



**MINISTRY OF MANPOWER, YOUTH AND
EMPLOYMENT (MMYE)**

**PILOT LABOUR SURVEY IN COCOA PRODUCTION IN
GHANA¹ – 2006**



**NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE ELIMINATION OF WORST
FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR (WFCL) IN COCOA (NPECLC)**

APRIL 2007

¹*Authors:* Samuel Asuming-Brempong (samasum@ug.edu.gh), Daniel B. Sarpong, Philip Amoo, and Kwadwo Asenso-Okyere, University of Ghana, Legon, Accra.

PREFACE

Concerns have been raised recently about the possible use of child labour in cocoa production, particularly in the West African sub-region and the threat to boycott cocoa from countries found to be indulging in Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL) and Forced Adult Labour (FAL). Senator Tom Harkin and Representative Elliot Engel both of the United States Legislature are among those who have raised these concerns and have prompted a series of discussions between representatives of the cocoa industry and a number of trade unions, consumer and non-governmental organizations on the incidence and nature of WFCL and AFL, culminating in the elaboration of a strategy to deal with the problem. This strategy is codified in the “Harkin-Engel Protocol”, an agreement to eliminate the worst forms of child labour (as described in ILO Convention No.182) from the cocoa and chocolate sector, signed by representatives of the major stakeholders in September 2001. This Protocol involved companies from the United States, Canada, Europe and the United Kingdom taking responsibility for addressing the worst forms of child labour and adult forced labour in the supply chain of the cocoa industry. A critical part of this agreement was the commitment to design and implement “standards of public certification” in the cocoa sector of Ghana.

A significant step towards addressing child labour in the cocoa sector and certification of cocoa growing within Ghana was taken in February 2006 when the Ministry of Manpower, Youth & Employment produced the National Programme for the Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL) in Cocoa (NPECLC) in collaboration with Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MOFEP), International Cocoa Industry, and other partners. It is noted that within this broad programme, one of the strategic elements calls for the “enhancement of the knowledge base on child labour in the cocoa sub-sector”. During the consultative review of the program it was agreed that efforts to survey practices within the cocoa sector in order to achieve certification would occur as part of this particular strategic programme element. To achieve the above goal, Representatives of Cocoa Industry have been working in Ghana with the Ministry of Manpower, Youth & Employment, the Ghana Cocoa Board, the Statistical Service, the University of Ghana, as well as with other experts and stakeholders to work through the process of developing a good sampling procedure that meets the requirements of a credible certification system.

The Ministry of Manpower, Youth & Employment in collaboration with COCOBOD, Ministry of Manpower and Economic Planning (MMEP), and the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) are therefore pleased to unveil this pilot labour survey in cocoa production as a step in the much larger process of addressing labour issues in Ghana’s cocoa production, particularly the commitment to design and implement “standards of public certification” in the cocoa sector of Ghana.

Hon. Mrs. Akosua Frema Osei-Opare
Deputy Minister (SD)
MMYE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors of this document, Samuel Asuming-Brempong, Daniel B. Sarpong, Philip Amoo and Kwadwo Asenso-Okyere, are Faculty Members from the University of Ghana's Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness (DAEA), and the University of Ghana Medical School (UGMS), Legon, Accra. Ghana.

The authors are particularly grateful to the Technical Working Group (TWG), chaired by Charles Ntim, Deputy Chief Executive (Operations), COCOBOD; Rita Owusu-Amankwah, National Programme Manager, NPECLC; and Silvia Hinson-Ekong who was the advisor to the TWG, for the technical insights and advice that has helped to shape the report. We also want to thank Eric Okrah, Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF; Stella Ofori, Senior Labour Officer, CLU/MMYE; and Agnes Kyei-Frimpong, Head of Child Labour Desk, COCOBOD; Andrew Tagoe of GAWU of TUC; and MacLord Chekpeche, MMYE.

The contributions of Peter Okyere-Boateng, COCOBOD; Joana Annan, Employment Information Branch (EIB) of Labour Department; Fred Nimoh, University of Ghana Agricultural Research Center, Kade; J. Y. Amankrah and Anthony Amuzu both of GSS; Alfred Asuming Boakye, DAEA; and Patience Dapaah, Communication Officer, NPECLC, are gratefully acknowledged. Funding from the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment (MMYE) and the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) is also recognised with appreciation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Tables	vii
List of Figures	x
Acronyms	xi
Executive Summary	xii
Section 1: Study Background	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 What is child labour?	2
1.2.1. Issues of Child Labour in the World Economic Systems	3
1.2.2. Child Labour and Child Work	5
1.2.3. Child Labour in Ghana	6
1.2.4. The Socio-cultural Context of Child Work and Child Labour in Ghana	6
1.2.5. Child Labour in Cocoa Production	7
1.2.6. Various Efforts at Addressing the Child Labour Problems	7
1.3 The Study in Context	11
1.4 Study Objectives	13
1.5 Organization of the Report	13
1.6 Limitations of the Study	14
Section 2: Trends in the Cocoa Sector	15
2.1 World Cocoa Industry	15
2.1.1. World Cocoa Production and Consumption Trends	15
2.1.2. World Cocoa Market and Cocoa Substitutes	17
2.2 Ghana Cocoa Sector	18
2.2.1. Cocoa Production Trends	18
2.2.2. Internal Marketing of Cocoa	20
2.2.3. External Marketing of Cocoa	22
2.2.4. Cocoa Policy Interventions	23
2.3 Labour Requirement and Sources in Cocoa Production	25
Section 3: Methodology for the Study	28
3.1 The Conceptual Framework	28
3.2 Sampling Procedure	28
3.2.1. Sample Selection	29
3.2.2. Sample Size	29
3.2.3. Listing of Households	31
3.2.4. Child Selection Procedure	31
3.2.5. Adult Worker Selection	32
3.3 Study Areas	32
3.4 Sources of Data and Data Collection	33
3.4.1. Training	33

3.4.2.	Data Collection	34
Section 4:	Socio-Economic Characteristics of Cocoa Farmers and Communities	36
4.1	Highlights of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)	36
4.2	Characteristics of Cocoa Farms	37
4.3	Demographic Characteristics of Respondents	39
4.4	Socio-economic and Livelihood Conditions of the Cocoa Farming Communities	41
4.5	Labour Supply Situation in Cocoa Production	43
4.5.1.	Labour Contribution of Household Heads	43
4.5.2.	Peak Periods of Labour Needs in Cocoa Production	45
Section 5:	Types of Adult Workers in Ghana’s Cocoa Sector	47
5.1	Socio-Economic Characteristics of Adult Cocoa Workers and Type of Contract	47
5.2	Incidence or otherwise of forced adult labour (FAL) in Ghana’s cocoa sector	54
5.3	Assessing the Incidence or Otherwise of Adult Debt Bondage	57
5.4	Assessing the Extent of Freedom of Movement of Adult Workers	61
5.5	The Extent or Otherwise of Abusive Labour Practices by Producer on the Adult Worker	63
Section 6:	The Involvement of Children in Cocoa Production	65
6.1	Socio-economic characteristics of the children in the sampled Communities	65
6.2	Perceptions on Living conditions of Sampled Children	74
6.3	Debt indicators in the Sampled Children in the Communities	76
6.4	Freedom of Movement in the Sampled Children	79
6.5	Labour Practices Among the Sampled Children	80
6.6	Participation of Children In Cocoa Production Activities	83
6.7	Time of Participation in Cocoa Activity by Child (Sample Survey)	90
Section 7:	Health and Safety Issues Among Children in Cocoa Production: Occupational Health	
7.1	Participation of children in hazardous work	93
7.2.	Evaluation of problems from exposure to hazards of cocoa farming, general agriculture and rural environment	94
7.3.	Relation between child activity and exposure to work related hazards in the last cocoa season	96
7.4.	Reported Health problems from Cocoa Specific Hazards	99
7.5	Health complaints by age and location	102
Section 8:	Summary of Findings and Conclusions	104

8.1	Cocoa Production activities: sources/types/period of labour needs	104
8.2	Children in Cocoa production activities	105
8.3	Children in cocoa production: Occupational Health	107
8.4	Incidence or otherwise of forced adult labour (FAL) in Cocoa Production in Ghana	109
Section 9:	Policy Recommendations	112
9.1	Sources/types/period of labour needs	112
9.2	Children in Cocoa production activities	112
9.3	Occupational Health aspects	112
9.3.1	Stakeholder Consultations on Acceptable/Tolerable Risk Levels	112
9.3.2	Tackling the Broader Socio-economic Situation of Farmers	113
9.3.3	Healthy Farming and Farming Practices Promotion	113
9.3.4	Further Research	114
	REFERENCES	115
	APPENDIX	117
	GLOSSARY	118

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	World Cocoa Production Forecast ('000 mt)	16
Table 2.2	Sources of Cocoa Farm Labour	26
Table 2.3	Per Hectare Labour Requirements for Cocoa Production Activities	27
Table 3.1	Selection of Cocoa Producing Districts and the Number of Districts per Cocoa Region	30
Table 3.2	Sampled Cocoa Districts and Communities for Field Data Collection	33
Table 3.3.	Name of Community and Type/Number of Questionnaires Administered	35
Table 4.1	Age, Gender, and Migration Status of Farmer Household Heads	39
Table 4.2	Other Demographic Characteristics of Farmer Household Heads	41
Table 4.3.	Socio-economic and Livelihood Conditions of the Cocoa Farming Communities	43
Table 4.4.	Head of Household's Labour Contribution to Various Cocoa Farm Activities for the Cocoa season July 2005 to June 2006	44
Table 4.5.	Peak Periods of Labour Needs in Cocoa Production by Cocoa District	46
Table 5.1.	Ages of Adult Workers	47
Table 5.2.	Migration Status of Adult Workers by location (Cocoa districts)	49
Table 5.3	Residence of Adult Worker in the community by location (Cocoa districts)	49
Table 5.4.	Type of Adult Worker in the Communities by location (Cocoa districts): By-day-labour	50
Table 5.5	Type of Adult Worker in the communities by location (Cocoa districts): Short-term contract (less than 6 months)	51
Table 5.6	Type of Adult Worker in the communities by location (Cocoa districts): Short-term contract (6 to 11 months)	52
Table 5.7	Type of Adult Worker in the communities by location (Cocoa districts): Long-term contract (greater than 1 year)	52
Table 5.8	Type of Contract of Adult Worker in the Communities by location (Cocoa districts)	53
Table 5.9	Proportion of Adult Workers who agreed to locate to the communities by Cocoa district	55
Table 5.10	Reasons for Not Agreeing to the Decision to come to live in the community	55
Table 5.11	Decision for Adult Worker to Come and Stay on this Farm/In this Community	56
Table 5.12	Perception of Welfare Situations of Sampled Adult Workers	57
Table 5.13	Payments for Adult Worker Services in the Communities by location	58
Table 5.14	Adult Worker Services on the farm and whether it Redeems Debt to someone back Home (by Cocoa districts)	59
Table 5.15	Adult Worker Services on the farm and whether it Redeems Debt to Someone who helped him/her to travel to the farm community (by Cocoa districts)	59

Table 5.16	Adult Worker Services on the farm and whether it Redeems Debt to Someone who helped him/her find job in the Community (by Cocoa districts)	60
Table 5.17	Adult Worker Services on the farm and whether it Redeems Debt to the Producer (by Cocoa districts)	60
Table 5.18	Freedom of Adult Worker to leave the farm for Visitation (by Cocoa districts)	62
Table 5.19	Freedom of Adult Worker to Leave the Farm whenever Desirable (by Cocoa districts)	62
Table 5.20	Adult Workers who have or have not Experienced Violence/Abusive Conduct by Producer (by Cocoa districts)	63
Table 5.21	Adult Workers who have or have not Experienced Violence/Abusive Conduct from relatives of Producer (by Cocoa districts)	64
Table 5.22	Adult Workers who have or have not felt Obligated/Forced to Work while Sick or Injured (by Cocoa districts)	64
Table 6.1	Child in Community by Cocoa District (Sample Survey)	66
Table 6.2	Child in Community by Age Group, Education and Gender	66
Table 6.3	Current School Enrolment by Cocoa District	67
Table 6.4	Proportion of current school enrolled children who attended school full day all school days during the last week by Cocoa District	67
Table 6.5	Child in Community and Migration Status	68
Table 6.6	Child in Community and Location of Child's Father	68
Table 6.7	Child and location of child's mother	69
Table 6.8	Migration Status and where the Father is	69
Table 6.9	Child in community and who the child is staying with	70
Table 6.10	Children staying with non-parents and whether the arrangement is permanent	71
Table 6.11	How children who do not live with parents in the community came to live with non-parents (relatives and non-relatives) in the community on a permanent arrangement (by type of child in community)	71
Table 6.12	Reason for the arrangement for child to live in the community	72
Table 6.13a	Decision taken to come and live in the community	73
Table 6.13b	Profile of Children who decided by themselves to come to live in the community	73
Table 6.14a	If decision to come to live in the community (household) not taken by the child, did the child agree	74
Table 6.14b	Profile of the four (4) children who did not agree to the decision to come and live in the community	74
Table 6.15	Child's life situation comparison	75
Table 6.16	Child's labour situation comparison	75
Table 6.17	Comparison of money paid for work situation in community to where child was before	75
Table 6.18	Child or family receiving payments for Child's work	77
Table 6.19a	Child Work to Redeem Debt by someone back home	77
Table 6.19b	Profile of Children who indicated they were working to redeem debt owed by someone back home	77

Table 6.20	Redemption of debt of help in travelling to community	78
Table 6.21	Child Working to Redeem Debt for help in finding job	78
Table 6.22	Child Working to Redeem Debt to the Producer	78
Table 6.23	Freedom of child to visit local town or community	79
Table 6.24	Does the children feel he/she can leave whenever desired	79
Table 6.25	Reasons of why child finds it difficult to leave to visit	80
Table 6.26	Child who finds it difficult to leave to visit and who child is staying with	80
Table 6.27	Experience of violence or abusive conduct by the producer/farmer	81
Table 6.28	Experience of violent or abusive conduct from relatives or caretakers of the producer/farmer	81
Table 6.29	Children who have experience of violent or abusive conduct from relatives or caretakers of the producer/farmer and who they are staying with in the communities	82
Table 6.30	Has Child felt obliged/forced to Work While Sick/Injured	82
Table 6.31	Children who indicated obliged/forced to work whilst sick who they are staying with in the communities	83
Table 6.32	Child Participation in Cocoa Production Activities in the last cocoa season – 2005/2006 (sample survey)	84
Table 6.33a	Child Participation in Hazardous Cocoa Production Activities in the last cocoa season – 2005/2006 (sample survey)	85
Table 6.33b	Actual Ages of children in the age group 5-12 who participate in the application of agro-chemicals	86
Table 6.34	Child Participation in Cocoa Production Activities in the last season (by Cocoa District) – 2005/2006 (sample survey)	87
Table 6.35	Child Participation in Cocoa Production Activities in the last cocoa season – 2005/2006 (Sample survey)	88
Table 6.36	Current school enrolment and child participation in cocoa production activities in the last cocoa season – 2005/2006 (sample survey)	89
Table 6.37	Proportion of Children within an age group that participate in the cocoa production process after school hours	90
Table 6.38	Proportion of Children within an age group that participate in the cocoa production process on weekends	91
Table 6.39	Proportion of Children within an age group that participate in the cocoa production process during school holidays	91
Table 6.40	Proportion of Children within an age group that participate in the cocoa production process when their parents need them	92
Table 6.41	Proportion of Children within an age group that participate in the cocoa production process when they feel like not going to school	92
Table 6.42	Proportion of Children within an age group that participate in the cocoa production process everyday	92
Table 7.1	Participation of children in hazardous cocoa farming activities in the last cocoa season-2005/2006	95
Table 7.2	Respondents who had problems due to the following exposures in the last cocoa production season	95

Table 7.3	Health problems from pesticide spraying in the last cocoa season	99
Table 7.4	Health problems from applying fertilizer in the last cocoa season	100
Table 7.5	Health problems from carrying load in last season – 2005/2006	100
Table 7.6	Use of cutlass and general health complaints from farming activities	101
Table 7.7:	Distribution of recent health complaints by age groups	103
Table 7.8	Recent health symptoms by location (cocoa districts)	103

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1	World Prices and Production of Cocoa From 1971/72 To 2005/06	17
Figure 2.2	Trends In Cocoa Production in Ghana for the Period 1986/1987 to 2005/2006	20
Figure 5.1	Age groupings of heads of households and adult workers	48
Figure 5.2	Presence of “By Day” Workers in the Communities	51
Figure 5.3	Presence of Permanent Workers (working one year or more for a farmer) in the Communities	53
Figure 5.4	Type of Major Contract Received from Employers for the last Cocoa Season	54
Figure 5.5	Debt Situation of Adult Farm Workers in the Communities	61
Figure 7.1	Children’s participation in land preparation, harvesting and post harvesting activities verses common farming hazards in last 12 months	97
Figure 7.2	Perception of chemical risk versus the use of PPE among children who participated in chemical-related activities in the last cocoa season (2005/2006)	98
Figure 7.3	Healing period of injury from cutlass wounds	101
Figure 7.4	Sources of PPEs for working children	102

ACRONYMS

ACHD	-	African Centre for Human Development
AFL	-	Adult forced labour
CMB	-	Cocoa Marketing BOARD
CMC	-	Cocoa Marketing Company
COCOBOD	-	Ghana Cocoa Board
CRIG	-	Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana
ECA	-	European Cocoa Association
ERP	-	Economic Recovery Programme
FCUBE	-	Free Compulsory Basic Education
FGDs	-	Focus Group Discussions
GAWU	-	Ghana Agricultural Workers Union
GCCMB	-	Gold Coast Cocoa Marketing Board
GCLS	-	Ghana Child Labour Survey
GFCC	-	Ghana Farmers' Co-operative Council
GNCCLEP	-	Ghana National Cocoa Child Labour Elimination Programme
GPRS	-	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy
GSS	-	Ghana Statistiactal Service
GSS	-	Ghana Statistical Service
ICCO	-	International Cocoa & Coffee Organization
ICI	-	International Cocoa Initiative
IITA	-	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
ILO	-	International Labour organization
IMF	-	International Monetary Fund
IPEC	-	International Program for the Elimination of Child Labour
ISSER	-	Institute of Social, Statistical and Economic Research
LBC	-	Licensed Buying Company
MMYE	-	Ministry Of Manpower, Youth and Employment
MOFA	-	Ministry Of Food and Agriculture
MOFEP	-	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organization
NHIS	-	National Health Insurance Scheme
NPECLC	-	National Program for the Elimination of Child Labour in Cocoa
OAU	-	Organization of African Unity
PBC	-	Produce Buying Company
PPE	-	Personal Protective Equipment
PPMED	-	Policy, Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation Department
SAP	-	Structural Adjustment Program
TWG	-	Technical Working Group (set up by MMYE for this study)
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children's Educational Fund
USDA	-	United States Department Of Agriculture
USDOL	-	US Department of Labour
WACAP	-	West Africa Cocoa and Commercial Agriculture Program
WACRI	-	West African Cocoa Research Institute
WCF	-	World Cocoa Foundation
WFCL	-	Worst Form of Child Labour

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The concerns expressed by certain individuals and agencies following negative reports in the media about the use of child labour in cocoa production prompted a series of discussions between representatives of the cocoa industry and a number of trade unions, consumer and non-governmental organizations. These consultations centred on the incidence and nature of the worst form of child labour (WFCL) and forced adult labour (FAL) in the cocoa industry. The result was the formulation of a strategy to deal with the problem, codified in the “Harkin-Engel Protocol”, an agreement to eliminate the worst forms of child labour (as described in ILO Convention No.182) from the cocoa and chocolate sector. The protocol was signed by representatives of the major stakeholders in September 2001. A critical part of this agreement was the commitment to design and implement “standards of public certification” in the cocoa sector of Ghana. The protocol also requires that governments of cocoa producing countries establish monitoring systems and also issue certificates or reports, which describes the current state of child labour and forced labour in the cocoa sub-sector and efforts being made to improve upon the situation, where necessary. The present study is part of the certification process.

The definition of *Child Labour* is derived from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, ILO Convention 138, and 182, and the Ghana Children’s Act 1998 (Act 560). It is all work that is harmful and hazardous to a child’s health, safety and development; taking into account the age of the child, the conditions under which the work takes place, and the time at which the work is done (MMYE, 2003). According to the ILO, child labour refers to work that (i) is mentally, physically, socially and morally dangerous and harmful to children; and (ii) interferes with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school, by obliging them to leave school prematurely, or by requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work. The worst forms of child labour (WFCL) is defined (by ILO Convention 182) to include all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery (the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom, forced or compulsory labour including recruitment for use in armed conflict); the use or offering of a child for prostitution and/or pornography, illicit activities including the production and trafficking of drugs; as well as work which when performed is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of the child (as determined by national authorities).

The specific articles of the convention that address the issue of child labour directly include Articles 27, 28 and 32 which state in part as follows: “States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity State Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing 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”.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) further elaborates and clarifies that child labour is **not** the participation of a child in work that does not affect his/her health and personal development, or interferes with his/her schooling. Such work “includes activities such as helping their parents care for the home and the family, assisting in a family business or earning pocket money outside school hours and during school holidays”. It includes also work that “contributes to children’s development and to the welfare of their families; provides them with skills, attitudes and experience, and helps to prepare them to be useful and productive members of society during their adult life” (ILO, 2002). Clearly, a good appreciation of the concept of what child labour is and is not is key to understanding the type of work children can do that contributes positively to both their own development and the well being of society.

About thirty–one percent (31%) of Ghana’s population of 20.3 million is made up children aged 5-17 years. The Ghana Child Labour Survey (GCLS) shows that 2.47 million children aged 5–7 years (that is, about 39 percent of the estimated 6.36 million children in the age group) were engaged in economic activities. The Ghana Child Labour Study (GCLS), 2003 does not provide detailed information allowing for an estimation of the number of children in the cocoa sub-sector. The survey, however, indicates that an estimated 1,128,072 children are engaged in agriculture, forestry and fishing. These represent 57% of the working children. The report also states that 88% of the total working children were unpaid family workers and apprentices. Among the children engaged in agriculture are those involved in cocoa production.

Cocoa production in Ghana is predominantly a smallholder activity, and tends to be labour intensive. The main sources of labour for cocoa farming activities are caretakers or sharecroppers, hired labour, and family labour. Children’s involvement in the production of cocoa is an age-old tradition which, besides the immediate labour value, constitutes a traditional way of imparting cocoa farming skills to them and equipping them to take over from ageing parents and relatives. However, despite the benefits of the practice, there could be some abuse in certain cases of children working on cocoa farms. It is imperative therefore that the recent concerns raised about child labour in cocoa production in Ghana be carefully investigated.

The primary objective of the study was to provide empirical evidence about labour use and labour practices in Ghana’s cocoa sector as a basis for establishing a certification system for the sector. This initial survey has been used as a pilot, which shall be expanded or scaled up in phases to cover the entire sector. More specifically, the objectives of the study include:

- (a) To identify sources, types and periods of labour needs in cocoa production in Ghana;
- (b) To document incidence or otherwise of the worst forms of child labour (WFCL) in Ghana’s cocoa sector; and
- (c) To document incidence or otherwise of forced adult labour (FAL) in Ghana’s cocoa sector.

A quantitative (statistical) survey was designed to enable the estimation of the incidence of child labour in cocoa production in Ghana. This was done in a way to permit the assessment of the extent and nature of hazardous child labour, and forced adult labour (FAL), as well as indications of the prevalence of the WFCL, notably trafficking and exploitative practices, to the extent possible. Through key informants interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) issues raised by the statistical part of the survey were further investigated.

The data for the study were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. *The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS)* was tasked to develop the sample frame for the survey. This was to ensure that the approach adopted was consistent with national practice, and would also make interpretation and comparison with results from other studies (in the national context) easy. Descriptive statistics were used to explain the data collected, and data analysis was done using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 12.0.

The sample frame for the survey followed a multi-stage sampling procedure. Four cocoa regions were selected based on purposive and stratified sampling design to reflect high, medium and low cocoa producing areas in Ghana. Subsequently, two districts per cocoa region were then randomly sampled, followed by a random selection of four communities per district. Finally, twenty-five households/farms per community were also randomly selected. The groups interviewed at the community level included producers (farmer owners or care-takers who operate the farms), adult ‘external’ workers, children belonging to the sampled households and working on the cocoa farms (***sampled household children***), children from other households that were not among the initial sample but work on cocoa farms (***other household children***), and key/resource persons in the communities (chiefs, assemblymen, opinion leaders, teachers, etc).

Achieving a representative sample for the survey was critical for the study, and therefore the first sampling stage used each of the seven regions as a cluster. An initial Demographic Analysis undertaken by a team from the University of Ghana found that Brong Ahafo and Ashanti regions have similar demographic characteristics and could be considered as homogeneous from which Ashanti Region was selected. Eastern Region and Central Region were also found to be similar enough and as such Eastern Region was selected. The Volta Region was found by the team to be a low priority area for the first stage of certification activities due mainly to the very insignificant levels of annual production.

The major findings of the study include:

- Cocoa farmers in Ghana are generally smallholders who operate family farms and cultivate acreages that range from about three acres or less in the Eastern and Ashanti regions, to about mostly ten to twenty acres in the Western North and Western South regions. A few outliers may operate farms that are less than an acre, or up to about a hundred acres or more in some cases. There are therefore no commercial cocoa plantations in Ghana. This is based on evidence provided by the demographic and socio-

economic characteristics of the cocoa farmers and their communities obtained from this study.

- Evidence adduced from the study suggests that the bulk of the cocoa activities related to matured cocoa trees occur between the periods July to December in any typical cocoa year. The peak labour demand for the clearing of land, felling the trees and burning are in the months of January to March; and burning usually will occur in the month of March. Weeding under mature trees is required in the months of July and August. Other activities such as the spraying of insecticides are mostly required in the months of August/September. November is the peak month for pod plucking through to the carting of dry beans to the centres for sale.
- The age range of adult workers in the sampled communities was between 18 years and 70 years, but most of the workers (76.3%) belonged to the younger age grouping of 18 years to 35 years. Indeed, 98.2 percent of the workers fell within the 18 years to 50 years range, indicating that most of the workers were relatively young, and consistent with the notion that cocoa farming is hard work and requires workers who are strong to be able to support it.
- Many adult workers were born in the communities and continued to live there to work on cocoa farms. About 53% of adult workers found in the communities indicated they took the decision themselves to migrate into the communities where they work on cocoa farms. This demonstrates the personal choices that many workers are free to make, whether to stay and work on cocoa farms or go elsewhere into another occupation. The study did not find evidence of forced labour in the cocoa farming communities studied.
- Some adult workers complained of abusive behaviour by the farmers and/or relatives of farmers, even though the practice does not seem to be widespread. However, based on information elicited from the FGDs, farm owners and their relatives usually exercise oversight of their farms, and it is normal for them to request farm workers to do specific jobs or other jobs outside the farms assigned the workers. This tendency for farmers and relatives to request workers to do other jobs is what some workers considered abusive. But there was no conclusive evidence of debt bondage or bonded labour in the cocoa farming communities studied.
- The typical adult worker usually will engage in a verbal contract (76 percent of respondents) with the producer on the services to be rendered on the farm. Written contracts constitute only 2 percent in all the communities but mostly in the Western South cocoa districts.
- The proportion of children currently enrolled in schools in the districts average about 91%, with school attendance ratio of about 71 percent, although one observes a relatively lower enrolment rate among sampled children in Kaase (Western North) and Bekwai (Ashanti) cocoa districts. This enrolment average is higher than the general

average enrolment of 88.1% for the same category of children in all the districts surveyed, based on the Ghana Living Standard Survey report of 2000.

- The survey showed that migrant children in the communities were generally living with their parents. Twenty four (24) percent of the sampled children were indigenes, and 36 percent were born to migrant farmers in the communities. In-migration from outside the region (but within Ghana) comprised 31 percent of the total sample, from within the region was 9%, and those that migrated from outside Ghana (either with their parents or their parents were from outside Ghana) and were living in the communities comprised only 0.7 percent.
- Over eighty-four (84.1) percent of the children were either staying with both parents, the father or the mother in the community. Those living with relatives were 13.5%, and those living with a non-relative comprised 2.4 percent of the sample. For the children not living with their parents, the major reason given was that the arrangements were made for convenience, which reflects the culture of these communities.
- In terms of restricted freedom of movements, the study did not find any evidence of its occurrence in the communities. About ninety-two (92) percent of the sampled children indicate they can leave the farm or household to visit local towns or community centres without any restriction. The few children (8%) who felt restricted in some way were more in reference to parental discipline than issues related to bondage.
- Results from the study did not suggest the incidence of children in debt bondage in the cocoa producing communities. Only 2.0 percent of the sampled children indicated that their income or labour in the communities helps pay debt to someone back home. They indicated that such debt was paid to their parents who probably might have borrowed from someone else to enable such children to travel. Similarly, only one child (or 0.9 percent of the sampled children) indicated his income helps to pay a debt for assistance obtained in travelling to the community.
- In terms of the involvement of children in cocoa production, it is observed that children of all age groupings are involved in the various cocoa activities. The involvement however differs by activity and age group, and as the children age, their involvement in cocoa farming activities also intensifies. The larger proportion of these age groups are found in weeding (50-75 percent), carrying water for spraying (61-73 percent), pod gathering and heaping (84-89 percent), bean scooping (58-65 percent) and carting fermented beans (50-74 percent). Pod plucking, drying of beans and carting dry beans for sale dominate among the 13-14 and 15-17 age groups.
- Children in the sampled cocoa districts engage in the cocoa production activities mainly during the weekends (90 percent regardless of age groups), and those who participated during school holidays were 85 percent. The least participation times were: when they feel like not going to school (10 percent); working everyday (14

percent); when their parents need them (21 percent) and when they close from school (i.e. after school hours) (34 percent).

- The study found that children's involvement in farm activities is widespread and diverse. The varying rate of participation of children in farm activities described as hazardous, children's own evaluation of their exposures to farm hazards and the subsequent health problems elicited during the survey is suggestive of presence of hazardous work. In particular the study found the following
- In terms of occupational health hazards, the study found that:
 1. High childhood time exposures rate to common hazards of farming: carrying load is common (90%); using cutlass is 75%; spraying pesticide is about 50%; and applying fertilizer is about 30%.
 2. Sickness or injury from farm work: cuts from cutlass is 60%, and injury or illness which are farm work is 65%.
 3. The childhood time use of personal protective equipments (PPEs) while working on the farm is low, that is, only about 25%.
- The age distribution indicate that children in the most vulnerable age group 5-12 constitute the largest numbers in all the hazards, but in terms of proportion children age group 15-17 leads, followed by 13-14, and then the 5-12 age group in most of the exposures. Districts in the Western Region especially Samreboi was the worse affected district though the hazards evaluated occurred in all cocoa districts.

Involvement of children in farming activities includes:

- Land preparation activities: land clearing, felling trees, burning (3 – 8%).
- Chemical-related activities: application of fertiliser, application of fungicide/other chemical, spraying insecticide (4-6%).
- Harvesting and post harvesting activities: pod plucking, carting fermented beans, carting dry beans for sale (30 – 60%).

The annual prevalence of health-related problems from farming hazards and rural environment was evaluated as follows:

- 30-50%: carrying heavy load, experienced insect bite, slips & falls, static postures
- 10-29%: suffered from dust, heat/cold, walking long distances, use of unsuitable tools, pesticides and chemicals, repetitive work.
- Less than 5%: experiencing loud noise, snake bite, forced to work when sick, lone working

The overall use of personal protective equipments (PPEs) while working on the farm is low, that is, only about 25%, but for children in chemical-related activities PPE use ranges 40-50%. The use of PPE also compared favourably with risk perception especially for children involved in pesticide spraying.

The health impact from exposure to specific farming hazards in the last cocoa season was evaluated as follows:

- Exposure to pesticides resulting in respiratory symptoms 20%, skin irritation 10%, eye irritation 6 percent;
- Application of fertilizer resulting in skin irritation and/or headache 12%, respiratory symptoms 8%, eye irritation 4 percent;
- Carrying heavy loads resulting in neck pains 55%, back pains 36%, leg pains 23% waist/chest pains 11%;

General Health impacts included:

Farm related injury or ill health 65 percent, injury from cutlass (during the last 3 years) 60 percent, persistent pain after days work 27.5 percent.

Cocoa farming is part of the fabric of the nation of Ghana, today as much as in the past. So, too, is the tradition of helping out on the family cocoa farm. In the future, the rich history and traditions of cocoa farming must be preserved, while ensuring that responsible, safe, labour practices are utilized in our cocoa industry.

In conclusion, we state that the case of child labour in Ghana's cocoa sector seems to be more of a socio-cultural phenomenon. Babies, for example, are carried to the farms at their mothers' backs, and school going children accompany their parents to the cocoa farms during weekends and holidays. However, a worrying development is the continual use of a small proportion of some of these children in activities that may be considered hazardous, and those that border on worst forms of child labour (WFCL). It is for this minority of children, who are usually the most vulnerable, that well planned and organized interventions should be implemented as a matter of urgency to protect them and ensure that these children enjoy their right to full development.