

Child Labor in Cocoa Production in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana

This study assesses and measures changes in the prevalence of working children, children in child labor, and children in hazardous child labor in the cocoa growing areas of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana between 2008/09 and 2018/19 and provides point estimates for the same in 2018/19. NORC spent the last five years working closely and collaboratively with the United States Department of Labor, the governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, the World Cocoa Foundation, Civil Society Organizations, and multiple international organizations with an interest in child labor.

Study Findings

We compared the trend in prevalence of child labor and hazardous child labor in cocoa production using data from all agricultural households with at least one eligible child age 5-17 (including both cocoa growing households and other agricultural households that did not grow cocoa) from cocoa growing areas of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana.

2013/14-2018/19: RECENT TRENDS



Cocoa Production Increased by 14 Percent



Child & Hazardous Child Labor Rates Remained Stable in Each Country

2008/09-2018/19: HISTORIC TRENDS

Percent Increase of Cocoa Production



Increase in Child Labor and Hazardous Child Labor Rates between 2008/09 and 2018/19 (in Percentage Point (PP)).

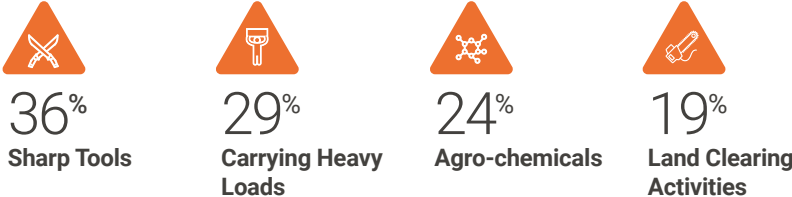


Amid a **62 percent increase in cocoa production between 2008/09 and 2018/19** in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, prevalence of child labor in cocoa production among all agricultural households increased 14 percentage points and prevalence of hazardous child labor increased 13 percentage points.

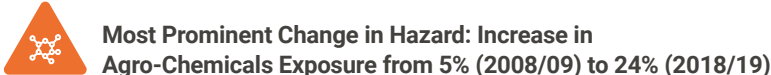
This study focuses on **child labor and hazardous child labor** as defined by ILO conventions and **does not cover forced child labor, child slavery, or child trafficking.**

2018/19:
SNAPSHOT

Children’s Current Exposure to the Most Common Hazards Related to Cocoa Production:



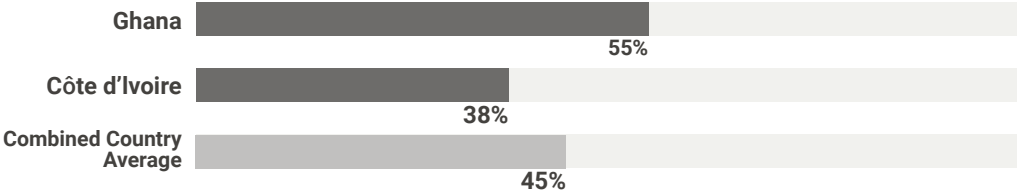
2008/09-2018/19:
HISTORIC TRENDS



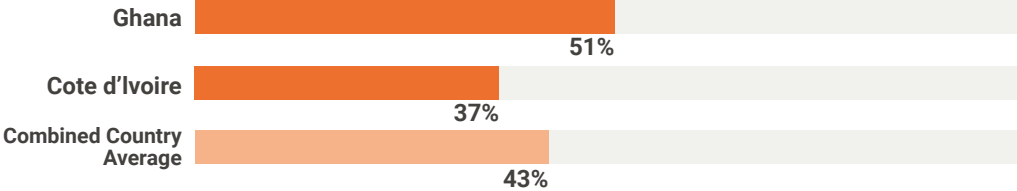
2018/19:
SNAPSHOT

Prevalence of Child & Hazardous Child Labor Rates in Cocoa Production by Country

CHILD LABOR



HAZARDOUS CHILD LABOR



2008/09-2018/19:
HISTORIC TRENDS

Change in Prevalence Rate of Child Labor Across Production Stratum in Percentage point (PP)



Prevalence rate of child labor increased in low and medium production areas while remaining stable in high production areas. Interventions targeting child labor over the past ten years (2008/09 to 2018/19) have likely focused on the high cocoa production areas where prevalence is more apparent and the perceived need for interventions is greatest.

Assessment Findings

The second major objective of this study was to assess the role of interventions implemented by key stakeholders in confronting the issues of child labor and hazardous child labor in the cocoa sector. Our assessment of effectiveness of various interventions focuses on understanding how different types of interventions, rather than interventions of any individual organization, were effective in addressing child labor issues in general, and hazardous child labor in particular, in the two countries.

NORC employed a mixed-methods approach utilizing a suite of quantitative and qualitative analytic tools to generate robust conclusions on whether child labor related interventions, implemented by key stakeholders, were effective in reducing prevalence of child labor and hazardous child labor.

The quantitative analysis used quasi-experimental method to assess the impact of different categories of interventions on child labor and hazardous child labor and the impact of multiple interventions, while the qualitative analysis used Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs).

The mixed-methods approach assessed the effectiveness of different types of interventions implemented by key stakeholders including education material assistance, livelihood support, occupational safety, and health training. It also examined overall efficacy of funded interventions as well as sustainability of interventions.

Educational Material Assistance

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS



Among households that received educational material support, the likelihood of children’s engagement in child labor and in hazardous child labor in cocoa production were not different from the non-beneficiary households. The rate of child labor and hazardous child labor in cocoa production among the beneficiary households were not statistically different from that of the non-beneficiary households in each country.

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS



Respondents perceived educational material assistance to be highly valuable. In many instances, children were engaged in child labor due to their caregivers’ inability to manage the costs associated with schooling. **Findings indicate that changes in access to schooling, school feeding programs, and material support for education have mitigated these barriers and impacted how much time children spend on farms.**

It is important to note that while quantitative analysis was unable to detect effect, qualitative findings based on perceptions **show the links between educational material assistance and improved outcome related to child labor.**

★ Qualitative Insight:

Since the parent himself must go to the field. If there is class, the child stays in school, he knows that his child is safe with the masters. But if he leaves him alone in the village, he does not know what his child is doing behind him. So, to be able to have an eye on their child, they prefer to go with them to the field. Like that, they are all together. They have time to watch over them. So, I do not think it's in any other sense that parents do it. The parents would not necessarily want his child to become a farmer tomorrow.

-Parent, Côte d'Ivoire

Livelihood Support

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS



When considering impact of livelihood support, **the rate of child labor was lower among the households that received livelihood services** compared to similar households that did not receive such services; no such impact of livelihood services was detected on children's exposure to hazardous child labor in cocoa production.

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS



Beneficiaries received livelihood services in the form of GAP training, material support for cocoa production, skills training, and savings and loans groups. These activities facilitated income generation and credit access and supported agricultural expense management. **The reduction in financial burden enabled farmers to hire laborers and reduce children's engagement in farm work.**

Occupational Safety and Health

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS



When considering impact of occupational safety and health (OSH) training, **youth who received formal OSH training were more likely to use at least some of the protective gear** while working in agriculture although the quantitative analysis was unable to detect any effect of OSH training on the likelihood of exposure to hazardous child labor among youth.

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS



Changes in occupational safety practices were more often reported by boys than girls in both countries. This correlates with reported differences in girls and boys reported on-farm and off-farm activities, as boys reported more chemical use and sharp tool use as part of their on-farm activities. While all youth found occupational safety training to be insightful, **youth felt more empowered to implement what they learned when their parents received similar training around occupational safety and health.**

Recognizing the fact that evaluating the impact of any one type of intervention would most likely to be methodologically challenging and that **most of the stakeholders implemented not only a particular category, rather multiple complementary interventions together to generate greater impact**, we explored the impact when multiple types of interventions were implemented by the partners.

Intervention Efficacy

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

Results derived from quasi experimental evaluation based on data from Côte d'Ivoire indicate that when multiple interventions were implemented in a community, it led to a statistically significant reduction in the rates of child labor and hazardous child labor in cocoa production.

25↓
PP

28↓
PP

Households in communities with multiple interventions were **25 percentage points (PP) less likely to have at least one child engaged in child labor and 28 percentage points less likely to have at least one child engaged in hazardous child labor** than the households from comparison communities.

17↓
PP

17↓
PP

The rate of child labor among households in communities with multiple interventions was **approximately 17 (PP) percentage points lower** than the rate of child labor among the households in the comparison communities. **The rate of hazardous child labor** among households in communities with multiple interventions was **approximately 17 (PP) percentage points lower** than the rate of hazardous child labor among the households in the comparison communities.

✧ Quantitative Insight:

When multiple interventions were implemented in a community, it led to a statistically significant reduction in the rates of child labor and hazardous child labor in cocoa production.

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS



Community ownership: Interventions that promoted beneficiary participation in planning and implementation were most effective. This was most evident in school-based interventions, which had the highest levels of success in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire.



Effective interventions: Community leaders, implementers, donors, and government officials reported that in most cases, factors related to poverty and truancy contributed to high child labor rates. Notably, some of the most effective interventions were those that addressed the root causes of child labor but were not necessarily designed to support child labor prevention only. These included school construction, good agricultural practices training, and road construction between cocoa communities and larger communities.



Moving beyond awareness: While awareness raising efforts have been extremely effective in improving knowledge around child labor, they were less effective in changing actual behaviors. Findings from focus group discussions indicate that beneficiaries in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire have improved their knowledge on child labor issues, especially as they relate to hazardous labor. However, these findings also indicated that changes in practices are still lagging. Although caregivers and community leaders reported community-wide changes in child labor practices, children in the same communities mostly reported changes around hazardous labor, but not around time worked, or ages at which work begins. As such, initiatives that supplemented awareness efforts while addressing barriers to schooling and income generation were more effective.

✧ Qualitative Insight:

The awareness has gone far but I must say that one of the challenges is that, you know it is attitudinal and behavioral change, one's attitude and beliefs cannot be changed in a day. It requires consistent efforts in engaging the farmers. It should be more of a participatory dialogue to help the farmers understand the issues and address it themselves because if the farmers are not addressing the issues themselves, we cannot address it for them.

-Implementer

Intervention Sustainability

Given the significant investments stakeholders are making in child labor prevention and remediation interventions, it was critical to assess the sustainability of different types of interventions, and identify strategies to strategies to promote sustainability.

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS



Promoting sustainability: Engaging community leaders, including women and youth leaders during the design phases of intervention activities is critical. Inputs from regional and national government actors are also critical to identifying practical ways to integrate intervention activities into community structures.



Respondents perceived that school-based interventions were most sustainable, while other interventions should aim to address the root causes of child labor in order to be sustainable. Promoting beneficiary and community ownership of intervention activities is considered a useful method for facilitating sustainability.



Working groups, national action plans, and coordinated activities hold significant potential for facilitating current and future sustainability. Implementers and donors indicate that national plans of action have promising potential for promoting intervention sustainability. These platforms provide a unique opportunity for the continued exchange of best practices, collaborative programming, and exploration for new approaches.

Looking Ahead

The findings of this mixed-methods assessment present a strong case for understanding child labor and hazardous child labor in cocoa production as a complex problem requiring multiple complementary solutions.