



GOOD PRACTICE INFORMATION SHEET

Community Registers as a Child Labour Identification Tool (Ghana)

Overview of the Good Practice

The International Cocoa Initiative (ICI) has developed a good practice in which community registers are used to identify children engaged in, or at risk of, child labour in cocoa production. Obtaining official demographic data at the community level is difficult. Thus, community registers are traditionally used to maintain comprehensive records about individuals and households within a community. ICI's good practice builds on this record-keeping by embedding questions related to child labour and school attendance into community register questionnaires. ICI's community registers are implemented by Community Child Protection Committees (CCPC) and have been a successful first step in identifying children who are engaged in, or at risk of, child labour. They have also helped to develop accurate population data in cocoa growing communities.

Community registers are an ideal entry point to gather information about demographics and activities at the household level. ICI's comprehensive community registers include questions about all individuals in a household such as their age, gender, year of birth and relationship to the household head. Adding information about work practices and school attendance allows for a more nuanced understanding of children's engagement in, or risk of, child labour. With information coming directly from community members themselves, community registers are more accurate than population estimates by local governments which often do not have the capacity or resources to conduct such comprehensive data collection. ICI's work with community registers demonstrates their value as child protection tools in efforts to both reduce child labour and increase school attendance.

Context

Identifying children who are engaged in, or at risk of, child labour in cocoa production is critical to reduce child labour in cocoa growing communities. The identification of child labourers allows for a more accurate understanding of the prevalence of child labour in cocoa growing communities. It also assists in developing nuanced knowledge on child labour including the types of work activities children are engaged in and the interconnections between child labour and school attendance. Finally, it allows for personalized remediation efforts that best address the underlying factors which contribute to child labour in individual households. Whether remediation is direct, such as the payment of school fees or birth registration, or indirect, such as supplementing children's labour with that of adults, it is essential in providing families with the supports needed to reduce child labour.

Despite the role CCPC members are meant to play in identifying children engaged in or at risk of child labour, it can be difficult to identify exactly which children are engaged in, or at risk of, child labour. Most children engaged in child labour in cocoa production work on their own family farms. Their labour fluctuates depending on a variety of factors including seasons of the cocoa harvest, the cost of hired labour, family income and family size. Children may be balancing school attendance and child labour meaning that they are not consistently engaged in cocoa farming. Overall, the reasons that children engage in cocoa production vary according to multiple factors and can be unique to each household. As such, by gathering data at the household level, community registers are an ideal starting point to identify child labour. However, CCPC members have limited time and capacity to ensure child identification, remediation and follow-up. This speaks to the limitations of relying on volunteers rather than the community register itself.

Stakeholders

- **Community Development Associates (CDA)** ICI staff who lead remediation activities. CDA oversees implementation of the community register, provides training and support to CCPCs, validates and analyzes community register data and assists in the provision of remediation activities.
- **Community Child Protection Committees (CCPC)** are comprised of approximately 7 to 9 community volunteers who oversee child protection issues at the community level. Trained CCPC members administer and store community registers, work with CDA to analyse data to identify children engaged in or at risk of child labour, determine effective forms of remediation and monitor children following remediation. They must build relationships of trust with community members as well as strong linkages to remedial supports and community resources.
- **Community Members**, particularly children and adults living in cocoa farming households, directly provide information about household demographics and activities. Their involvement requires a high degree of openness and trust. Members of School Management Committees, assembly members, unit committee members and other community leaders provide information to CCPC members, which they then verify by visiting individual households and obtaining additional information.

Implementation

The following are key steps in the implementation of community registers:

- 1) Community leaders grant permission to administer surveys.
- 2) Comprehensive community register questions are produced that include general information such as household member age, gender and relationship with head of household as well as information on child labour and school attendance. For data collection and analysis purposes, developing numerical codes for each answer is most effective. Please see Tables 1 and 2 for examples of relevant questions.

Table 1. Questions related to child labour

Type of work/occupation A: Farming, B: Teaching C: Trading D: Artisan E: Other (Specify)	If occupation is farming activity, where does she/he work? A: In his/her farm B: In the family farm C: In someone else's farm D: Other (specify)	Amongst the tasks done in the field which ones does he/she do (select all that apply): A: Clearing forest or felling trees B: Bush burning C: Working with and/or being exposed to agro-chemicals D: Carrying heavy loads E: Using sharp or dangerous tools F: Other (specify)
<i>Ensure this list is aligned with national guidelines or frameworks on hazardous labour</i>		

Table 2. Questions on educational status (for children only)

QUESTIONS FOR CHILDREN ONLY (EDUCATIONAL STATUS)				
Does she/he attend school? 1: Yes 2: No	If NO, why is the child not in school? A: Family can't pay school fee, material, uniform B: No school in the community C: School too far D: Education not useful E: Child does not want to go to school F: Child needs to work and help the family G: Other (specify)	If YES, can she/he read and write? 1: Yes 2: No	Current education level / completed? A: Kindergarten B: Primary; C: Junior high school D: Senior high school E: Vocational Education F: Drop-out G: Never enrolled	If drop-out when did she/he stop going to school? A. Last school year B. Couple of months ago C. 01 – 02 year D. 02 – 05 years E: 05 – 10 years F: +10 years G: Never Enrolled

- 3) CCPC members are trained to administer community registers as well as store, validate and work with CDA to analyse information that is collected. Training is typically one day.
- 4) CCPC members update information every six months by conducting household visits; registers are regularly updated if someone is born, dies or permanently leaves the household.
- 5) CCPC members work with CDA to analyse community registers to identify children who are engaged in, or at risk of, child labour.
- 6) CDAs liaise with CCPCs to determine effective and possible remediation activities for children identified as engaged in, or at risk of, child labour. Remediation may be direct (school fees, school uniform, school resources, birth registration, literacy, bridging classes, vocational and technical training, school support) or indirect (supplementing children's labour with subsidized adult labour through the set-up of Community Service groups and other adult income generating activities).
- 7) CCPC members monitor children following the implementation of remediation activities. Their monitoring involves visiting the child's household and school every three months to track progress, learn of any new issues and offer emotional support.

Impact

ICI's implementation of community registers as child labour identification tools has resulted in the following positive impacts in cocoa growing communities in Ghana:

- Reliable data on the number of children engaged in, and at risk of, child labour in cocoa growing communities including a deeper understanding of the specific types of work activities children engage in and children's educational status;
- Implementation of remediation activities for 181 children. In 2017, **152 children received educational materials to support their schooling and 29 children began apprenticeship training** as a result of remedial supports; and
- More accurate and reliable population data than previous government estimates.

Challenges

- **Time and capacity constraints of CCPC members:** CCPC members are volunteers meaning that they do not always have time or capacity to administer the community register or follow up on identified children. The long term sustainability of the practice and the motivation of volunteers pose a challenge.
- **Methods and efficiency of data collection:** Community registers are currently administered on paper, meaning that updates are slow and data miscalculations common. Fluctuating numbers of volunteer CCPC members affect the amount of human resources available to regularly update the community register. ICI is currently creating a mobile app to assist in overcoming these challenges. The app will ensure that data collection, updates, storage and analysis are all conducted digitally. It will also allow CCPC members to administer the community register more efficiently, even when their membership is low.
- **Community size:** The administration of community registers is more feasible when the communities are smaller (Ex. 400-500 inhabitants). With larger communities, the data collection requires greater commitment from volunteer CCPC members and becomes more challenging.
- **Budget constraints:** Budgets may not always allow for individual remediation for children who are engaged in or at risk of child labour.