



embode

# CHILDREN AT THE HEART

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Assessment of Child Labour in Indonesia's Cocoa Sector and  
Recommendations to Mondelēz International

## Executive Summary

COMMISSIONED BY  
Mondelēz International's Cocoa Life program



# Executive Summary

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The issue of child labour, including the worst forms of child labour, such as child slavery, has been of significant concern to the cocoa industry over the last two decades. In April 2015, Mondelēz International contracted Embode, an independent human rights consulting agency, to undertake an assessment of child labour and child slavery in the cocoa sectors of Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Indonesia with a view to providing recommendations on how it could better respond to these concerns, principally through its Cocoa Life programme. This report presented to Mondelēz International provides the assessment and recommendations for the cocoa sector of Indonesia.<sup>1</sup>

Indonesia is considered the third largest producer of cocoa in the world after Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. Indonesia also has a significant problem of child labour across a wide array of sectors and industries, both formal and non-formal, including in agriculture. In 2009, Indonesia's Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) stated that an estimated 6.9 per cent of the country's 58.8 million children, between 5 to 17 years, were working (equivalent to 4.05 million).<sup>2</sup> Of this number, 1.76 million children or 43.3 per cent were child labourers, of whom 20.7 per cent were working in the worst forms of child labour.<sup>3</sup> It is estimated that 61.6 per cent of working children are engaged in the agricultural sector. The International Labour Organization estimates that there are over 1.5 million children aged between 10 to 17 years working in the agricultural sector.<sup>4</sup>

In Indonesia, children are and continue to be involved in cocoa farming. Children, as young as 12 years of age participate in cocoa farming, with some suffering injuries from the equipment and pesticides used in the farming process. The research team's findings, however, found such instances to be few, and on the whole there seemed to be a declining number of children, involved in the cocoa sector. This conclusion was reached following multiple consultations and small surveys conducted by the research team with local NGO representatives, members of farming communities, mothers and fathers as well as children and youth. Most government officials, NGO workers, village leaders, teachers, parents and even children participating in cocoa farming believed that the number of children involved in this activity was limited and not as serious as other child labour issues within the country, or their local communities.<sup>5</sup> Children undertaking this work are most likely doing so after school, on weekends or during school holidays and usually are engaged only during peak periods, such as at harvesting. Where children do work in cocoa farming after school, it tends not to be for long hours or on a regular basis, giving rise to a reduced level of concern over the impact of cocoa farming in children's education and wellbeing. Nevertheless, instances of child labour in cocoa have been identified,

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<sup>1</sup> The assessments for Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana were published in May 2016

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Manpower, Republic of Indonesia, 2014. 'Roadmap Towards a Child Labour-Free Indonesia in 2022'

<sup>3</sup> As stated by Ministry of Manpower, Republic of Indonesia, 2014. 'Roadmap Towards a Child Labour-Free Indonesia in 2022'

<sup>4</sup> ILO, N.D., 'Child labour in plantation'. Available at: [http://www.ilo.org/jakarta/areasofwork/WCMS\\_126206/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/jakarta/areasofwork/WCMS_126206/lang--en/index.htm) [Accessed 17 July 2016]

<sup>5</sup> National concerns of child labour relate to other agricultural sectors such as tobacco, palm oil and rubber. At community levels stakeholders sexual exploitation, domestic work, fishing, clove field farming, seaweed farming, as well as brick making as areas where there were concerns about child labour

highlighting that risks and vulnerabilities do remain and continue to exist, thus requiring attention.

The research team's findings were corroborated by other assessments undertaken under the Cocoa Life programme, notably by Care International and Save the Children. The findings also mirrored the literature review on child labour in Indonesia, which noted that research-to-date focused on other sectors of agriculture with little or no reference to cocoa farming.

Children engaged in child labour in Indonesia generally tend to be out of school and often subjected to neglect. Education is the opposite side of the 'child labour' coin: if children are studying, they are not in the workforce. Indonesian studies have noted a correlation between parents' education and the probability of children ending up in the workforce.<sup>6 7</sup> Indonesia has seen advancements in educational attainment, evident in the increase in the number of years of schooling among those aged 15 years or over, from 6.2 years in 1993 to 7.9 years in 2010. Parents interviewed in this study were aware of the changing nature of school enrolments.

Overall, the data gathered indicated a lesser concern over child labour in the cocoa sector, compared to other sectors in agricultural farming. The researchers hypothesised that the presence of the following factors distinguished the cocoa sector from other agricultural sectors, and thus to an extent lessened the concerns over child labour: i) cocoa farmers are not as reliant on children's labour as other agricultural or labour sectors; ii) government social programmes have been able to reach the families at highest risk of child labour in the districts visited and have thus mitigated vulnerability to child labour; iii) communities in which cocoa is farmed have tended to prioritise the education of their children; iv) cocoa farmers have tended to be not as dependent on cocoa as their only source of income and thus have been able to maintain more stable livelihood streams from a diversity of crops. The research team submits that this constellation of infrastructural development factors played an important role in shaping the dynamics and reducing the overall problem of children's engagement in the cocoa farming, and as such should be considered when devising sustainable responses to child labour in the cocoa sector in Indonesia.

The Government of Indonesia was one of the first governments in the world to adopt a systems-building approach to child protection. Accordingly, it recognises that child labour is enabled through socio-economic root causes and responds to a systems-building approach. Through its various ministries and departments, the government is implementing a comprehensive set of social assistance measures to target the most vulnerable children and families, thereby tackling the underlying enablers and roots causes of child labour.

Cocoa production in Indonesia is relatively unregulated as an industry compared to Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. The government does not take any significant initiative in independently supporting cocoa sustainability. Sustainability efforts are therefore largely led by the private sector and related industry institutions. Consultations with stakeholders in the cocoa sector revealed variant perspectives about what 'cocoa sustainability' means and as such differing views on what efforts were most important to prioritise and expend resources on. The defining of cocoa sustainability has implications for child well-being and

<sup>6</sup> Asra, Abuzar, ed. Working Children in Bandung, Indonesia, 1993. Jakarta: Central Bureau of Statistics and International Labour Office International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, 1994 (page 69)

<sup>7</sup> Irwanto, Sutrisno Pardoen, et al. Child Labor in Three Metropolitan Cities: Jakarta, Surabaya, Medan. Vol. 1. Jakarta: Atma Jaya Research Centre, 1995 (page 69 and 73-75)

child labour risks, particularly in contexts where communities lack access to basic amenities and social infrastructure. In an interconnected world, child well-being is linked to and dependent upon a number of contextual factors, such as safety, security, socio-economic resources, nutrition, education and so forth. Children who lack access to such socio-economic support and safety will be at greater risk of being involved in child labour.

Recommendations to Cocoa Life thus focus on aligning with the systems-building approach to child protection and education and consciously integrating programme outcomes with child well-being targets. At the community level, specific interventions are required to ensure children stay in school as long as possible. It is also recommended that the existing programme is more intentionally integrated with relevant social assistance programmes to help the most vulnerable children and families access resources. At the regional and national levels, Cocoa Life is encouraged to participate and engage in the national dialogue on principles of cocoa sustainability, as well as in the broader discussion on business and human rights. Cocoa Life already recognises that tackling child labour and other community-based vulnerabilities are linked to the sustainability of cocoa. Mondelez International's Cocoa Life programme provides a comprehensive framework, which sets it apart from the vast majority of approaches and initiatives on cocoa sustainability.

# Recommendations

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1. Mondelez International to develop and implement a child protection policy and code, which explicitly includes the reporting and referral of child protection cases, including child labour.
2. Cocoa Life Indonesia to integrate 'staying in school' initiatives within the existing programme as a primary response to child labour risks in communities.
3. Cocoa Life Indonesia (through its implementing partners), to integrate interventions along a child well-being systems-strengthening approach.
4. Cocoa Life Indonesia to regularly review and upgrade its monitoring and evaluation mechanism to ensure the inclusion of child well-being targets indicators and provide for regular assessment of its impact and effectiveness as well as sustainability of its programmes.
5. Cocoa Life Indonesia to explore and enable systemic accountability of all its implementing agencies in the outcomes across all five pillars.
6. Cocoa Life Indonesia to consider its level of participation in the national conversation on corporate accountability and cocoa sustainability.
7. Mondelez International to set up a broader accountability structure and mechanism to ensure its work actively supports and respects human rights in its supply chains.