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# CHILDREN AT THE HEART

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Assessment of child labour and child slavery  
in Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa sector and recommendations to  
Mondelēz International

COMMISSIONED BY  
Mondelēz International's Cocoa Life program



*This report is dedicated  
to the children and families of  
cocoa-growing communities  
across Côte d'Ivoire.*

Children at the Heart; Assessment of Child Labour and Child Slavery in  
Côte d'Ivoire's Cocoa Sector and Recommendations to Mondelēz International

ISBN: 978-0-9954640-0-2

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**Embode** is an independent international consulting agency specialising in business and human rights, child protection and organisational analysis.

This assessment and report was commissioned by **Mondelēz** International.

This assessment and report was commissioned by Mondelēz International. The Embode team consisted of Ms Aarti Kapoor (Lead Consultant and Team Manager), Dr Frédéric Thomas (Technical Specialist Consultant) and Ms Korotoum Doumbia (Engagement and Relations Consultant).

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# 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, particularly in West Africa, over the last two decades.

This report presents an assessment of child labour and child slavery in the cocoa sectors of Côte d'Ivoire as commissioned by Mondelēz International. The methodology was collaboratively agreed by Mondelēz and Embode and consisted of briefings and stakeholder consultations, a literature review and visits to cocoa-growing communities.

Despite efforts, child labour is still largely prevalent in Côte d'Ivoire. In 2013, ILO estimated that a total of 1.42 million children in Côte d'Ivoire were engaged in the worst forms of child labour.<sup>1</sup> According to Tulane University the percentage of children working in cocoa production, and in hazardous work in cocoa production, has increased from 23.1% to 34.9% and from 22.3% to 30.9%, respectively, between 2008/09 and 2012/13.<sup>2</sup> Most evidence highlights the reality that children's work and child labour are prevalent, in different forms, throughout the country. Relatively little evidence is available relating to child slavery, or practices similar to child slavery in the sector.<sup>3</sup> Stakeholder consultations also revealed a general lack of prioritisation of and sufficient attention to these more egregious forms of child exploitation. Police recently identified and recovered 48 alleged 'child slaves' aged 5 to 16 from cocoa farms, and arrested 22 alleged traffickers. This calls urgent attention to the significant concern of child trafficking and slavery in the sector.<sup>4</sup>

Côte d'Ivoire's national laws and regulations prohibit the use of child labour and child slavery, and promote the rights of children. The national mandate for child protection is shared between the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Solidarity, Family, Woman and Child. The Oversight Committee and the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Actions to Fight Trafficking, Exploitation and Child Labour oversee and coordinate the national response to child labour across all sectors, with the aim to reduce child labour by 70% by 2020. Meanwhile, industry stakeholders and UN, NGO and civil society sector hold integral roles in providing technical expertise, financial support and other resources to the national response to child labour.

A complex array of causes and conditions, enablers and push factors results in children being exploited in cocoa farms. These include persistent cultural practices, gender inequalities, child vulnerabilities and youth labour migration patterns. Factors include, among others, economic and structural of access to basic services such as education, health, sanitation and justice.

Child labour, in all its forms, including child slavery, is a tenacious problem in Côte d'Ivoire. Even after 15 years of dedicated efforts and millions of dollars of investment, the problem continues, and arguably grows. In understanding why efforts have not the level of

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<sup>1</sup> ILO, 2013. 'Etude de base sur le travail des enfants dans le culture du cacao dans les départements de Bouaflé, Mbatto Daoukro, Issia et Soubré'

<sup>2</sup> Tulane University, 2015. 'Survey Research on Child Labour West African Cocoa Growing Areas: Final Report'

<sup>3</sup> See Annex 2 for definitions of these terms.

<sup>4</sup> Farge, E. and Brice, M. 2015. 'Ivory Coast frees 48 child slaves, arrests traffickers', Reuters, 23 June 2015

effectiveness hoped for, it is important to understand that child labour and child slavery do not exist in a vacuum. Responding to them as if they are unconnected or unrelated to anything else will only result in undermining those very efforts. If it takes a village to raise a child, then stakeholders must step back and see children at the heart of their families and communities.

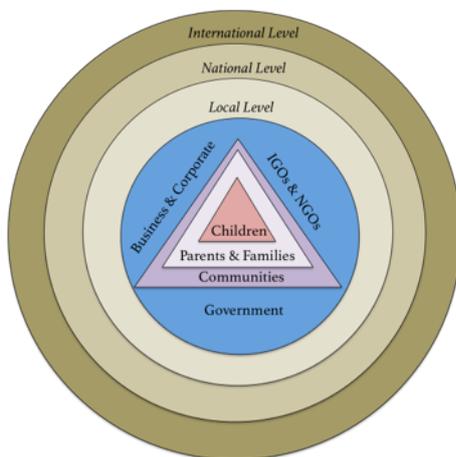
Achieving cocoa sustainability is a major priority and endeavour in Côte d'Ivoire and it is through the lens of working towards cocoa sustainability that many of the largest stakeholders in both the private and public sector are recognising the importance of community development. Inherent within this paradigm is the reality that although life in communities may revolve around cocoa farming, communities are of course more than just cocoa producers. Communities are their own systems and, relative to their contexts, are dynamic and shifting. To this end, narrowly focused child labour awareness raising in communities should only be a short first step measure, not a long-term endeavour.

A sustainable child-centred approach to child labour and child slavery calls for the integration of the viewpoint of the child and his or her family and community. For a child,

she or he needs protection from all forms of exploitation and abuse. Focusing on one type of harm may push children into other more hidden forms of exploitation. Without systemically responding to the root vulnerabilities and enablers of child labour, efforts run the risk of simply plastering over the issue in ways which externalise it to another sector or geographical area. In order to put children at the heart of efforts against child labour in cocoa, the focus must be on the holistic well-being of the child. Every child has the right to grow up in an environment, conducive to safety from harm and with access to education and care. This also requires all stakeholders to strengthen and build upon existing national support systems and mechanisms,

in partnership with the Ivorian government. These include strengthening of basic support services such as education, health, justice, as well as water and sanitation.

Mondelēz International's Cocoa Life provides a comprehensive framework, which sets it apart from most other approaches to cocoa sustainability. The most distinguished feature of the Cocoa Life is its direct work with communities with a broader intention than cocoa farming and child labour. Due to this holistic approach, as well as the significant financial and technical investment being dedicated to the Cocoa Life holds the potential to make a significant difference to hundreds, if not thousands, of communities and their children. The sincere objective to not only develop, but *transform* communities is not too ambitious a task, if done with sustainability in mind, and children at the heart.



# 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 and child slavery.
2. Cocoa Life to adopt a child well-being approach to child labour and child slavery, starting with adding a formal 'children's access to education' component into Cocoa Life; and actively utilising this as an entry-point for identifying children at risk.
3. Cocoa Life to review its child well-being targets and indicators to ensure impact on child labour and child slavery integrates with sustainability and effectiveness of outcomes.
4. Mondelez International to develop and follow a public engagement stance and strategy at the sector level, which more clearly represents its distinct development approach to cocoa sustainability.
5. Cocoa Life in Côte d'Ivoire to develop a partnership strategy that informs all its dialogues at national and local levels, which explicitly aligns with the Ivorian government's national strategies for cocoa sustainability child well-being agendas.
6. Cocoa Life in Côte d'Ivoire to clearly demarcate the boundaries between the core tasks of its five areas, particularly between the differentiated of supplier and NGO implementing partners, to ensure that each has proportionate resources, time and technical support to deliver all outcomes effectively.
7. Cocoa Life to more explicitly incorporate a 'systems-strengthening' approach, working alongside communities, to support sustainability of its programme outcomes.
8. Mondelez International to set up a broader accountability structure and mechanism to actively engage with its work to respect human rights in its supply chains.

# 1. Introduction

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## 1.1 Overview

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, particularly in West Africa, 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 Côte d'Ivoire.

A child rights-centred approach has been utilised in undertaking the assessment and providing recommendations to Mondelēz international. This means that the rights of children have been prioritised above all other considerations, as enshrined under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

## 1.2 Conceptual definitions

Children's work can be seen as a broad spectrum of activities and conditions. Acceptable children's work is on one side of the spectrum, and includes children partaking in age-appropriate light work and chores which are neither harmful, nor impedes their enjoyment of other rights, such as their schooling. Child *labour* covers any type of children's work, which is undesirable due to its negative impact on the child, whether physical or mental. This could be due to its interference with a child's school-work, their time to play, or because they are below the minimum legal age of employment. The '*worst forms of child labour*', as articulated by ILO Convention No.182<sup>5</sup>, include child slavery, trafficking, sexual exploitation, engagement in armed conflict or the production or trafficking of drugs, as well as any work which is illicit or is harmful to a child's health, safety and morals. Further details regarding conceptual definitions utilised in this assessment can be found in Annex '2'.

## 1.3 Methodology

Given the extensive research, previous and ongoing, on the issue of child labour in West Africa, the methodology focused on building on existing research and on providing recommendations for Mondelēz. The methodological framework was collaboratively agreed by Mondelēz and Embode and consisted of initial briefing meetings, a literature review of published research as well as organisational documents from Mondelēz and International Cocoa Initiative (ICI), an analysis of national and international law and policy

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<sup>5</sup> International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention No. 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labor

as well as visits to six cocoa-growing communities. Finally, a series of stakeholder meetings were held with strategic and relevant stakeholders based in Abidjan and Daloa, consisting of representatives from key government, corporate, UN and NGOs agencies that hold direct or indirect mandates for protecting children from labour and slavery in the cocoa sectors. Fuller details of the methodology and data gathered can be found in Annex 2.

## 1.4 Ethical Considerations

The main ethical considerations for the research related to respecting cultural sensitivities in planning and attending to community visits. Communities were selected in collaboration with Cocoa Life and local partners, and representatives from the villages were prepared to receive the team. During focus group discussions, care was taken to respect any cultural sensitivity and to ensure that the focus was on listening to and understanding communities' views on the matters most important for them. When conducting focus group discussions with the children, explicit verbal consent was requested and received. Children were not asked directly about child labour issues.

## 1.5 Limitations

There are a number of limitations to note. There is a significant amount of information and data as well as highly varied perspectives on the subject of child labour in Côte d'Ivoire. This assessment, and its annexes, provide an overview of the situation, map the responding infrastructure and provide recommendations. To this end, a large amount of data analysis and consolidation was required. However, some parts of the information have not been verified. This largely relates to government and formal mandates of structures, mainly due to the team not being able to meet all the key government responsible agencies.

There were also limitations in visiting some communities that were being supported by other stakeholders due to confidentiality measures. Furthermore, due to administrative delays and logistical constraints, some of the communities were not informed of the team's visit until just a day or so before, which may have caused some anxiety on their side. Community members were also highly reticent to talk about cases or trends of child labour on their farms. The visits to each community were short, not lasting more than two hours.

Finally, the assessment was not able to engage meaningfully with children to any large extent. Two focus groups were undertaken with children, however with the small amount of time for the sessions, children were shy and difficult to engage. It was felt that children were well aware of the sensitivities around talking about working on cocoa farms. In one community, the focus group discussion was observed (and intervened upon) by a group of adults, potentially making it difficult for children to express themselves openly.

## 2. Situational assessment on child labour and child slavery

### 2.1 Country profile

Côte d'Ivoire (formally called 'Republic of Côte d'Ivoire') is situated in West Africa and became independent from French colonisation in 1960. Following almost 40 years of relative stability and prosperity, the country experienced its first military coup in 1999, as a result of which it was engulfed in political turmoil for over 12 years.

Rupturing decades of ethnic and multicultural harmony, discord and political divisions along religious and ethnic lines split the country into north-south factions. After a brief reprieve in 2004, the country was thrown back into a worsened situation with violence breaking out, requiring peace troops to be sent in by the UN and France. Elections were finally held in 2010, and after a four-month standoff election winner Alassane Ouattara stepped into his Presidential role, which he still occupied at the time of this assessment.<sup>6</sup> He was re-elected in October 2015.

Côte d'Ivoire's national population stands at 22, 671, 331 according to the National Institute's 2014 census, with 41.5% of the population under the age of 15 years (slightly lower than the equivalent figure of 43% in 1998).<sup>7</sup> Of the total population, 24.3% (5,491,972 people) are categorised as 'non-Ivorians', which are largely made up of people from Burkina Faso and Mali, with sizeable populations of Senegalese, French and Lebanese amongst them.

Côte d'Ivoire's Human Development Index (HDI) for 2012 was 0.432 – in the low human development category, positioning it at 168 out of 187 countries.<sup>8</sup> Multidimensional poverty has increased from 27.8% in 2002 to 34.4% in 2011.<sup>9</sup> The country's clear water access indicator has declined to 76% since the political crisis and only 24% of households use improved household toilets. To this end, Côte d'Ivoire did not reach its Millennium Development Goal targets for water and sanitation.<sup>10</sup>

### 2.2 Cocoa production in Côte d'Ivoire

Côte d'Ivoire produces 40% of the world's cocoa, equivalent to 1.4 million tons per year.<sup>11</sup> The vast majority of farmers (estimated at 80%) sell their cocoa through middlemen, and about 20% are part of farmers' cooperatives. The continuing economic sustainability and

<sup>6</sup> BBC World Country Profiles 2015, Ivory Coast, accessed 28 July 2015 < <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13287216>>

<sup>7</sup> Institut de la statistique, 2014 'Recensement Général de la Population et de l'Habitat 2014', November 2014, accessed 21 July 2015 < <http://www.ins.ci/n/>>

<sup>8</sup> UNDP, 2013. 'Human Development Report 2013: Côte d'Ivoire'

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Statistics Division. Available at: <http://faostat3.fao.org/browse/Q/QC/E>

stability of cocoa production is important for the development of the country, particularly given concerns that the collapse in cocoa prices in 1999-2000 was largely responsible for the political crisis of 2002 and the ensuing conflict.<sup>12</sup>

As the global demand for cocoa rises, Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa industry is under increased pressure to produce more and better quality cocoa. Yet supply is constrained, due to a range of complex technical, environmental, socio-economic and political issues.<sup>13</sup> To give a glimpse of the problem, these issues include changing aspirations of younger generations for sources of livelihoods, the aging population of cocoa farmers, the occurrence of cocoa tree diseases such as swollen shoot and black pod, problems of land tenure and ownership for farmers, and a declining yield of cocoa as trees grow old. Add to this a significant lack of infrastructure, governance structures and low levels of literacy and education amongst cocoa-growing communities; it becomes clear how a cocoa supply deficit is of urgent concern.

## 2.3 State of children in Côte d'Ivoire

According to UNICEF, the child mortality rate was estimated at 108 per 1,000 in 2013, and the maternal mortality rate has worsened with 614 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2013 compared to 543 per 100,000 in 2006.<sup>14</sup> Access to healthcare is extremely low, with research referenced by UNICEF in 2013 finding that the average cost of treating a child against illness in two urban areas, at approximately USD 25, was 20 times above the national poverty line at that time.<sup>15</sup> Free healthcare is available to children and pregnant women, though studies show that fees are still payable.

Violence against children is considered to be widespread and socially accepted. In 2013, 1,568 cases of violence against children were reported and referred; an increase from the number reported in 2012.<sup>16</sup> This can be seen as an improvement in the capability of national systems to receive reports and respond to cases rather than an increase in child abuse and neglect, as the majority of cases are likely not reported. Children in Côte d'Ivoire also face other child protection concerns. For example, according to UNICEF<sup>17</sup>, 40% of students experience violence from their schoolteacher and 34% of students have been victims of humiliating punishments. Even though more children are gaining access to school year-on-year, there is a need to focus on the well-being and safety of children, including at school. Children's access to a birth certificate is considered to be a key indicator of their level of vulnerability to child abuse and exploitation. The national average percentage of children with birth certificates is 62% with rates much lower in some cocoa-farming areas, such as the Bas Sassandra region, where the percentage is at low as 39%.<sup>18</sup> Children are also reported to be experiencing sexual and physical violence, with an

<sup>12</sup> Robson, P., 'Ending Child Trafficking in West Africa; Lessons from the Ivorian cocoa sector', Anti-Slavery International, December 2010

<sup>13</sup> Mondelēz International, 2013. 'Cocoa Life Guidance Document'

<sup>14</sup> UNICEF Annual Report. 2013 Côte d'Ivoire

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Khudr, A. 2014. *Improving Access to Education* (Presentation), ICI Stakeholder Meeting Report, 18 November.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

## The ECOWAS region is known to have the highest incidence of child labour and the lowest literacy rates in the world.

estimated 35% seeking assistance subsequently.<sup>19</sup>

### 2.4 Scale and nature of child labour and child slavery

The ECOWAS<sup>20</sup> region is known to have the highest incidence of child labour and the lowest literacy rates in the world.<sup>21</sup> A great deal of research has been conducted on the scale and nature of child labour, including the worst forms of child labour in Côte d'Ivoire and the West African region, with some limited information specific to child slavery. This section presents key headlines from the most recent research. In general they highlight significantly high numbers of children engaged in child labour, including the worst forms of child labour, with little evidence of any substantial change over the last decade or so.

In 2014, ILO estimated that a total of 1.42 million children in Côte d'Ivoire were engaged in the worst forms of child labour, representing seven out every ten children in employment, and one out of every five children between 5 to 17 years of age.<sup>22</sup> In total, 28% of children between 5 to 17 years of age were found to be economically active in all sectors of the economy. Within the above-mentioned total of 1,424,996 children engaged in the worst forms of child labour, 539,177, or 38%, were considered as involved in hazardous work. Of these, 64% were engaged in largely unremunerated 'work' within families.

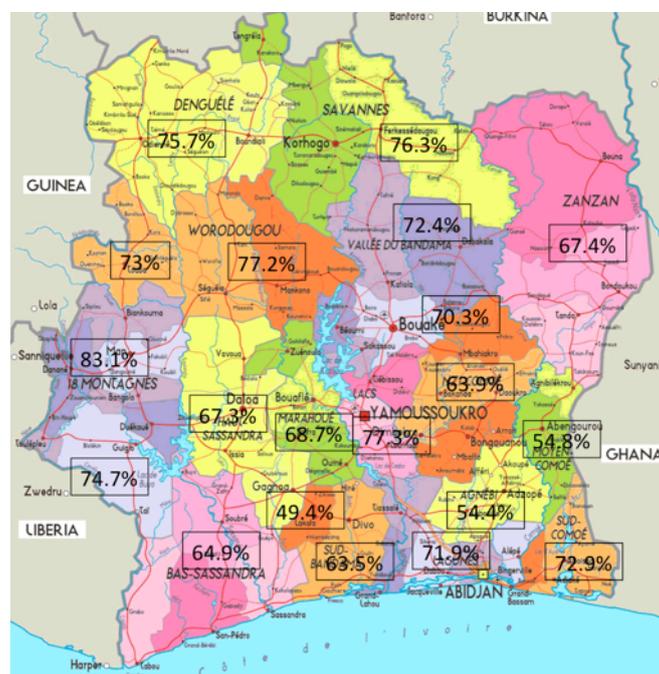


Figure 1: Incidences of child labour by region

<sup>19</sup> UNICEF Annual Report. 2013 Côte d'Ivoire

<sup>20</sup> ILO, 2014, *The twin challenges of child labour and educational marginalization in the ECOWAS region*

<sup>21</sup> ILO, 2014, *The twin challenges of child labour and educational marginalization in the ECOWAS region*

<sup>22</sup> The survey was based on a national sample of 12,000 households selected using statistically significant sampling.

The percentage of children economically active varies according to region. Thus, in the main areas where Mondelēz International is implementing Cocoa Life, the percentages range from 49.4% in the region of Fromager (Le Gôh) to 83.1% in Montagne (see Figure 1). It is possible that there is a combination of explanatory factors related to the variations in child participation rates in economic activities. For example, a report made by CEPRASS (2002) found greater incidence rates of child labour by both internal (74%) and foreign (69%) migrants than by indigenous people (63%).

According to Tulane University (2013/14), the percentage of children working in cocoa production, and in hazardous work in cocoa production, has increased from 23.1% to 34.9% and from 22.3% to 30.9%, respectively, between 2008/09 and 2012/13.

**Table 1: Estimates of Percentages of Children Working in Cocoa Production, 5-17 Years, Exposed to Hazardous Work Activities in the Cocoa Sector, in Côte d'Ivoire, 2008/09 and 2013/14**

Percentage of children working in cocoa exposed to:	2008/09	2013/14	Per cent change
Number of children working in cocoa production	819,921	1,303,009	+58.9%
Land clearing (V1)	64.3%	44.4%	30.9%
Heavy loads (V2)	79.8%	57.2%	-28.3%
Agro-chemicals (V3)	15.2%	13.0%	-14.5%
Sharp tools (V4)	79.4%	71.2%	-10.3%
Long working hours (V5)	5.2%	3.1%	-40.4%
Night work (V6)	2.4%	2.3%	-4.2%
Exposed to one or more variables	96.5%	88.5%	-8.3%

Source: Tulane University (2013/14)

The same report highlights that “some hazardous activities in cocoa agriculture have decreased considerably and children exposed to hazardous work are reporting fewer hazards. However, due to growth in cocoa production as well as other factors, the total number of children in hazardous work in the cocoa sector has not decreased”.

From visiting cocoa farming communities and speaking directly with cocoa farmers and other community members, there were indeed indicators that child labour was potentially prevalent throughout. Risk factors and indicators included community members expressing significant resistance to saying anything that would indicate that children worked in their cocoa farms.<sup>23</sup> Despite this, farmers admitted to needing their children to work in the cocoa farms and a fear that they might lose their certification or face legal consequences if

<sup>23</sup> Resistance to discussing children’s work and child labour in communities generally highlights an underlying sense of anxiety or fear about what information and views might arise from the conversation and their potential consequences. Similarly, an openness to discuss such issues would indicate the expectation that different views have been, or can be, resolved.

## Farmers admitted to needing their children to work in the cocoa farms and a fear that they might lose their certification or face legal consequences if found to be doing so.

found to be doing so. In one community visited children were observed labouring under the hot midday sun, carrying breeze blocks from one pile to another.<sup>24</sup> If community members felt there were community-wide negative consequences to reporting or sharing information about child labour, this inevitably pushes incidences further underground.

Working in cocoa farms is considered arduous and hard and there are often

two harvests per year during which time the work needs to be done fast and efficiently. This is what makes this kind of work particularly challenging and hazardous for children. The types of work that children are undertaking can be any of the following, though some of the tasks are more commonly undertaken than others.

- Using machetes (to cut branches and keep the farm free of weeds)
- Using pesticide sprays
- Cocoa harvesting
- Breaking cocoa pods
- Spreading cocoa to dry
- Drying, packing into sacks and loading onto lorries
- Watering cocoa plants

Some of these tasks are inherently hazardous for all children to undertake. Related risks that make the work harmful and/or hazardous for children are the risk of insect or snake bites, the length of hours (see Table 4) the weight of loads and so on.

**Table 2: Average weekly working hours of economically active children**

Age	Girls	Boys	Average
5-13 years	29	31	30
14-17 years	39	41	40
Total	34	37	35

Source: ILO (2014)

Through focus group discussions with children in two of the communities, children generally related a dislike or an aversion to working in cocoa farms. Wounds and other such marks below the knees were observed on one or two of the boys who were wearing shorts. Although images of cocoa plants featured in their drawings, children were reticent

<sup>24</sup> This community was not supported by Cocoa Life or any other organisation. The farmers were unsure as to whether they were still certified or not. There were school holidays at the time of the visit and so it was not immediately clear as to whether this would be going on during school time. The activity stopped shortly after the team arrived in the village.

## **The boundaries between children’s work, child labour and the various forms of hazardous work, seem to be a matter that communities are negotiating, and even transgressing, continuously.**

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to talk about cocoa farming. The children generally aspired to finish school and enter the civil service as police officers, doctors or teachers. No children showed an interest in cocoa when asked about their present or future. The low levels of children’s interest in cocoa farming (due to low incomes, low social status, etc.) were also confirmed by the adults. They also mentioned how awareness-raising campaigns against child labour have encouraged children to further

resist farming activities during their free time. Farmers expressed how they were experiencing a major lack of manpower.

Suffice to say, most evidence highlights the reality that children’s work and child labour are prevalent, in different forms, throughout the country. A large part takes place within households, though is not limited to such. Where children are increasingly enrolling in and attending school, they are often still required to work on farms. The boundaries between children’s work, child labour and the various forms of hazardous work, seem to be a matter that communities are negotiating, and even transgressing, continuously.

### **2.4.1 Child slavery**

Despite the focus on child labour in Côte d’Ivoire over the last decade, relatively little evidence has been sought by the sector relating to child slavery, or practices similar to child slavery, which for the purposes of this report includes the trafficking of children. Stakeholder consultations also revealed a general lack of prioritisation of and sufficient attention to these more egregious forms of child exploitation. This was due to a combination of factors, including the hidden nature of trafficking and the relatively low scale of the problem when compared to other forms of child labour. This was further complicated by general confusion between child slavery and other forms of child labour, which also affects the lack of ability to formally identify and report cases. For example, in a recent pre-training survey of police and security forces undertaken by INTERPOL, 52% stated that they had witnessed incidents of child trafficking but did not respond to the case.<sup>25</sup>

Source areas for trafficking point to a range of locations, from neighbouring countries such as Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso, as well as from the northern regions of Côte d’Ivoire. As often occurs, trafficking routes mirror larger migratory trends. When considering destinations of trafficking, it appears that trafficking may also be more common to the Southwest regions of the country where there are settled communities of migrant labourers from Mali and Burkina Faso.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Interview with Representatives from INTERPOL Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation Sub-Directorate on 16 July 2015.

<sup>26</sup> Robson, P., ‘Ending Child Trafficking in West Africa; Lessons from the Ivorian cocoa sector’, Anti-Slavery International, December 2010

## **Police recently identified and recovered 48 alleged ‘child slaves’ aged 5 to 16 from cocoa farms, and arrested 22 alleged traffickers.**

A 2010 Anti-Slavery International research interviewed 133 young people from Burkina Faso and Mali, in 2009 and 2010, all of who had returned from working in the Ivorian cocoa sector in the previous five years. All of them had been recruited whilst under the age of 18 years (some under 10) and were identified as returning youth migrants by agencies in their home country. Of

the 133 young persons (including nine girls), 75 to 90% reported having spent two to three years working on the farms, some up to five years and some less. The testimonies recorded their tragic experiences on farms, which many only left after years of broken promises of payment by farmers and having grown mature enough to realise how they could return home. Only nine of the young people were paid according to their ‘agreements’ and the rest were left unpaid or paid very little for their years of hard labour. The work involved was broad and included menial tasks such as collecting water, but also hazardous tasks such as spraying of pesticides and using machetes to cut branches and trim grass and weeds. Farmers were able to control them through a mixture of threats and calling them to obedience, which explains why farmers preferred to let the children go once they grew older and as they became more difficult to control. Stories include farmers threatening to report them to the police for false accusations of theft or such, which would prompt the boys to run away out of fear. These boys were somehow able to return to their home country but were too ashamed to return to their communities with no money or ‘status’ to show for their years of servitude. The testimonies revealed dire conditions of living and working including being unable to leave the farms due to fear of snakes and wild animals. Some described falling seriously ill with malaria and other forms of severe illness with only other child workers to care for them, while living together in small cabins or adobe houses. After performing gruelling tasks from dawn till dusk, they were required to cook their own meals from yam and cassava, and often went hungry due to exhaustion from work.

The report also stated that there are indications that child trafficking has been decreasing in both scale and scope over the past 10 to 15 years, due to new laws and increased awareness about its criminal nature.<sup>27</sup>

In 2005, police recently identified and recovered 48 alleged ‘child slaves’ aged 5 to 16 from cocoa farms, and arrested 22 alleged traffickers. This calls urgent attention to the significant concern of child trafficking and slavery in the sector.<sup>28</sup> Media reports state that the children came from Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso, as well as from northern regions of Côte d’Ivoire. It was confirmed to the team that the 22 alleged traffickers were not related to the children identified.<sup>29</sup> It is surprising that the case has not received more international media attention; particularly given the significant ramifications such information holds for the entire sector.

<sup>27</sup> Robson, P., ‘*Ending Child Trafficking in West Africa; Lessons from the Ivorian cocoa sector*’, Anti-Slavery International, December 2010

<sup>28</sup> Farge, E. and Brice, M. 2015. ‘Ivory Coast frees 48 child slaves, arrests traffickers’, Reuters, 23 June, accessed 28 July 2015 <<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/06/23/uk-ivorycoast-trafficking-idUKKBN0P300620150623>>

<sup>29</sup> Interview with Representatives from INTERPOL Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation Sub-Directorate on 16 July 2015.

**It is important to look at the above situation of child labour and slavery within the broader context of the cultures, demography, history, sociology and development of the country and region.**

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## **2.5. Contextual dynamics, enablers and factors**

It is important to look at the above situation of child labour and slavery within the broader context of the cultures, demography, history, sociology and development of the country and region. Côte d'Ivoire has a history of a shifting and dynamic demography, which continues to shape the socio-economic, cultural and political landscape of the country.

Within the context, child exploitation in cocoa farms is the result of a complex array of causes and conditions, enablers and push factors. It is critical to understand that those enablers and push factors that render children vulnerable to exploitation in cocoa farms also make them vulnerable to other forms of abuse and harm. A 'child-centred' approach calls for a response that understands how different forms of child exploitation and abuse are interrelated.

### ***2.5.1 Relative poverty and lack of structural support***

Poverty can be seen both as an enabler and a push factor as cocoa farmers remain some of the poorest people in the world. This is largely due to the small amount of value they derive from the supply chain. There is general agreement across NGOs and other stakeholders that cocoa farmers are not benefiting from a fair share of the financial value of the cocoa they produce, despite large and increasing profits in the sector and the rising demand for cocoa products – such as chocolate – on a global scale. The Cocoa Barometer Report (2015)<sup>30</sup> presents a detailed economic analysis showing how the value chain is squeezing value beyond levels of sustainability. It argues that farmers are not being heard and are universally underrepresented in efforts to achieve cocoa sustainability. The average cocoa farmer in Côte d'Ivoire earns the equivalent of 50 cents per day – lower than the international poverty line set at USD 2 per day, as well as the extreme poverty line of USD 1.25 per day as set by UNDP and World Bank.

Farmer poverty is further exacerbated by a combination of additional factors, including the small size of farms, low education, malnutrition, poor working conditions, lack of access to support and healthcare and so on.<sup>31</sup> The low income of farmers means that there are economic contributing factors to why they may exploit labour; as well as why this practice may have become commonly accepted. Given that 80% of cocoa farmers are not part of farmer organisations there are few governance structures or avenues to set labour standards. The risk of labour exploitation, including child labour and slavery, is considered higher amongst this group when compared with farmers who are members of a cooperative.

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<sup>30</sup> Barometer Consortium 2015, Cocoa Barometer Report, [www.cocoabarometer.org](http://www.cocoabarometer.org)

<sup>31</sup> Barometer Consortium 2015, Cocoa Barometer Report, [www.cocoabarometer.org](http://www.cocoabarometer.org)

## 2.5.2 Women's rights and gender equality

It is well recognised<sup>32</sup> that the well-being and protection of all children, both boys and girls, is directly connected to the well-being and equality of women. Of course, as child bearers, women's health and well-being are directly and biologically linked to the health of the child before and for some years after birth.

The Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), which measures levels of gender-based discriminatory factors, places Côte d'Ivoire high on its scale. The SIGI scoring for 2014 found: *"women's position in Ivorian Society remains low, with many subjected to discriminatory practices, significantly limiting the capacity of women to play an active role in society, as well as representing violations of their human rights"*.<sup>33</sup> It also found that the recent political instability and volatility resulted in many grave acts of gender-based violence against women, such as the widespread use of rape and sexual violence.

Women face significant challenges to equality in rural communities in all spheres of their lives. About 12% of women are reportedly married by the time they are 15 years of age, and 36% before 18, even though the minimum age of marriage is 18 for women (21 for men).<sup>34</sup> In the communities visited, women reflected these reported trends, as many were married and had borne children by the time they were 17 years of age. In each of the focus groups undertaken with women, many, if not most, had not completed primary school and, in some communities, were largely illiterate. In one of the Cocoa Life communities, the women were from different ethnic groups and faiths and spoke about how their illiteracy also made them ignorant about many other things and marginalised as a consequence. Women expressed how they wanted to be able to 'learn things', so that they could make better decisions and earn money and assets in their own right.

Under the Civil Code, women have equal right to inherit property, however the practice varies across the country. Under customary practices, sons are also more likely to inherit land than daughters. Indeed, this was reflected in the communities visited where farmers mainly considered their sons in taking over their farms in the future. In one community, women collectively owned and cultivated their own cocoa nursery, from which they derived their own income. Significantly, out of the six communities visited, women in five of them were generally clear they were *not* cocoa farmers and did not own or have any rights over the farms. They expressed how cocoa farms, and the income derived from them, were clearly the prerogative of the men. However, on questioning relating to their daily life, it was found that women were undertaking many cocoa farming tasks as a matter of course. Hence why women are considered 'invisible cocoa farmers'.<sup>35</sup>

There was a general experience shared amongst the women that their views were not heard or sufficiently represented by the Community Development Committees.

<sup>32</sup> UNICEF, 2007. *'State of the World's Children'*

<sup>33</sup> SIGI, 2015, Côte d'Ivoire <[www.genderindex.org/country/cote-d039ivoire](http://www.genderindex.org/country/cote-d039ivoire)>

<sup>34</sup> Ministère de la Santé et de la Lutte Contre le Sida (MSLS) et l'Institut National de la Statistique (INS) et ICF International, 2013. *'Enquête Démographique et de Santé et à Indicateurs Multiples du Côte d'Ivoire 2011-2012'*

<sup>35</sup> UTZ-Solidaridad, 2009. *'The role of certification and producer support in promoting gender equality in cocoa production'*

## **There was a general experience shared amongst the women that their views were not heard or sufficiently represented by the Community Development Committees.**

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### **2.5.3 Socio-cultural influences**

It has been argued that the chaotic economic and market conditions in Côte d'Ivoire, and in particular the low living income received from cocoa production, have contributed to child labour becoming socially accepted and culturally entrenched.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, Berlan (2011) argues that there are also more historically connected factors that influence children's work and labour in cocoa farming.<sup>37</sup> Berlan

points to the history of slave labour in the cocoa sectors of Côte d'Ivoire from previous centuries to the intra-familial and socio-gender dynamics in broken and dysfunctional families, which can put children at risk.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, dysfunctional families, broken families and the common subsequent neglect of children, are universally recognised as serious child protection issues, which make children further vulnerable to abuse and exploitation outside the home.

Children, who have little protection and care at home and no supportive access to school, can be more likely to use their own agency to leave home. Lack of child protection at home thus becomes an enabling factor that can drive children to find work on cocoa farms. Indeed, finding work in such limited circumstances is a way of being fed, gaining status, acquiring social and community support, accessing some form of vocation and investing in their future and following enduring traditions of farm work, which many consider has formative value.<sup>39</sup> In some cases, children may choose to work in farms as either a better alternative to school, because of teacher absenteeism, corporal punishment by the teacher or other reasons; or as a pathway to pay for school. Concomitantly, farmers may also decide to take on children to work in their farms through the belief and tradition that such work has value for children, whilst weighing up the age and gender of the child and their relative distance from the nearest school.<sup>40</sup>

During the team's visits to cocoa farming communities, people were highly reticent to talk about their children working or even going to the cocoa farms. They stated that 'no child' was being taken to the farms. On deeper enquiry, community members expressed fear at being reported, imprisoned or disqualified from certification of their cocoa cooperative. Farmers felt frustrated that they were not only left with a shortage of labour to grow their cocoa, but also felt a sense of parental de-authorisation from influencing the lives of their own children. Some described how their children threatened them with reporting if they

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<sup>36</sup> Robson, P., 'Ending Child Trafficking in West Africa; Lessons from the Ivorian cocoa sector', Anti-Slavery International, December 2010

<sup>37</sup> Berlan, A. Manchester Papers in Political Economy; 'Social Sustainability in Agriculture: An Anthropological Perspective on Child Labour in Cocoa', Working paper no. 11, (October 2011), Centre for the Study of Political Economy, The University of Manchester

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid

## **Farmers felt frustrated that they were not only left with a shortage of labour to grow their cocoa, but also felt a sense of parental de-authorisation from influencing the lives of their own children.**

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were asked to go the farms; highlighting their anxiety of shifting familial power dynamics. They also expressed concern about a rising communal and cultural disconnection of youth from cocoa, further strengthened by children living away from home to access secondary school.

### **2.5.4 Lack of access to schools and education**

West Africa has the lowest literacy rates in the world.<sup>41</sup> In Côte d'Ivoire, there is not only a serious and urgent need for access to both primary and secondary schooling for children, but also a need for quality education.<sup>42</sup> So even where children have access to school, the low quality of education can lead to poor learning. This is not only an issue for children, but lack of access to school and education means that farmers and other adults within communities are also uneducated and low skilled, further contributing to the vicious cycle of poverty.

Schools visited by the research team in cocoa-growing communities highlighted generally poor and basic facilities (sometimes schools were little more than a straw roof with no walls), lack of teachers and / or teacher's living quarters. The dire state of children's schools, facilities and resources in cocoa-growing communities can be seen as a key barrier to alleviating child labour and its risks. The internationally accepted primary response to child labour is a basic-functioning school system, yet this response is not sufficiently developed in Côte d'Ivoire.

### **2.5.5 Regional migration**

Regional youth labour migration is an important factor in considering issues of child labour in cocoa. There is debate as to what extent the agency of children in decision-making regarding their own education, training and work must be considered to properly understand the contextual perspective of the problem.<sup>43</sup> Such questions are also intricately linked to decisions about migration, whether within or across borders. As Côte d'Ivoire has been a popular destination for work for people across the region for many years, there are well-trodden cross-border migration routes, social/ familial/ ethnic networks and established receiving communities for migrants to follow. In particular, Côte d'Ivoire has been receiving migrants, many of who are under 18 years of age, from neighbouring countries of Burkina Faso and Mali for many years.<sup>44</sup> Studies highlight the persistent trend and tradition of youth labour migration across the region whether to the agricultural sectors of cocoa, coffee, cotton, yam, cashew and charcoal, or whether into

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<sup>41</sup> ILO, 2014, *The twin challenges of child labour and educational marginalization in the ECOWAS region*

<sup>42</sup> Global March Against Child Labour, 2013. 'Child Labour in Cocoa Farming in Côte d'Ivoire; Report of the Scoping Mission conducted by global March Against Child Labour' January - February

<sup>43</sup> Robson, P., 'Ending Child Trafficking in West Africa; Lessons from the Ivorian cocoa sector', Anti-Slavery International, December 2010

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

## The dire state of children's schools, facilities and resources in cocoa-growing communities can be seen as a key barrier to alleviating child labour and its risks

domestic work, restaurants or market trading.<sup>45</sup> Reasons for migrating are much broader than economic and comprise a variety of social and psychological dimensions relating to children, particularly young teenagers, needing to explore new places, experience new settings and accumulate material possessions as part of cultural aspirations.<sup>46 47</sup> Castle and Diarra's in-depth research with young Malian migrants to Côte

d'Ivoire found that, like other migrants, many experienced exploitation and trafficking as well as hardships such as deceit, lying, theft and extortion (including by officials). Importantly however, they also found that many reported positive migration experiences where they were treated and paid well by their employers, which in turn improved their status and capacity.<sup>48</sup> Such good experiences were more likely to occur where the migrant had contact with 'resortissants' (people from the migrants' native village) in their destination areas. Such contacts thereby made up an important protective network for these young people. This helps to explain a Bambara proverb quoted by Castle and Diarra in their research; "*If you go on labour migration, even if you don't get rich, you will see something, you will learn something*".<sup>49</sup>

### 2.5.6 Rule of law and criminal justice

According to INTERPOL, there have only been eight prosecutions of trafficking in Côte d'Ivoire, but none in the cocoa sector.<sup>50</sup> Access to police and justice is largely unheard of for most working in the cocoa sectors of the country. 'Reporting' of identified cases is rarely made to the police, but rather to industry-related organisations, such as certifying bodies, or to child protection agencies. Communities visited expressed that child abuse incidents, whether of rape or other forms of violence, were usually dealt with within the community and amongst the families. Police stations were often far away and difficult to reach without transport (and most communities visited had very little access to means of transport). The lack of attention to the criminal justice response was also reflected across the sector and stakeholders. This partly explains the relative lack of media attention given to the recent arrest of 22 alleged traffickers and the recovery of 48 children in San Pedro's cocoa farms.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Hashim, I. 'Pathologising young people's movement' (20 July 2015) Need to correct the citation (<https://www.opendemocracy.net/beyondslavery/iman-hashim/pathologising-young-people%E2%80%99s-movement>)

<sup>48</sup> Castle, S. and Diarra, A. '*The International Migration of Young Malians: Tradition, Necessity or Rite of Passage?*', (2003) London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Consultations with Representatives from INTERPOL

<sup>51</sup> Farge, E. and Brice, M. 2015. 'Ivory Coast frees 48 child slaves, arrests traffickers', Reuters, 23 June, accessed 28 July 2015 <<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/06/23/uk-ivorycoast-trafficking-idUKKBN0P300620150623>>

## 3. National governmental response - Infrastructure and systems

This section provides an overview of the national governmental response to child labour, providing an overview of the legal and policy framework as well as the infrastructure and systems in place relevant to the issue of child labour in cocoa. An overview of international legal and policy frameworks can be found in Annex 4. An overview of the response to child labour by NGOs, UN and the corporate sector can be found in Annex 5.

### 3.1 National legal framework

Côte d'Ivoire is a signatory to the ILO conventions No 138 on Minimum Age and No 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, and has also ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. These have all been incorporated into the national law.

Côte d'Ivoire's *Labour Code (1995)* outlines that a child cannot be employed under the age of 14 years, even in the case of apprenticeship, unless formally approved by a regulatory body. It further outlines that a Labour Inspector, under Social Law, may examine children (and women) to ensure they are not working beyond their strength.

The *Law Relating to Trafficking and The Worst Forms of Child Labour No 2010-272 of 30 September 2010*, specifically defines, prevents and prohibits trafficking and hazardous work for children.

Under Article 7, forced labour of children includes:

- all work or service, outside the usual family chores and educational work that is required of a child that he should not do, does not want to do or cannot do, but is required of him or her under threat of fear or deprivation of any kind, for the benefit any individual, organisation or company.
- any practice or institution under which a child is transferred by either or both parents, or by a guardian or another that has control over him or her, to third parties whether individuals, organisations or societies, against a payment or not, of the exploitation of the child.
- the imposition of some form of work or service with a view to produce or profit for the purpose of the organisation's use or for commerce and trade.

Further regulations detailing the types of work considered hazardous for children and prohibited for those under 18 are outlined in *Arrêté No 009 du 9 Jan 2012 relating to the determination of the list of prohibited hazardous work of children less than 18 year*. Under Article 3, the regulation states that work is considered hazardous and prohibited for children where it:

- puts their lives in danger
- damages their health, their safety or their morality
- damages their physical or mental development
- deprives them of their childhood, their potential and their dignity
- prevents them from having scholarly diligence or to have the aptitude to benefit from instruction received.

This goes on to include the cutting of trees, burning of fields, application of chemicals and chemical fertilizer, chemical treatment of field or plans as well as carrying of heavy loads. Further types of tasks detailed include the overall weights of loads allowed, with or without vehicles.

At least two stakeholders interviewed stated that there was a draft law on mandatory education that was due to pass. However, the team were not able to acquire a copy.

## 3.2 National policy framework

A National Child Protection Policy was adopted in October 2013, proposing a vision of a national child protection system. It contains principles and objectives on strategies of prevention, victim assistance, the fight against impunity and systems-strengthening. The policy is integrated with the National Development Plan Framework (2012 to 2015) alongside the National Strategy for Social Protection. This is accompanied by a Plan of Action that has been put in place for 2014 to 2018, which focuses on the provision of social services to the most vulnerable populations.

Following the National Plan of Action on Child Labour (2012 to 2014), a further four-year plan was being developed to begin from 2015 to 2019. This plan will follow a similar framework retaining the components of prevention, protection, criminal justice and monitoring and evaluation.<sup>52</sup>

Responses to child labour are also included in the Cocoa-Coffee sector reform process. For example, participation in the National Action Plan on Child Labour (2012 – 2014) is explicitly included under the sustainability objectives of the Cocoa-Coffee Reform Working Group, established under the Ministry of Agriculture.<sup>53</sup>

## 3.3 National child protection mechanism

The national mandate for child protection is shared between the Ministry of Solidarity, Family, Woman and Child (MSFFE), and the Ministry of Social Affairs.<sup>54</sup> The MSFFE are responsible for policies and national coordination efforts on a broad range of areas such as child protection and gender. The Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for the provision of nationwide social services.<sup>55</sup>

Côte d'Ivoire's social services mechanism, though rudimentary, has its basic foundational framework in place. Annually, 500 social workers are trained by the *Institute Nationale de Formation Sociale*, most of whom are active in and around Abidjan.<sup>56</sup> According to UNICEF, there are 108 social service centres, 70 specialised education centres, 43 protection centres (for early childhood) including both public and private centres, 85 community centres for

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<sup>52</sup> Consultation with Representative from the National Oversight Committee

<sup>53</sup> Hatløy, A., Kebede, T.A., Adeba, P.J., Elvis, C. 2012. *Towards Côte d'Ivoire Sustainable Cocoa Initiative (CISCI): Baseline Study Report*. Fafo Institute for Applied International Studies, Oslo, Norway.

<sup>54</sup> Consultation with Representative from UNICEF

<sup>55</sup> Idem.

<sup>56</sup> Idem.

**Côte d'Ivoire is a signatory to the ILO conventions No 138 on Minimum Age and No 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, as well as having ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. These have all been incorporated into the national law.**

children, two orphanages, four kindergartens, and three SOS villages.<sup>57</sup> There are officially 10 state institutional care facilities for children and over 60 privately funded institutions, mainly known as 'orphanages'.<sup>58</sup> Many of these 'orphanages' do not have any formal mandate to provide services and therefore operate without known standards or processes.<sup>59</sup>

Compared to the region, Côte d'Ivoire has a relatively good social services framework and mechanism. However, its uneven distribution and lack of correlation with vulnerabilities

and population needs means that access to resources and provisions are lacking for those who need it most.<sup>60</sup>

Coordinated through the MSFFE, UNICEF is working with relevant government departments to develop a comprehensive approach to national social services that provide a systemic response to concerns of child protection and welfare. Efforts have followed an iterative process of supporting community mobilisation, raising community awareness and fostering attitudinal changes on all issues of child protection.

Following an in-depth assessment of communities' understanding and views on child protection, UNICEF found that communities were frustrated with 'being told' what was best for them and were resistant to what they perceived as interference. Communities called for a more participatory and holistic way of working. The specially formulated 'Community Child Protection Guide' for Côte d'Ivoire, outlines a participatory process whereby a social worker facilitates a six-step series of open community dialogues about all relevant child protection concerns. The process is designed to be a fast-track pathway fitting within government budgetary limitations. The aim is to hold an extended dialogue with any given community over a period of six months, concluding with a self-selected dedicated community child protection committee. By the end of the six months of dialogue, the social worker is formally allocated to the community. Multi-agency teams made up of both government and NGO social workers lead efforts. Due to its low cost and ease of implementation as well as its success in enabling a fast-track process for communities, the project is now being scaled up through a nation-wide programme with implementing partners.

<sup>57</sup> UNICEF, 2014. *Pour une Société Plus Équitable dans un Pays Émergent: La Situation de l'Enfant en Côte d'Ivoire (SITAN)*.

<sup>58</sup> It is not clear if these are additional to, or whether they related to the above information cited in the SITAN report (2014).

<sup>59</sup> Consultation with Representative from UNICEF

<sup>60</sup> UNICEF, 2014. *Pour une Société Plus Équitable dans un Pays Émergent: La Situation de l'Enfant en Côte d'Ivoire (SITAN)*.

## **Their role is to serve as a coordination mechanism for combatting trafficking, exploitation and child labour, including its worst forms, across all sectors.**

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and child labour, including its worst forms, across all sectors. It is chaired by the Ministry of Employment and Labour and also includes the Ministry of Family, Women and Children, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Agriculture. The committee has a secretariat, which conceives, coordinates and monitors implementation of programmes and efforts against child labour.

A national child labour monitoring system, called SOSTECI<sup>61</sup>, was initially established by ILO in 2004 within the framework of the West Africa Cocoa and Agriculture Program (WACAP) in 6 regions of the country (Soubré, San Pédro, Daloa, Oumé, Adzopé and Abengourou).<sup>62</sup> The main objective is to support the identification and referral of children engaged in hazardous work and child trafficking. It operates at four levels; national, regional, district and village. The system relies largely on voluntary identifications and referrals. Although the WACAP has been completed, the SOSTECI system is still being piloted in certain parts of the country and is still dependent on external funding. It is overseen by the Inter-Ministerial Committee.<sup>63</sup>

The *Oversight Committee* sits within the First Lady's office and is charged with overseeing the work of the Inter-Ministerial Committee. It is composed of a broad range of government, non-governmental, corporate and other bodies. The main mandate of the committee is to implement the National Plan of Action on Trafficking, Exploitation and Child Labour. The overarching aim is to reduce child labour by 70% by 2020.<sup>64</sup>

The *Conseil du Café Cacao (CCC)* is a non-departmental government body tasked with regulating all activities of the coffee and cocoa sector.<sup>65</sup> The board of the CCC consists of representatives from government ministries, producers and private sector (exporters). The CCC has established the *Public-Private Partnership Platform (PPPP)* as the main mechanism to promote the coordination of its development program and project interventions in the cocoa sector, with all stakeholders.<sup>66</sup> Under the PPPP there is a dedicated Child Labour Working Group attended by all key national stakeholders.

<sup>61</sup> Système d'Observation et de Suivi du Travail des Enfants en Côte d'Ivoire

<sup>62</sup> ILO, 2013. 'Document cadre du Système d'observation et de suivi du travail des enfants en Côte d'Ivoire (SOSTECI)'

<sup>63</sup> Consultation with Representative from National Oversight Committee

<sup>64</sup> Idem.

<sup>65</sup> Established by decree No 2011-481 on 28 December 2011 and is under the technical supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture and the financial supervision of the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

<sup>66</sup> Hatløy, A., Kebede, T.A., Adeba, P.J., Elvis, C. 2012. *Towards Côte d'Ivoire Sustainable Cocoa Initiative (CISCI): Baseline Study Report*. Fafo Institute for Applied International Studies, Oslo, Norway.

## 4. Cocoa sustainability and community development

Achieving cocoa sustainability is a major priority and endeavour in Côte d'Ivoire and it is through the lens of working towards cocoa sustainability that many of the largest stakeholders in both the private and public sector are acknowledging the importance of community development. Recognising the value of the infrastructure and services to which communities have access, cocoa sustainability strategies now include community development as a key component. Inherent within this paradigm is the understanding that while life in communities may revolve around cocoa farming, communities are of course more than just cocoa producers. Communities are their own systems and, relative to their contexts, are dynamic and shifting. Indeed, community development is an integral part of the broader efforts towards national development goals and overall standards of living. The distinction between the two requires attention so that any conflicts of interest and differences in views can be viewed in full light.

The current blurring of lines between supporting cocoa sustainability and community development can be seen throughout the literature and communications across the sectors and stakeholders. There were many instances where stakeholders, including those leading organisations and projects, spoke about cocoa productivity methods and community development efforts without adequate differentiation between the two. Examples include projects (across all sectors) where teaching of farming methods to communities is included in a community development project. Similarly, organisations that focus on cocoa productivity and farming methods are also delving into areas of infrastructure building, such as for schools and healthcare centres, leading them into areas where they may not possess any expertise.<sup>67</sup>

Within the cocoa sector's community development work, better acknowledgement of communities as a whole would ensure that cocoa productivity and community development agendas are seen as differentiated, as well as related. Better coordination and division of specialist work amongst agencies and projects would enable more effective use of resources. This paradigm is, in turn, impacting how responses to child labour are developed and implemented.

### 4.1 Partnering with Communities

Communities are the most integral stakeholders to consider. The role of Community Development Committees, and the drawing up and implementation of Community Action Plans are of huge significance in supporting a conducive and protective environment for children.

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<sup>67</sup> Consultation with Representatives from CCC

**Although partnership with communities is an explicit aim, as outlined in numerous strategies and programme, the experience of communities is that they are listened to very rarely.**

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Although partnership with communities is an explicit aim, as outlined in numerous strategies and programmes, the experience of communities is that they are rarely heard or listened to.<sup>68</sup> For these reasons, it is of utmost importance to continually consider in what way communities are being engaged with and heard. This may also require the recognition of potentially conflicting agendas that need to be brought to light, and where possible resolved

and responses integrated, when interacting with communities. For example, there seems to be a conflation of the roles of communities as producers of cocoa, with whom business is done, and the roles of communities with regard to family life, particularly in relation to their children. A consequence of this is that the issue of child labour is being raised within the whole paradigm of cocoa farming; whereas the subject of child education and welfare itself is much broader than cocoa.

Contrasting views of adults as farmers and as parents were apparent from focus group discussions where the subject matter turned to the future of their children. Farmers, most of whom were men, expressed a desire for their children (particularly their sons) to take over the cocoa farm. On a number of occasions farmers were asked how their view might be different if they did not think about this from the perspective of their cocoa farms. In this case some farmers expressed a desire for their children to be civil servants. Visits by outsiders are seldom about anything but cocoa. On the other hand, women, who did not recognise their own contribution on cocoa farms as work,<sup>69</sup> expressed a desire for their children to complete schooling and enter professions. This highlights a need to be clear about how, and through what perspective, communities are being engaged with on issues relating to the welfare of their children.

#### **4.1.1 Working through cooperatives**

It is understood that approximately 20% of the cocoa farmers in Côte d'Ivoire sell their cocoa through a cooperative.<sup>70</sup> A cooperative is a 'farmer organisation', which takes up the role of gathering all the cocoa from its members and selling it in bulk. Most of these cooperatives are managed or supported by exporter companies such as ECOM, Barry Callebaut and so forth. These companies, in turn, export and sell the cocoa to chocolate and other manufacturers, such as Mondelēz. Exporter companies are called 'suppliers', revealing a 'buyer-centric' rather than a 'farmer-centric' perspective, mirroring the relative power imbalance along the supply chain.

Various stakeholders expressed concern regarding issues of governance and the general lack of accountability being taken up by many cooperatives in properly tackling issues of

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<sup>68</sup> Barometer Consortium and VOICE Network, 2015, *Cocoa Barometer Report*, [www.cocoabarometer.org](http://www.cocoabarometer.org)

<sup>69</sup> It was found that women were in fact doing significant amounts of work on cocoa farming but were not recognising this as such.

<sup>70</sup> Care, 2012. *'Sustainable cocoa from thriving cocoa-farming communities; Mondelēz – Care Partnership'*

## **Exporter companies are called ‘suppliers’, revealing a ‘buyer-centric’ rather than a ‘farmer-centric’ perspective, mirroring the relative power imbalance along the supply chain.**

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recognise that the reason big companies are so interested in them is because of cocoa. In one community visited, farmers expressed wonder at the fact that people were coming to see them from as far away as Europe: “now we understand that cocoa is really important”.

At the same time, 80% of cocoa farmers do not operate through a cooperative, and sell their cocoa through *pisteurs* (middlemen who buy cocoa from farmers and sell to larger traders). Given that cooperatives are able to attract resources, such as capacity, training, community infrastructure and premiums in selling their cocoa (where certification is acquired), there is a concern that farmers operating outside of cooperatives are worse off.

### **4.1.2 Certification schemes**

Certification schemes, such as Rainforest Alliance, UTZ and Fairtrade, offer to certify cocoa that meets specific standards relating to environmental, social and agricultural conditions. If a cooperative is able to produce certified cocoa, they receive a ‘premium’ on the farm gate price of their cocoa. Such certifications are easier to apply and maintain through a cooperative. Farmers receive a higher price for certified cocoa, often in the form of premiums, which farmers can collectively use for both farming and social community investment. Stakeholders reported that more often than not, these premiums are used towards supporting cocoa farming rather than other aspects of community needs or development.<sup>73</sup> Auditing is undertaken by national and international independent consultants, and communities are usually informed up to a few weeks in advance. According to a Fairtrade representative, approximately five cooperatives in Côte d’Ivoire have lost their certification due to non-compliance with child labour standards.<sup>74</sup>

### **4.1.3 Raising awareness and training**

Raising awareness and training on issues of child labour is probably the most common intervention against child labour. There were mixed responses and opinions about the benefits and impact of such interventions, with the stronger views on the side of how ineffective these efforts are. From the perspective of communities, it was found that

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<sup>71</sup> Global March Against Child Labour, 2013. ‘*Child Labour in Cocoa Farming in Côte d’Ivoire; Report of the Scoping Mission conducted by global March Against Child Labour*’ January - February

<sup>72</sup> Consultation with Representatives from WCF, Cargill and ECOM

<sup>73</sup> Consultation with Representatives from WCF, Cargill and ECOM

<sup>74</sup> Consultation with Representatives from Fairtrade International

## **It was found that in almost every village, adult communities members felt frustrated with child labour awareness raising activities.**

community members who had received training were adamant that children did not work at all in their cocoa farms. On deeper enquiry it was found that in almost every village, adult community members felt frustrated with such awareness raising activities. They described how they could not even take their youngest children to the farms, as they normally would, to let them play and sleep while they worked. Instead, they felt they had to leave such young children home alone, unsupervised, for fear of legal consequences. They also expressed that the young people of the community were becoming disconnected from their land and the future of their cocoa farms. Concerns that efforts to eliminate child labour are ineffective raise serious questions about the impact of the sector's current interventions.<sup>75</sup> Sector stakeholders, both NGO and corporate, expressed that such training only enabled communities to evade detection of child labour practices. Overall, there was a common feeling amongst most stakeholders that there was a lot of confusion about what 'child labour' was, its different forms and the differences between 'western' standards and culturally accepted norms in communities.

## **4.2 Call for an integrated response**

Child labour does not occur in a vacuum. As elaborated in this report, there are a complex web of causes, push factors and enablers that interrelate over time to result in child labour in its different forms. Furthermore, child labour in Côte d'Ivoire is not limited to the cocoa farms. Children and youth can be seen working across various activities and sectors, from street vending to construction work, and one might presume that much of this work may fall within the definitions of child labour if examined. In order to take a sustainable child-centred approach, it is important to perceive the issues from the viewpoint of the child and his or her family and community. For a child, she or he needs protection from all forms of exploitation and abuse. Focusing on one type of harm does not necessarily end up keeping children safe, and may even push children into other more hidden forms of exploitation. For example, preventing children from working in cocoa may give them little alternative but to find work in another sector. Similarly, turning away children from employment in cocoa farms because of formal child labour standards may not prevent that child from migrating to finding work in the rest of the cocoa sector, 80% of which is not organised through cooperatives. All these examples highlight how a narrow focus on child labour in the cocoa sector can in fact undermine efforts to respond to child labour. Without systemically responding to the root vulnerabilities and enablers of child labour, efforts run the risk of simply plastering over the issue in ways which externalise it to another sector or geographical area.

### **4.2.1 Child-centred approach to child labour**

In order to put children at the heart of efforts against child labour in cocoa, the focus must be on the holistic well-being of the child. Every child has the right to grow up in an

<sup>75</sup> Tulane University, 2015. 'Survey Research on Child Labour West African Cocoa Growing Areas: Final Report'

## **Child labour does not occur in a vacuum. There are a complex web of causes, push factors and enablers that interrelate over time to result in child labour in its different forms.**

forms of intentional harm. Intentional harm manifests as abuse, i.e. physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse as well as neglect. It also includes all forms of child labour and exploitation. Child protection systems consist of keeping children safe through working at three levels such as the following:

- Level 1: Identification, referral of, and responses to, cases of child abuse
- Level 2: Targeting the immediate causes of child abuse and neglect
- Level 3: Establishing and strengthening a safe environment for children where they are kept safe in order to be able to thrive

These are the three main interdependent interventions of child protection systems.

A child protection approach strengthens the formal and informal systems that seek to keep all children safe from harm in a holistic way, supported through professionals such as qualified social workers and youth workers. This is analogous to a healthcare system, which seeks to treat and protect people against all illnesses and diseases, not just one form of disease.

### **4.2.2 School and education system**

Improving access to schools, both primary and secondary, is the principle response to child labour in the country. It is also the most sustainable and the most urgent. Indeed, without access to a functioning school, children and families have little alternative but to engage in income-earning activities. Significant progress has been made over the last 15 years in improving access to schools for children and is continuing. The quality of schools and education is also integral to this approach. Education needs to be accessible by children who are entering the system late or re-entering after years of work.<sup>76</sup> Education also needs to provide pathways into vocational training relevant to context. Schools also need to be safe for children. In at least one community, women raised their concerns about teachers sexually abusing their students.

At the same time, education for all children and improving access to schools cannot be seen as the *only* response to child labour. However, schools and education can be well utilised as an entry-point for identifying children engaged in child labour, including its worse forms. For example, where schools are supported as part of a community approach, accurate data of local populations can be compared to school enrolment and attendance rates to check for 'missing children'. For children who are attending school but exhibit

environment, conducive to safety from harm and with access to education and care. Taking a *child-centred* approach requires looking at this issue from the perspective of the child.

All children have the right to protection as delineated under Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Child Protection can be described as the protection of children from all

<sup>76</sup> ECOWAS report on Twin Challenges of child labour and educational marginalisation

**Improving access to schools, both primary and secondary, is the principle response to child labour in the country. It is also the most sustainable and the most urgent. Indeed, without access to a functioning school, children and families have little alternative but to engage in income-earning activities.**

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not to say they did not exist. Decent work for youth is an important part of the response to child labour, and must not be obfuscated in the discussions and responses to the issue. Decent work for youth plays an important role in replacing hazardous working conditions for children.<sup>77</sup> Such endeavours also enable meaningful and more involved participation of children into the efforts against child labour. Some stakeholders spoke positively about 'travail socialisation', or 'socialisation par le travail', a method by which children are socialised into understanding agriculture through appropriate training. Farmers were also encouraged by such initiatives, and suggested they be able to take their children to farmer field schools, which they felt would enable them to maintain a cocoa farming, and an agricultural connection with their children.

symptoms and indicators that raise concerns about child labour or other protection issue, their identification, follow up and response can provide a pathway for intervention..

Children who are trafficked or in slavery-like conditions are not usually attending school, even where one is accessible. This is again why supporting schools as a community-based approach can help identify children who are not in school, as a key indicator.

#### **4.2.3 Decent work for youth**

The team was not able to access any projects that supported decent working conditions for youth. This is

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<sup>77</sup> Global March Against Child Labour, 2013. 'Child Labour in Cocoa Farming in Côte d'Ivoire; Report of the Scoping Mission conducted by global March Against Child Labour' January – February

## 5. Mondelēz International - The way forward

This section seeks to present Mondelēz International's efforts in responding to child labour and child slavery within the context of its overarching work on sustainability, particularly through its dedicated cocoa sustainability programme, Cocoa Life. Importantly, this section seeks to explore areas for where Mondelēz's efforts could be further strengthened, organisationally as well as in relation to its partners and other stakeholders. Key recommendations are specified and elaborated upon.

### 5.1 Mondelēz International and its Cocoa Life program

Mondelēz International is one of the world's largest snack companies, and is one of the world's largest buyers of cocoa in West Africa. Given its enormous global reach and leadership in its industry, Mondelēz recognises its role and shared accountability on the world stage.<sup>78</sup>

At a sector level, Mondelēz International is a founding member and board member of ICI, which is dedicated to eradicating child labour in cocoa. Furthermore, through its membership of WCF, Mondelēz is taking up its role in sector-wide cocoa sustainability measures, which include responses to child labour. To this end, Mondelēz International holds shared accountability for the approaches, strategies and objectives of these representative agencies.

#### 5.1.1 Analysis of Cocoa Life framework and approach

Mondelēz, together with the global chocolate and cocoa sector, have recognised that as the global demand for chocolate continues to increase, the future growth of cocoa supply is in jeopardy.

Mondelēz International recognises the importance of supporting farmers and their communities to thrive and making cocoa a more valuable crop to cultivate and harvest. To this end, Mondelēz established Cocoa Life, a dedicated cocoa sustainability programme with a commitment of USD 400 million over a 10-year period. It aims to work in 6 origin countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Indonesia, India, Brazil and the Dominican Republic) and to reach 200,000 farmers and over one million people across five focus areas.<sup>79</sup>

Cocoa Life's vision is to empower communities to thrive, based on a holistic approach encompassing the following three principles;

- i. Holistic farmer-centred
- ii. Committed to partnership
- iii. Aligned to sourcing [of Mondelēz's supply chain]

In recognising that its investment in the sustainability of cocoa is embedded in cocoa-growing communities' well-being and success, Cocoa Life implements activities across the

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Mondelēz International 2013 'Cocoa Life Guidance Document'

## **Mondelēz established Cocoa Life, a dedicated cocoa sustainability programme with a commitment of USD 400 million over a 10-year period.**

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following five key areas: i) farming, ii) community, iii) youth, iv) livelihoods, and v) environment.

Programme implementation and impact are measured through monitoring 10 global key performance indicators, which are independently evaluated. The themes of 'women's empowerment' and 'child labour' are integrated as crosscutting themes across the five areas, and also have their own specific indicators to ensure

progress is monitored and measured.<sup>80</sup> The approach and design of Cocoa Life openly aims to support farmers to improve their farming practices so that the cultivation of cocoa grows in both quantity and quality. In parallel, Cocoa Life works directly with cocoa-growing communities to support broader development goals, as prioritised by the communities themselves.

What is unique about Cocoa Life, and is not paralleled in scope by other similar sector stakeholders, is its approach to community development. Cocoa Life's approach to community development focuses primarily on the needs of the community, within a broader context of cocoa sustainability. These broad-ranging objectives are then put into practice through dedicated and budgeted medium term projects. Cocoa Life implements this by separating out the two parallel paths of interventions i.e. cocoa farming-focused support on the one hand, and broader community development support on the other, by partnering with separate agencies to implement each. Such an approach respects the difference and relatedness of approaches between supporting cocoa production and wider community development, in ensuring cocoa sustainability. The reason this programmatic approach is unparalleled when compared with other stakeholder interventions in the cocoa sector is due to the *scope* of its investment and partnerships, as well as its *reach* in target cocoa-growing communities.

### **5.1.2 Cocoa Life and its approach to tackling child labour and child slavery**

Mondelēz has elaborated on its strategic response to child labour and established an Advisory Board consisting of leading international experts on the issue. The external advisors<sup>81</sup> are regularly consulted on strategic and operational decisions relating to child labour. This included the commissioning of this assessment and the commitment to launch a dedicated Child Labour Action Plan.<sup>82</sup>

As stated, Cocoa Life requires response to child labour and gender issues to be crosscutting themes across the five key focus areas. This essentially means that all partners must ensure that child labour and gender equality are mainstreamed throughout all programmatic activities and outputs. Cocoa Life's *development* approach provides a

<sup>80</sup> Mondelēz International 2015 'Cocoa Life Operations Guide'

<sup>81</sup> Members of the board include Aidan McQuade of Anti-Slavery International and Mil Niepold as an Independent Expert.

<sup>82</sup> Mondelēz International, 2014. 'The Call for Well-being; 2014 Progress Report'

## Any differences in approach must be recognised as a boon for the industry as a whole, which gains an opportunity to test and witness different models of interventions.

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relates and takes up its role in joint sector-wide efforts, particularly through ICI and WCF's CocoaAction strategy. Any differences in approach must be recognised as a boon for the industry as a whole, which gains an opportunity to test and witness different models of interventions. Mondelēz would benefit from reflecting more deeply on how it can contribute to sector-wide joint objectives whilst maintaining its role as a proponent of an *integrated, child-centred approach* to child labour; *vis-à-vis* the *supply-chain* driven approach.

sustainable framework of responding to issues such as child labour and child slavery, because of its potential to not only to treat its symptoms and immediate push factors, but also to target its root causes and underlying enablers. The challenge now is for effective implementation of this approach and measurement of benefits

The reality that Mondelēz's Cocoa Life approach potentially sets it apart from its peers has implications for how it

### 5.1.3 Cocoa Life implementation in Côte d'Ivoire

Mondelēz International set up its Cocoa Life office and programme in Côte d'Ivoire in 2013. The national Cocoa Life programme is implemented through cocoa supplier companies (cocoa exporters) and NGOs. Supplier implementing partners, ECOM, Barry Callebaut and Cargill, are responsible for delivering the *farming*, and to some extent, the *environment* programme components in Cocoa Life communities. NGO partners, Care and Solidaridad, are responsible for delivering the *Community, Youth and Livelihoods* components. Cocoa Life's target for 2015 is to reach 217 communities.<sup>83</sup>

Care has been the main NGO implementing partner for Cocoa Life since its inception in the country and the programme has recently transitioned from pilot phase to a three-year project. Solidaridad began implementation of their three-year project in early 2015, and were still in their inception phase of setting up and team recruitment when the research team visited. Together the partners work in selected communities, and support them to reach set minimum standards to be able to produce cocoa in a sustainable way; that is, to fulfil Cocoa Life bean requirements. These minimum standards consist of i) traceability up to the first point of entry of suppliers' premises, ii) transparency on premiums paid to farmers based on the volume they deliver, iii) Community Action Plan (CAP) activated on all focus areas before the end of the main crop, and iv) communities trained in Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), with training offered to all farmers and deliberately inclusive of women and youth, with a 70% attendance requirement.<sup>84</sup>

NGO partners have been contracted for at least three years to work with communities to deliver outcomes; with the potential for the time span to be extended where the need is

<sup>83</sup> Consultation with representatives from Cocoa Life Côte d'Ivoire

<sup>84</sup> Mondelēz International 2015 'Cocoa Life Operations Guide'

**Working with communities to reach a level where they can self-mobilise and organise depends on a number of variables and can take years. Once that capability is released, a community is able to tackle a whole host of different community issues.**

evidenced and required. A primary performance target for community development work under the Cocoa Life programme is the establishment of Community Development Committees (CDCs), the development of Community Action Plans (CAPs) and the subsequent activation of those plans. To undertake this work with communities in a meaningful way, which respects and enables communities to take up their role and be mobilised, is not a small feat. It requires time, building of trust, sensitivity, adaptability, flexibility and connection with communities. The

‘community development’ component covers a broad spectrum of activities and requires a wide set of organisational capabilities spanning from environmental technical capacities to skills in livelihood and income development. It is also important to note that often community development work requires significant amount of efforts in social cohesion. A number of stakeholders expressed how it could often take weeks just to get all members of a community to sit together, due to discord and social tensions caused by the political instability of recent times.<sup>85</sup> It also takes time to start tackling gender disparities in communities and to co-create the public space for women to not only be heard, but also feel empowered. Nonetheless, working with communities to reach a level where they can self-mobilise and organise depends on a number of variables and can take years. Once that capability is released, a community is able to tackle a whole host of different community issues.<sup>86</sup> To this end, the three-year timeframe offers an optimum amount of time for important community relationships to be built upon and development work to be undertaken.

## 5.2 Building on Mondelēz International’s efforts

In order to continue the important progress being made by Mondelēz through Cocoa Life and to ensure the best possible results from its significant investment in cocoa sustainability and thriving communities, it is important to reflect on where efforts can be strengthened and built upon moving forward. This is integral to maintaining long term effectiveness and sustainability of efforts, particularly given the tenacity of issues such as child labour and child slavery, that can undermine both present and future well-being of children, families and communities, and thereby cocoa sustainability. Eight specific recommendations are provided below, in a general order of priority, and further elaborated beneath.

<sup>85</sup> Consultation with representatives from Care and UNICEF

<sup>86</sup> Consultation with representatives from Care

### 5.2.1 Child protection policy and code

#### **Recommendation 1: Mondelēz 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 and child slavery.**

It is recognised that Mondelēz International aims to provide data on incidences of child labour towards the implementation of the CocoaAction strategy. A key factor in deciding how child labour cases must be monitored is not only its effectiveness in gathering reliable statistics, but also the way the method of case monitoring helps keep children safe and build communities in a sustainable way. Often compliance-driven approaches can make it more difficult to identify cases.

In consulting with stakeholders working in cocoa-growing communities across Côte d'Ivoire, it is found that when children are identified in child labour, or at risk of child labour, agencies refer these to the local farmer cooperatives for action and/or to an NGO. Such responses are reasonable in order to ensure the child is kept safe and immediate action is taken. However it is unclear as to whether formal reports or referrals are made to assess the case and the needs of the children involved, as well as of the community. Furthermore, knowledge of such cases is not generally shared with any other stakeholders along the supply chain. As mentioned earlier in the report, there is a structural resistance to formally reporting such cases for fear of consequences to certifications, reputation and more.

Moving forward it is essential to proactively identify and report actual cases; primarily to ensure the child is removed from the harmful situation, and secondarily to incrementally build the response system, which will help strengthen a safe and conducive environment for all children. To this end, it recommended that Mondelēz International develop and formalise an internal Child Protection Policy and Code, which includes a strategy and plan for implementation, and is signed off and supported by senior leadership.

At a *strategic* level, the child protection policy would set some overarching principles on Mondelēz International's position on child labour and related matters, setting the tone for its public engagement and role in the sector. At an *operational* level, the child protection code should be integrated into the programmes on the ground, similar to a 'supplier code'. Community development programming can incorporate an identification, reporting and referral mechanism for actual cases. This would require all identified child protection cases, including child labour and slavery, to be reported through a formally appointed local structure, risk assessed and referred to the most appropriate child protection authority, which may well be at community level. Reporting of cases back to Cocoa Life should clearly be required in partners' project reporting. Figure 4 outlines a minimum standard for a possible 'child protection' code.

*At minimum, the Standard Operating Procedure should include the following steps:*

- i. If any information regarding a possible case, or a child at risk, of child exploitation, comes to the attention of a representative or agent of Cocoa Life, s/he must report this information immediately to their manager or Cocoa Life focal point.*
- ii. A brief child protection report should be drawn up by the representative/agent for these purposes so that a written record of the referral process is documented. The report should include:*
  - i. Date, location and any identification details of the child or children;*
  - ii. Pertinent details of the incident, including any harm known or suspected to be suffered by the child or children in question;*
  - iii. Any actions that have been taken, including whether any report or referral (formal or informal) has been made to any child protection authority or other agency;*
  - iv. Any details regarding other persons involved, including any suspected abuser, as well as any other responsible persons around the child;*
  - v. Any other salient details, including any factors requiring urgent attention.*
- iii. The reporting manager or focal point must check whether the information has been shared with the relevant child protection body in the community of location of the child.*
- iv. Where the incident has already been reported to the relevant child protection authority, a child protection report should still be written up and submitted to the reporting manager.*
- v. All information relating to the identity of the child, or any other identifying information, must be handled with care and passed in a confidential process through the reporting and referral lines.*
- vi. Reporting and referral must be made swiftly and dealt with as a matter of priority to reduce risk of harm, or further harm to the child, or children.*

Figure 4

### **5.2.2 Child-centred programming with education as the entry-point**

**Recommendation 2: Adopt a child well-being approach to child labour and child slavery, starting with adding a formal 'children's access to education' component into Cocoa Life; and actively utilising this as an entry-point for identifying children at risk.**

Within the broad remit of Cocoa Life's community development work, NGO project activities cover a wide spectrum of activities, whilst the specific responses to child labour are mainly limited to training and awareness raising. Such interventions on child labour are common across the sector and though important first steps, they are not sufficient and ineffective in the long term.

In this context, a child-centred approach requires the strengthening of a safe environment for children, which must begin with improved access to schools and a minimum satisfactory quality education. Furthermore, where communities have a well-functioning and better-

resourced school in their vicinity, families will be encouraged to send their children to school instead of their farms.

It is proposed that Cocoa Life formally adopt 'children's access to education' as a primary response to risks of child labour in cocoa-growing communities. This should begin with developing specific indicators on children's access to education in schools, relating to enrolment rates, attendance rates and performance levels, which should be directly compared to child populations. Anomalies and inconsistencies, such as missing school children, provide important indicators of children most at risk of child labour and provide an entry point for proactive child protection follow-up at a case-by-case level.

In parallel, school systems need to be supported to not only improve the quality of education and be better resourced, but require encouragement to identify children at risk of dropping out, or engaged in child labour. Teachers should be actively identifying children where concerns include child labour (as well as other child protection issues), so that community-based authorities can follow up directly with the family. This way vulnerable families are also identified and can be specifically supported to participate in Cocoa Life activities such as complementary livelihoods or saving schemes. This way supporting access to education for children not only supports a sustainable primary response to child labour, but also provides an entry point for the active identification of cases.

A principal finding of consultations with women in communities was that they, more so than the men, held consistently high aspirations for the well-being and education of their children. In fact, the future of their children was their primary motivation for their work and drive. To this end, the cross cutting theme on women's empowerment is intricately linked to the response to child labour.

### **5.2.3 Measuring impact sustainably**

**Recommendation 3: Cocoa Life to review its child well-being targets and indicators to ensure impact on child labour and child slavery integrates with sustainability and effectiveness of outcomes.**

As mentioned, Cocoa Life monitors and measures its impact and effectiveness using 10 global indicators. The indicator for child labour seeks to measure 'reduction in child labour and forced child labour'. It is however unclear how the levels of child labour and forced child labour are measured. There was no programme-wide baseline assessment, and there are no reporting or referral mechanisms in place, which means that there are no documented cases that are recorded as a matter of course. At the time of the assessment the project activities had not been implemented long enough to review the monitoring and evaluation processes. However, it is vitally important to build and maintain a robust, transparent and functioning monitoring and evaluation mechanism that measures impact and effectiveness of interventions and acts as a gateway for improving activities in an on-going way.<sup>87</sup>

It is recommended that the work undertaken in communities be required to meet some basic minimum performance targets that focus on the well-being of children, and respond

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<sup>87</sup> A specific recommendation on this point has been made for Cocoa Life in Ghana and therefore should also be duly considered for the Côte d'Ivoire programme.

to the underlying enablers and vulnerabilities to child labour and child slavery. Some of these are already focused on by Care, such as acquiring birth certificates for all children.

The following example indicators in Table 5 could be considered and built upon for integration in order to measure impact on the child well-being.

**Table 5: Proposed example performance targets / outcomes  
for Cocoa Life programmes**

Target Indicators	By end of Year 1	By end of Year 2	By end of Year 3
<b>1. Birth Certification</b>	Families are supported to acquire birth certificates for all children.	Families are supported to acquire birth certificates for their children before 3 months of age.	All families acquire birth certificates for their children before 3 months of age.
<b>2. Access to school/ education</b>	<p>All children of primary school age are going to school.</p> <p>Those out of school (either not enrolled or not attending) are followed up, assessed for reasons and provided with assistance according to needs.</p> <p>School committees are identified and supported to develop child protection policies and practices.</p>	<p>All children have access to good quality primary school and secondary school.</p> <p>Children not enrolled, regularly absent or who perform poorly are identified and assessed; with support from NGO where needed.</p> <p>Children of working age have access to decent work.</p> <p>School committees are supported to review and improve child protection policies and practices.</p>	<p>All children have access to good quality education from primary, secondary, vocational training and beyond.</p> <p>Children not enrolled, regularly absent or who perform poorly are identified and assessed, without requiring support from NGO partner.</p> <p>Children of working age have access to decent work.</p> <p>School committees are reviewing and improving child protection policies and practices without support from NGO partner.</p>

<p><b>3. Access to formal child protection system</b></p>	<p>Communities' and systems' awareness on a broad range of child protection issues are raised and key issues discussed.</p> <p>Communities identify or self-select and establish a committee related to school and child welfare.</p> <p>Gathering and collation of data on community child population and school population (enrolment, attendance and performance rates).</p> <p>Community school and child welfare committee work regularly to identify at-risk children through inspecting community and school-related data and applying indicators.</p>	<p>Community school and child welfare committee work regularly to identify at-risk children through inspecting community and school-related data.</p> <p>Community school and child welfare committee regularly follow-up children missing from school and assess any child labour or other child protection concerns.</p> <p>Children identified at risk of harm (including child labour) are provided with adequate response, according to their need.</p> <p>Community school and child welfare committee identifies and accesses any additional resources and trainings to build their capacity.</p>	<p>Community school and child welfare committee work regularly to identify at-risk children through inspecting at community and school-related data.</p> <p>Community school and child welfare committee regularly follow-up children missing from school and assess any child labour or other child protection concerns.</p> <p>Children identified at risk of harm (including child labour) are provided with adequate response, according to their need.</p> <p>Community school and child welfare committee is formally linked to an allocated social worker with whom they can liaise on a regular basis.</p>
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At a broader community development level, some further basic indicator targets are recommended as they also impact child well-being. These include i) access to clean water ii) access to basic healthcare and iii) livelihood earnings to reach the equivalent of minimum living income over the poverty line. Specific gender equality indicators could be developed in relation to (i) livelihoods support to women in cocoa-growing communities, (ii) gender awareness and sensitisation with the cocoa-growing communities and (iii) supporting of Women's Extension Volunteers in cocoa, as these interventions, if targeted well, would support the well-being and education outcomes of children.

These performance targets, with clear indicators, need to be regularly measured by both the NGO and Cocoa Life teams with regular monitoring and evaluations, including independent evaluations every two to three years. The crosscutting nature of gender equality also requires clearer monitoring, and must not only focus on women's empowerment but also on community-wide attitudes and cultural practices that are shared by both men and women.

Finally, given Mondelēz International's participation in the sector-wide efforts to eradicate child labour through the CocoaAction platform, it is further recommended that sector-wide indicators be also similarly reviewed in light of a more sustainable impact approach.

### 5.2.4 Taking up an active role at the global sector level

**Recommendation 4: Mondelēz International to develop and follow a public engagement stance and strategy at the sector level, which more clearly represents its distinct development approach to cocoa sustainability.**

The size and scale of Mondelēz International's global operations require it to externally demonstrate high levels of accountability. This includes in preventing and addressing human rights violations, including child labour and child slavery, across the supply chain. The proportionality of Mondelēz International's responses and actions on this front are measured against its size, scale and the locations of its work.<sup>88</sup> In taking up its shared responsibility, it is important to have cognisance of its role vis-à-vis the other industry stakeholders in the sector, some of who are also significant in their size and scale, such as Nestlé and Mars. Industry stakeholders are explicit in their recognition of the shared and integrated reality of the cocoa supply chain.<sup>89</sup>

Mondelēz International must remain aware both of its capacity to act separately from its *competitors*, or jointly with its *peers*, and the impacts this has on a wider level. Notably, there continue to be calls for the private sector to collaborate jointly and pre-competitively on addressing contextual social and environmental issues.<sup>90</sup> To this end, it is proposed that a clear strategy is established documenting Mondelēz International's approach, notably its unique development approach to sustainable cocoa-growing communities.

### 5.2.5 Partners in development

**Recommendation 5: Cocoa Life in Côte d'Ivoire to develop a partnership strategy that informs all its dialogues at national and local levels, which explicitly aligns with the Ivorian government's national strategies for cocoa sustainability and child well-being agendas.**

In supporting the Ivorian government's cocoa sustainability efforts, it is proposed that Cocoa Life considers how it can take up its role as a 'partner in development'. Côte d'Ivoire is still a developing country, which was unfortunately set back due to political instability, in turn involving and impacting the cocoa sector. Cocoa farmers are still some of the poorest people on the planet, severely impacting their children and families in a cycle of poverty. Given Cocoa Life's objective to support communities to thrive and ensure the sustainability of cocoa, the programme's objectives already align well with national development goals. This, in turn, could more consciously support Mondelēz International's role in supporting the global Sustainable Development goals through its Cocoa Life programme.

In taking up its role as a development partner in the areas of mutual interest, it is recommended that Cocoa Life actively support government efforts to eradicate child

<sup>88</sup> Principle 14 of UNHCR, 2011. 'The Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights'.

<sup>89</sup> Fair Labor Association, 2011. 'Sustainable Management of Nestlé's Cocoa Supply Chain in the Ivory Coast – Focus on Labor Standards'.

<sup>90</sup> Barometer Consortium and VOICE Network, 2015, *Cocoa Barometer Report*, [www.cocoabarometer.org](http://www.cocoabarometer.org)

labour through strengthening the national education and child protection systems. This would include regularly participating in key national forums and platforms on child well-being with clear strategic objectives and a willingness to contribute through sustainable methods. Priority should be given to those forums that consult and collaborate on national policies, plans and actions as well as those focused on child labour. For example, a number of stakeholders explicitly recommended that Cocoa Life take a more active role in participating in the Public-Private Partnership Platform working group on child labour, held by the Conseil de Café-Cacao. Such participation in strategic national forums would also enable Cocoa Life to advocate on specific efforts, such as the proposal for regional plans of action, as shared by the Cocoa Life national team.<sup>91</sup>

### **5.2.6 Delineating programmatic boundaries**

**Recommendation 6: Cocoa Life in Côte d'Ivoire to clearly demarcate the boundaries between the core tasks of its five areas, particularly between the differentiated programmes of supplier and NGO implementing partners, to ensure that each has proportionate resources, time and technical support to deliver all outcomes effectively.**

As mentioned above, the Cocoa Life programme is designed comprehensively in its approach and overarching implementation framework. Implementing partners are selected according to their organisational specialisation and expertise. This enables resources to be allocated and used effectively as all five areas are integral to the overall success of Cocoa Life.

It was found that counterparts tended to pay more attention on the farming side of Cocoa Life interventions than on community development. This was the case, for example, where NGO partners are implementing farming pillar activities, despite these areas being allocated to suppliers. This may well be an influence of the sector-wide blurring of focus on community development through the lens of cocoa-farming productivity (cocoa sustainability) without adequately considering the distinctions.

It is proposed that the key areas of focus for each implementing partner are more clearly delineated so that NGO community development efforts are not unnecessarily broadened, leaving efforts 'thinner on the ground'. Community development, (which includes the focus areas of livelihoods and youth) is already a wide remit. Whereas some NGOs have a history and experience working on farming and agricultural methods for supply-chain sustainability, it is important for them to retain a distinct focus on community development and allow the supply-chain partners to implement the farming pillar of the programme.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Consultation with Country Lead Mr Mbalo Ndiaye

<sup>92</sup> It should be noted that the research team have not formally evaluated the Cocoa Life programme and therefore these suggestions result from only preliminary observations, conversations and a brief review of the documents.

## 5.2.7 Programming for sustainability in community development

**Recommendation 7: Cocoa Life to more explicitly incorporate a 'systems-strengthening' approach, working alongside communities, to support sustainability of its programme outcomes.**

In the long term, children, families and communities, require the development and strengthening of support systems, such as health, education, justice, security and other social services in order to ensure general well-being (i.e. thriving communities). Such development also requires, though is not limited to, the building of basic infrastructure, such as roads, schools, water mains, hospitals, electricity and other grids. Where there is a lack of infrastructure and systems, everyday life is not only incredibly arduous, but also lacks basic support and safety nets that enable persons to reach a greater human potential. Without adequate nutrition, basic health care, water and sanitation, life is primarily about survival. It is within such a context that child labour and child slavery needs to be understood and combated.

To this end, it is vitally important to identify and strengthen existing formal and informal systems and mechanisms as part of the community development work. Doing the work, *on behalf of* the systems is generally unsustainable, as programmes are finite. For this reason Cocoa Life implementing partners are informed that their support to communities must not seek to *build* infrastructure or systems that would normally sit within the remit of the government. Although the reasoning behind this policy is well intentioned, it is suggested that this principle be reviewed and clarified. Both NGO implementing partners expressed their concerns that the need for infrastructure was very high for cocoa-farming communities and was difficult to 'ignore'. Where partnership with government and the public sector is undertaken with 'systemic sustainability' in mind, efforts to build and strengthen infrastructure can be highly effective and have long-term development benefits. It is important to consider that relative to many other countries, the Ivorian government exhibited a willingness and genuine desire to develop the country. Further, most stakeholders had high regard for their government and public sector counterparts, with the only 'criticism' was that they lack resources and capacity. For these reasons it is recommended that projects do not reject infrastructure building projects outright, but review any proposal according to need and consider implementation in coordination with formal national systems such as relevant Ministries. Indeed, this would be in line with the proposed role for Mondelēz International as a 'partner in development'.

Cocoa Life also encourages NGO implementing partners to support capacity building of secondary national NGOs. It is recommended that such capacity building also involve and include relevant public sector officials and workers. Joint capacity building initiatives strengthen links and relationships between communities, NGOs and government, and also build institutional capacity in the long run.

## 5.2.8 Beyond compliance

### Recommendation 8: Mondelēz International to set up a broader accountability structure and mechanism to actively engage with its work to respect human rights in its supply chains.

There is a global trend in recognising the shared accountability of corporates and business enterprises to respect human rights in their operations, as outlined in Annex 5 outlining the 'international legal framework'. Mondelēz International will already understand its requirements to comply with all relevant laws, both national and international. The following actions are proposed, in a suggested order of priority, as examples of measures that would reflect the *heart*, as well as the *letter*, of these international laws and principles. Overall, they convey a bold approach to managing the risk of liability, by moving beyond minimum compliance, towards corporate responsibility and shared accountability.

1. **The Best Interest Principle:** Commit to the universal principle that all decisions and actions relating to children will be made in the best interests of children.
2. **Policy and Operational Framework:** Develop policies and set up operational frameworks that protect and respect children's rights throughout business activities. This would include training and orientation of staff on their joint accountability and appointing senior members of staff with specific responsibilities. The framework would also extend to contractual partners in the supply chain.
3. **Transparency and Public Information:** Be transparent and make information about efforts and organisational learning public and accessible, not only to the international public, but also to communities and children. Examples include annual statements on efforts and achievements on children's rights.
4. **Supporting States:** Actively support and encourage governments and other stakeholders on strengthening child rights and protection at national and international levels.
5. **Consultative Platform:** Put into place a formal consultative platform for engaging with children, families and communities, in order to open dialogue, participation and exchange mutual views on working together.
6. **Impact Assessment:** Undertake a comprehensive human rights impact assessment (with a focus on children) in accordance with the 'protect, respect and remedy' framework set out in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Such an assessment would include a gaps-analysis on child rights against policies and operations.
7. **Regular Due Diligence:** Conduct regular due diligence of the effectiveness of policies and frameworks to address child rights impacts.
8. **Remedial Process:** Establish a remedial process and mechanism for aggrieved children and their guardians to seek redress for any violations. Such processes would need to be made accessible to children and their guardians and families, through clear communications and providing multiple points-of-entry.

It is understood that these actions support a broader rights-based framework, which would provide a more comprehensive response to concerns of child labour and child slavery. It is envisaged that consideration and adoption of these actions and approaches might be reviewed and potentially phased in over the next five years. Such commitments and actions would convey a genuine and open process for respecting the rights of children against exploitation and other rights abuses.

## 6. Conclusion

Child labour, in all its forms, including child slavery, is a tenacious and complex problem in Côte d'Ivoire. Even after 15 years of dedicated efforts and millions of dollars of investment, the problem continues, and arguably grows. As is well agreed by most stakeholders, it is a symptom of a complex set of factors interacting together over time. In parallel, the response to child labour and slavery remains largely uncoordinated and narrow, whilst the sector as a whole is fatigued with the ineffective efforts at curbing a high profile issue. To add further challenge to an already complex issue, the sector-wide anxiety arising from the pressure of international media and campaigns, sometimes ill-informed, pushes industry to find somewhat 'quick-fix' solutions which are not sustainable nor holistically child-centred in the long run.

Child labour and child slavery do not exist in a vacuum. Responding to them as if they are unconnected or unrelated to anything else will only result in undermining those very efforts. If it takes a village to raise a child, then stakeholders must step back and see children at the heart of their families and communities. The parental and familial circles of any child are his or her primary sources of protection and support for survival. A safe environment conducive for children to thrive requires the presence of accessible and well-functioning schools where children can develop their potential through age-appropriate learning. By focusing on the strengthening of the education system through schools, children who are engaged in child labour can be better identified and supported. This way, community-based child protection mechanisms can build on the rudimentary, but improving, school system of Côte d'Ivoire. Overall, through meaningful engagement with communities, not only as cocoa producers, but also as parents and families, stakeholders can work more cohesively to keep children safe. At the national level, by taking up a role as a partner in development, Mondelēz International can support wider infrastructure and systems that help to enable better identification and protection mechanisms for all children.

Mondelēz International's Cocoa Life programme provides a comprehensive framework that sets it apart from most other approaches to cocoa sustainability. The most distinguished feature of the Cocoa Life programme is its direct work with communities with a broader intention than cocoa farming and child labour. Due to this holistic approach, as well as the significant amount of financial and technical investment being dedicated to the programme, Cocoa Life holds the potential to make a significant difference to hundreds, if not thousands, of communities. The sincere objective to not only develop, but *transform* communities is not too ambitious a task, if done with sustainability in mind. The programme is still in its initial stages in Côte d'Ivoire, and the path is untrodden. This means that challenges encountered require openness to understanding and shifts in thinking. It will need differences of views, from both within and outside the organisation, to be considered and integrated, with a regular space for reflection as well as action.

Mondelēz International's role at the sector level, particularly through representative organisations is also integral to this work. Indeed, it may well be *because* Mondelēz sees things differently that its voice is most valuable for the sector.



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Mondelēz Internationall

ISBN: 978-0-9954640-0-2

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