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Ending Child Trafficking in West Africa

Lessons from the Ivorian cocoa sector

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Executive Summary

This report finds that trafficking of children to cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire still occurs. It is difficult to quantify a hidden phenomenon such as human trafficking. However, the research found significant numbers of young people in Mali and Burkina Faso who had worked as children in cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire in the last five years. The practices occur in the context of large-scale movements of people within the region including the trafficking of children to other agricultural activities and to other sectors.

Anti-Slavery International carried out research in 2009/10 on the dynamics of child trafficking into the Ivorian cocoa industry. This included interviewing 133 young people from Burkina Faso and Mali, who had returned in the past five years from working in the Ivorian cocoa sector. These young people had been recruited when under 18 years of age (some under ten years of age) for the purposes of labour exploitation. Under international standards this amounts to trafficking, which is recognised as a contemporary form of slavery.

Those interviewed had generally been trafficked to Côte d'Ivoire when they were 12 to 16 years old. Their parents were poor and the children felt they should make preparations for adulthood by earning some money. Almost all had heard this was possible in Côte d'Ivoire, though they did not know how to get there. The trigger for migration was meeting a recruiter who confirmed a positive image of Côte d'Ivoire, promised good wages and agreed to pay their fare and arrange travel.

The main part of the journey was by regular service bus or by lorry, travelling in small groups accompanied by the recruiter or another person. In some cases young people were taken across the border without passing border controls, while in others they travelled by bus or lorry across the border where little notice was taken of one or two young people. In Côte d'Ivoire the person accompanying them used a mobile telephone to contact a cocoa farmer to arrange to pick them up. The destinations were most of the cocoa regions of the south of Côte d'Ivoire, though most frequently in the south-west of Côte d'Ivoire, which has strong links with Mali and Burkina Faso because of an earlier generation of migrant labourers who settled in this area.

On arriving at a cocoa farm their work involved the use of a machete to keep the farm free of weeds and the use of insecticide sprayers, as well as cocoa harvesting, drying, packing into sacks and loading onto lorries. More than 80 per cent of the young people said that the conditions were poor or very poor. Groups of six to ten young people lived in a cabin or an adobe house, isolated from social contact and unable to leave. If they were sick it was other young workers who looked after them. They were expected to find their own food in the farm. The working day was tiring and lasted from dawn to dusk.

Most of the young people interviewed spent two or three years on cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire before returning to Mali or Burkina Faso. The young people reported that they asked to be paid and to leave after the first year but the farmer said they had not yet worked enough to pay

for their transport. They were then promised pay the next year, though the farmer then found other excuses not to pay. Some managed to negotiate payment of usually about 50,000 CFA/100 USD per year, less than half of the amount they expected. Though others received little more than the cost of the bus ticket or left without being paid. Almost all had to make their own arrangements to travel home. As they travelled unaccompanied, without documents, the return journey was more difficult due to demands for payment at rebel road-blocks in the north of Côte d'Ivoire.

The experiences related in this field research are similar to those found by Professor Alain Sissoko in Côte d'Ivoire in 2005¹. Almost all respondents were very negative about their time in Côte d'Ivoire and said they would advise others never to go there. However, they often seem reticent to discuss their experiences, so in practice may not speak out to dispel others' unrealistic perceptions about the country. Reports from the 1990s mentioned large groups of children being transported together to Côte d'Ivoire in specially-hired buses, something this research did not identify.

The initiatives in the region to improve conditions on farms and reduce trafficking have succeeded in creating new laws against child labour, violence and trafficking. They have raised awareness of the issue of trafficking, and there appears to be greater vigilance by authorities and by transport operators in Mali and Burkina Faso. However poverty in Mali and Burkina Faso continues to be a push factor, along with the continuing perception of Côte d'Ivoire as a rich country. Governance indicators in the region (and particularly in Côte d'Ivoire) are low, meaning that legislation is poorly resourced and implemented. Statutory social protection agencies are particularly weak. Some effective programmes to combat child trafficking are winding down and have not lasted long enough to change the mind-set of rural people (whose only, often forlorn, hope to break the cycle of poverty is migration to Côte d'Ivoire), and to reduce their tolerance of those who organise the trafficking of children. Programmes in Côte d'Ivoire are relatively new and of a small-scale compared to the estimated 800,000 cocoa farms, which are difficult to locate and monitor.

It is clear from this research that the problem of child trafficking, in West Africa generally and in the cocoa sector in particular, is a regional one resulting from a variety of political, social and economic issues. The response to this issue, if it is to be optimal in its impact, must also be regional and seek to address the multiple causes of child labour and trafficking in the region. An approach to eradicating child labour and trafficking in the cocoa sector must therefore be formulated recognising the wider context of trafficking and migration in the region: as this research shows the factors that make children vulnerable to trafficking are the same irrespective of which sector they are ultimately trafficked to.

Anti-Slavery International is aware that there are programmes in the region that address child labour and trafficking, and that the cocoa industry has programmes to improve the productivity of farms in Côte d'Ivoire. It is, however, concerned that attention to the issue of trafficking to cocoa farms is being reduced, that programmes remain small-scale and that remediation has been of too short duration to have affected a deeply-embedded phenomenon. Hence we make the following recommendations:

International Governments

1. Promote effective government and rule of law in Côte d'Ivoire

The slow pace of re-establishing effective government in Côte d'Ivoire means the agencies of state are neither able to protect children effectively from child labour or trafficking nor establish an optimal enabling environment where other actors are able to operate effectively toward these ends. Hence the establishment of effective government and rule of law should become a key priority for diplomatic and aid policy towards Côte d'Ivoire².

2. Ensure regionally co-ordinated action

The reestablishment of the ILO/ International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) in West Africa provides a positive opportunity for the co-ordination of anti-child labour and trafficking policy and action across the region and across sectors.

3. End fears of a boycott of Ivorian cocoa

A diplomatic initiative to advance aspects of good governance, particularly as they relate to reducing trafficking and child labour, may be facilitated by being clear that these would effectively remove remaining demands for a boycott.

Ivorian Government

4. Protect national citizens and migrant workers from labour rights abuses

The political leaderships of Côte d'Ivoire have an obligation to ensure effective government whose writ runs across the country and which acts both to ensure its citizens are protected and to prevent its citizens from violating the rights of others within the borders of the state. Their failure to establish effective government to date is a key reason why child labour and trafficking are such problems in Côte d'Ivoire, and why measures to end these abuses are so piecemeal.

5. Improve the farm-gate price of cocoa

Addressing the poverty of cocoa farmers will not alone resolve the issue of child trafficking and labour to this sector, but it can help stop the problem from worsening. Among other measures the Ivorian Government should

¹ GTZ, 2005

² At time of writing (8 Dec 2010) the outcome of the long delayed Ivorian presidential election is in dispute between incumbent president Laurent Gbagbo and his challenger, Alassane Ouattara.



review the domestic cocoa value chain, ideally with the help of a UN agency or office, such as the International Trade Centre, with a view to removing rent-seeking activities from the chain and hence maximising return to farmers.

Industry

6. Industry assistance for anti-child labour and trafficking measures should be proportionate to profits and of the same duration as commercial activities.

Businesses should invest a minimum of 0.7 % of their pre-tax profits in ensuring their operations and supply chains are free of human rights abuses³, particularly trafficked child labour.

7. Act to end any “free-rider” behaviour by businesses deriving profits from West African supply chains, particularly cocoa

The engagement of cocoa commodity companies such as Cargill, ADM (Archer-Daniels-Midland Company) and Barry Callebaut are regularly identified by observers of the industry as disinterested in comparison with the relatively greater action of chocolate retailers, though Cargill’s foundation did, in 2008 contribute a \$10 million grant to Care⁴. The cosmetics sector is notable by its absence.

Civil society and donors

8. Recognise that ending child labour and trafficking is a social, as well as an economic, issue

Many interventions in the West African cocoa sector operate from a flawed assumption that the use of child labour, including trafficked child labour, is principally a result of the poverty of the farmers who use child labour. However, a social acceptance of child labour can develop beyond any economic necessity. Hence all civil society actors and donors must put in place effective child labour prevention policies and practices and ensure systems are in place for identification and protection of children found in such circumstances.

Co-ordinated action

9. Governments, international institutions, cocoa-using and other businesses, and civil society should act to prevent child trafficking from the countries of origin

The push-factors in countries of origin need to be addressed as well as the pull-factors in the countries of destination. This is all the more important given the difficulties of establishing sufficient and coherent programmes in Cote d’Ivoire as a result of limited governmental effectiveness there.

10. Governments, international institutions, cocoa-using and other businesses, and civil society should act to prevent child trafficking in Cote d’Ivoire

It is recommended that the cocoa and chocolate industry continue and expand its remediation activities in Côte

d’Ivoire, paying particular attention to the attitudes of destination communities to use of trafficked child labour. They should ensure systems for the identification, protection and rehabilitation of trafficked children are in place.

11. Multiple research methodologies should be used to understand the problem

There will always be inherent uncertainties in any one monitoring process and the use of multiple methodologies can help illuminate not only ongoing risks but potential responses to dealing with such risks.

³ The figure 0.7% of businesses’ pre-tax profits reflects the repeated commitment of the world’s governments to commit 0.7% of rich-countries’ gross national product (GNP) to Official Development Assistance. This was first pledged in a 1970 UN General Assembly resolution.

⁴ The donation was for projects “designed to help 100,000 men, women and children in rural areas throughout six countries... It is the largest corporate grant in Cargill’s nearly 150-year history” http://www.care.org/newsroom/articles/2008/06/20080617_cargill.asp



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Chapter 1: Introduction

Case A: Letiefesso in Burkina Faso

I was nine years old when I went to Côte d'Ivoire. I was still at school in the 2nd year of primary school and I was living in town. A man told me that if I went with him to work in Côte d'Ivoire I could have a bicycle. I very much wanted to have a bicycle. I did not know this man. He told me that I would not have to work very hard to get a bicycle.

I was still living at home and went to school. I did not tell my family that I was going to Côte d'Ivoire. I knew that they wouldn't let me go to Côte d'Ivoire so I didn't tell them. I very much wanted a new bicycle so that I could go longer distances and I knew that there was no job near my home where I would earn enough money for that. I had heard that there was plenty of money in Côte d'Ivoire and I thought that if I worked a month or so I could have enough money for a bicycle. My friends had told me about Côte d'Ivoire and how rich it was and how easy it was to earn money. Some people had come back with plenty of money.

There were two middle-men who organised my journey to Côte d'Ivoire. There was one who came to the village and spoke to me and said that I could get a bicycle if I went with him: I travelled with him to the border on a motorbike. The second met us at the border and went with me all the way to the farm. He paid for my bus ticket and said that I would work for him. In fact he only stayed with me until we got to the farm. I do not know the names of the towns that we passed through. We slept one night on the bus and I ate some bread during the journey. I didn't speak to anyone on the journey.

On the farm there was a shelter covered with black plastic without a door. That is where we slept. My job was to carry sacks of cocoa on my head. Once I slipped in a hole when I was carrying cocoa and hurt my ankle. We ate only banana and yams.

Somebody who I don't know came to the farm when I had been there a few months, and said that I was too young to be working there. This person brought me back to Burkina Faso by bus. He made the farmer let me go and give me money for the bus back to Burkina Faso. I got 13,000 CFA (25 USD) which was more than the bus fare but it was not enough for me to buy a bicycle.

This was a few years ago but my memory of being on the farm is only of suffering. I tell people that I meet that there is only suffering in Côte d'Ivoire and that they should not believe what they hear about that country. I might go back there though when I am older, there might not be so much suffering then. I am not at school and I do not have a job. I do what I can to help my parents. We still live in poverty. I did not receive any aid when I got back to Burkina Faso.

I had been told that it was very easy to earn money there quickly, but I was deceived. It was too difficult for me to cut the grass with the machete and cutting the pods from the trees with the long pole hurt my neck. Sometimes I had to climb the trees. At night it was difficult to sleep because of the pains in my body, and then we had to get up at 04.00 and work until 16.00. I was always tired.

The above case study and the subsequent case studies in this report are typical of the testimonies of the young people from Burkina Faso and Mali who have returned from working in the cocoa farms of Cote d'Ivoire⁵. In order to understand more fully the significance of this account it is necessary to consider some of the international standards relating to trafficking and child labour.

Article 3 of the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, 2000 (Often referred to as the Palermo Protocol)⁶ defines trafficking as *“the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons,...for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs”*. It notes that the *“recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered “trafficking in persons”” irrespective of the means used to transport them to their place of exploitation and that a child is any person under 18 years of age”*. Article 3 of the International Labour Organisation Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour 1999, which was ratified by Cote d'Ivoire in 2003, states that worst forms of child labour comprises *all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour ... “ and “work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.*

Put simply then, this is an account by a child of his trafficking into slavery. It is one of 133 such accounts gathered by Anti-Slavery in the course of this research.

From the 1990s onwards there have been press reports of children being trafficked and forced to work under exploitative conditions on West African cocoa farms. The research upon which this report is based has studied the movement of children from Mali and Burkina Faso in recent years to work in exploitative conditions on cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire. It concludes that such trafficking continues.

Trafficking in West Africa occurs in the context of widespread migration, including of children, in the region. Some researchers have been sanguine about this phenomenon, regarding it merely as a feature of the socio-economic culture of West Africa. However, the recurrent reports of exploitation of children, such as trafficking of children into a range of agricultural and other sectors (such as fisheries, illegal gold mining and the sex industry) presents significant risks for children's rights and welfare. It also implies a significant impediment to the advancement of human rights protection enshrined in the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights – specifically Article 4 which states that *“No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms”* and guaranteed in the Convention of the Rights of the Child, specifically Article 32, which states that *“States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development”*. Furthermore, worst forms of child labour and child trafficking pose significant obstacles to attaining the targets set by the Millennium Development Goals with respect to achieving universal primary education and full and productive employment and decent work for all, by 2015.

In addition, given the importance of West African cocoa in supplying raw materials to chocolate and cosmetics manufacturers of global consumer brands, this issue poses a major challenge to the achievement of basic standards of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and due diligence which frame the steps a company must take to become aware of, prevent and address adverse human rights impacts. Anti-Slavery International argues that fundamental to the practices of corporate social responsibility and due diligence is a commitment to establish business policies including human rights policy and practices that are mindful of international standards, including all applicable UN and ILO Conventions which can be applied throughout a business's operation and along its supply chain. In arguing for this we recognise that such a model poses new challenges for businesses, for which they may be ill-prepared. There is therefore a need for sustained dialogue and regular collaboration between businesses, civil society and government to translate the ideals of CSR and due diligence into reality.

This report seeks to establish a basis for this dialogue and collaboration focussed on eliminating the trafficking of child labour in the West African cocoa sector. It seeks to contribute to the understanding by policy makers and practitioners in civil society, business and government of the dynamics of trafficking to the Ivorian cocoa industry. In explaining the reasons how and why trafficking occurs, this report should facilitate consideration of appropriate strategies and policies that may be expected to diminish its incidence. This should lead to renewed efforts in eliminating child labour in the cocoa and other West African sectors and may provide ideas for tackling trafficking in other economic or geographic areas.

⁵ Further exemplar cases are provided in the appendices.

⁶ UNODC, 2000



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Chapter 2: Objectives and implementation of this research project

Anti-Slavery International carried out research in 2009 and 2010 to study the dynamics of trafficking to the Ivorian cocoa industry. Given that after eight years of the Harkin-Engel Protocol⁷ and of various remediation initiatives there are still recurrent reports of child labour and child trafficking in the cocoa sector as well as more generally across West Africa, Anti-Slavery International felt it was necessary to revisit the causes and consequences of child trafficking in the regio. Better understanding of the dynamics of migration and forced labour in cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire would assist in developing effective responses to the eradication of these problems.

The research involved:

- reviews of current literature, particularly recent research undertaken since the implementation of remediation initiatives
- interviews with key informants in Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Burkina Faso, including former child workers in the cocoa sector

Interviews with key informants suggested it would be difficult to locate young people working on cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire, and interview them safely.

Organisations in Côte d'Ivoire who showed interest in being involved in the research preferred to wait until after presidential elections had been held, and these have been continually postponed since September 2009⁸. However, organisations in Mali and Burkina Faso were confident they would be able to locate and carry out in-depth interviews with young people who had been to Côte d'Ivoire to work on cocoa farms. It was therefore decided to carry out research in both countries using a similar methodology, but with different partner organisations. The data from the two countries would be compared to look for differences between countries and to assess the reliability of the information. The data would also be compared with information from key informants and recent literature.

⁷ More formally entitled: "Protocol for the growing and processing of cocoa beans and their derivative products in a manner that complies with ILO Convention 182 concerning the prohibition and immediate action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labor." <http://www.cocoainitiative.org/images/stories/pdf/harkin%20engel%20protocol.pdf>

⁸ Côte d'Ivoire has suffered from political instability and tension since a military coup in 1999. After an army-led rebellion in 2002, and the deployment of French troops as a buffer between the north and south of the country, a 2003 peace agreement led to a government of national reconciliation. Presidential elections have been due to be held since 2005. The country remains divided between the south (administered by the Government) and the rebel-controlled north. See Global Witness, 2007. The first round of presidential elections were eventually held in October 2010 though there are still many steps to be taken to re-unite the country and recreate an effective national administration.



While men, women and children are trafficked into forced labour⁹ across the region and sectors, this research focussed on collecting testimonies from young people in Mali and Burkina Faso who had been working recently in Côte d'Ivoire on cocoa farms. Anti-Slavery International worked with local NGOs in Mali and Burkina Faso that had the capacity to locate young people who had been working in Côte d'Ivoire through their contacts with local communities and other NGOs who had been involved in assisting young people who had returned from Côte d'Ivoire. The local NGOs were asked to locate young people who had been working on Côte d'Ivoire cocoa farms in the last five years, without the presence of their family, and who were 16 or under when they started to work on cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire. With each young person who was located, the local NGOs were asked to carry out an extended conversation about their experience of migrating to and working in Côte d'Ivoire, with a focus on the following areas:

- how and why they took the decision to travel to Côte d'Ivoire to work?
- whether or not they were living with their family when they took the decision to travel to Côte d'Ivoire to work?
- what factors led them to take that decision?
- what were the stages of their journey from home in Mali or Burkina Faso to Ivorian cocoa farms?
- who were the intermediaries who helped them on the various stages of their journey from Mali or Burkina Faso to the cocoa farms?
- what were their experiences on the cocoa farms?
- what circumstances led to their return to Mali or Burkina Faso?
- how did they return to Mali or Burkina Faso?
- what do they think that they gained from working on cocoa farms (in terms of money, experience, skills, knowledge, new possibilities)?
- what advice would they give to young people about working on Ivorian cocoa farms?
- how did they re-install themselves in Mali or Burkina Faso?
- would they ever consider returning to Côte d'Ivoire or the cocoa farms?
- how do their ideas about Côte d'Ivoire and the cocoa farms now compare to the ideas they had before they went to work there?

In total 61 young people from Mali and a further 72 from Burkina Faso were interviewed, 133 in total. All had worked in the Ivorian cocoa sector and analysis of their accounts indicates that trafficking remains a significant issue in the Ivorian cocoa sector and as part of a wider regional problem that affects a variety of industries in addition to cocoa.

However the overall objective of this research was not to measure the number of young people trafficked to Côte d'Ivoire to work on cocoa farms or to assess whether this

number had declined or decreased in recent years. It was recognised that it is unrealistic to make quantitative assessments of hidden phenomena such as trafficking and forced labour¹⁰. The aim was to provide understanding and evidence on the nature of trafficking in the cocoa industry of Côte d'Ivoire and identify appropriate strategies, policies and practices for its eradication. The research aimed to look at the process of migration from origin to return and understand the factors contributing to it¹¹. This would assist in making an assessment as to whether the various remediation measures were having an effect and what other measures might be tried. It would also be used to assess whether 10 – 15 year olds are an important part of the cocoa farm labour-force, whether they are recruited from Mali and Burkina Faso, whether there is serious exploitation, what choices face young people and their families in source areas of migration, how people perceive the risks of migration in source areas, whether sensitisation programmes have any impact and where young people go after working on cocoa farms.

The research was carried out in February – March 2010 in Mali and June – July 2010 in Burkina Faso.

⁹ ILO convention 29 states that, "forced or compulsory labour shall mean all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily."

¹⁰ IPEC Sudamerica, 2002

¹¹ As recommended in IPEC Sudamerica, 2002



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Chapter 3: Background

3.1 Cocoa industry in Côte d'Ivoire

Cocoa was grown on a small-scale in south-west Côte d'Ivoire early in the 20th century, but large-scale production of cocoa began in the 1930s in the east of Côte d'Ivoire, extending from neighbouring areas across the border in Ghana. In the 1950s cocoa production spread to the west of Côte d'Ivoire (in a belt slightly over 100km from the coast) and then in the 1970s spread southwards towards the coast in the western part of Côte d'Ivoire. Cocoa in Côte d'Ivoire is grown mainly on small family-owned farms, of which there are between 600,000 and 800,000. These are called '*plantations*' (from the French word) but are very different from large-scale commercial plantations, which is the normal meaning in English.

The area of cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire increased rapidly after 1960:

1961	250,000 hectares
1973	611,000 hectares
1983	1,398,900 hectares
2004	4,000,000 hectares

Production increased by more than six per cent per year in the 1960s and 1970s and even more into the 1980s. At independence in 1960, cocoa production was about 60 thousand tonnes per year and by the early 1990s production had reached 850 thousand tonnes. Ten years

later it was 1.3m tonnes. Côte d'Ivoire is the main world producer of cocoa beans and provides about 40 per cent of the world total cocoa beans production. Côte d'Ivoire's production is nearly twice that of the next most important country, its neighbour Ghana.

World cocoa production has increased threefold since 1960, from 1.2 to 3.6m tonnes, due to increased production in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana as well as the advent of new Asian competitors (Indonesia and Malaysia)¹². Approximately 50 countries in the inter-tropical zone now grow cocoa beans¹³, though three still dominate world production: Côte d'Ivoire (39%), Ghana (21%) and Indonesia (13%)¹⁴. Cocoa production in West Africa is 2.6m tonnes, two-thirds of world production:-

Côte d'Ivoire	1,410,000 tonnes
Ghana	740,000 tonnes
Nigeria	180,000 tonnes
Cameroon	170,000 tonnes

In 2002-2003 cocoa provided 90 per cent of Côte d'Ivoire's export earnings, at 2.3 billion USD. Cocoa is said to represent a third of the economic activity of Côte d'Ivoire. Since independence, the growth strategy of Côte d'Ivoire has depended on production and export of cocoa. Until the 1980s, cocoa was at the heart of the "Ivorian miracle". High world market prices enabled the State to generate considerable profits. The Stabilisation

¹² ECOWAS-SWAC/OECD, 2007

¹³ The cocoa market – a background study (unpublished), 2002

¹⁴ Chapter 4 of Global Witness, 2007



Fund (CAISTAB) set the purchase prices for farmers, collected taxes and compensated for any decreases in the prices paid to exporters while continuing to pay a guaranteed price to farmers.

However, Côte d'Ivoire increasingly faced income losses as increasing production led to oversupply and prices fell steadily from a peak in the 1970s. In the 1980s, consuming countries took advantage of falling prices to build up reserves, which they use to regulate the market to their advantage¹⁵. In 1999/2000 stocks reached 50 per cent of total world consumption. Producing countries were not in a position to build reserves, as storage was difficult and costly in tropical countries due to the hot humid climate which encourages insect and mould development. In real terms, the world price of cocoa decreased rapidly from 1980 to 2000 (from 2,600 USD per tonne to 900 USD per tonne)¹⁶. Prices fell drastically in 1985. In 1989, Côte d'Ivoire vainly attempted to raise prices by stock-piling but was forced to abandon this and the price paid for cocoa was halved. The value of the CFA was then halved again in 1994 and a liberalisation process eventually led to the dissolution of the CAISTAB in 1999 again halving the price paid at the farm. Farmers found it increasingly difficult to access credit, local exporters gradually disappeared from the scene and multinationals began to dictate prices and conditions.

Cocoa marketing in Côte d'Ivoire is now in practice completely in the hands of private traders, and the actual price paid to farmers is less than in neighbouring Ghana.

Market liberalisation occurred in Côte d'Ivoire, as in many producer countries, without establishing mechanisms to safeguard production, quality and producer incomes beforehand¹⁷. The result was a serious disintegration of cocoa marketing and distribution networks as well as sharp drops in the net incomes of small producers, undermining the ability of poor producers to participate in cocoa markets on more equitable terms¹⁸. The lack of effective competition along the cocoa supply chain also depressed prices. World cocoa prices tend to be volatile: cocoa is mainly traded on London and New York's stock markets and the market is sensitive to rumours, anticipation of stock depletions, bad harvests and weather-related or political events. International prices also fluctuate according to macroeconomic conditions in OECD countries, whose average annual demand has varied over the past 50 years by anything between 0.4 per cent and 5.5 per cent. Finally, price volatility is magnified by trading in cocoa on futures markets: the volume of cocoa traded in futures contracts is ten times higher than actual world production. Without mechanisms to

safeguard producer incomes, small producers do not know in advance what they will receive and have difficulty negotiating more with traders who are better informed about price changes¹⁹.

The collapse in price in 1999-2000 caused considerable social unrest in the country as cocoa growers protested at the way the government had liberalised their industry. The reductions in export taxes on cocoa had the added effect of reducing the income of the Ivorian government, which until liberalisation had relied on cocoa for 20% of its entire revenue. This was an important factor contributing to the political crisis of 2002 and the ongoing frozen conflict in Côte d'Ivoire.

The price of cocoa has tended to rise over the last eight years as demand has increased²⁰. In January 2002 the price was 1,350 USD per tonne: at some points in 2010 it has been over 3,000 USD per tonne.

The world price of cocoa strongly depends on the production in Côte d'Ivoire, as the production in Côte d'Ivoire is about 40 per cent of the world total production. The stagnation of production in Côte d'Ivoire, alongside increasing world demand (for example the rapid growth of demand in China) has led to increasing prices since 2002. The cocoa industry perceives that there is a risk there will be a shortage of cocoa in future. This has led to efforts to renew West African farms and boost their productivity, as they are still major cocoa producers and are unlikely to be completely replaced by production in other parts of the world.

The view in producer countries on the other hand is that the industry wants to increase production in order to keep commodity prices low. It would seem that farmers in Côte d'Ivoire have not benefited from the recent rise in prices. Farmers spoken to in Côte d'Ivoire in 2009 all said that prices were too low, quoting prices of between 300 and 500 USD per tonne. Global Witness found, in 2007, that farmers were paid between 350 and 560 USD per tonne, though the indicative farm-gate price is 700 USD per tonne. There are many steps in the supply chain and farmers believe they do not benefit if prices rise. Cocoa produces profits for those who smuggle it through the rebel-held zones of the north of Côte d'Ivoire²¹.

3.2 Migrant labour and cocoa production in Côte d'Ivoire

In the colonial era, Mali and Burkina Faso were closely integrated (politically and economically) with Côte d'Ivoire and migration was encouraged. In the 1930s, the French colonial administration attached six provinces of Burkina Faso (then called Upper Volta) specifically to encourage migration to overcome the labour shortages

¹⁵ ECOWAS-SWAC/OECD, 2007

¹⁶ The cocoa market – a background study (unpublished), 2002

¹⁷ ECOWAS-SWAC/OECD, 2007

¹⁸ The cocoa market – a background study (unpublished), 2002. Also ILRF, 2002

¹⁹ The cocoa market – a background study (unpublished), 2002

²⁰ ECOWAS-SWAC/OECD, 2007

²¹ Hot chocolate, Global Witness, June 2007. This is in agreement with the prices reported to the Anti-Slavery International researcher in Côte d'Ivoire in 2009.



on cocoa farms. Construction of infrastructure in what is now Côte d'Ivoire involved forced labour from areas to the north.

After independence migration to Côte d'Ivoire from Mali and Burkina Faso continued, allowing cocoa production to continue to expand.

Rates of poverty are high in the Sahel countries such as Mali and Burkina Faso. The Sahel suffers from drought and this may increase with climate change, though certain technical advances (such as controlling river blindness) may open up some economic opportunities by opening up areas to more intensive agriculture.

Mali:	59% of population live in poverty
Burkina Faso:	46% of population live in poverty
Côte d'Ivoire:	38% of population live in poverty ²²

Across the region, population growth rates are high by global standards. Children under 18 generally comprise about half of the population of each country²³). A culture of migration developed among young men of about 18 – 21 years old who would spend about three years working in Côte d'Ivoire and earn enough to establish themselves for their adult lives. Some of them, during the phase of rapid expansion of cocoa production in the west of Côte d'Ivoire, managed to acquire their own farms. Côte d'Ivoire was at one time perceived as an African miracle, an El Dorado to which people in the region wished to migrate: it had strong public institutions and working government and offered reasonably paid employment.

The fall in the price of cocoa, beginning in the 1980s, reduced the wages paid to farm workers. Young men (aged 18 or above) were less attracted to employment on cocoa farms. Cocoa farmers in Côte d'Ivoire shifted to employing younger boys as their economic situation deteriorated. Farmers were unable to pay adult wages, adults migrated to the towns (especially Abidjan) and child labour became more common.

3.3 Public awareness of labour issues in cocoa production in Côte d'Ivoire

From the 1990s onwards there were press reports of children being trafficked and forced to work under exploitative conditions on West African cocoa farms. This issue received significant attention in Europe and North America in 2001 which led to the threat of a boycott of products made from Ivorian cocoa. In response to this threat, the Harkin-Engel Protocol, a voluntary agreement, was signed in September 2001 by the Chocolate Manufacturers' Association and the World Cocoa Foundation and witnessed by Senator Tom Harkin and Representative Eliot Engel, the Ambassador of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire to the USA, the International

Labour Organisation, labour trade unions and various civil society organisations. The full name of the Protocol is the "Protocol for the growing and processing of cocoa beans and their derivative products in a manner that complies with ILO Convention 182 concerning the prohibition and immediate action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour." It commits the industry to addressing the worst forms of child labour and adult forced labour on cocoa farms. There were further joint statements by the partners in 2005 and 2006 reaffirming commitment to these goals.

Specifically the Protocol includes a commitment by industry to develop and implement voluntary, industry-wide standards of public certification that cocoa beans and their derivative products have been grown and processed without the worst forms of child labour. The parties also agreed to commit significant resources to address the problem of forced and child labour, establish an action plan to enforce standards and monitor and report on compliance with those standards, and establish a non-profit foundation bringing together the industry and other interested parties.

A non-profit foundation (the International Cocoa Initiative) was established, with 3 million USD for pilot projects. In addition, individual companies initiated their own programmes. A Verification Working Group started work in 2004, though funding was discontinued in 2006. In mid-2007, Verité organised a multi-stakeholder Cocoa Verification Board (ICVB), contracting FAFO and Khulisa to carry out verification studies for the ICVB. The Payson Center of Tulane University in the USA was contracted to carry out oversight.

Under the Protocol standards of certification should have been developed by mid-2005. This was not achieved and a three-year extension was agreed upon, though this was not achieved either. International Labour Rights Forum (ILRF) then began a legal case against three chocolate and cocoa companies under the Alien Tort Claims Act on behalf of a group of children from Mali who allege that they were trafficked into Côte d'Ivoire and forced to work on cocoa farms for long hours under abusive conditions. This case is still pending.

The attention given to the issue of children working under exploitative conditions on West African cocoa farms led to various attempts to assess the extent of the use of child labour and exploitative conditions. These show that children in rural areas work on cocoa farms and in other agricultural and economic activities, sometimes from the age of five²⁴. ILO/WACAP research indicated that 284,000 children were working in hazardous conditions on cocoa farms in West Africa, mainly in Côte d'Ivoire²⁵. The various studies have

²² UNFPA, 2007

²³ UNFPA, 2007

²⁴ Payson, 2008; ICVB, 2008.

²⁵ ILO/IPEC, 2007



observed that children commonly carry out tasks that are hazardous, such as use of machetes, pesticide application and carrying heavy loads. All the surveys suggest that the more sensational phenomena, publicised in European and North American media in the 1990s and 2000 (children being kept locked up and physically mistreated), are rare. However, the work is very hard and one of the reasons given as to why boys from the age of 12 are assigned arduous tasks is that it is the only way to accustom them to such work. Cocoa farming is arduous (and involves risks from insects, snakes, cuts and being alone in the forest) which may not be accepted by someone coming to the occupation when they are 18.

The literature suggests that child labour is found on cocoa farms and not in other sectors of the cocoa industry (marketing and transport) and that issues of trafficking and forced labour on cocoa farms concern children (mainly boys aged 14-18) and not adults²⁶. While some of the literature suggests that farmers do not employ boys under 16 to cut cocoa pods from trees and to subsequently split them, carry out burning and tree-cutting, carry heavy loads and use chemicals, because they are not strong or skilled enough and may damage the harvest, while some stakeholders suggest that farmers do employ boys of under-16 for these tasks. The literature that suggests that boys under 16 do not carry out these tasks may be based on information from Ghana (where the dynamic is different and where there has been less willingness to accept the existence of issues about child labour.)²⁷ A study by GTZ says that boys under 14 do light work but from 14 years old generally do dangerous work²⁸.

There is however disagreement in the literature and between different groups of stakeholders about trafficking and forced labour. The ILO/WACAP research found 12,000 children in Côte d'Ivoire working with no family living nearby, suggesting they may have been trafficked²⁹. The report commissioned by GTZ³⁰ suggests that boys are brought from the north of Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Burkina Faso to work on cocoa farms and that there are children on cocoa farms who should be considered as workers rather than as members of the family of the farmer. The report states that there is a phenomenon of young workers (aged about 14 – 18) delivered to adults whom they have not known previously and who are therefore placed in spaces of physical and psycho-social insecurity. It estimates that 4,800 such boys arrive at Soubré in the three months of most frequent migration: this suggests that in Côte d'Ivoire as a whole the figures given in the ILO/WACAP report could be taken as a minimum. The GTZ report also suggests that, while the majority of children have some

link with the family of the farmer (being from the same village originally or the same extended family), there are an increasing number of cases where there is no link: the child has been recruited by an intermediary in a public place in Mali or Burkina Faso and the intermediary has no obligations to the village or community of the child. In contrast to these studies suggesting the existence of several thousand young workers delivered to adults whom they have not known previously, the surveys carried out by the Côte d'Ivoire Government for the purposes of certification suggest that the vast majority of children on cocoa farms are the direct children of the farmer.

Some of the literature and stakeholders indicate that there is an issue of the worst forms of child labour for all children working on cocoa farms. This arises from the difficult and sometimes dangerous nature of the work and the fact that such work may not be in the best interests of children, preventing them, for example, from attending school.

However, there is also some debate in the literature as to what extent the migration of boys to work on cocoa farms should be described as trafficking, with its negative connotations. Some literature argues it is risky to talk of trafficking, because there is a long history of assisted migration of young people from the Sahel regions to the more fertile, coastal regions of West Africa. Intermediaries help young people to migrate and have a duty to ensure the family in the source area receives information and payment³¹. On the other hand certain stakeholders point out that migrants used to be 16 years old and above and traditionally expected to actively contribute to the decision to migrate, but migrants now are frequently under-16 and definitely not adults taking their own decisions about important steps in their lives. Certain informants also suggest the social bonds between a farmer, the intermediary and the child's family may now in certain cases be weaker than they were 30 years ago. The idea that this is a form of fostering with clear, enforceable social duties among the various parties may be less true than it was. Safe migration may now require more intervention of outside parties than was the case 30 or more years ago because social bonds can no longer be relied on.

Nevertheless, from the perspective of international law and standards, and in spite of disputes in the literature, there is persistent evidence that the “*recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of*”³² children to this sector is for the purpose of exploitation, and hence, unequivocally, trafficking. As also noted above, under international standards such as the Palermo Protocol, where children, under 18 year olds,

²⁶ Payson, 2008; ICVB, 2008; ILO/IPEC, 2007

²⁷ Multi-country studies frequently carry out more research in Ghana than in the Ivory Coast because of poor infrastructure and security in Ivory Coast.

²⁸ GTZ, 2005

²⁹ ILO/IPEC, 2007

³⁰ GTZ, 2005

³¹ See for example the papers to the conference on “Child and Youth Migration in West Africa: Research Progress and Implications for Policy”, Centre for Migration Studies, University of Ghana, 9th- 10th June 2009, Accra

³² The language of the Palermo Protocol, as described above.



are concerned the issue of whether or not the children are choosing to migrate of their own free will is irrelevant in determining trafficking.

As will be seen in the following chapters, from analysis of the accounts of 61 young people from Mali and a further 72 from Burkina Faso, who have worked in the Ivorian cocoa sector, trafficking remains a significant issue in the Ivorian cocoa sector and as part of a wider regional problem that affects a variety of industries in addition to cocoa.



Nile Sprague / spraguephoto.com

Chapter 4: Motivations and experiences of former migrants in Mali and Burkina Faso

Case D: Sikasso, Mali

I am twenty years old. I went to Côte d'Ivoire in 2004 when I was 14 and returned to Mali in 2007 when I was 17. Because I was poor, and my family were poor, I came to Sikasso to earn some money by doing odd jobs. I met a man called O at the bus station who told me that he needed workers. I travelled in a large bus to Côte d'Ivoire. In fact O was in charge of the bus. I had no identity documents but that was not a problem because no-one checked during the whole journey.

I worked for O for one month without payment on his cocoa farm. He said that this was to pay for the bus fare. He then handed me over to S who was an older man. There were seven of us working on this farm: there were two from Mali, two from Burkina Faso and three from Togo. We all slept in a small cabin on the farm. We had no contact with the family. We started work at 08.00 and worked until 17.00. We only had a short break when we could eat. The food was cassava and potato that we collected and grilled ourselves. The seven of us got on well together.

Our work was to keep the farm free of weeds, harvest the beans and put them out to dry, fill sacks full of beans and load them on lorries. S was Ivorian and even though he was Muslim he did not take us into his house on holidays.

We all worked for three years without being paid. When we asked to be paid S found various excuses why he couldn't pay us at that time. He wanted us to stay another three years and he said that he would then pay us the six years all together. We didn't want to stay so he sent us away. We then found work on other farm but we made sure that we were paid daily. We were usually paid 1000 CFA (2USD) per day. We worked like that for a few weeks then those from Mali decided to use the money to buy a ticket to return to Mali.



We came back by bus to Mali. We had no identity documents which created a lot of difficulties. The driver of the bus helped us past the controls but it was a lot of effort for him. He had to work hard to help us. I came back with empty hands. We were betrayed on the first farm and we worked just enough as day workers to buy a ticket to return home. What I remember was that the work was hard, that I was sometimes sick, ate badly and slept badly. I also remember that the farmer betrayed us.

I did not go back to my family when I returned to Mali. I had left for Côte d'Ivoire without telling them so did not want to go back, especially as I had come back with no money. I have stayed in Sikasso. I do not have a regular job. I earn money doing something different every day. I am trying to earn some money so I can go back to my village with something. My situation is desperate because I can never go back to my village with empty hands. I think though that I am a wiser person after what I lived through in Côte d'Ivoire. I swear that I will never go back to Côte d'Ivoire and I will tell my sons to do all they can to avoid leaving Mali. When I meet young Maliens they think that there is a lot of money in Côte d'Ivoire. I try to make them aware of the reality. I hope that I have convinced some of them that it is not as they think.

Analysis of the accounts of the informants, such as Sikasso above, shows that the majority of those recruited are between 12 and 16, with some as young as seven. Hence it is clear that according to international standards this research has identified 133 young people who were recruited to the Ivorian cocoa sector for the purposes of exploitation. For example the case above relates to the recruitment of a 14-year-old. The next case in this chapter describes the experiences of a young person who was recruited at the age of 15. The case at the outset of this report describes the experiences of a young person recruited at the age of nine.

Consistently across the accounts our young informants describe various means of deception, generally the promise of good, well paid jobs, which have been used to induce them into migrating to the cocoa farms of Côte d'Ivoire. Such deception undermines any claim to the notion that the young people have offered themselves voluntarily to this sort of work. However, as noted in Chapter 1 of this report, under the Palermo Protocol the question of consent where children are concerned is irrelevant. Child trafficking occurs when children are moved for the purpose of exploitation.

Furthermore the International Labour Organization identifies six indicators of forced labour³³:

1. Threats or actual physical harm to the worker;
2. Restriction of movement and confinement to the workplace or a limited area;
3. Debt bondage. Where the worker works to pay off a debt or loan, and is not paid for his or her services. The employer may provide food and accommodation at such inflated prices that the worker cannot escape the debt;
4. Withholding of wages or excessive wage reductions, that violate previously made agreements;
5. Retention of passports and identity documents, so that the worker cannot leave, or prove his /her identity and status;
6. Threat of denunciation to the authorities, where the worker is in an irregular immigration status.

Reviewing the above case study against these indicators

we can see there are elements of debt bondage in the account (the requirement to work to pay off the cost of the bus fare) and the withholding of wages. In addition implied in the above account, though explicit in others, are the restrictions on the movement that the forest itself and the children's lack of documentation imposes. So even if the informants had been adults when they had been recruited to the Ivorian cocoa sector this sort of treatment would have quite plainly constitute forced labour.

The following sections explore in greater detail the experiences of trafficked young people from recruitment through their time in the cocoa farms to their return to the countries of origin. As noted above the aim of the following sections is to understand the dynamics of trafficking so that effective policies and strategies for its elimination may be elucidated and implemented.

4.1 Characteristics of former migrants who were located

In both Mali and Burkina Faso the research teams located young people who had migrated from Burkina Faso to Côte d'Ivoire who had been working on Côte d'Ivoire cocoa farms in the last five years, without the presence of their family, and who were 16 or under when they started to work on cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire. Seventy-two young people were interviewed in Burkina Faso, all young men. Sixty-one young people were interviewed in Mali, nine of them young women who had done domestic work in the homes of cocoa farmers but who had also worked on the cocoa harvest. The identification of these young people indicates that there does continue to be trafficking of young people from Mali and Burkina Faso to Côte d'Ivoire cocoa farms despite the measures taken after 2001 to address the worst forms of child labour in West African cocoa farms.

The young people who were interviewed are those who managed to return to Mali and Burkina Faso. It is not possible to say whether there are other children who do not manage to return. Some of those interviewed say they left behind others who were too afraid to ask to

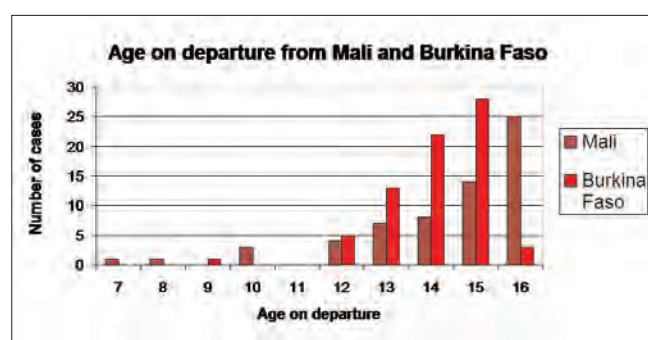
³³ ILO/EU, 2009



leave or to run away, and who were praying someone would come and help them to leave. In Mali and Burkina Faso people have heard of cases of children who have left and have never returned, though there is no certainty about whether they went to Côte d'Ivoire or not, nor whether they have returned without contacting their family or not.

While carrying out the field research, other young men were located who had been to Côte d'Ivoire to work in other sectors such as rubber, rice, sugar cane and cotton. Rubber is a relatively new crop in Côte d'Ivoire, which has spread from Liberia as Côte d'Ivoire has attempted to diversify away from cocoa; it is cultivated in the same regions as cocoa (the humid south). Sugar-cane, rice and cotton are grown in the north of Côte d'Ivoire and migration to work on farms with these crops is seasonal. This corroborates that the risks of child labour in poor conditions are not limited to cocoa.

The young persons identified had generally migrated from Mali or Burkina Faso when they were between 12 and 16 years old, though some were between seven and 10 years old³⁴.



The overwhelming majority of young people located had migrated to Côte d'Ivoire in 2006 or later³⁵. However those who had migrated when they were 10 years old or less had usually migrated in the period 1999 to 2001. The phenomenon of migration of young people from Mali and Burkina Faso to Ivorian cocoa farms has continued in the last five years and would appear to be continuing; however those who were found to have migrated when they were 12 years old or less migrated much earlier than the rest of the sample: this may indicate that migration of younger age groups is now less common than it was before the initiation of programmes against trafficking and forced labour.

Thirty-five per cent of the young people interviewed in

Burkina Faso had still been at school when they were recruited to go to Côte d'Ivoire cocoa farms, while in Mali the figure was 9 per cent. This may be a result of a better organised system of education in Burkina Faso.

All the others interviewed had left school even though, theoretically, they were still under the age at which they could leave school. They were either at home with their parents helping their parents at home, in the fields or with their other economic activities (being a builder or mechanic, for example); or they were spending the rainy season helping their parents with cultivation and the dry season earning some money from casual work away from home. Casual work mentioned includes jobs such as being a porter in bus stations, selling telephone cards on the streets of a town and being a shepherd. One respondent in Burkina Faso already had regular work in gold-mining. All the respondents mentioned the fact their parents were poor. It is probable they had left school because their parents could not afford the costs.

There was no sign that those who had been to Côte d'Ivoire were *enfants terribles* (difficult children) or particularly different from other rural children in Mali and Burkina Faso³⁶.

4.2 Motivations for migration

The testimonies of the young people indicate that there is a desire by young people when they reach the age of about 13 or 14 to do something for their parents, and to prepare for adult life, when they see that their parents are poor. Their thinking is that their family will arrange for them a wife in a few years' time, but they will need to build a house and have some form of income (a business). Thus by the time they reach that age they consider that they need to earn some money, and that spending some time in Côte d'Ivoire is the way to do it. They do not know how to get to Côte d'Ivoire and how to find work in the cocoa farms, and they do not have the money to buy a ticket. The person who comes to the village and convinces them to go to Côte d'Ivoire fills that role.

In some cases a young person will leave without telling their parents. They will say they are going to town or to the fields and they then go directly to Côte d'Ivoire. They may consider it a sign of maturity that they took this decision themselves. In other cases their parents have known and have agreed.

The question remains, why do young people of about 14 years old perceive spending time in Côte d'Ivoire as being a way to earn money to help their parents and

³⁴ During the conversations the young people were asked about their age at present, their age on return from Côte d'Ivoire and their age when they migrated to Côte d'Ivoire. They were also asked about the years in which they went to Côte d'Ivoire and the year in which they returned. This information was checked with them until a coherent picture emerged of their age when they were in Côte d'Ivoire. In a number of cases the interviewers felt that the young people were overstating their age, and that young people who looked 16 were saying that they were 19. Their stated age is used in this analysis, though it is possible that some young people were younger than they have reported when they were in Côte d'Ivoire.

³⁵ One of the criteria for inclusion in the research was that the young person had been in Côte d'Ivoire in the last five years. The usual length of time spent in Côte d'Ivoire was two to three years. Thus it is to be expected that the majority departed from Mali from 2006 onwards. There were probably many young people who migrated from Mali in the previous years but these were outside the scope of this research. There are few young people in the sample who migrated in 2009 because those who departed then are unlikely to have returned yet.

³⁶ This was a hypothesis put forward by some key informants.



prepare for adult life? The image of Côte d'Ivoire as a Promised Land developed over many years, particularly during the cocoa boom years between the 1950s and the 1980s. The reality is now different but some of the people who come back from Côte d'Ivoire return with money or goods. Boys will have heard conversations that mention what could be earned in Côte d'Ivoire, and there are few other ways in which boys can imagine that they can earn significant amounts of money. This helps to maintain the idea that developed before the 1980s that Côte d'Ivoire was the Promised Land. Furthermore recruiters often actively seek to dispel any doubts children may have about Côte d'Ivoire. Those who return from Côte d'Ivoire disillusioned appear to be ashamed and reluctant to discuss their experiences.

The trigger for migration was meeting a recruiter who confirmed the positive image of Côte d'Ivoire, promised good wages and agreed to pay their fare and arrange travel. Young people already had a positive image of Côte d'Ivoire which ran in parallel with their desire, at the age of 13 or 14, to prepare for adult life and help address the poverty of their parents.

4.3 Travel to cocoa farms

More than two-thirds of the young people who were interviewed had travelled from Mali or Burkina Faso to Côte d'Ivoire in a regular service bus and most of the others had travelled by lorry. There was only one case reported of travelling in a specially hired bus, and this was of someone who had gone from Mali to Côte d'Ivoire in 2000 when they were eight years old. Many of the reports from before 2001 are of large groups of children being transported together in specially hired buses. It would appear that this was common before attention was drawn to the question of trafficking and child labour, but children being transported together in specially hired buses is now much less common. However, NGOs in Burkina Faso have reported that minibuses carrying children to Côte d'Ivoire are still occasionally detected by the police.

The village where a young person lived may not have a bus service. The first stage of the journey, from a village to a town or to the main road, is usually by motorcycle and occasionally by minibus, by bicycle or on foot accompanied by the person who was organising their journey.

In the present survey young people reported that they travelled alone or in small groups of two or three. The person who was organising their transport would put two or three young people on a regular service bus among the other passengers or would have them travel as helpers with a lorry making a regular run to Côte d'Ivoire. In some cases the person who has recruited them travels with them, while in others this person hands them over to a *"convoyeur"* or *"locateur"*. In Mali and Burkina Faso it is common for the owners of buses and lorries to hire out their vehicles to other agents who organise the journeys and take the financial risks for each journey. The reports from those interviewed

suggest that, in some cases, it is these agents who are acting as intermediaries who help the young people to migrate to Côte d'Ivoire, receiving the child from the person who has recruited them and brought them from the village to the bus terminal. A small number of young people travelling to work in Côte d'Ivoire are among their load for the journey. Young people, who travel in small groups by bus, or as helpers with a lorry, are less likely to be noticed by police or immigration officials, or at least the latter can claim not to have noticed them. As awareness of the issue of trafficking of young people has been raised in Mali and Burkina Faso following the publicity of this issue in about 2001, it has become less viable to organise the transport of young people to Côte d'Ivoire in large groups.

The main route followed from Mali, according to the information given by the young people about the towns that they remember passing through, is from Sikasso to Korhogo and then southwards to join the main north-south road through Côte d'Ivoire which eventually leads to Abidjan. They left that route at one of the main towns and then headed either east or west to one of the cocoa regions in the south of Côte d'Ivoire. From Burkina Faso the main route followed is the main north – south road from Bobo Dioulassa in Burkina Faso to Abidjan in Côte d'Ivoire. In a small number of cases the route followed was through Ghana and then into the south-eastern region of Côte d'Ivoire, or along the smaller north-south roads in Côte d'Ivoire that lie between the main Bobo Dioulassa - Abidjan route and the Ghana border. It was reported that road conditions in Ghana are better and that the presence of rebel road-blocks in the north of Côte d'Ivoire slows down travel on the routes through that country; however the main destinations in Côte d'Ivoire are on cocoa farms in the west so travel through Ghana would be a very long diversion.

In almost all cases those who were interviewed reported that they went through the usual border controls. It would appear that at the border little attention was paid to one or two young people in the bus. In about 20 per cent of cases they were taken across the border on foot or by motorcycle without passing through normal border controls. Either they did this before they joined the bus (in cases where their home village was in the south of Mali or Burkina Faso) or they left the bus on the north side and rejoined a bus on the south side.

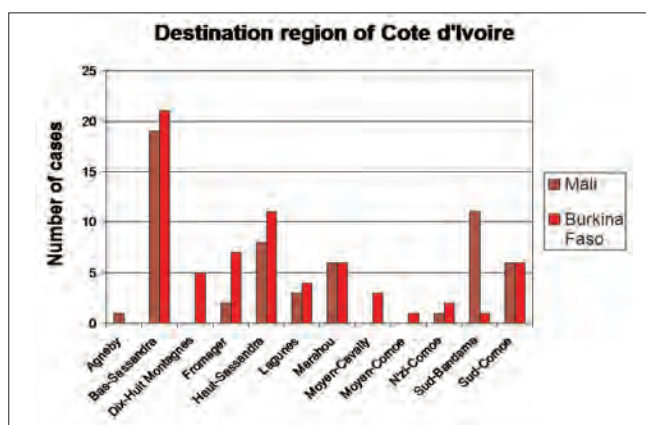
In the rebel zone of the north of Côte d'Ivoire, there are many check-points along the main roads. However, the main interest of those manning the check-points appears to be to extract money from those who do not have the proper documents. The *"locateur"* of the bus appears to be able to convince those manning the check-points to take no notice of the occasional child without documents.

Some young people reported that the person accompanying them had obtained a birth certificate for them though in many cases it would appear that at the border little notice was taken of one or two young people



in the bus. The young person usually did not see the certificate and did not keep it (so getting back from Côte d'Ivoire later was much more difficult). The document may have incorrect information about the child (name or age) so that it is easier for him to pass the controls.

In Côte d'Ivoire the person accompanying them used a mobile telephone to contact a cocoa farmer to arrange to pick them up.



The young people who were interviewed were asked about the towns they passed through on their way to and from a cocoa farm and which part of Côte d'Ivoire they were in. From this information it was possible, in most cases, to make a judgement about which region they had worked in. In a few cases however this was not possible as they either had no knowledge of the towns they passed through or they gave names of towns which could not be found³⁷.

The destinations were most of the cocoa regions of the south of Côte d'Ivoire, though most frequently in the south-west of Côte d'Ivoire which has strong links with Mali and Burkina Faso because of an earlier generation of migrant labourers who settled in this area.

4.4 Experiences on cocoa farms

On arriving at a cocoa farm, the young persons interviewed found that the conditions were very different from those that they expected. They were expected to assist those who were there already, for example by carrying water for them to drink during the day. Within a few days though they were expected to start to learn how to carry out the agricultural tasks on the farm, and the older boys provided the instruction. Within a few weeks they were carrying out a range of tasks on the farm. The main ones were using a machete to remove the lower branches of cocoa trees and to keep down the grass in the farms, using an insecticide sprayer, harvesting the cocoa from the tree³⁸, breaking the cocoa nuts, spreading the cocoa to dry, putting it in sacks and

Case D: Boromo in Burkina Faso.

When I was 15 I was living with my family in the village. I met someone who I didn't know who told me about Côte d'Ivoire. I had thought before about going to Côte d'Ivoire but I didn't know how to go there, and it was a long way and I didn't have any money to go there. This person said that he would help me. He misled me and told me lies.

I had got the idea that Côte d'Ivoire was a very beautiful country where there is lots of money. I had got that idea from people who came back to the village from Côte d'Ivoire. The person who came to speak to me said the same thing and said that his friends had a large cocoa farm. I wanted to get some money, at least 500,000 CFA(1,000 USD). I wanted to have a motorbike and a radio and be able to build a house.

The man who had spoken to me went with me all the way to the farm. He paid the fare and he paid my food on the journey. We went by bus through Bobo, Banfora, Yamoussokro and Magui. The journey was very difficult because the bus was very full and there were also lots of road-blocks and searches. I only knew this man and I only spoke to him on the journey. We slept in the bus. He bought bread and fruit for me.

I was one of five workers who slept in a little house on the farm. We mainly ate cassava. We had to get up early to work and came back to the house late. I cut myself with a machete (coupe-coupe) early on when I was there and had a wound. We didn't have any contact with anyone else.

When I came back to Burkina Faso I came back alone by bus. The fare was 45,000 CFA(90 USD). The conditions were slightly better on the bus coming back than they were when going. I had 10,000 CFA (20USD) left when I got back to my village in 2006.

I do not have a job and I do not go to school. I would advise everybody to try to stay in this country and avoid departing on an adventure. I would never go there again because my experience was that I came back with almost no money. I had been deceived. I had told myself that going to Côte d'Ivoire would make me really rich. The reality was something else completely. We worked like animals. We were exploited.

loading it onto lorries when they came to farm to buy the harvest. The peak labour period was during the two

harvests per year (the large and little harvests) when a number of tasks have to be completed quickly³⁹. The working day was tiring and lasted from dawn to dusk. Some of the literature on the subject of labour in cocoa

³⁷ Maps and guidebooks of Côte d'Ivoire were used to find towns and their region, as well as the "Directory of cities and towns in Côte d'Ivoire" - <http://www.fallingrain.com/world/IV>

³⁸ Pods are cut from the tree by a sickle on the end of a long pole.

³⁹ The young people were asked to describe in some detail the work on the plantations to check that they had been on a cocoa plantation.



farms has said that children are unlikely to be working on cocoa farms because they will not have the skills to do some of the tasks properly and will damage the trees or the beans. The evidence gathered from this survey however is that they are forced to learn quickly to do these tasks.

Young people report seeing signs in Côte d'Ivoire saying that children should not be employed on cocoa farms, sometimes very close to where they are working.

When asked about the overall conditions on the farms, more than 80 per cent of the young people said the conditions were poor or very poor. When one aspect of conditions was poor (housing, food, care during sickness, work conditions) all aspects were poor. A few of those interviewed in Mali reported that someone from their family (such as an uncle) had been involved in taking them to Côte d'Ivoire. In some of these cases the conditions for the child are sometimes not as bad as in other cases: the knowledge that a relative knows the location of a child sometimes protects the child, though not always as there are cases of uncles taking children to Côte d'Ivoire and leaving them on farms with very poor conditions.

There is usually a group of six to 10 young people who live on the farm as workers, in a cabin or an adobe house. They are not living in a village and their social contacts are restricted to the one group of young people. Those interviewed do not talk about being locked into the house at night, a feature which appeared in some reports in the 1990s. However, it is difficult for them to leave as they are in the middle of a forest and do not know where they are and they are unaccustomed to being in a forest environment. Also, there are wild animals and snakes in the forest and it is difficult to move about at night time.

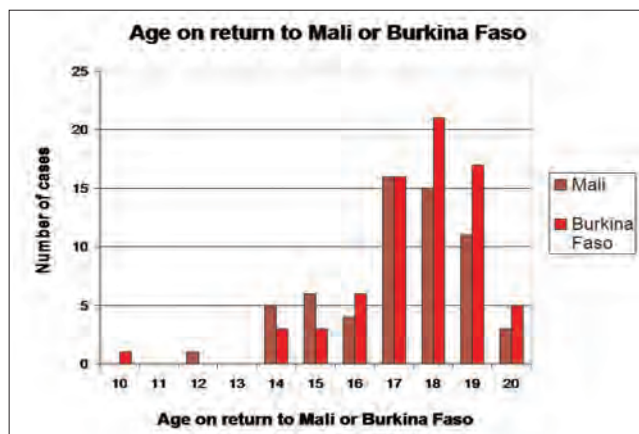
The young people interviewed mention being sick, sometimes seriously including malaria, snake bites, cuts from tools and being hit by falling cocoa beans or branches. They are exposed to sicknesses not found in the drier environment of Burkina Faso or Mali. Usually it is their companions who look after them and not the farmer. Their companions find roots and leaves in the forest with which to treat any sickness.

On the farm the young people are expected to provide their own food. They are given a piece of ground on which they can grow yams and cassava, or there are already banana trees growing. They have only a short time to prepare food in the middle of the day or are too tired to prepare food at the end of the working day.

4.5 Leaving cocoa farms

Almost 90 per cent of the young people interviewed in Burkina Faso had spent two or three years on cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire before returning to Burkina Faso. In Mali the figure was 75 per cent. A few had spent four or five years and a few had spent one year or less. Some of the reports from before 2001 of young people working

on cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire suggested they had spent longer than two to three years there. It is possible that young people now spend a shorter period on cocoa farms before they manage to leave than they did in the past. It is possible that the longer time spent in Côte d'Ivoire in the past is due to the younger age at which migration from Mali took place while the age of departure from Côte d'Ivoire was about the same. It is likely that, when they reach the age of 17 to 19, young people are able to find a way to leave the cocoa farms. The dynamics of leaving cocoa farms will be discussed below.



There was one case in the survey of a child from Burkina Faso who was recruited as a nine-year-old and taken to a cocoa farm in Côte d'Ivoire. A person unknown to the child came to the farm after he had been there a few months, and said that he was too young to be working on a cocoa farm. This person brought the child back to Burkina Faso by bus after forcing the farmer to let him go and pay for the fare back home. This may mean that there are people in Côte d'Ivoire who try to assist very young children who they find on cocoa farms.

The other young people interviewed were aged between 12 and 16 when they travelled from Burkina Faso to Côte d'Ivoire and they stayed two or more years on a cocoa farm. The testimonies show that the young people asked to be paid and to leave after the first year but that the farmer presented various arguments why they should not be paid, usually saying that they had not yet worked long enough to pay for their transport to the farm or for their tools and clothes and other expenses. They were then promised they would receive something the next year. When they asked to be paid at the end of the second year the farmer will find other excuses to not pay and to not allow the young person to depart, for example that the farmer is waiting to be paid for the harvest or has just had to make some heavy expenditure for a wedding or funeral. The young person will then realise they may not get paid and will leave then or the next year. The farmer may make accusations that the young person has been developing relations with his wife or his daughter, or has stolen something, to dissuade him from going to the police or other authority.

The testimonies show that the farmers do not want the young people to leave as they will probably have to pay a recruiter to find another child. However, they see that it is more difficult to deal with a young adult of 16 or 17 years old who has begun to have his own ideas and who is demanding to leave and to be paid. Reluctantly, employers will allow them to leave realising that they may be heading for a conflict⁴⁰. Some young people seek work on another farm after they leave the farm to which they were first taken, but they demand to be paid regularly and will leave immediately if they are not paid.

Only eight of the young people interviewed received from the farmer the amount of money they had expected, and all of these were cases from Mali where there was some involvement of a family member in the young person's migration to Côte d'Ivoire. It should be noted though that there were another nine young people from Mali where there was some involvement of a family member in their migration but they did not receive their complete salary.

Five young people from Mali and three from Burkina Faso received no pay at all. All the others received something from the farmer when they left. The amount most commonly mentioned was 50,000 CFA (100 USD) per year, less than half of the amount they expected, though some received little more than the cost of the bus ticket to Mali or Burkina Faso.

All the young people interviewed had to make their own arrangements to travel back to Mali or Burkina Faso, except for the nine year old who was assisted by an unknown person. All returned by bus, by the same route as the outward journey, and had to buy a ticket. An important difference though is that on the return journey they were unaccompanied: the recruiter was not with them and the *"convoyeur"* or *"locateur"* has not been instructed to look after them. If a birth certificate had been obtained for their outward journey they never received it and they had to make the return journey without any such document, and without the knowledge of how to cross the border without any documents. The main difficulty, however, was with the road-blocks mounted by the rebels in the north of Côte d'Ivoire whose main aim is to demand money from those who do not have proper documents. The majority of respondents reported that they had had to pay to get through the road-blocks, and those who had no money were allowed to pass after being searched to see if they had any money. The young people eventually reached Mali or Burkina Faso with less money than they received at the farm.

Those who left the farm without any money, and without the means to buy a ticket to return to Mali or Burkina Faso, either asked someone to buy their ticket or else worked for some time on another farm so as to buy a ticket and to return home with some money.

4.6 Resettling in Mali or Burkina Faso

As noted above, boys in villages who have reached the age of 13 or 14 feel they should do something to alleviate the poverty of their parents and to prepare for their adult life. They will need to build a house and to set up some form of income-generating activity. They recognise that this will mean earning money outside their village. If they return home with a bicycle, a radio and a set of new clothes they will be recognised as having succeeded.

Going to Côte d'Ivoire is perceived as one of the few options for earning money. Good money could be earned in the past by those who migrated to Côte d'Ivoire. Even though there is some awareness that those days have passed, the richness of Côte d'Ivoire is still talked about in villages because there are few other options for earning money. Also, there are still some young people who come back from Côte d'Ivoire with money, and young people still see in houses postcards sent from Abidjan with skyscrapers and cars. Due to their young age they have difficulty in evaluating how true this is and what the risks are. Even if they recognise that some people come back from Côte d'Ivoire with nothing they tell themselves that they will have more luck, and that this will help improve their status on their return.

The amount of money that young people have in mind is around 100,000 CFA (200 USD) per year, usually for three years. A figure of 300,000 CFA (600 USD) does not seem unreasonable for what they say they were aiming for when they decided to seek work. Key informants estimated the following for the kind of expenditure usually envisaged:

Construction of a small house in a village -	100,000 CFA (200 USD)
Bicycle (second hand, <i>velo France au revoir</i>) -	35,000 CFA (70 USD)
Radio-cassette player	20,000 CFA (40 USD)
Set of clothes and shoes	25,000 CFA (50 USD)
Invest in micro-business ⁴¹	200,000 CFA (400 USD)
Total	380,000 CFA (760 USD)

In practice none had returned with anything like this amount and some had returned with nothing.

In many cases respondents response to their current situation was apathy and disillusion. This had been their one hope of having funds to break the cycle of poverty, but this had not worked and they saw no way out of their present situation. They were living in their home village, helping their family in the fields in the rainy season and earning a small amount of money in town in the dry season from an activity like selling telephone cards.

In a few cases, though, the response had been more active, namely seeking work in gold-mining. There is some small-scale gold-mining in Mali, Burkina Faso and

⁴⁰ In comparison to 13 – 16 year olds who tend to be obedient and to have been accustomed to obeying their parents. By the third year the farmer may want the young person to go away though as cheaply as possible.

⁴¹ From the budgets of former projects to assist returnees; to include a stall in a market, some tools for bicycle or motorcycle repair or sewing machine, initial stock of materials.



neighbouring countries. There is a demand for the labour of children and adolescents as it involves working in narrow tunnels. The risks are high, which is why many of the adults involved prefer to avoid the more risky aspects and instead employ children and adolescents. Accidents are reported to be frequent, from collapsing tunnels or the misuse of dynamite. It is, however, another area where young people imagine they can earn enough money to break the cycle of poverty.

Interviews with various stakeholders in Mali and Burkina Faso indicated that there had been projects from 2001 onwards that aimed to help young people who returned from Côte d'Ivoire cocoa farms, as part of the programmes responding to the publicity around child labour and trafficking in the Ivorian cocoa industry. These projects had the aim of helping returnees to get home and to provide them with tools and skills to learn a trade.

Only a small number of young people interviewed in Burkina Faso mentioned any help of this kind. They had asked for help to return to their home villages when they arrived in Burkina Faso and been put in contact with local NGOs, who found transport to take them home. Only one respondent reported receiving any material assistance, a set of tools for a motorcycle mechanic.

Associations in Mali and Burkina Faso said that about five years ago they received funding to carry out this kind of project but they no longer receive any finance to do it. They are sometimes contacted by the police and asked to help deal with young people who the police suspect as being trafficked to Côte d'Ivoire but they can do little more than provide some transport to take them back to their villages. The Association TON in Burkina Faso reported that it did manage to maintain a centre where they could lodge young people in need of assistance but this was financed from their own income-generating activities (such as export of fair trade dried mangos) and their help was on a lesser scale than it was five years ago.

All respondents were very negative about their time in Côte d'Ivoire. All said they would never return to work on cocoa farms and that they would advise others never to go to the cocoa farms.

This, however, does raise the question as to how many children and young people continue to have a very positive image of Côte d'Ivoire while at the same time there are young people in the towns and villages of Mali and Burkina Faso with direct experience saying that they would advise young people never to go there. It appears that the positive image persists because there are a few young people who return with money, or who are too ashamed or embarrassed to admit their "failure" there. Hence the idea persists of work in Côte d'Ivoire as a perceived way of breaking the cycle of poverty, something further promoted by recruiters who continue to spread a positive image of work there.

4.7 Summary of experiences

Child trafficking is defined as "recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child [someone under 18] for the purpose of exploitation". This study demonstrates that such trafficking, which represents a contemporary form of slavery, is still practiced in the region and in this agricultural sector amongst others.

The field research upon which this report is based located young people in both Mali and Burkina Faso who had been trafficked to work on cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire in the previous five years. The young people who were interviewed in Mali and Burkina Faso were actively recruited for work at a great distance from their family when they were, generally, aged between 12 and 16. They were misled about the amount of work, the conditions in which they would work and how much they would earn (deceptive recruitment). Their vulnerability at the point of origin was abused, because they were anxious to earn an income and (in some cases) were living alone and had difficulty in asking the opinion and aid of others. They had usually stayed two or three years on the Côte d'Ivoire cocoa farms. There they had worked all year clearing vegetation on the farm (using machetes) and doing the harvest twice a year (using sickles attached to poles to cut the pods from the tree, open the pods, then spread the pods to dry, then putting into sacks and loading onto lorries). The work was hazardous and arduous. This would seem to contradict assertions that farmers would not employ boys of this age on farms because they would not be able to handle the tools and would damage the crop.

The issue of ethnic or national prejudice does not appear to be a significant factor behind trafficking and forced labour. The employment of child workers occurs within ethnic groups (for example Burkinabé farmers employing migrants from Burkina Faso).

Food, lodgings and health care were poor. They had difficulty in leaving the farms and returning home. In most cases, their salary was retained and they had no alternative but to work. They almost never received the amount of money promised and sometimes received nothing. Various actors were involved in their recruitment and transport. Without these actors they would not be able to reach the cocoa farms. Recruitment of young people to work on cocoa farms appears to involve transactions, and involve organised movement into exploitative situations. In most cases the transport had been arranged by, and the fare from to Côte d'Ivoire had been paid by, an intermediary. It is most likely that the farmer pays the intermediary a fee for bringing a young person to work for them, and that this covers the cost of the fare and a fee for recruitment of the young person. The young person is then considered to be in debt to the farmer. Among the reasons given for not paying the young person their salary when they ask for it is that they have not yet paid off the fee paid to the intermediary.



This is not mentioned until the young person demands to be paid. The costs of returning home (the bus ticket, demands for money from rebels at road blocks in northern Côte d'Ivoire) reduced even further the money they managed to obtain.

The experiences are similar to those reported in other research reports in the last five years (for example Sissoko et al, 2005)⁴² and the impressions of some key informants who felt that under-16s from neighbouring countries were still likely to be employed on Côte d'Ivoire farms.

These experiences are not as extreme as some of those in reports from the 1990s, which involved children as young as nine who were locked in the cabins at night and who were forced to spend up to eight years on a farm. Reports from the 1990s also mentioned large groups of children being transported to Côte d'Ivoire together by specially-hired bus, which is now rare. It is almost impossible to quantify a hidden phenomenon such as trafficking; however the indications are that the phenomenon has continued in the last five years and has adapted by becoming more hidden and ending some of the extreme practices.

Nevertheless the evidence thus is that trafficking continues though in different forms. Those who organize the recruitment and travel of young people to work on cocoa farms have responded to the greater public awareness of the issue, and the greater vigilance of the police, border guards and transport operators, by adapting the way in which young people travel. It also seems to have led to a reduction in the number of those under 13 who are recruited, which may indicate greater awareness of the harm of this kind of work to young children as a result of sensitisation programmes.

In this research it was found that recruitment was more discrete and it is very often the driver or the hirer of the bus or lorry who takes a small number of children on each trip. This may indicate that there are fewer people dedicated to trafficking full-time. Trafficking appears to involve drivers and hirers of transport who are already known to police and other security agencies because of their normal transport business. Reports from the 1990s mentioned towns such as Boaké in northern Côte d'Ivoire as places where large groups of children were kept while waiting to travel to farms. Farmers would come to these places to find children. The pattern now appears to be different and children travel more directly to the farm. Contacts are made by mobile telephone and those involved appear to already know each other.

⁴² GTZ, 2005



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Chapter 5: Interventions to address worst forms of child labour on cocoa farms

The Harkin-Engel Protocol called for remediation activities to eliminate the worst forms of child labour on cocoa farms in West Africa. The Payson Centre report of 2008 (Payson, 2008) lists (in the Appendices) the projects reported by the various actors in Côte d'Ivoire as part of the remediation programme underway since the signing of the Harkin-Engel Protocol. Other activities have taken place in the source countries of migrant labour, mainly Mali and Burkina Faso.

The main types of activity are

- Awareness
- Improving schooling and skills in cocoa planting communities
- Control of the movement of unaccompanied children
- Programmes for improvement of cocoa productivity and quality

During the 2003 – 2005, the ILO was an important actor in this process through its International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC): the programme was known as WACAP (the West Africa Cocoa/Commercial Agriculture Programme to Combat Hazardous and

Exploitative Child Labour)⁴³. WACAP worked with many of the traditional partners of ILO (government agencies, labour unions and employers' organisations). Training was provided to all implementing agencies, mainly in substantive child labour and related development issues, and provided support in developing Action Programmes with selected implementing agencies. However, as many of these agencies were developing child labour interventions for the first time, this took some time (IPEC, 2005).

From 2005 onwards there have been new remediation programmes. These include the International Cocoa Initiative, projects of the Côte d'Ivoire Government and GTZ's LTTE programme. There is an important programme, called IMPACT, near Soubré, which is led by Mars and involves a number of partners such as STCP, IFESH, ICI and the Rainforest Alliance. A similar programme, but covering more zones of the country and funded by the Gates Foundation, was expected to begin in 2009. The Sustainable Tree Crops Programme (STCP) of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) plays a technical role while IFESH is concerned with

⁴³ WACAP began in January 2003 and ran for three years

literacy and ICI with training, awareness raising and funds for school building and repair. GTZ will also be involved with the Gates' funded programme.

5.1 Awareness

Raising awareness, about the risks of child labour and trafficking to the children themselves and to the Ivorian economy if there were a resultant boycott of cocoa from the country, is a significant part of remediation initiatives in Côte d'Ivoire. This activity has been contracted to local NGOs in most programmes: for example local NGOs are contracted to do this by the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI) directly, or through other partners such as CARITAS.

Raising awareness involves, among other activities, the creation of local committees against child labour and trafficking. This does appear to raise awareness about the potential risks to young children of carrying heavy loads or using chemicals: farmers interviewed for this research spontaneously mentioned the risks to child labourers and in some villages demonstrated that groups of local youths (aged over 18) have been created to carry out tasks previously carried out by children.

However, observers interviewed in Côte d'Ivoire expressed a number of reservations about the impact of these interventions. They felt that, while they may have made farmers more aware of the risks to their own children, it is unclear what the impact is on children from outside the community living away from their families, in other words the children who are trafficked. The use of child labour had become accepted in many communities in the 1990s and some informants have questioned whether there has been a sufficient duration of awareness-raising to ensure a lasting effect.

There is also a risk, paradoxically, that raising awareness leads to a culture that activities related to child labour must be hidden from outsiders rather than resolved. The fear of a boycott of Ivorian cocoa because of use of child labour, whether real or imagined, exacerbates this risk and makes exceedingly difficult the possibility of dialogue between national and international institutions with the responsibility for ending child labour.

Raising awareness about the risks of child labour and trafficking has also been an anti-trafficking measure in Mali and Burkina Faso. The information obtained from stakeholders in those countries indicates that there has been a significant amount of activity in these countries, particularly in Burkina Faso where there is a very active civil society. This has involved the creation of local committees against child labour and trafficking, and in addition education of transport operators and the police. There are strong indications that this has had a significant impact: transport operators were able to demonstrate a high level of awareness of the issue of trafficking and talk about the measures that had been taken.

The reservation expressed by observers in Mali and Burkina Faso is that, although the programmes had been widespread in those countries, they had in practice only lasted about three years. Again this might not be enough to effect enduring change in the mind-sets of people about a practice that had come to be considered normal in a context of extreme poverty. In a group discussion, people who had been involved in these programmes said they wanted to understand better to what extent those involved in committees against trafficking had taken on board the issue and whether they in fact saw these activities as an external imposition. They also had the reservation that, at some time in the future, people involved in trafficking would exert their influence again and that committees would lose their strength unless they continued to be supported.

5.2 Improving schooling and skills in cocoa planting communities

A common remediation action in Côte d'Ivoire is the construction, reconstruction or improvement of schools in cocoa farming villages. In the case of ICI remediation initiatives, this is accompanied by promotion of informal education, making education more appropriate for rural children and integrating with training in practical skills⁴⁴. IFESH is a USA NGO, which is involved in the IMPACT Project, and is a stakeholder oriented to skills training and informal education. Winrock is another USA NGO with an education orientation.

The impact of such projects in cocoa farming villages is very positive. However it is unclear how this impacts on trafficking and employment of unaccompanied children from other areas: this would appear to be an intervention aimed at reducing the use of local child labour. It is the lack of education opportunities in the north of Côte d'Ivoire and in Mali and Burkina Faso that contributes to the migration of children to cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire, not the lack of schools in cocoa areas. Thus this may encourage cocoa-farming parents to leave their own children in school for longer and avoid putting them to work on cocoa farms, but it may not impact on trafficked children.

5.3 Control of movement

The control of movement of unaccompanied children has been improved in Mali and Burkina Faso. Training and awareness raising amongst the police, border officials and transport operators has, in the view of all those interviewed in those countries, led to bus operators being more careful about carrying unaccompanied children and to the police and border officials taking more effective action to control movement of children by road. This appears to have led to traffickers being more discrete. The government of Côte d'Ivoire is reported to be trying to improve border controls to reduce trafficking, and step-up checks by the police and local administrations inside cocoa areas. There are press reports in Côte d'Ivoire about the police stopping buses carrying unaccompanied children at road-blocks.

⁴⁴ The local representative of ICI is from the Ministry of Education with strong interests in this area, and sees ICI as an opportunity to implement activities in informal education.



The impact of this activity is, however, unclear. It is difficult to measure whether there is in fact less trafficking than before. The testimonies of young people who have been trafficked suggest that they are moved in groups of two or three children, but that trafficking continues. There is also a risk that children are simply frightened by being stopped by the police rather than helped. As the total number of trafficked children is unknown, it is difficult to say whether a significant number are being intercepted.

5.4 Improving cocoa productivity and quality

The rapid fall in the price of cocoa is believed to have been a significant impetus towards the use of child labour by cocoa farmers in Côte d'Ivoire. There is also concern that cocoa farms in the country are declining in productivity as they reach the end of their natural life and are not being rehabilitated. Cocoa in the region was known for its quality but there are concerns that this is now declining, with a negative impact on farmers' incomes.

In West Africa, IITA has a sustainable tree crop programme (STCP) that puts a heavy emphasis on cocoa improvement. The strategies adopted by STCP are interesting, emphasising participative and adaptive methods to diagnose problems and spread innovations. In Côte d'Ivoire there was a pilot phase cocoa programme from 2003 to 2006, and this is being followed by a five-year first implementation phase. Programmes such as IMPACT (in Soubré) are part of this programme, as are the programme about to begin (with funding from the Gates Foundation). STCP works in partnership with many of the Harkin-Engel Protocol remediation programmes. Although the programme has a lot of potential there is a lack of information about its geographic coverage and its potential for impact on social problems such as child labour and trafficking. Observers who were interviewed for this research felt that the lack of an effective state agricultural extension programme probably reduces the technical impact of STCP, and that in places where the programme works farmers have low awareness of its recommendations.

Economically West Africa needs to maintain its position as a supplier of high quality cocoa. Specialised high value-added markets have been developing and the demand for fair trade and organic cocoa is growing. In most cases, access to niche markets is based on more direct contracts between buyers and producers on the basis of specifications of quality, quantities and growing methods. There is a potential for fair trade cocoa, but Côte d'Ivoire is just seeing the beginning of fair-trade activities, lagging behind Ghana, where access and security has been easier. However, fair-trade activities alone do not provide any guarantee of reduction of child labour and trafficking.

Observers who were interviewed were concerned that little thought had been given to the impact of programmes to improve cocoa productivity and quality

on labour needs in general and on the issue of child labour in particular. An assumption was being made that these programmes would improve farmers' incomes and that this would reduce the propensity to use child labour. However, such programmes may not have any impact in themselves on the cultural acceptance of child labour and trafficking, and may also make further work demands on farmers and so not reduce their tendency to seek cheap labour, including that of children. Programmes that seek to certify cocoa as being produced under sustainable and fair trade conditions could incorporate certification about labour, but that would require a specific commitment to monitor this, which is not always the case.

A central catalyst to farmers in Côte d'Ivoire seeking cheap labour is a chaotic marketing system. Practically this means that farmers receive a fraction of the farm gate price that their counterparts in Ghana receive. Having been driven by economic necessity to obtain child labour, including trafficked child labour, these practices become socially accepted and culturally entrenched. To date however there is no identifiable effort in Côte d'Ivoire to address this root cause of child labour.

5.5 Conclusion

The main comment made by observers about remediation programmes was that their duration was as yet short and that there had been a lack of continuity. In Burkina Faso and Mali implementation of programmes was rapid but these appear to be coming to an end. In Côte d'Ivoire they were slow to get off the ground and there has been a lack of continuity. Addressing a problem that occurs on a vast number of small farms in forested areas with poor roads, throughout the country, requires a sustained effort on a sufficient scale at both the origin and destination of trafficked children. This is something that has not yet been achieved.



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Chapter 6: Why continued trafficking of young people to cocoa farms?

6.1 Despite initiatives migration by young people is still common

Despite anecdotal evidence to suggest reductions in child trafficking brought about by various initiatives in Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Burkina Faso from 2001 onwards, there continues to be a risk of children and young people being trafficked and forced to work under exploitive conditions on Ivorian cocoa farms. The initiatives in the West Africa region to improve conditions on farms and reduce trafficking have succeeded in creating new laws against child labour and trafficking in most countries of the region. They have raised awareness of the issue of trafficking. There is greater vigilance by authorities and by transport operators in Mali and Burkina Faso, who have been quicker to report and stop suspicious travel by unaccompanied children. Our study suggests that it is less common for children under 12 to be involved.

However, it would seem that a number of contextual factors continue to provide strong incentives to employing boys under 16 from neighbouring countries on cocoa farms. Some of these factors are regional (providing incentives for young people to migrate) and some are specific to cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire. The

effective programmes implemented in this area are winding down and there is a concern that the interventions undertaken have not been sufficient to obtain a fundamental and sustainable attitude change towards migration and trafficking amongst rural people whose only hope to break the cycle of poverty is migration to Côte d'Ivoire, and to reduce the tolerance of those who organise the trafficking of young people. Programmes in Côte d'Ivoire are relatively new and of a small-scale compared to the estimated 800,000 cocoa farms which are difficult to locate and monitor. The rise of world cocoa prices since the 1990s only marginally benefits small-scale farmers due to the lack of monitoring of the supply chain, so they continue to be under financial pressure.

6.2 Child migration is common in West Africa

As a response to the high level of poverty and the rate of population increase, rural to urban migration and cross-border migration are common in the West Africa region, and often result in family separation and child migration to support the households' needs (Black, 2004). Poverty in Mali and Burkina Faso continues to be a push factor, along with the continuing perception of Côte d'Ivoire as a



rich country. In the region a culture of migration and work by children and youth has developed, in a wide range of agricultural activities and industries.

Every day a large number of West African children leave their rural families in search of work. They go to nearby towns, or to presumed prosperous neighbouring countries like Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Gabon, where employment opportunities are greater. Some leave with a parent or a relative, other family acquaintances, or friends while others leave alone. Migration may be with or without the consent of parents and guardians. Others are forced to leave against their will. While many return after the harvest season, others will return after the years it took them to earn their dowry or to learn a craft, or settle more permanently at the destination site. And there are those that will never be heard from again. The results of demographic surveys of most West African countries show that a high proportion of children live away from their parents⁴⁵. Some rural areas are so destitute that the prospect of work or education for their children becomes a priority for loving parents and any risk associated with leaving is well worth the simultaneous increase in opportunities. Migration of young people is seen as a way for households to meet immediate needs and as a form of investment in human capital. Those who migrate and work may learn more useful skills than those who go to school.

Sometimes there are intermediaries who convince either the child or the family that a prosperous job is waiting for him or her in the city or on a commercial farm. Many adventurous children who leave alone or with siblings and friends also run into intermediaries of some sort along the way: middlemen or good helpers – adults who to a greater or lesser extent benefit from facilitating for the child's relocation and job search. While some do indeed turn out to have migrated to a better life, welfare consequences are serious for most child migrants.

Child migration has been so common in the region for so long that it has become part of the culture. It is commonly said that in some areas of Burkina Faso and Mali that *"If you don't have a son in Côte d'Ivoire you don't count in this village"*. Child labour migration is a status symbol, signalling strength of character, hope and prosperity.

6.3 Weak state

Côte d'Ivoire is the easternmost of a group of West African states (Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire) that have very poor governance ratings. In contrast Ghana, to the east, has good governance ratings compared with the other countries in the region. Ghana is the only country in West and Central Africa that is rated in the middle percentile (50th to 75th percentile in the global comparison).

At present Côte d'Ivoire is a frozen conflict within a weak state. The civil service structures created in the colonial period and the early post-independence period, when cocoa prices and tax income were high, still exist but do not function. Statutory social protection agencies are particularly weak. Civil servants were evacuated from the north and west to Abidjan, where they continue to be paid but have no work: it is therefore difficult to convince them that it is safe to return to the north and west (though some informants say that some are beginning to return). It is unclear how the polarisation of the State will be resolved. Elections were repeatedly postponed, and, at time of writing, the results of the 2010 presidential election are being contested with a lurking threat of continue conflict. In any case, it is unlikely that elections on their own will resolve the causes of the conflict. There are indications that the lack of a functioning state permits powerful groups to profit from trade in cocoa and this in turn creates a disincentive to creating a functioning state. There is a risk that elections exacerbate political competition, which is part of the problem, without rebuilding the effectiveness of state institutions. Cocoa farmers, particularly those of Burkinabé and Malian descent, are nervous about the future and take only a short-term view of the future of their farms: they are reluctant to make investments that would reduce their dependence on child labour.

The fall in the price of cocoa is part of the explanation of the weakening of the Ivorian state over the last 30 years, as the State was no longer able to afford to provide services out of the tax revenue on cocoa. The resulting weak state now has difficulty in reforming and rejuvenating the cocoa sector. The shocks fed the social unrest that contributed to the present social and political divisions of the country and undermined the capacity of the State. Government legislation in 1998 on indigenous land rights in the cocoa-belt fuelled continued unrest, because many farm owners and workers come from neighbouring Burkina Faso. Relations between the two countries have become even more strained as the result of the current mutiny by sections of the Ivorian armed forces, in which Burkina Faso were accused of having a hand. Cocoa farmers of Malian and Burkina origin in Côte d'Ivoire feel uncertain about the future and are taking a short-term view of their farms, maximising revenue and reducing investment.

Without a functioning state Côte d'Ivoire lacks capacity to properly patrol its border, enact and enforce anti-trafficking legislation, properly regulate the cocoa marketing chain, deal with the networks of trafficking, and in the cocoa supply chain, which are well-established⁴⁶. The international attention to labour issues in the cocoa sector and the threat of a boycott are important to Côte d'Ivoire but putting laws and regulations into practice is difficult. There is unlikely to be good access to technical assistance, inputs, credit,

⁴⁵ ODI/UNICEF, 2009

⁴⁶ For example, official guidelines on training for those involved in child protection have been developed in consultation with child protection agencies, but no progress is being made in passing the required laws and regulations as no official is willing to take decisions.



transportation, and marketing information which are critical for ensuring that small farmers get a good price for their products. There are also necessary conditions for improving yields, quality of production and processing capacities at the farm level, and for providing protection to migratory labour. The weakness of the state means that there is little control over the marketing system. Generating pressure to make Côte d'Ivoire a functioning state again would be a useful role for those parts of the international community concerned about labour conditions on cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire. More modestly, in the interim, facilitating the development of civil service and industry systems to promote child-labour free agriculture and to ensure protection of children from abuse should be considered.

6.4 Cocoa productivity and quality

The productivity of cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire is declining and the quality is threatened. Productivity in all cocoa farms tends to decline after a number of years, and in all cocoa regions of the world the usual response has been the opening up of new areas. This is what happened in Côte d'Ivoire. A stage has now been reached where productivity and quality are falling throughout Côte d'Ivoire as the average age of plants increases, and there are now almost no suitable areas to open up new areas of production. Exacerbating this problem, cocoa plants are increasingly blighted by diseases such as black pod, mirids, and swollen shoot, which prohibit optimal production and quality.

Cocoa productivity and quality are among the factors that lead to reductions in farmers' incomes and thus to the search for cheaper labour. However, improving income is no guarantee to reversing the trend of child trafficking where it occurs. If systems have been established for the supply of children and farmers have become habituated to their use this is likely to continue. Nevertheless, addressing the decline of the Ivorian cocoa industry could, at least, help prevent a worsening situation and, at a macro level, cocoa may be seen as fundamental in any future recovery of the Ivorian state. Activities in this area are, as yet, recent and their impact has yet to be felt.

There is a strong concern amongst producers that efforts towards improved productivity are focused on reducing price. This concern needs to be addressed if such work is to be successful, perhaps by crop diversification and reduced areas under cocoa, to diminish the risk of over-supply will be worsened. This is, in theory, the recommendation of Sustainable Tree Crop Programme.

For fair-trade activities to have a role in reducing child trafficking, rather than merely diminishing some of the conditions that have provoked the problem, requires that there must be clear focus on the social causes of child labour and the realities of child slavery as well as the economic conditions in which these occur.

6.5 Short duration of many regional remediation interventions

As a response to the attention given to labour issues on cocoa farms, a number of regional programmes were developed that included Mali and Burkina Faso. These included raising awareness in communities about the risks of allowing young people to migrate to Côte d'Ivoire, raising awareness with the police and transport operators about their responsibility to prevent young people being trafficked across national borders, and with border communities seeking cooperation to prevent irregular cross-border movements. Local NGOs were involved in activities to help young migrants return home and resettle, for example through training in income-generating activities.

Key informants in Mali and Burkina Faso reported that these activities appeared to have some success but had been short-lived. They reached a peak in mid-decade but were now being rapidly phased out. For example LUTRENA, a large regional programme to combat trafficking, ended officially in March 2010; although another programme is spoken of, most key informants were far from certain that there would be a similar programme. The concern expressed by key informants was that there was a risk that the phenomenon of trafficking might return as less attention is paid to the issue, or that vigilance by police and transport operators decreases if the issue is rarely spoken of. Key informants felt that the awareness about the harm of trafficking might only have been instilled superficially in such a short period: local anti-trafficking committees might cease to function if there was not continued support, and potential traffickers could reassert their influence.

Local and international NGOs have tended to reduce their attention to the issue of child labour and migration in cocoa farms. In part this is because some NGOs feel that too much attention was given to this particular issue, and in part because they have moved to a strategy of "safe migration" rather than trying to prevent migration of children and young people: they feel that it is difficult to reduce significantly a phenomenon that is deeply entrenched so it would be better to find ways to reduce the risks of such migration. The difficulty of dealing with migration to cocoa farms in this way is that the destination is remote forest areas of Côte d'Ivoire, a country in conflict, where it is very difficult to monitor the welfare of young people.

6.6 Small-scale of remediation activities in Côte d'Ivoire

As noted in Chapter 5, the Harkin-Engel Protocol called for remediation activities that will eliminate the worst forms of child labour on cocoa farms in West Africa. These have included improving skills in cocoa-planting communities, awareness raising, programmes to improve cocoa productivity and quality, and control of movement of young people.



In the first three areas it will take some time to see an impact: as has been noted in Chapter 5, most of the programmes are recent and still small-scale compared to the number of cocoa growing communities in the country.

Control of movement of young people may have a more rapid impact though it is difficult to assess how this is being implemented in a country with a weak administrative system. Furthermore, given the number of children who are believed to be migrating for work, it is unlikely that such migration can be stopped by law enforcement alone. A longer-term agenda, being promoted by the various child protection agencies, is to attempt to reduce the risks for child migrants. This aims to address a wider group of young migrants including those being trafficked to work in small-scale mining, construction work and (for girls) domestic service. It also involves looking at inter-continental trafficking, which is believed to be significant in the region. Applying this approach to cocoa farms could be difficult, though, given the difficulty of access to farms and the weakness of the Ivorian state. It would require more attention by the cocoa industry to conditions along the whole of their supply chain.

6.7 Conclusion

In general cocoa development, as well as anti-child labour activities, in Côte d'Ivoire are still small-scale and not of a sufficient scale to deal with a problem in widely dispersed remote farms. There are at present various remediation initiatives but outside observers find it difficult to assess what they add up to. It is difficult to assess the coverage and impact of these initiatives. It is also difficult to know whether the initiatives actually work together and form an overall strategy. There are gaps in the remediation strategy. The issue of price is not addressed. Many initiatives display limited attention to the social causes and consequences of child labour. Actions to address trafficking are limited to control activities that are unlikely to be effective. There is little linkage with other agencies addressing the culture of child migration and labour and attempts to reduce vulnerability in this context.

There is disagreement between various stakeholders about whether the various initiatives of the Government and the industry are reaching children working on cocoa farms. This can be seen in the Payson Centre report of 2008⁴⁷, where in the main body of the report it is stated that the vast majority of children in cocoa-producing areas do not report any exposure to intervention projects in support of children in rural areas, while in the Appendix that contains comments from the cocoa industry this is strongly questioned.

It is surprising that WACAP ended after three years, and some of those interviewed felt that the remediation programme was weakened by the ending of the

involvement of a UN agency with a multi-country mandate in labour issues and a specialist division with experience in child labour issues. The re-establishment of an ILO/WACAP programme in the region is to be welcomed, particularly if it manages to co-ordinate efforts to reduce trafficking of children across the region and across the sectors which exploit children's labour, including cocoa.

⁴⁷ Payson, 2008



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Chapter 7: Recommendations

It is clear from this research that the problem of child trafficking, in West Africa generally and in the cocoa sector in particular, persists. It is a regional problem resulting from a variety of political, social and economic issues. The response to this issue, if it is to be optimal in its impact, must also be regional and seek to address the multiple causes of child labour and trafficking in the region. Anti-Slavery International is aware that there are other forms of child labour and trafficking in the region including publicised examples in quarries, fishing, child domestic work⁴⁸ and forced child begging⁴⁹. Hence child trafficking to cocoa farms is probably only a small part of trafficking in the West African region⁵⁰. An approach to eradicating child labour and trafficking in the cocoa sector must therefore be formulated recognising the wider context of trafficking in the region: as this research shows the factors that make children vulnerable to trafficking are the same irrespective of which sector they are ultimately trafficked to.

Anti-Slavery International is aware that there are programmes in the region that address child labour and trafficking, and that the cocoa industry has programmes to improve the productivity of farms in Côte d'Ivoire. It is however concerned that attention to the issue of trafficking to cocoa farms is being reduced, that programmes remain small-scale and that remediation

has been of too short duration to have affected a deeply-embedded phenomenon. Hence we make the following recommendations:

International Governments

1. Promote effective government and rule of law in Cote d'Ivoire

The slow pace of re-establishing effective government across all of Cote d'Ivoire means that the agencies of state are neither able to effectively protect children from child labour or trafficking nor establish an optimal enabling environment where other actors are able to operate effectively toward these ends. Hence the establishment of effective government and rule of law should become a key priority for diplomatic and aid policy towards Cote d'Ivoire.

2. Ensure regionally co-ordinated action

The reestablishment of the ILO/ International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) in West Africa provides a positive opportunity for the co-ordination of anti-child labour and trafficking policy and action across the region and across sectors.

3. End fears of a boycott of Ivorian cocoa

As noted above there appears to be considerable concern in Cote d'Ivoire that Ivorian cocoa will be the

⁴⁸ See "They respect their animals more than us", which discusses trafficking for child domestic servitude in Togo and Benin, http://www.antislavery.org/includes/documents/cm_docs/2009/t/they_respect_their_animals_more_08.pdf

⁴⁹ See "Begging for Change", which discusses exploitation of children for begging in Senegal, http://www.antislavery.org/includes/documents/cm_docs/2009/b/beggingfor-change09.pdf

⁵⁰ There are other situations that can be called slavery (for example young girls (from eight years old) as domestic servants in Abidjan, boys in gold and diamond mining and civil construction industries.



subject of an international boycott. A boycott of Ivorian cocoa would plunge Côte d'Ivoire into an even deeper crisis. The threat of a boycott also seems to create an incentive to deny the existence of issues of child labour and trafficking, not the incentive to deal with these issues.

There is currently limited international momentum for a boycott of Ivorian cocoa. The heat has gone out of the issue. A diplomatic initiative to advance aspects of good governance, particularly as they relate to reducing trafficking and child labour, may be facilitated by being clear that these would effectively remove remaining demands for a boycott. This may further make relations among various stakeholders easier and more constructive.

Ivorian Government

4. Protect national citizens and migrant workers from labour rights abuses

The political leaderships of Côte d'Ivoire have an obligation to ensure that there is effective government whose writ runs across the country and which acts both to ensure that its citizens are protected and to prevent its citizens from violating the rights of others within the borders of the state. Their failure to establish effective government to date is a key reason why child labour and trafficking are such problems in Côte d'Ivoire, and why measures to end these abuses are so piecemeal.

5. Improve the farm-gate price of cocoa

Addressing the poverty of cocoa farmers will not alone resolve the issue of child trafficking and labour to this sector, but it can help stop the problem from worsening.

There are programmes that address the technical issues of cocoa production (the International Sustainable Cocoa Programme at a global level, the Sustainable Tree Crop Programme at a West African regional level) and these may impact on the income of Côte d'Ivoire cocoa farmers through increasing productivity. However, the most important factor for farmers, which they spontaneously mention, is the price of cocoa. This is an issue that is not at present being addressed. Improvements in the price paid depend on a better system of marketing in the country, improving the functioning of cooperatives, providing farmers with better information and tipping the balance in negotiations in favour of farmers. All these depend on resolving the crisis of the weak Ivorian state, a greater involvement of the cocoa industry in conditions in the supply chain or an expansion of the fair-trade operators in the supply chain with certification of labour practices alongside other sustainability issues.

The Ivorian Government should review the domestic cocoa value chain, ideally with the help of a UN agency

or office, such as the International Trade Centre, with a view to removing rent-seeking activities from the chain and hence maximising return to farmers.

Other factors are the world price, and the improvement of quality of cocoa and techniques used by farmers. The cocoa industry could make a strong contribution in many areas. It could be pressed to say how it envisages contributing to rebuilding the state in Côte d'Ivoire. It could be pressed to say how it envisages the evolution of the world price and what contribution it envisages making to improving both quality and price. It could be pressed to say how it envisages rebuilding the economy of small-scale Ivorian cocoa farmers. The risk is that technical advances promoted by the industry (for example new varieties, disease resistance, improved yields) increase production in existing areas and permit expansion of production to new regions, which increases the problem of over-supply and depresses the price further⁵¹.

Industry

6. Industry anti-child labour and trafficking measures should be proportionate to profits and of the same duration as commercial activities.

Many professionals in industries working in West Africa may resent the idea that they have responsibilities to ensure that their supply chains are free of child labour and trafficked child labour. They may also feel that they lack the skills to undertake such work. Nevertheless, if they derive profits from commercial activities Anti-Slavery argues, and consumers expect, that they have a responsibility to ensure those profits do not come as a result of the abuse of children. Anti-Slavery would therefore argue that businesses should invest a minimum of 0.7 per cent of their pre-tax profits in ensuring their operations and supply chains are free of human rights abuses⁵², particularly trafficked child labour.

The chocolate industry has begun some significant initiatives already in this regard, but it is not clear that the investment meets this standard of proportionality, and, as this research points out, it is not clear that a sufficient and sufficiently sustained, co-ordinated response exists.

7. Act to end any "free-rider" behaviour by businesses deriving profits from West African supply chains, particularly cocoa.

That many in the chocolate industry have engaged to the extent they have in trying to end child labour and trafficking in its West African supply chain is to be warmly applauded, even if some chocolate businesses appear to have engaged with these challenges more than others: the engagement of cocoa commodity companies

⁵¹ This would be likely to affect most severely traditional producers and/or weak states, such as Côte d'Ivoire. An economically rational approach by the global cocoa industry might be to concentrate on improving production in new production areas in Asia, where possibly take-up of new techniques is easier and there is not an inheritance of diseases and falling fertility. This would leave a weak state of Côte d'Ivoire with serious challenges in diversifying the economy.

⁵² The figure 0.7 per cent of businesses' pre-tax profits reflects the repeated commitment of the world's governments to commit 0.7 per cent of rich-countries' gross national product (GNP) to Official Development Assistance. This was first pledged in a 1970 UN General Assembly resolution.



such as Cargill, ADM (Archer-Daniels-Midland Company) and Barry Callebaut is regularly identified by observers of the industry as disinterested in comparison with the relatively greater action of the chocolate retailers, though Cargill's foundation did, in 2008 contribute a \$10 million grant to Care⁵³. Other cocoa-using industries, such as cosmetics, and other businesses that may derive profits from the West African agricultural sector are notable by their lack of involvement. Many in the chocolate industry can rightly complain about "free rider" attitudes by other industries: while the chocolate industry invests some of its cash in beginning to address the problem of child labour and to a much lesser extent that of child trafficking. In doing so the industry has opened itself to dialogue with and often criticism from civil society and government, while other businesses have simply failed to engage.

If the sort of leadership provided by US Senator Harkins and Rep Engels on prompting action by the chocolate industry could also be focussed on other, less high profile, international businesses this could begin to develop a wider business coalition aimed at co-ordinated action to eliminate child labour and trafficking from the region.

Civil society and donors

8. Recognise that ending child labour and trafficking is a social, as well as an economic, issue

As outlined above, many interventions in the West African cocoa sector operate from a flawed assumption that the use of child labour, including trafficked child labour, is principally a result of economic factors, particularly the poverty of the farmers who use child labour. It is indeed clear that economic factors are significant in prompting families to use child labour. However, a social acceptance of child labour can develop beyond any economic necessity meaning that the removal of the initial economic causes does little to alter the practice of child labour and trafficking. All civil society actors and donors working in West Africa, particularly in the cocoa and wider agricultural sectors, must put in place effective child labour prevention policies and practices and ensure that systems are in place for identification and protection of children found in such circumstances.

Co-ordinated action

9. Governments, international institutions, cocoa-using and other businesses, and civil society should act to prevent child trafficking from the countries of origin

As this report emphasises, child trafficking is a regional issue. The push-factors in countries of origin need to be addressed as well as the pull-factors in the countries of destination. This report has identified that ongoing work on awareness raising amongst children vulnerable to trafficking, increased efforts towards achieving universal access to education and policing efforts to prevent the trafficking of children all appear to have significant

potential for reducing the trafficking of children if interventions on these areas are sustained until they make a enduring cultural change. Added to this, efforts to ensure the relevance of education to children may be important, providing them with skills to make a livelihood after graduation rather than fall into unemployment or under-employment or putting themselves at risk as a result of traffickers' dubious promises.

Action in countries of origin are all the more important given the difficulties of establishing sufficient and coherent programmes in Côte d'Ivoire as a result of limited governmental effectiveness there. International stakeholders, particularly UN agencies, should convene conferences in the key source countries to bring together the governments of those countries, industry and other international stakeholders with the key actors dealing with child trafficking to consider the most cost-effective ways of investing 0.7 per cent of industry pre-tax profits in eliminating this problem. This should lead to costed anti-child labour strategies for each country.

10. Governments, international institutions, cocoa-using and other businesses, and civil society should act to prevent child trafficking in Côte d'Ivoire

It is recommended that the cocoa and chocolate industry continue and expand its remediation activities in Côte d'Ivoire, paying particular attention to the attitudes of destination communities to the use of trafficked child labour. They should ensure that systems for the identification, protection and rehabilitation of trafficked children are in place. However as Côte d'Ivoire is likely to continue to be a weak state with limited government capacity it is recommended that industry and international stakeholders use their position to initiate a dialogue on how Côte d'Ivoire can be supported in meeting its obligations under ILO conventions 138, on child labour, and 182, on worst forms of child labour, to which the country is party. It is recommended that labour issues in cocoa farms receive attention in official and NGO programmes of child protection and safe migration, which have tended in recent years to focus more on other forms of child migration. It is also recommended that North American and European governments seek alternative ways to address the frozen conflict in Côte d'Ivoire, which hinders efforts to reform farm agriculture

It is also recommended that the industry be more closely involved in monitoring the cocoa supply chain. In addition it is recommended that labour issues be more closely integrated into programmes to improve productivity of cocoa farms and that certification for sustainability, just beginning in Côte d'Ivoire, also include monitoring of labour issues.

11. Multiple research methodologies should be used to understand the problem

It is recommended that the current oversight surveys of

⁵³ The donation was for projects "designed to help 100,000 men, women and children in rural areas throughout six countries... It is the largest corporate grant in Cargill's nearly 150-year history" http://www.care.org/newsroom/articles/2008/06/20080617_cargill.asp



initiatives to eliminate child labour in the cocoa sector in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire include a wider range of research methods. Trafficking and forced labour are a hidden phenomena, happening on remote farms and on remote routes and border crossings where efforts are made to hide them. Studies always come up against problems of definitions and of the elusive nature of the issues. As ILRF point out⁵⁴ it is difficult to be certain about the coverage of such projects given the large area covered by cocoa farms and the isolation of the camps in such farms. It can also be difficult to disentangle the roles of the various implementing actors, who may have complementary roles in the same geographical area. Quantitative research on a hidden phenomenon in this context is unlikely to yield clear results. Qualitative research in neighbouring countries with former migrants and a criminological approach as used by Sissoko et al are likely to give better insights into trends and underlying factors⁵⁵.

Even if it is certified in the next few years that exploitative conditions have been eliminated on cocoa farms, it is recommended that organisations should remain vigilant, for three reasons:

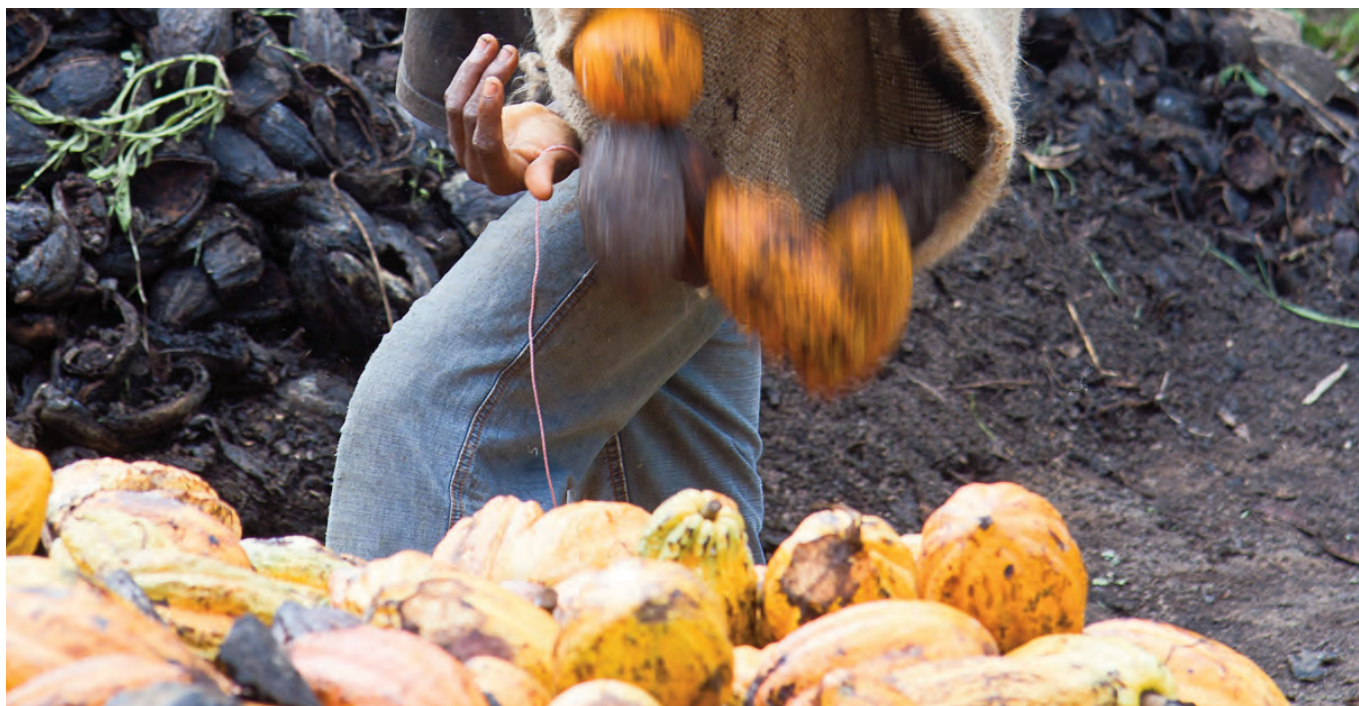
- 1 In this context, there are inherent uncertainties in the monitoring process⁵⁶
- 2 There is still a lack of evidence about the coverage and impact of remediation programmes⁵⁷
- 3 In this context, there remain risks of exploitative conditions.

⁵⁴ ILRF, 2008

⁵⁵ GTZ, 2005

⁵⁶ The Tulane monitoring reports indicate how difficult it is to monitor the core issues, and the difficulty of monitoring, researching and resolving these issues in the framework of three-year projects.

⁵⁷ The consultant visited a village where there had apparently been an STCP presence in the recent past but farmers showed no awareness of the kind of techniques promoted by STCP. The usual difficulties of understanding in detail the coverage of large-scale rural development projects in any country apply.



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Chapter 8: Conclusions

This research has found that trafficking of children to the Ivorian cocoa sector is still occurring. This occurs in the context of widespread regional migration and trafficking to a variety of other agricultural and non-agricultural sectors in West Africa.

Key factors that have sustained this phenomenon include poverty in the children's countries of origin, poverty of the farmers who use child labour, acculturation of communities to the use of child labour, and opportunities for intermediaries to profit from the trafficking.

Attention to this issue at the turn of the 21st century has led to some useful regional and local initiatives. However, at the time of writing interest in some sections appears to be waning, leading to uncertainty that a sufficiently comprehensive and sustained strategy for the eradication of child labour will be attained.

The chocolate industry has undertaken some laudable initiatives in an effort to reduce child labour in its supply chain. These should be expanded to the value of at least 0.7 per cent pre-tax profits and linked with other civil society, industry, governmental and inter-governmental efforts to ensure that all assume their responsibilities in efforts to eliminate this problem and to ensure that such efforts are appropriately regional in scope and address the social, political and economic causes of the problem.

Child labour and child trafficking remain profoundly difficult problems to address effectively anywhere and particularly in regions as poor and extensive as West Africa. However, consumers reasonably expect that the companies they purchase from are doing all in their power to ensure that children are not being abused as part of the process of producing cosmetics, chocolate or other goods.

With concerted efforts of all stakeholders it is possible to have a significant positive impact on this matter and this report outlines the framework for a strategic conversation on achieving the goal of eradication of child trafficking in West Africa. To fail to engage with the issue will let slip a historic opportunity to deal with this issue and will be a serious indictment of all concerned.

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Anti-Slavery International, founded in 1839, is committed to eliminating all forms of slavery throughout the world. Slavery, servitude and forced labour are violations of individual freedoms, which deny millions of people their basic dignity and fundamental human rights. Anti-Slavery International works to end these abuses by exposing current cases of slavery, campaigning for its eradication, supporting the initiatives of local organisations to release people, and pressing for more effective implementation of international laws against slavery. For further information see: www.antislavery.org

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