCP was conducted in two districts in the Ashanti Region; the second phase will include support to more farmer field schools in the same target districts. The programme plans to reach another batch of farmers over the next two years period and will end in 2005. Suggestions for ICI include the need to support ongoing programmes for sensitising the people about the importance of sustainable farm practices and support youth with credit, land tenure and skills development. They also suggested that any interventions should be placed within the socio-cultural context of the people and consider the sustainability of the programme.

ICI should work with STCP in the promotion of sustainable agriculture /cocoa farming practices. The STCP cocoa training guide for farmers includes ecologically sound approaches to pest management and soil/preservation, which should be promoted, on a wider scale.

There are also other NGO programmes attempting to eliminate harmful child labour practices. These include the Africa Centre for Human Development's child trafficking work with DANIDA. The Ghana National Coalition on the Rights of the Child (GNCR) have implemented several child labour programmes including the following:

- Child labour within the Tourism Industry -involving counselling and retrieval of children (Central Region)
- Baseline Study of Commercial Sexual Exploitation conducted by Interlove in the Manya Krobo, Tema, Kokrobite, Ada areas of Ghana.
- The removal and reintegration of children in the fishing areas through the agency BEWDA (Yeji)
- Cocoa monitoring to assess the extent of child labour in the cocoa growing areas through the IPEC programme.

**Table 7.0: Programme Interventions across Districts**

Name of Programme	Districts of intervention (Cocoa Growing area)	Components of the programme	Time frame of Programme
<p><b>WACAP Programme</b>  (ILO / IPEC programme)</p>	<p><u>Ashanti Region:</u> Atwima Amansie West <u>Western Region:</u> Sefwi Wiawso <u>Eastern Region:</u> Suhum Kraboa-Coaltar</p> <p>Aiming to assist 1,000 children over the next five years.</p>	<p>Project is aimed at the prevention and elimination of hazardous child labour in the cocoa and other selected agriculture sub sectors. Key areas of action planning include: Capacity building of social partners, intensive awareness raising campaigns, comprehensive package of social protection measures including counselling and training, and cost effective child labour and monitoring system.</p> <p>National Steering Committee in place. Collaborating with STCP in same districts.</p>	<p>Launched in July, 2003 (37 months programme).</p>
<p><b>Youth Education and Skills Project (YES)</b>  (Creative Associates, CARE and PROMAG)</p>	<p>Sefwi Wiawso District (15 Communities)</p>	<p>Addressing the following components: Community mobilization/sensitisation Develop and test curriculum for out-of- school youth (literacy, life skills and worker safety) Formation of Youth Clubs Train Educational Facilitators to facilitate non-formal education programme. Radio programme for sensitising the population.</p>	<p>One-year pilot ending in May, 2004.</p>
<p><b>Sustainable Tree Crop Programme (STCP)</b>  (IITA Programme)</p>	<p><u>Ashanti Region:</u> Atwima Amansie West</p> <p>Working in districts involving between 30 farmer field schools in 23 communities</p>	<p>The aim of the programme is to improve the economic and social well-being of smallholders and the environmental sustainability of tree crop farmers. The main programme components include: Strengthening farmer and community based groups, technology dissemination and research, policy change and implementation, market system and information system development and labour and social systems.</p>	<p>2001 –2005 (Pilot Phase). Ending in September 2005</p>

Name of Programme	Districts of intervention (Cocoa Growing area)	Components of the programme	Time frame of Programme
		STCP is implementing a child labour module within the farmer field schools and is also assisting the YES programme to develop radio programming.	

The **General Agricultural Workers Union (GAWU)** has been successful in negotiating a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) with the Ghana Oil Palm Development Company. Contained in the agreement are the following clauses (ILO, Bitter Harvest 2002):

‘The management is committed to the eradication of child labour in and around the plantations, and within the country as a whole’

‘The management shall, in conjunction with the union take necessary action to ensure that child labour is absent from within and around the plantation.’

The collective bargaining agreement offers GAWU the opportunity to:

- Share information with management on child labour issues at the plantation, around the plantation, in the Agricultural sector and within the country;
- Undertake joint research on child labour;
- Conduct training and education;
- Institute reward and sanction schemes with particular reference to casual, smallholders and out growers;
- Deepen awareness about child labour and its manifold linkages with child rights, the rights of women, workers rights, human rights and sustainability;
- Unearth the casual linkages between child labour and cost-saving production and management methods;
- Campaign and advocate for national legislation and policy formulation.

## 5.4 Institutional and Policy Gaps

Ghana has a good track record of progressive laws and regulations that seek the welfare and protection of children. In spite of all these there still remain identifiable gaps in institutional operations and functions. There are some Ministries, which have overlapping responsibilities to oversee the issues of child rights. The Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment (MMDE) and the Ministry for Women and Children’s Affairs (MOWAC) with the subsequent conversion of Ghana National Commission on Children into a department under MOWAC both have responsibilities for ensuring the protection of child rights.

The Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) has mainly focused on the rights of adults and could focus more on child rights with particular

reference to child labour. Although CHRAJ<sup>38</sup> made some inputs to the Trade Union's labour law in relation to ILO convention Nos. 132 and 182, apart from that level, it has not done enough to sensitise the Ghanaian society on the abolition of all forms of child labour.

The Department of Social Welfare, within the Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment has the main responsibility for ensuring the welfare of every child and the task of implementing key policy requirements of the law. Yet, the department is one of the most poorly resourced government departments in the country, which makes it an ineffective institutional structure for implementing the law and also participating in administrative and judicial procedures affecting the child. For instance, the procedural arrangements in juvenile justice administration are seriously undermined by the inadequate number of probation officers who are expected to be at each point to bring about the necessary linkages from arrest to sentencing.

Very little has been done to halt labour practices that are harming children in the country. The lack of coordinated action by state and non-state actors is one of the factors responsible for the continued existence of child labour practices and is one of the gaps identified in the fight against child trafficking in the country. (*Ghana National Coalition on the Rights of The Child [GNCRC] 2003, State Party CRC Report*).

## **Conclusions and the Way Forward.**

Ghana has made some progress in protecting the Rights of the Child, in terms of passing the appropriate legislation. Yet, enforcement is weak. Legal provisions for child survival and complementary policy initiatives have been introduced to ensure child welfare but they are not yet being implemented successfully. State institutions that have the responsibility to enforce the law and /or implement the policy outcomes of the laws are ineffective in protecting the rights of persons for whom they are intended. Child Labour has been legislated within the Children's Act but compliance is a problem.

Ghana is experiencing a situation where most children drop out of school and fall prey to child labour even before the approved age of 15. The Children's Act recommends light work for children of thirteen years or below. However one is yet to establish how "light work" is defined within the country context. There is therefore the need to clearly define and conceptualise what constitutes light work for the purposes of enforcement and implementation of existing laws.

Despite all the legal provisions, it is also worrying to indicate that little practical action targeted at improving the conditions of children, has been taken to directly boost their standard of living and survival. The most likely and feasible way forward is to strengthen mechanisms at the district and community level for protecting children's rights. This would involve the strengthening and activation of District Assembly sub-committees focused on children and also the involvement of traditional leaders in the education of the population regarding legislation and bye-laws from the district

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<sup>38</sup>Telephone Interview with Mr. Bosompem of CHRAJ Public Relations Unit on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2004

assemblies. It would also involve educating Assembly members and other district civil society stakeholders including NGO's, on the provision of the Children's Act of Ghana (Act 560) in order to ensure its implementation and adaptation by districts.

Traditional leaders, parliamentarians and the cocoa private sector (particularly buying agencies) at the district and regional levels should be educated on the rights of the child, particularly as they relate to child labour standards and provisions. Innovative ways should be found to educate the population and key stakeholders in order to improve child welfare and protection. The strengthening of the Department of Social Welfare and the Ghana National Commission on Children at the district level are integral to the process and should be at the forefront of this change process. There is also the need to improve public knowledge of the existence of the laws that have been so well written (GNCRS 2003, State Party CRC Report). Awareness creation is important, as indeed is the need to mount continuous education for the implementers and enforcers of the law.

## **6.0 Strategic and Programmatic Options for ICI**

### **6.1 A Causal Analysis of Child Labour in Ghana**

The causes of child labour are complex and multi dimensional requiring depth of analysis and context to assist inquirers understand the micro, meso and macro dimensions of the problem. The Ghana field research also revealed that the causes are often interrelated and can be understood from different perspectives depending on the level of analysis (i.e. community, district, national or international). For instance, the diagram below is based on a district view of the problem, which emerged from local level consultations.

The views of local NGO's working in cocoa producing areas assisted the research team validate the causal diagram presented below. Several of the stakeholders felt that the causes of child labour were deeply rooted in the patterns of agricultural practice, poverty and socio-cultural norms, which are affecting parental behaviour. They also felt that the socio-cultural dimension particularly in the Akan speaking areas is influenced by matrilineal systems of inheritance whereby fathers' often do not take responsibility for their children's upkeep, leaving the main burden on the mother. The local NGO's explained that these practices, although having existed for centuries, have been transformed in the modern age, manifesting themselves in an attitude and behaviour pattern among parents, which does not always demonstrate responsible parenthood. Many of the key informants in the cocoa growing areas complained that in the Western Region children are left to their "own devices" often fending for themselves and feeding themselves from a very early age. Once the child leaves school he/she is responsible for their own upkeep. Examples observed and interviews with children in the areas confirmed that lack of parental support is widespread particularly in family's which have broken down due to divorce or separation.

The fieldwork revealed a wide array of ethnic communities living as a microcosm in cocoa growing areas. Muslim, Christian and African religious beliefs as well as ethnic traditional practices were interspersed in these areas. Underlying many of the socio-cultural beliefs and practices is the aim of family survival within often harsh socio-economic contexts. The practice of engaging children on the farm is a reality which cannot be ignored but was found to be a normal farming practice and at times a survival strategy. Each member of the family including children are expected to play their role in overcoming difficultly economic conditions. The child will have to lend a helping hand by fetching water, going for firewood and working on the farm as a natural contribution to the family's sustenance.

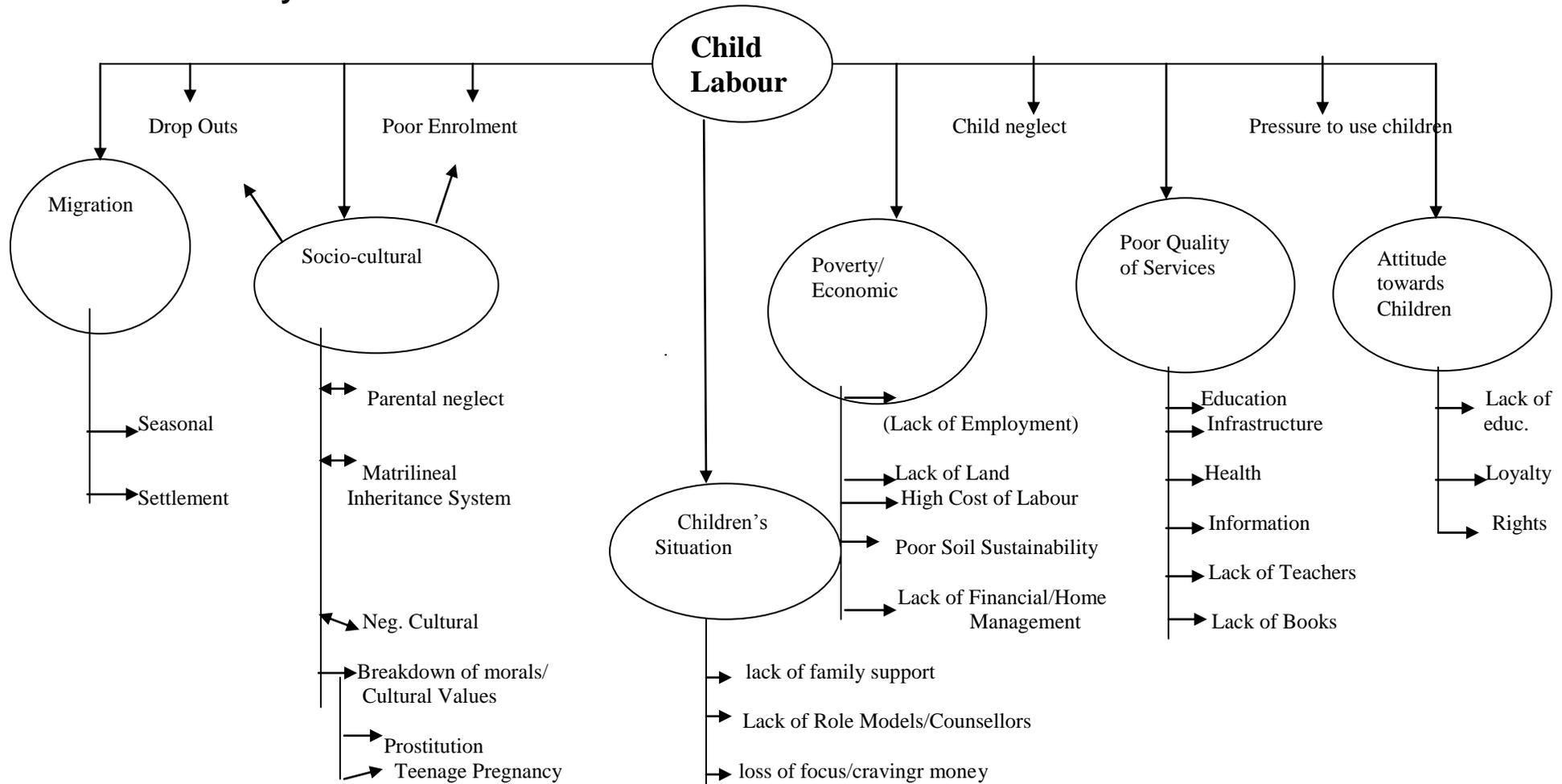
Closely related to this is the attitude and behaviour of parents within the family setting. Children are seen as reliable and loyal helpers particularly when a parent is sick or cannot work on the farm. The parents were also found to take pride in sharing their occupational skills with the child and helping the child learn an alternative form of livelihood to that which was offered by the formal education system. Several of our focus group discussions with parents confirmed that they did

not have confidence that the formal education system was preparing children for a future with guaranteed jobs; parents believed that farming was a reliable alternative which must be learned in case of hardship and failure within the school system.

Apart from the economic, socio-cultural dimensions of abusive child labour is the poor quality of educational services and attitudes of parents toward these services. The alternative for the child to working on the farm is attending school. When schools were not exhibiting a high degree of quality, the school was not seen as a reliable vehicle for preparing the child for adulthood. In communities where survival is important the question of ensuring the child is skilled enough to take care of him or herself within the family and community is extremely important.



## Causal Analysis of Child Labour



## 6.2 Best Practice and Key Strategies for Reducing Child Labour in Cocoa Growing Areas

Creating awareness concerning the rights of the child, and improving rural livelihoods and educational quality are key preventive approaches for reducing child labour in the cocoa growing areas of Ghana. The causes of child labour are numerous but often relate to the inability of farmers to pay for labour costs and their belief that using the child on the farm will help prepare them for the future. In cases where the school restricts the practice of using children on the cocoa farms and the teachers are regularly attending schools, parents are less likely to take their children out of school during the intensive cocoa growing seasons. The introduction of more sustainable farming practices will also reduce the need for labour, and the use of children in carrying out dangerous farm practices (i.e. pesticide use).

### Best Practice in Child Labour Programming

The ILO best practice within the arena of child labour identifies three main areas for any programme to consider:

- Creating the necessary conditions (Policies and Laws, public awareness and legitimacy from the bottom up)
- Building capacity of NGOs and Government stakeholders
- Direct action involving the reintegration of school and the family

#### Advocacy and Awareness Creation Programmes

- Ensuring that convention on the elimination of the worst forms of child labour is widely understood by key actors in Government
- Engaging with industry and socially minded agencies at the national level (involving civil society take up the issue)
- Securing buy in to ensure education for all is upheld
- Ensuring that the Child Rights Act involves the instruments for protecting children from forced labour and welfare systems
- Legal agencies to protect the rights of the child are properly remunerated (particularly the Police Services, WAJU)

#### Change Agent and Family Education Models

- Supporting farmers with labour saving techniques for cocoa
- Farmers school models (child labour module)

#### Improving Educational Options for Children Engaged in Child Labour

- Flexible educational approaches which complement the formal education system
- Enabling children to engage in supporting the family and at the same time attain a basic right to education through complementary education programmes (Olinga Foundation, and School for Life models)
- Scholarship Fund for children particularly girls who are migrants and have been forced to support their families in the rural areas while they lose out on school.

(Adapted from the ILO Best Practice In Child Labour Series)

One of the recurring themes throughout the fieldwork was the need to consider how to improve sustainable cropping systems and rural livelihoods. The vast majority of farmers in the cocoa growing areas are dependent on cocoa sales and complained that income was not enough to sustain the family. Many had large families and were not farming large enough plots of land to sustain even the minimum family food requirements throughout the year. These same findings were confirmed in Ghana's Social Assessment (Korboe, 1998) and many other Ghanaian poverty studies conducted over the last ten years (DFID/MOFA, 2001a; World Bank, 1999).

What is surprising and not fully understood is that cocoa growers, one of Ghana's leading export producers and cash crop earners, are also within the same category as food crop farmers who experience long periods where they are unable to properly feed the family often due to small farm sizes and high dependency ratios. The Ghana field research confirmed that cocoa farmers, although they may be marginally better off according to the Ghana Living Standards Survey reports, are also more dependent on earnings from cash income making them vulnerable to the fluctuations in food prices and dependent on importing food into their households, since they are focused on cash cropping.

With the introduction of high-tech systems of agriculture, cocoa farmers may be able to produce more, increase their yields and farm throughout the year. The question remains: how sustainable will this farming system be over the course of the next 10 years? Interviews with the Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG) do not provide the answer. They are aware of the risks and are promoting alternatives to "high-tech" which are more organic in nature but have also been mandated by Government to assist with the introduction of "high tech" across the country. Much more research is needed to assist cocoa farming communities analyse and consider sustainable cocoa farming techniques such as integrated pest management in order to ensure better livelihoods for their children and families. The improvement of rural livelihoods will be one of the most important interventions in order to prevent more Ghanaian children from becoming victims of child labour or child trafficking.

### **Creating Farmers Associations for sustainable agriculture approaches**

Interviews with the **Ghana Organic Farmers Network** also revealed that there are several types of interventions that could minimise the use of child labour on the farm and ensure the child's safety. If introduced these farming techniques could improve sustainable approaches to rural livelihoods minimising the practice of child labour. Some of these techniques include the following:

- Using the Macuna Bean as a nitrogen fixing plant in order to ward off weeds at the bottom of the cocoa plants. This nitrogen fixing plant also reduces the number of weeds in the cocoa farms and can be eaten.
- Using "Neem" as a natural pesticide, which is not harmful compared to other synthetic pesticides.

Over the last five years GOAN has established over 500 organic farmers groups with over 5000 organic farmers in 10 regions of the country; they were originally partnered with the PBC in order to market organic cocoa but have since stopped due to the closing of the company. GOAN uses the farmer field school approach and has

had promising results in improving both cocoa and food crop production in the areas of operation.

Another promising approach to improving the lives of cocoa farmers is being implemented by the **Kuapa Kokoo Ltd**, which has reached over 46,000 farmers throughout the cocoa growing areas of the country. The programme has established over 896 societies/ co-operatives and has a viable co-operative programme, which purchases cocoa from these farmers. Visits to the field indicate the need to strengthen the co-operative mechanisms and ensure that farmers are able to tap their social assistance programmes (Kuapa Kokoo Annual Report, 2003).

The Kuapa Kokoo system is a model for ensuring that all the needs of the farmers are taken into account including access to credit and savings facilities throughout the year. Kuapa Kokoo Credit Union has made impressive strides through their partnership with the Ghana Co-operative Credit Union. Last year, Kuapa Kokoo Credit Union mobilised over 12.8 billion cedis with an average savings per member at 751,000cedis. They disbursed 20.7 billion cedis in loans to their members. They have a loan recovery rate of 81%, which was a significant increase from the year before.

Kuapa Kokoo Ltd has also established a strong social assistance programme through the Kuapa Kokoo Trust with the aim of supporting community development projects such as: water supplies, and educational structures. Kuapa Kokoo Social Development officers are active in the 24 cocoa growing areas of operation and provide support for the Kuapa Kokoo credit and savings union; the officers also provide their clients with training in co-operative development and income generation programmes. Socodev, a Canadian NGO, has also been involved in assisting Kuapa examine its programmes and strengthen its co-operative programmes.

The Kuapa Kokoo Company is also implementing a women's income generation programme which is working with the Cocoa Research Institute (CRIG) and assists women's groups develop viable products with their cocoa waste. The programme is very successful and requires a larger injection of funding to scale up activities. There is a very high demand for the facility which is improving the lives of many of families in cocoa growing areas. The women's income generating programme provides loans to women who are linked to Kuapa Kokoo.

### **Strengthening Co-operative Systems of Agriculture: Nnobia**

The Ghana field research confirmed that the "Nnobia" system of cooperative farming is providing farmers with a regular source of labour during labour intensive periods of farming (weeding, planting and harvesting). The system is an indigenous method of improving access to labour using a co-operative system of self-help. Groups of people gather together to systematically farm each other's land from weeding to the harvesting of the cocoa. Two of the communities where "nnobia" was being used, had reduced the need for child labour on the farms. Some communities complained that the system is dying out and needed to be reintroduced.

Apart from the "nnobia" farming system, the promotion of co-operative farming at the community level to improve the efficiency of marketing, improve sale prices and

collectively purchase inputs is also needed. Co-operative farming has not been widely accepted due to the poor incentives for farmers at the market place.

### **Improving the Quality of Education in Schools in the cocoa growing areas.**

Another strategy, which appears key to reducing and sustaining the elimination of child labour in cocoa growing areas, is the improvement of the quality of education in rural areas. Parents are more inclined to supporting and keeping their children in school when there is quality of education being offered at community level. The need to sensitise teachers and promote moral leadership/behaviour change strategies within the teaching profession is needed to improve quality. Another approach to improving quality and teacher retention is the support for Community Based Volunteer Teachers or “Rural Education Volunteers”. This is a well-tested approach to improving quality in rural deprived communities (USAID, 2003) and is being used by several communities in northern Ghana. A few communities visited during field work also suggested that they are willing to support community volunteers to assist in the teaching of their children and a few communities are already sponsoring their own SSS graduates to work in schools as pupil teachers for a modest level of remuneration. The Rural Education Volunteer programme requires that the SSS graduates come from the communities and be trained in basic literacy and numeracy techniques. Additionally, the community remunerates the REV’s by paying for their examination fees and books for Teacher Training College or by paying for their re-take of exams for entrance at the University Level.

There is also a great need for children’s reading books in most of the communities. The establishment of small school /community libraries would be a great contribution to the achievement of literacy and numeracy among children in the cocoa growing areas of Ghana. There are a few NGO’s operating community based library schemes, which could also facilitate the process<sup>39</sup>. These programmes involved the community helping to establish libraries as part of the school, could also assist out of school youth with their reading and writings skills and serve as resource centres and educational learning centres. Community libraries are providing alternative places for youth to study in the evening and acquire the habit of reading. They are also proving as a key intervention to empower girls and ensure they are able to achieve higher levels of formal education. Several have been set up by FAWE to encourage girls’ education in deprived rural areas across the country.

### **Improving Youth Skills and Leadership within the Communities**

The provision of basic training for youth to serve as peer counsellors/resource people for their communities is needed as an important strategy in the campaign against child labour. Some communities are already sponsoring youth to attend vocational skills training programmes and come back to serve their communities as resource people at the Junior Secondary School level. Much more community initiative is needed to uplift the rural population and provide viable opportunities for rural youth in cocoa growing areas. A core team of role models sponsored and supported by ICI to help train and mentor other youth is needed. ICI should

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<sup>39</sup> The Foundation for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) is operating several community libraries across the country.

consider providing sponsorship support for a core team of youth from each district in order to expose rural youth to basic social mobilisation skills, cooperative formation, peer counselling, income generation options and agricultural skills. A strong gender component and gender balance should be achieved within this initiative.

Peer counselling and youth leadership programmes for youth would ensure that a large group of youth from across the target districts are actively engaged in their communities' development and act as role models for other children/youth in the community. Training programmes by the National Youth Council should be included in such a programme and assist ICI identify and harness the youth in each intervention district. The NYC in collaboration with other youth oriented NGO's should train potential youth leaders in all the communities and develop a curriculum which will include moral leadership, money management, life-skills training and reproductive health information. A major incentive for youth leaders in the communities should be excursion tours to other parts of Ghana in order to share ideas with other young leaders. None of the rural development programmes or community awareness campaigns will be sustained or implemented unless youth development is a significant aspect of ICI's strategy at district level. There are approximately eight youth leadership institutes across the country, which are running programmes, which could train promising young people from the districts to serve in their communities as youth leaders. The National Youth Service Scheme could also play a significant role in such a programme.

### **6.3 Potential Gaps in Programming**

There are several gaps within the ongoing child labour programmes mentioned in Section 5.3, which are related to the "prevention side" of child labour and child trafficking issues in Ghana. The review of ongoing programming and projects suggests that there is still a need to provide more social education and public awareness campaigning against the harmful child labour practices throughout the country. This would include a stronger focus of programming in the child sending communities (Upper East and Northern) as well as the communities, which are receiving children (Western and Ashanti). A more preventive approach would also consider the socio-economic and socio-cultural context of child labour within Ghana and look at more sustainable solutions. Primarily this would involve a consultative phase of start up activities focused at district and communities levels engaging district assemblies, traditional leaders, farmers and civil society stakeholders in the proposed districts.

The following are some of the programmatic gaps and potential areas for intervention identified during the programme mapping exercise.

- Consider more sustainable livelihood approaches, which include a more thorough participatory analysis of the needs of cocoa farmers in order to ensure food security throughout the year.
- Consider culturally sensitive, community development and moral leadership approaches which engage parents and community members in reflective processes on parental control, discipline and parental care in order to curb

teenage pregnancy, truancy, alcoholism, school dropout, HIV/AIDS and child labour.

- Support counselling and social services in cocoa growing areas in order to guide youth and provide career counselling for JSS children at the JSS 2 and JSS 3 levels.
- Educate, train and empower youth leaders, civil society, District Assembly, traditional authorities and cocoa purchasing companies on the rights of the child and the child labour conventions; review the impact of harmful child labour practices at the district and regional levels.
- Develop mass media and information campaigns on a district and regional wide scale.

## 6.4 Strategic Options for ICI in Ghana

This section considers in more depth the strategic options for ICI and the potential areas of intervention in light of ICI's mandate and purpose. Considering ICI's added value as a relatively new international NGO working to eliminate child labour in the cocoa growing areas of the world. ICI's mandate is to:

“... oversee and sustain efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labour and forced labour in the growing and processing of cocoa beans and their derivative products. (ICI Mission Statement).”

ICI was established to “ support field projects and act as a clearinghouse for best practices that help eliminate abusive child and forced labour in the growing of cocoa.” It was also created to develop a joint action programme of research, information exchange and action to enforce internationally recognised abusive child and forced labour standards in cocoa growing areas. ICI is expected to determine the most appropriate, practical and independent means of monitoring and public reporting in compliance with these labour standards. ([www.afrol.com/news2002/civ021\\_gha\\_cocoa\\_labour.htm](http://www.afrol.com/news2002/civ021_gha_cocoa_labour.htm))

ICI evolved from a collaborative process between industry, labour and civil society groups. This places it in a unique position to work with private, public and civil society stakeholders in the management and implementation of change. One of the greatest contributions ICI could make on the international arena is in the area of fair pricing and also the development of a code of conduct for stakeholders involved in the industry. Fair pricing is important since most of the child labour issues are related to the economic conditions and livelihood strategies cocoa farmers are using to secure their families welfare. An industry code of conduct is an important focus in order to ensure that farmers are aware of the negative impact of using children on their farms if they do not recognise the ILO standards of what defines hazardous forms of child labour in contexts where they are being used on the cocoa farm.

A balanced intervention strategy, which places the interests of industry and at the same time, ensures social justice is called for. This will require that lessons learned in the field be shared with the highest levels of industry stakeholders and vice versa. Taking example from the Tobacco industry... social justice issues such as child labour can afford the opportunity for industry to reflect on its practices and consider the impact that pricing policies will have on a developing country, on a cocoa growing area, on a family and/or child. It also provides the opportunity to bring the world to the doorstep of the chocolate industry using strong socio-economic and culturally based approaches to research. It also involves the need for industry to consider the reasons it is interested in the issues and see how far they are willing to take action.

At the national level, the issue of child labour is extremely sensitive and will require a higher level of ‘openness’ if real and lasting change is to take place. Part of the reason for a district-based approach will be to learn from the grassroots and feed the lessons up to the national level. Already District Assemblies are taking action, which need to be highlighted at national level once more momentum is built.<sup>40</sup>

The results of the ICI strategy must aim at improving children’s well-being and the families ability to improve their own socio-economic context of the child. ICI’s interventions in Ghana should involve some intervention at the national level but the main focus of their work should be at the district, community and even family level in order to gain experience in working with the cocoa growing areas of the country through key stakeholder collaboration as well as district and civil society agency engagement.

## **National Level**

The Ghana National Commission on Children (GNCC) has been able to develop the Child Rights Act (Act 560) but much more work is needed in order to operationalise the instruments at the district and community level. There is also the need to use the National Child Labour Plan of Action as a framework for coordinating different interventions at the national level and informing key stakeholders of intended areas of intervention in order to avoid duplication.<sup>41</sup> ICI should work closely with the IPEC Office in Ghana to review this plan of action with key stakeholders and revitalise the arms of government, which are currently involved in its implementation. Other national interventions should include:

- Participating on a national steering committee as observer for the WACAP project
- Ensuring that national legislation for the rights of the child is widely disseminated through the media and other organisations involved in social marketing campaigns such as the Ghana Social Marketing Campaign.
- Conducting more research to establish the incidence, causes and impact of child labour in the cocoa growing areas of the country.

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<sup>40</sup> The DFID Livelihood Programme in Brong Ahafo is a good example of how a district based collaboration; facilitation of key stakeholders and policy change can work. The “Brong Ahafo District Support Programme” has many lessons, which ICI can use in the design of their approaches at the district level.

<sup>41</sup> Several stakeholders within Government including the Labour Unit, the Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment, the National Commission on Children, UNICEF and other key stakeholders formulated this plan of action.

- Sharing research findings with key government, union/civil society and particularly, private sector stakeholders.

There are several areas of child labour in which issues concerning very harmful practices are being documented particularly within the small mining and fishing industries of Ghana. Consulting with key stakeholders at the national level will assist ICI engage both state and non state actors in dialogue concerning some of Ghana's worst forms of child labour and strengthening both the legal and institutional frameworks and agencies who are to monitor and control these practices. National stakeholder platforms can be best established through existing networks such as the Ghana National Coalition on the Rights of the Child, and the Ghana Commission on Children and the WACAP Technical Advisory Committee.

Another mechanism, which should be considered, is the creation of an in-country (Ghana Based) coalition of industry stakeholders including representatives from all the purchasing companies and Cocobod representatives. This type of mechanism could provide a stronger, more comprehensive voice for industry and allow more efficient collaboration with cocoa purchasing companies. It will also allow NGO's and other key stakeholders to have a common dialogue for sharing information and collecting feedback from industry.

### **District Level Interventions**

The identification of lead NGO's to manage the overall programme on a district wide basis is essential. The regional NGO coalitions and the Regional Representatives of the Ghana Coalition on the Rights of the Child will be essential in this process. The identification of lead government agencies is also important but should be established once ICI works closer with the WACAP steering committee and finalises its intervention strategy. For instance in some districts the National Youth Council Office, Department for Civic Education or the Department for Community Development may be well equipped to handle ICI collaboration.

The first year of implementation should aim to establish District Sub Committees on Child Protection and Child Rights, which contain a host of different agencies, and key stakeholders in order not to alienate any one-district agency. This committee should provide support and overall guidance to the implementation of the ICI programming at the district and community level assisting ICI staff conduct poverty mapping in potential areas for intervention and organising regular consultations on the progress of the programme. This approach will also ensure district ownership in the long term.

An ICI district facilitator is best placed to initiate this process; the ICI facilitator should be based at the district level and report to a national ICI coordinator. In some districts the National Youth Council Office may be an important agency to liase with along with the Civic Education Office. This district-based strategy would minimise cost since many of the NGO's are operational at the district level and they are already familiar with the communities in their areas.

## Community Levels

All community interventions should be facilitated through the assistance of the District Assembly organs such as the National Youth Council, the Department of Community Development and NGO's active at the district level. Basic facilitation and monitoring support should be provided in order to mobilise these institutions to support the community development programmes described below. Where these bodies are not available the local NGO sector may also be engaged. The initial programmes should involve a process of community analysis using PRA/PLA techniques in order to identify the key issues surrounding improving child well being and development within the community and identification of key community groupings and associations.

Another cross cutting intervention, which should be pursued, in all communities and at district levels is the sensitisation process. Radio programming which is developed by the STCP and YES programmes could be scaled up to the ICI districts since radio drama has proven very effective in helping to sensitise communities. Other techniques such as youth drama groups should also be supported to stage local community drama's using approaches such as interactive community drama whereby the community see the drama and then react to the solutions.

## Start Up Activities

A district-based approach in any one district in each of the target regions should include the development of mechanisms and awareness creation activities. The focus should be on two key programmes designed and implemented in selected districts in the cocoa growing areas. Areas where there are high levels of cocoa production and migrant farming communities should be particularly targeted.

The first ICI programme focus is designed to improve the livelihoods of cocoa farming families, particularly female-headed households. It is aimed at improving the livelihood practices and income generation programmes to sustain children and their families within the cocoa growing area year round.<sup>42</sup> The programme component should include the following interventions:

- Introduction of more effective agricultural farming practices particularly related to food crop farming (through the introduction of farmer field school models with support from GUAN).
- Women's income generating programmes with linkages to micro credit institutions and cooperative cocoa programmes such as Kuapa Kokoo, should be promoted<sup>43</sup>.
- Leadership training and support for youth (particularly girls) and women's organisations which exist at community level to sensitise farmers on new farming

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<sup>42</sup> Women should be a key target group for all the programmes since they are usually responsible for the welfare of the child and often pay the school fees, provide the health and social benefits to children particularly in areas such as the Akan speaking areas. Women are also known to use funds generated from income/micro finance projects to assist the family compared to their male counterparts. (Sutherland Addy, 2003).

<sup>43</sup> Women are a primary agent of social change and are also most vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. Their socio-economic empowerment should be cross cutting issue of any strategy.

techniques, financial /home management, co-operative farming and *nnoboa* systems of farming.

- Training in alternative livelihoods such as those which do not demand high level of labour inputs and are diversified in the communities (mushroom farming, bee-keeping, snail rearing etc)
- Promotion and provision of credit to youth involved in the savings and credit groups, which are set up through the Ghana Co-operative Credit Union or Kuapa Cocoa society.

The second ICI programme focus should aim at improving the quality of education within the basic school system (primary and JSS). This would include the following:

- Potential co financing of rural education volunteer schemes to engage SSS graduates, particularly girls, as volunteer teachers.
- Training of volunteer teachers where communities have agreed to support the salaries of such teachers in the basic literacy and numeracy techniques.
- Training of basic schoolteachers in literacy and numeracy techniques particularly in the local languages in order to improve their reading abilities of children.
- Provision of literacy and numeracy primers for children in the primary and JSS level system for programming to take off (at least 50-60 books per school).
- Provision of a basic supply of reading books in both twi and english languages for all school/communities, which are able to provide a library, space and build bookshelves.
- Training of peer educators within the community (upper JSS level, JSS and SSS graduates in the community) in order to counsel youth and act as peer educators in the areas of career guidance, counselling in reproductive health etc.
- Provision of a community education fund, which is matched, with ICI funds in order to sponsor youth to vocational and technical training institutes in return for one year of service as community volunteers teachers.

Non-formal education programmes should be considered after the YES programme has completed its pilot phase. NGO's working in the Western Region also confirmed that support to the formal education would achieve higher results in sustaining children in the education system since families were not confident in the investment they were making in the formal system.

Approaches to empowering communities through participatory analysis/reflection, improving the quality of education through teacher motivation and provision of rural education volunteers and finally, improving and ensuring sustainable rural livelihood practices are many of the same strategies being used to manage the scourge of HIV/AIDS. The Western Region of Ghana has a high vulnerability towards HIV/AIDS due to its close proximity to Cote D'ivoire, migration patterns and extremely high level of movement within farming communities and the education sector. Reports of girl child prostitution at the community level are disturbing when one considers the lack of parental care and other contextual factors such as poverty, which may be contributing to the situation. ICI's approach should at all times consider the positive contribution it can make in preventing the spread of HIV /AIDS and at the same time

assist communities and families plan to improve their social and economic conditions in order to prevent HIV/AIDS from spreading.<sup>44</sup>

## 6.5 Geographic Areas for Intervention

The ICI programme should be a phased approach targeting three of the highest cocoa growing regions of the country in the first phase. Communities, which are high cocoa producing areas and contain a high proportion of migrant farmers, should be given priority for ICI programming. ICI programming strategy should consider intervention in districts, which have not had other child rights programming available in order to broaden the coverage areas (i.e. Western, Ashanti and Brong Ahafo and parts of the Central Region). IPEC felt that ICI should consider working in the Brong Ahafo region since not as many agencies are operating there. The Central region should also be considered due to its high incidence of poverty based on the Ghana Living Standards Survey.

Districts, which are adjacent or nearby the STCP/ WACAP programmes should be targeted. Final selection should be carried out in consultation with the WACAP steering committee; consultation should also include the executive members of the NGO networks in the three regions (i.e. WERENGO, ASHANGO and Brong Ahafo NGO network).

Table 8 contains a list of geographic areas for intervention, which can be used for initial district identification and analysis. Poverty mapping with the District Planning and Co-ordination Unit of the Assembly should also be a key step to initial selection of areas for district targeting. Table 8 presents the areas where there is a large proportion of cocoa being grown and where migrant populations are also present. The table also identifies areas where there are very few interventions on child labour activities to date by the key agencies.

**Table 8.0: Cocoa Growing Areas with no Donor Interventions**

Region	District <sup>45</sup>	Particular Pockets to look at within the District <sup>46</sup>
Western Region	Juabeso Bia	Adabokrom, Asempanaye, Bonsu Nkwanta, Essam, Fosukrom, Juabeso, Kasse (Very high cocoa growing area with large proportion of deprived communities). Should be given top priority since no interventions are present and adjacent to Sefwi Wiawso.
	Sefwi Wiawso	Bekwai, Asawinso, Wiawso, Nsawora, Akontombra (35 needy communities from poverty mapping exercise in the district. There are at least six other zones within the district, which have not been touched by PROMAG/YES support.
	Wassa Amenfi	Agona, Samaraboi, Nyamendae, Achechere,

<sup>44</sup> UNAIDS links the spread of HIV/AIDS to poverty within the family, community and district context.

<sup>45</sup> The Districts do not include the STCP and WACAP Target Districts.

<sup>46</sup> See also GIS maps and annex of cocoa districts for a complete list of potential areas.

Region	District <sup>45</sup>	Particular Pockets to look at within the District <sup>46</sup>
		Sompri, Amuni, Anakum, Manso
	Aowin-Suaman	Enchi, Dadieso
	Bibiani AnhWiawso	Debiso, Bekwai, AnhWiawso
	Wassa West	Bogoso, Tarkwa, Bogosso, Prestia, Kofijan and Honey Valley, Tarkwa
Brong Ahafo	Asutifi,	Hwidiem
	Dormaa	Nkrankwanta
	Sunyani	Sunyani
	Berekum	Berekum
Ashanti	Ahafo Ano North	Tepa
	Ahafo Ano South	Mankranso
	Ashanti Akim North	Konongo
	Ashanti Akim South	Juaso
	Sechere East	Effiduase
	Amansie East	Bekwai
	Adansi West	Obuasi
	Adansi East	New Edubiase
	Offinso	Offinso
Eastern Region	East Akim	Kibi/ Tafo
	West Akim	Asamankese
	South Birim	Oda
	Kwabirirem	Kade
	Kwahu South	Nkawkaw
Central Region	Upper Denkyira	Diaso, Dunkwa
	Lower Denkyira	Twifo Praso
	Wassa Mpohor East	Ateiku
	Assin	Fosu, Assin Breku,
	Asikuma Odoben	Breman Asikuma,
	Agona	Agona Swedru

(Based on Consultation with WERENGO and PROMAG, and Cocobod Data, 2004)

The WERENGO NGO Coalition in the Western region considered Juabeso Bia a district of great need<sup>47</sup>. They felt that this is a highly deprived area engaged in cocoa farming with a high incidence of child labour prevalence within the cocoa farming communities.

### Geographic Mapping

A detailed map of all potential locations is available in Annex 8. The vast majority of interventions are focused in the Sefwi Wiawso District, which is the highest cocoa producing area in the country. The two STCP/WACAP district areas are in the Ashanti Region (i.e. Atwima and Amansie West). Consultations with key stakeholders and NGO's have suggested that ICI interventions focus outside the WACAP targeted districts. Adjacent districts in the Brong Ahafo, Ashanti and Western regions where a spread effect in programming could be felt, should be considered priority. This approach would also avoid duplication and allow for new programming approaches to naturally develop.

<sup>47</sup> According to PROMAG the Juabeso Bia District is more deprived than Sefwi Wiawso.

The Geographic Mapping Institute (CERGIS) of the Department of Geography, University of Ghana developed the maps, which are presented in Annex 8. The maps identify the current areas with highest production in the country. The maps are designed using Cocoa Board boundaries called "cocoa growing districts" and District Assembly Boundaries. They are based on the latest cocoa production data from the Cocoa Marketing Board (January, 2004).

The maps reveal a high concentration of production in areas of the Western, Ashanti and Southern Brong Ahafo. Consultations with NGO's in the Western and Ashanti Regions, as well as fieldwork carried out in the areas, reveal a significant shift in migration patterns within cocoa growing areas due to poor soil fertility, and lack of land within the Western region. Migrant cocoa farmers are moving within the Western Region to new areas such as the Enchi (Wassa West District) where land is more available to start cocoa farming. Some northern farmers are also acquiring land (*Abuna, Abusa* and outright payment) in the Ashanti Region since there is a shortage of land available in the traditional cocoa growing areas of the Western Region (i.e. Sefwi Wiawso).

According to Promag, there are still large pockets of migrant communities who are far worse off than the current 15 communities targeted in the YES project<sup>48</sup>. Poverty mapping with the District Assemblies should be a key strategy for identifying areas where there is a great need for ICI intervention. This would involve district stakeholders meetings to design the intervention strategy.

## **6.6 Potential Implementing Partners and Linkages**

There are several stakeholders within the Ghanaian Context, who should be considered in the strategic plan of ICI. The key stakeholders are outlined in the table 9.0 at the end of the chapter and include government, industry, academic, civil society, traditional leaders, farmers, families and children themselves. A more detailed outline of these stakeholders is included in Annex 7.

Although this is not an exhaustive list it does reflect the number of key stakeholders identified during the study. The findings from the Ghana Situational Analysis suggest that the primary focus for intervention should be at district level. This is based on the fact that much more action based research and strategic piloting is needed in order to investigate the scale, dimensions, context of the trends, which could gradually build district and community capacity for sustaining interventions. Given the strategies which are already being tested through the YES programme and the ILO/WACAP programme, ICI should attempt at piloting cost effective and sustainable approaches on a district wide basis which can reach a significant amount of farmers (district wide scope). This strategy is also in line with the Government's own implementation strategies for district based development. Districts are the primary target at which Government releases funds for development and is managing cross-country programming such as the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy and STEP programme for youth entrepreneurship and skills development.

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<sup>48</sup> Promag conducted a poverty mapping exercise with the Sefwi Wiawso District Office,

## **Potential Partners for ICI Collaboration**

There are several key partners at national, district and regional level, which ICI should consider as potential partners in Ghana. Due to the number of actors, it is advisable to begin programming through the selection of an ICI representative (national coordinator) and district based facilitators in order to allow scope and innovation to evolve within each district. ICI role should assist districts build their capacity to tackle child rights issues by using a variety of district level actors including those which are responsible for public education and law enforcement on the rights of the child (i.e. District Assembly, Traditional Leaders, Department of Social Welfare, Civic Education, Community Development and Law Enforcement Agencies). Programme partnerships should evolve gradually as action on the ground led by agencies in the district grows systematically at district level. The following section therefore reviews some of the key agencies, which can collaborate with ICI during its operations in Ghana. Section 6.4 considers the proposed programming options for district-wide programming providing details of the main intervention areas including: social mobilisation/education and awareness creation programmes, capacity building for NGO's in rights based programming, improving the quality of education and alternative livelihood approaches within the targeted districts.

### ***Potential National Level Partners***

The **Ghana National Commission on Children** should be considered as a potential ICI partner in Ghana. The Commission is responsible for oversight of binding UN conventions, which impact on the child welfare and development including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It also facilitates consultation and the development of Ghana's own statutes such as the Children's Act (Act 560). The Commission is involved in a variety of child related projects including early childhood education/development, publication of the State of Ghana's Children report and other research which tracks the status of children across the different sectors. The Commission has regional representation in all the regions of Ghana and works through District Assemblies to ensure that bye-laws protecting children's rights are upheld. The Commission has recently come under the auspices of the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs.

The ***Centre for Development Studies at the University of Cape Coast*** runs a programme for Labour Studies and is interested in pursuing the issue of child labour as part of its research agenda. The Centre is under the Department for Social Sciences at the University of Cape Coast and has a full-time teaching and research staff of 15. The Centre has published a number of studies on rural livelihoods and labour issues within Ghana. The Centre has a long history of working with Labour Unions and Government on policy related to labour issues. Interviews were held with the Director and several researchers at the Centre who have a strong background in social research, agriculture, fishing and mining areas of the country. The Centres ongoing research programme includes studies on social, economic and ecological impact in the agriculture, fishing and mining sectors. Collaboration with

the Centre would provide the opportunity to work with the University sector and build sustainable research capacity and policy advocacy at the national level.<sup>49</sup>

- **The Africa Centre for Human Development** is currently working with the WACAP programme and could provide entry support for ICI by training other NGO's in the areas of child labour and trafficking. The Africa Centre for Human Development is a well-known and recognised NGO in Ghana having a long history of community development work particularly in the Volta Region of the country. They are strong potential partner but already engaged in ongoing programmes with IPEC/WACAP. They would be ideal for training and building the capacity of other local NGOs working at the district level particularly in the areas of advocacy, lobby skills and public awareness campaigns. They have worked extensively on child trafficking and child labour issues and could assist other NGOs build their knowledge and capacity within the sector.

### ***Potential Regional and District Level Partners***

**Ghana National Coalition on the Rights of the Child (Regional Branches):** ICI should consider working through the regional branches of the NGO Coalition on the Rights of the Child, which are based in Takoradi in the Western Region and Kumasi in the Ashanti Region. The GNCRC national office is currently undertaking work with WACAP on child monitoring in the cocoa sector. The GNCRC has an extensive network of NGO's working on child rights and protection issues. The team met with members of their networks in the Ashanti and Western regions and collected information on their areas of programme focus in these regions (see Annex 6 for details).

**Regional Coalitions of NGO's:** another entry point into working with civil society partners at the district and regional level is through the regional NGO coalitions, which have been set up in every region of the country. These coalitions bring together a wide range of stakeholders, which could contribute to different aspects of the awareness creation component, livelihood and educational interventions proposed under the ICI Ghana programme. Strong NGO people having a wide variety of members head the Ashanti Regional NGO Coalition and the Western Regional Coalition of NGO's. The Western NGO Coalition has just acquired offices and is building capacity through collective programming at district and regional level. The memberships of the two NGO coalitions could benefit from capacity building in the areas of child rights and advocacy skills particularly focused on child labour in cocoa growing regions (Western and Ashanti). This could also be a valuable entry point for ICI programming at district level. It provides the network with enhanced skills in tackling child rights issues and identify strategies for intervention within the regions.

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<sup>49</sup> The Centre for Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Services (CERGIS) and the Department of Geography are interested in the environmental sustainability in the cocoa sector. They could also provide valuable research back up for future studies and have an experienced team of researchers who have participated in the ILO/WACAP study with the African Centre for Human Development. The Geographic Information Systems Department has generated the maps in this report.

The **National Youth Council of Ghana (NYCG)** has offices in 68 of the 110 districts with staff strength of 3 per office excluding volunteers. The organisation is involved in several the proposed areas of intervention, recommended in this report. The NYCG conducts counselling sessions for youth at the community level through the youth co-ordinators and youth leaders. They also conduct training for young people between the ages of 10-29 years in agriculture, carpentry, masonry and other income generating areas. They receive funding for youth development programmes often through local and International NGO's. They mobilise youth to undertake projects such as providing water and sanitation facilities, constructing classrooms, and clean up exercises. The District Youth Coordinators operate under the National Youth Council, which is currently under the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. At district level, the NYCG is a decentralised department under the District Assembly.

### **Potential Civil Society partners**

There are many NGO's working in the field of child rights, rural development, education and livelihoods programming across the country. The **Ghana Organic Agriculture Network** has a wide range of services, which promote sustainable farming practices including knowledge on sustainability livelihoods through farmer field school approaches. The **Olinga Foundation for Human Development** is an education focused NGO which has trained teachers, developed materials and training programmes in the areas of literacy, numeracy and leadership skills in rural schools in cocoa growing areas. **PROMAG** has developed capacity to implement education awareness, literacy and life skills programmes for youth; it has also conducted community based research and facilitation processes in the cocoa growing areas through the YES programme.

**The Centre for the Development of People (CEDEP)** has a wide network of community based organisations working in four regions of the country including Brong Ahafo and Ashanti region. They are considered one of the strongest NGOs in the Central Belt of Ghana and have implemented a number of large donor programmes. They could provide ICI with implementation and capacity building support within any district in the Ashanti and Brong Ahafo regions. **Friends of the Nation (FOM)** are working to assist communities in the resource management sector and have conducted training and advocacy programmes in the Western Region. Currently they are working on a child labour programming in the Western Region with private sector support; they are also a key partner with CARE Ghana.

These organisations could provide a comprehensive approach to creating awareness of child rights issue, develop district based strategies for improving educational quality and livelihood needs with District Based NGOs targeted for ICI support. They could also contribute to monitor, training and provide ongoing capacity building support with state and non-state actors at district level. The Friends of the Nation, CEDEP and PROMAG are well suited to undertake direct

programme implementation (i.e. PROMAG in the Western Region and CEDEP in the Ashanti and Brong Ahafo Regions).<sup>50</sup>

**CARE** has built a significant amount of experience working in the cocoa growing areas particularly using education, natural resource management and community empowerment approaches. **Action Aid, Ghana** has also developed a methodology for hiring and training of Rural Education Volunteers (REV's), which could assist ICI develop its in country programme at district level along with the key district actors. Both NGO's should be invited to share lessons learned once programming begins at the district level.

Most districts have between 3-10 locally based NGOs, which are ready, and willing to implement community based programming which could reduce child labour in these areas. The team consulted with several varieties of NGOs from child welfare groups to environmental NGO's at district level and regional levels through the WERENGO and ASHANGO networks. Please see Annex 6 for a comprehensive list. Youth associations, women's associations and teachers should also be involved in the implementation of the programme.

Table 9.0 presents the key stakeholders, their levels of operation and provides an indication of the services available at each administrative level by state and non-state actors in Ghana.

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<sup>50</sup> Since both NGOs are currently contracted to work with other key donor agencies ICI may have to use them in building the capacity of training other locally based NGO's. Fieldwork did reveal that there are capable NGO's in many of the districts, which could be strengthened through a collaborative relationship with ICI.

**Table 9.0: Key Stakeholder Analysis**

<b>Key stakeholders</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>Regional</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Potential Linkages to ICI</b>
<b>Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports</b>	<b>National Youth Council</b>	<b>Regional Youth Council Representatives</b>  <b>Regional Education Directorate</b>	<b>District Youth Council Representatives</b>  <b>District Education offices</b>		<b>Key Ministry for ICI collaboration</b>
<b>Cocoa Marketing Board (Cocobod)</b>	<b>Cocoa Board Offices</b> <b>Research Quality Control Services</b> <b>Cocoa Services Division</b>	<b>Cocoa Services Department</b>	<b>Cocoa Services Department</b>	<b>Field/ officers</b>	<b>Should be kept informed of ICI activities</b>
<b>Ministry of Food and Agriculture</b>	Statistics, Research and Information Division  Cocoa Extension Services	Regional Agriculture Department	District Agriculture Department	<b>Extension officers</b>	<b>Key Ministry for ICI collaboration</b>
<b>Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment</b>	Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment (Child Labour Unit)	Regional Social Welfare Service	Department of Social Welfare		<b>Should be the main partner ministry in which a Memorandum of Understanding is established.</b>
<b>Ghana National Commission on Children</b>	Ghana National Commission on Children	Representatives are in all 10 Regions	Approx. 40 Districts have District Sub Committees on Children		<b>Should be a collaborating agency at regional level.</b>
<b>National Commission on Civic Education</b>	NCCE	Regional Civic Education Office	District Civic Education office	<b>Field educators and staff</b>	<b>Should be a collaborating agency at district level.</b>
<b>Donor Partners/ Programmes</b>	ILO/IPEC/WACAP (Ghana)	Labour Unit/ Social Welfare officers, NGO's			

Key stakeholders	National	Regional	District	Community	Potential Linkages to ICI
	CARE/Creative Associates	STCP Office/Trainers	PROMAG Farmer Field Schools in two districts		
<b>Industry</b>	24 Cocoa Purchasing companies. (Adwumapa, Kuapa Kokoo, Amajaro are most widespread)  Representatives from Manufacturers (Nestle Ghana)	Mostly based in Kumasi	Many have offices at the district level	Many have purchasing agents at the community level.	Should be kept informed and invited to dissemination workshops.
<b>Researchers</b>	University of Cape Coast, Centre for Development Studies  Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG)  Africa Centre for Human Development and PROMAG assisted conduct the ILO baseline study.  CERGIS- Department of Geography, University of Ghana	University of Cape Coast is situated in a cocoa growing area.  Researchers conduct fieldwork across the country.  They have regional office in the Volta region and Promag is in the Western region.	Central region		<b>Should be involved in future research.</b>

<b>Key stakeholders</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>Regional</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Potential Linkages to ICI</b>
<b>NGO Coalitions</b>	Ghana National Coalition on the Rights of the Child (GNCRC)  Ghana Association of Private Voluntary Organisations in Development (GAPVOD)	Regional Coalitions on the Rights of the Child  Regional NGO Coalitions (i.e. ASHANGO, WARANGO etc)	Coalition members  Coalition Members		<b>Should be involved in national level implementation.</b>
<b>Civil Society Agencies: NGO's, Youth associations</b>	Ghana Agriculture Workers Union  Ghana Employers Association  African Centre for Human Development	Representatives at regional levels  One regional Office (Volta)  Friends of the Nation (Western Region)  Ghana Organic Agriculture Network (GOAN) Based in Ashanti region	PROMAG Office  Several Farmer Field Schools in over 10 regions	<b>Community workers in Sefwi Wiawso</b>	<b>Should be a partner agency involved in district-based implementation.</b>
<b>Law enforcement agencies</b>	Ghana Police Force	Women and Juvenile Unit	(Some districts have WAJU offices)		<b>Should be kept informed</b>
<b>Traditional Authorities</b>	National House of Chiefs	Regional House of Chiefs	District House of Chiefs (Paramount Chiefs)	<b>Chiefs, Queen mothers and elders.</b>	<b>Should be kept informed and active in the district-based implementation of the advocacy work.</b>

<b>Key stakeholders</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>Regional</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Potential Linkages to ICI</b>
<b>District Assemblies</b>			District Assemblies District Chief Executives District Assemblies Coordinators Planning Officers Information Services Department of Cooperatives	→ <b>Assembly men and women</b>	<b>Memorandum of Understanding should be signed with Districts involved in the programme.</b>
<b>Community Level Stakeholders</b>				<b>Chief and Elders Unit Committee Chairperson Assembly men/women Chief Farmer Women's Leader Youth Associations Cooperatives Farmers Groups School Teachers Children Parent Teachers Association School Management Committee.</b>	<b>Full involved in implementation.</b>

## 6.7 Overall Recommendations and Start Up Issues

### Opportunities and Challenges

The greatest challenge, which ICI will face in implementing programmes within Ghana's child rights sector, is the sensitivity concerning the child labour issue particularly at the National level. Interviews with key government officials within the Ministry of Agriculture, and other agencies confirmed that the issue of child labour in cocoa growing areas is highly contested and needs much more comprehensive research than what is readily available. The ILO/WACAP baseline study (ACHD, 2004) will be an excellent contribution to supporting these findings and assisting Government take cognisance of the issue but much more work is needed from a social perspective to identify the trends and causal relationships and to substantiate findings and convince policy makers and key Government officials of the need to act. University institutions along with civil society stakeholders experienced in evidence based research and policy advocacy skills should be used to put forth the arguments (e.g. Centre for Development Studies).

ICI should be extremely careful in how it enters the child labour debate within the Ghanaian context in order to avoid creating bottlenecks for programming. The naming of programmes using the label of "child labour" may not be the most beneficial approach in both engaging key actors and finding sustainable solutions. The Ghana Field Research team found it more productive to consider the issue within a broader child welfare and child prosperity framework whereby communities were willing to discuss their problems naturally and without hesitation. The research team recommends that ICI attempt to approach the issue from a broader perspective keeping in mind its undying aim of eliminating child labour from cocoa growing areas until key stakeholders are better informed, understand the underlying roots of the problem and develop a collective vision. This approach should also inform the key objectives and overall aim of ICI's work in Ghana in order to focus more on the root causes of child labour.

The opportunity is of course to *find a lasting solution to the problem of child labour through participatory community based analysis and engaging a host of community/district based actors in a process, which can ultimately improve the social economic, and poverty status of families and the educational outcomes of children in the cocoa growing areas of the country.* The other ICI opportunities include being able to educate their own stakeholders concerning the needs, challenges and problems facing Ghanaian cocoa farmers and their families. These problems are global in nature and cut across many agricultural sub sectors. ICI has the opportunity to make a difference within the cocoa sector and its educational and collaborative process must challenge both its constituencies in the north as well as the south. Improving the understanding and creating forums for dialogue within the global cocoa industry to the issues of poverty and socio-cultural context should not deter it but be at the heart of all its work.

## Potential Constraints and Risks

ICI should continue to work closely with the IPEC/WACAP programme in order to establish its presence in the country. They should also begin to forge relationships with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and Civic Education Programme in order to come to an agreement on collaboration with their district offices (i.e. Youth Council Officers, District Education Offices etc). Once the programme is established ICI may also wish to use National Youth Volunteers in the sensitisation process and community mobilisation activities.

The major constraints and risks of a programme of this nature are the need for strong and committed institutions at the district and community level. The next phase of activities should include a feasibility study in order to identify the districts, most appropriate for the interventions. This should include extensive study of the capacity and interest on the Key District stakeholders including the District Assembly, district collaborative agencies and possibly traditional chiefs and leaders. The secondary stakeholders should include: the District Education Office, Civic Education, National Youth Council District Co-ordinators, Department of Community Development personnel and the NGO's available for collaboration within the District.

Once this has been established a more district-based study of the communities with the highest child labour incidence should be established through poverty and migration mapping in the districts selected. This process will identify the pockets of needy communities and those with high levels of migrants. PROMAG should be involved in this exercise due to their experience in working in the cocoa growing areas and their familiarity with the process.

ICI should focus its efforts to begin in areas where there are high levels of cocoa production particularly in the Western, Ashanti and Brong Ahafo Regions; later they should consider Central or Eastern Regions of the country. One district in each of the three priority regions should be selected which are in close proximity to other intervention districts under the STCP or WACAP programmes. Three districts in the three regions should be selected Juabaso Bia in the Western Region was a district given high priority by many of the NGO stakeholders working in the Western Region. Ashanti and Brong Ahafo should be carefully considered using the methods described below under *Recommendation 1*.

## Key Recommendations

*Recommendation 1:* ICI should conduct a feasibility study in order to identify and select the districts, which would be most suitable for intervention. This fieldwork should include:

- Consultation with key stakeholders and potential partners mentioned in the report including PROMAG, ACHD, STCP and WACAP co-ordinators and the NGO coalition Chairpersons. This would help to establish a list of potential districts for the start up year of operation as well as identification of NGO's operating in these areas.

- Field visits should be made to selected districts to finalise the selection. Interviews should be held with key district actors such as the District Co-ordinating Director, District Assembly, Agriculture Extension and Department for Community Development. A mapping exercise at district level should be conducted to identify pockets of poverty with potentially high levels of child labour.

*Recommendation 2:* ICI should present the findings from this study and the proposed strategy to the WACAP Technical Steering Committee for comment and input. Where possible the WACAP Technical Advisory Committee should be asked to broaden its mandate and include direction and guidance for other key programming activities.

A multi-disciplinary team of in country advisers should also be set up to guide the process; this should include members of the key partner agencies such as the GNCC, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Agriculture, WACAP/STCP and others agencies involved in child labour in the cocoa sector.

*Recommendation 3:* ICI should also set up a small office and recruit an in country co-ordinator to manage its operations. The office would provide oversight to district wide programming, monitor and manage the relationships with the various actors in the programme. This coordinator could be seconded by an NGO already active within the child rights and protection sector in Ghana. A district-based facilitator should also be hired to assist with partnerships and project takeoff during the two-year phase. Three district facilitators will be needed.

*Recommendation 4:* ICI should share the findings of its field work with other stakeholders at the national and district levels in order to build their capacity and help to increase awareness of the problems and causes of child labour in the cocoa growing sector particularly among its private sector collaborators.

## **Regional Level Interventions**

*Recommendation 5:* The main intervention at this level should be to train NGO's and other civil society partners including industry and cocoa purchasing companies in the basic legal and constitutional frameworks, which protect the rights of the child. The programme should use awareness creation instruments developed by the ILO/IPEC and UNICEF to introduce NGOs working across the three-targeted regions to the need for eliminating child labour. Existing NGO coalitions based at the regional level should be used to organise these seminars (i.e. WARANGO, ASHANGO and others).

## **District Based Interventions**

ICI should pilot an approach on a district wide basis, which attempts to reach a significant amount of farmers, and their families based on best practices, awareness creation and sensitisation of traditional and state actors in child protection.

*Recommendations 6:* ICI should work collaboratively with the Ministry of Education Youth and Sports and the Ghana National Commission on Children at the Regional and National Level to ensure that districts targeted for intervention are actively using a District Assembly Children's Sub Committee to monitor child labour issues. The mandate for this committee should also include issues around youth. The National Youth Council should also be considered a potential partner agency.

*Recommendation 7:* Poverty mapping with the District Assemblies should be a key instrument for identifying areas where there is a great need for ICI intervention. This would also enable district stakeholder involvement in the design of the intervention strategy.

*Recommendation 8:* Findings from the ILO baseline study revealed that most communities lack teachers. ICI should consider support to a Rural Education Volunteer scheme, which will increase the number of teachers in the school system and through a simple system of training and monitoring schools. The cost of one Rural Education Volunteer is approximately 150,000 cedes per month plus the cost of a two-week training programme and teaching learning material provision.

*Recommendation 9:* in the second year of operation, ICI should engage the NGO sector along with other district agencies in the design of a sustainable livelihood programme for farmers, particularly women and rural youth which could enhance their livelihoods in the district. The programme should include knowledge-based approaches to household savings, credit and income generating activities, diversified agriculture and aim at ensuring food security. GOAN may be a strong partner in this process as well as other cooperative approaches such as Kuapa Kokoo, and youth development programmes such as the STEP as well as other micro credit programmes, which have proven successful.

## **Community Level Interventions and Approaches**

*Recommendation 10:* Community based organisations and committees, which are already operational at community level such as the School Management, or PTA, welfare or women's association, should be considered as a mechanism for monitoring and tracking child labour issues in the community. Representatives from these agencies should be selected by the traditional leaders to monitor activities of cocoa farmers along with the buying company representatives. These people should be made aware of the legislation protecting children in Ghana as well as district bye-laws if they exist and then help to enforce them.

## **Further Research**

A systematic programme of research should be established by ICI in collaboration with the University of Cape Coast and other agencies in order to undertake studies, which provide insight into child labour practices within the cocoa sector. The WACAP Technical Committee, which involves Government stakeholders, should be consulted on the key areas where research is needed and develop a collective approach to commissioning future research. One of the studies is the need to look

deeper into the socio-cultural trends affecting children within the cocoa growing areas. This research should consider the child within different ethnic localities and within mixed migrant populations. Another piece of research, which may also be needed, is more information on sustainable livelihood, practices that are working to sustain food security at family level particularly in balancing cash and food crop farming practices in cocoa producing areas. Finally, a third piece of research which is related to sustainable livelihood practices is the long term impact of “high-tech” farming as opposed to organic farming practice within cocoa growing areas and the impact on hazardous forms of child labour.

## **Conclusions**

Although some programmes are being initiated in Ghana to eliminate harmful child labour practices in the cocoa growing areas of Ghana, these are mainly pilot schemes lasting a few years and reaching only a small proportion of people (e.g. 30 farmer field schools; 15 communities benefiting from YES). There is still a tremendous need to educate the population and introduce a more comprehensive approach to the prevention and elimination of child labour on a district wide level in order to achieve a level of impact.

Some of the ongoing programmes are focused on “removing children” and not attaching the causes of child labour using a more holistic and preventive approach. Programmes, which take account of the social and economic dimensions of the problem and the factors creating the child labour problem, should be carefully considered. ICI should aim to address the roots of the problem and avoid interventions, which are not sustainable in the long run. For instance, attempting to improve the educational status of the child without taking into consider the child’s social context within the family setting will not deal with the causes of child labour. The two main reasons identified by the ILO/IPEC Baseline Study (ACHD, 2004) were poverty and the inability of parents to pay for labour in the cocoa growing areas. The team found that improving the rural livelihoods and the socio-economic status of cocoa farmers is the first step to ensuring that they do not use their children on the farm particularly during peak seasons.

Secondly, improving the quality of education within communities is an important strategy for preventing children from being pulled out of school. But this strategy alone may not be effective. Assisting the family improve their livelihood and ensure food security is a key factor to ensuring lasting change and should be considered one of the key strategies for intervention in eliminating abusive patterns of child labour in the cocoa growing areas of the country. Improving livelihoods without moral leadership and consultation on parental responsibility will also not be enough. An integrated programme requires that all facets of the problem be considered.

The findings from the situational analysis suggest that cocoa farming and agriculture in general, demand more socio-economic sensitive approaches to intervention taking cognisance of poverty, lack of parental care and changing cultural patterns at work in these areas. Unlike other sectors of the economy, which are the focus of programmes for the elimination of child labour (e.g. fishing and mining), farming is the main livelihood for the majority of rural Ghanaians. The difference between child labour and child work is value ridden and can depend on “whose perspective” and

whose definition one is using. The reaction from in country stakeholders to the issues of child labour within the agriculture sector is highly defensive and questions the standards, which are being thrust upon Ghanaians. Dialogue and consultation on the definitions, and a better understanding of the standards are needed at all levels in order to arrive at a realistic, lasting and sustainable solution. Short-term approaches within the agriculture sector cannot solve the underlying reasons why child labour exists particularly in areas where HIV/AIDS forces children into labour patterns due to loss of parents and older siblings.

Using a district based focus will enable ICI to systematically develop, learn and implement a strategy to eliminate harmful practices of child labour in the cocoa growing areas of Ghana. ICI will also raise the awareness of key stakeholders within Government, provide evidence based research and develop sustainable strategies, which help to enforce laws at the same time tackle the underlying socio-economic context of child labour within the community. More importantly, ICI will begin a learning process with its northern and southern constituency, which brings to light the global, national and local policies needed for child protection and the need to improve sustainable rural livelihoods and quality education as a key vehicle for change.