



INITIAL RESPONSE TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Combating Child Labour

Our belief is that no child should ever be harmed in the growing or harvesting of cocoa. In West Africa, 90% of cocoa is grown on small family farms. In Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana there are over 1.5 million cocoa farming families living in some of the most remote parts of these countries who depend on cocoa for their livelihood.

Unacceptable labour practices on cocoa farms are a recognised issue, with too many children participating in hazardous farming tasks or working at the expense of attending school. Child Labour is a complex phenomenon that finds its root causes, as rightly outlined in the Commission working document, in poverty and limited access to education. Ending the Worst Forms of Child Labour begins with changing traditional farming methods which have been practiced for more than a hundred years.

For nearly a decade now, the global chocolate and cocoa industry have made extraordinary efforts, along with the Governments of Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana through the development of their national action plans, Non-governmental organisations and a host of other international organisations including the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI)¹, the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF)² and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), to bring about positive and sustainable change to the way cocoa is grown and harvested in West Africa. Changing traditional farming methods and bringing about real and lasting change to the cocoa farming communities takes time, not just resources.

A public Certification process is underway across the cocoa farming sector in Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana, reporting on the incidence of the Worst Forms of Child Labour and on progress in reducing incidence. Public Certification includes several key elements:

- Data collection to generate detailed, accurate information on cocoa farming labour practices on a sector wide basis
- Public reporting of the data by the Governments of Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana
- Remediation activities to address the issues identified in the data collection process
- Independent verification to ensure integrity of the public Certification process

¹ <http://www.cocoainitiative.org/>

² <http://www.worldcocoafoundation.org/>

The chocolate and cocoa sector is committed to a programme of investment and improvement of social conditions in cocoa producing countries. Collectively the global chocolate and cocoa industry has spent more than 75 million dollars over the past decade. We are currently supporting some 40 social and economic programmes in West Africa that improve the lives of cocoa farming families and communities. By the end of 2010, more than three million direct and indirect beneficiaries will have been impacted by the industry's programmes, including hundreds of thousands of cocoa farming families and more than one million children.

We have stood at the forefront of these efforts, as an industry, and we will continue to do so. Attitudes are changing. It is only by working together in a spirit of trust and collaboration with all stakeholders that we can hope to change the lives of millions of children and families in cocoa.

For further information and background:

<http://www.cocoa farming.org.uk/>

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