

# Benchmarking study: Overview and definition of child labor monitoring and remediation systems

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## Background

By 2021, four national platforms for sustainable cocoa – Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa, German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa, Belgian Initiative Beyond Chocolate, and the Dutch Initiative for Sustainable Cocoa – had signed a Memorandum of Understanding to collaborate in their efforts to address four of the sector’s main challenges:

1. To enhance the transparency in the cocoa value chain and promote the production and consumption of sustainable cocoa.
2. To contribute to a living income for cocoa farmers and their families
3. To halt cocoa-related deforestation and promote sustainable reforestation and biodiversity in cocoa producing countries.
4. To end the worst forms of child labor and forced labor in the cocoa value chain.

The national platforms are developing a harmonised results framework to monitor progress towards these objectives.

The Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa, with its Working Group on Child Labour and Living Income, assumed responsibility for developing common indicators to measure progress on ending child labour.

One of the draft indicators was the number and percentage of households covered by Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation Systems (CLMRS) or comparable due diligence systems that assess and address child labour. This report was conducted to support the definition and measurement of this indicator.

## Introduction

To support efforts to develop the harmonised monitoring framework, the Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa commissioned the International Cocoa Initiative to conduct a desk study and stakeholder consultation with the following aims:

1. Conduct a mapping exercise of existing Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation Systems implemented by different actors in the cocoa sector, highlighting their differences
2. Develop a common definition of Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation Systems for use by the Swiss, German, Dutch and Belgian Platforms
3. Suggest common indicators and benchmarks that can be used to monitor progress of the scale up of effective Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation Systems

Based on a review of available documentation and consultation with key stakeholders<sup>1</sup> from government, industry, civil society, international organisations and multi-stakeholder platforms, this report summarises the outcomes of the mapping exercise, definitions, and proposed indicators.

Child labour, together with forced labour and trafficking, are complex structural challenges, rooted in three dimensions: the vulnerability of individuals as a result of poverty and limited access to basic services, such as education, healthcare and social protection; gaps in legislation, enforcement capacity, and access to justice; and shortcomings in business conduct and business environment.

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<sup>1</sup> See list of stakeholders in annex

Eliminating child labour and resolving these related challenges requires mutually supporting, comprehensive policy responses<sup>2</sup>

CLMRS and equivalent systems are a means of targeting prevention, mitigation and remediation assistance to children involved in or at-risk of child labour, as well as to their families and communities. These systems are currently implemented by governments, civil society actors and businesses. Appropriately designed and implemented, CLMRS can support the implementation of due diligence expectations placed on companies under the UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights that are being increasingly transposed into law.

CLMRS alone cannot address all dimensions of child labour as a complex structural challenge. Other complementary and mutually reinforcing efforts are also required to tackle child labour holistically and address the socio-economic pressures and other root causes.

The broad range of stakeholders consulted during the preparation of this report share the goal of eliminating child labour. They emphasized the importance of ensuring that CLMRS support and work in synergy with wider public, community and developmental prevention and response mechanisms. Critical for the effectiveness and sustainability of CLMRS systems at scale, and relevant to the six key elements of CLMRS discussed in this report, are the following cross-cutting principles:

- Alignment and coordination of efforts, through an area-based lens, ensuring efforts are targeted to address all forms of child labour in all livelihood sectors
- Linkage and integration of CLMRS with wider local and national child protection and social protection mechanisms
- The avoidance of unintended consequences which could inadvertently undermine the capacity of local and national protection systems.

## Method

The mapping exercise sought to provide an overview of the different approaches used, as well as to understand the extent to which efforts and aspirations in relation to CLMRS are currently aligned. This step consisted of a review of available documentation and data;<sup>3</sup> a series of in-depth interviews with stakeholders from national authorities, the cocoa and chocolate industry, civil society and international organisations; and a workshop with representatives of 21 different organisations, including members of the Swiss, German, Dutch and Belgian Platforms for sustainable cocoa.<sup>4</sup>

The development of a common definition, benchmarks and indicators was informed by the document review, in-depth interviews and discussions during the workshop. Documentation reviewed includes key publications by the International Labour Organisation and the national authorities in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana in relation to systems for child labour monitoring and remediation. We also drew heavily on two reviews of Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation Systems in smallholder agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa, a collective review of emerging good

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<sup>2</sup> International Labour Organization, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, International Organization for Migration and United Nations Children's Fund (2019) *Ending child labour, forced labour and human trafficking in global supply chains*, p27.

<sup>3</sup> See full bibliography in annex.

<sup>4</sup> See annexes for further details on the different stakeholders interviewed and a list of workshop participants.

practices, conducted by ICI in 2017,<sup>5</sup> and the second an ongoing ICI study, for which multiple implementers of CLMRS have shared monitoring data for over 200,000 children.<sup>6</sup>

### Scope

This study has a deliberately narrow focus on *Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation Systems* in line with its aim to support the measurement of one target within the harmonised Results Framework proposed by the Belgian, Dutch, German and Swiss platforms for sustainable cocoa.

The proposed Results Framework contains multiple targets in relation to several areas of sustainability, which are not covered by this review. It is important to note that there are many different approaches to preventing and addressing child labour, which fall outside the scope of this exercise.

### Structure of this report

This report begins with a summary of the mapping exercise, showing the common elements shared by all systems as well as where they differ (objective 1). It then provides a common operational definition of a Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation System for the cocoa sector (objective 2), suggests indicators on which to report, and provides further guidance on how to report on these indicators (objective 3).

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<sup>5</sup> ICI (2017) [Effectiveness Review of Child Labour Monitoring Systems in the Smallholder Agricultural Sector of Sub-Saharan Africa](#), Phase I.

<sup>6</sup> ICI (2021) Effectiveness Review of Child Labour Monitoring Systems, Phase II (publication forthcoming, 2021).

## Summary of systems reviewed

The following table provides an overview of responses given in interviews by stakeholders from national authorities in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, the cocoa and chocolate industry, civil society and international organisations. Respondents implementing CLMRS were asked to provide details about how their systems currently function, as well as their aspirations in relation to how a system should function.

Findings are structured around six key elements, drawn from the ILO guidance for developing Child Labour Monitoring Processes, and from the *2019 Effectiveness Review of CLMRS in Smallholder Agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa*. The elements are:

1. Awareness raising and training
2. Monitoring and identification
3. Provision of support (prevention and remediation)
4. Follow-up
5. Partnerships
6. Third-party verification

For each element, we describe a set of *core criteria*, representing a set of minimum standards that stakeholders agreed any CLMRS should meet; *additional criteria* met by some CLMRS currently in operation, and which demonstrate how it is possible to go beyond the core criteria; and *aspirations* shared, but not yet implemented, by the majority of stakeholders interviewed. For each element, we also provide a summary of common challenges mentioned, including gaps in evidence of effectiveness, and the need for common definitions or tools.

The information presented below illustrates clearly that while systems for child labour monitoring and remediation are designed and implemented in a variety of different ways, there is already considerable alignment among public and private actors in relation to core criteria and aspirations for most of the elements examined.

### 1. Awareness raising & training

Core criteria that any CLMRS should meet	Additional criteria met by some CLMRS, but not all	Aspirations shared by most stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A CLMRS includes awareness-raising at community and household level; targeted to both adults and children.</li> <li>- Awareness-raising should cover the following topics: what is child labour (not limited to child labour in cocoa), what type of work are children allowed and not allowed to do, which activities are hazardous and the associated risks.</li> <li>- Awareness-raising should be conducted by people who have been trained on the subject, on awareness raising methods, and equipped with awareness-raising materials.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awareness raising under some systems cover broader topics, including child protection, child rights, and the importance of education.</li> <li>- Some systems also target authorities with awareness raising.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awareness raising should be as comprehensive as possible and reach all members of the communities where a CLMRS is present, whenever possible conducted in cooperation with local authorities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More evidence is needed on which methods of awareness raising work best, and what types of messaging are most effective.</li> </ul>		

## 2. Monitoring & Identification

Core criteria that any CLMRS should meet	Additional criteria met by some CLMRS, but not all	Aspirations shared by most stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A CLMRS includes <i>active</i> child labour monitoring, through repeated visits to monitored households.</li> <li>- The system aims to identify <b>all children</b> in child labour in monitored households, regardless of which sector they are working in, applying definitions based on national legislation.</li> <li>- Monitoring is done by trained people, using standardized data collection tools.</li> <li>- Monitoring directly involves speaking with children, as well as with parents/guardians</li> <li>- If active monitoring visits are restricted to “higher-risk” households only, then comprehensive, household-level risk assessment should be conducted, using reliable data, applying systematic and transparent methods, and using acceptable risk-thresholds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some systems also include complementary <i>passive</i> monitoring mechanisms (e.g. a community structure to which cases can be reported) to detect and record child labour within a larger population.</li> <li>- Some systems conduct both household <i>and</i> farm visits</li> <li>- Some systems also identify children “at risk” of child labour, although definitions used differ.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The ability to identify and prioritize higher-risk households for monitoring visits, using systematic and transparent methods, will be important in efforts to scale up CLMRS.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need to harmonize definitions of a child “at-risk” of child labour</li> <li>- Several actors are currently developing risk assessment tools for prioritizing communities, households or cooperatives for CLMRS roll-out; continued exchange on risk indicators, methods and operational implications would be helpful</li> </ul>		

## 3. Provision of support (remediation and prevention)

Core criteria that any CLMRS should meet	Additional criteria met by some CLMRS, but not all	Aspirations shared by most stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CLMRS provides support to children <i>in</i> and <b>at-risk</b> of child labour to prevent, mitigate, and remediate child labour.</li> <li>- Support includes activities to prevent future child labour cases and remediate current child labour cases. It can include the provision of assistance (e.g. in obtaining a birth certificate), services (e.g. tailored awareness-raising) or goods (e.g. school kit), and can be provided at child, household or community level.</li> <li>- The provision of support (both preventative and remediation) should be implemented in close cooperation with public actors whenever possible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some systems provide support only through referral to government services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The CLMRS should monitor whether a child has received support, including if provided via referral.</li> <li>- Systems should give priority support to the most severe or most urgent cases.</li> <li>- Systems should use evidence on the effectiveness of different support measures in different situations to inform</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The first stage of corrective action is a supportive, rather than punitive, approach.</li> <li>- Cases are referred to existing support services (government services, community, NGO, private), where available.</li> <li>- Support provided is recorded in the monitoring system and can be linked back to the child.</li> </ul>		<p>selection of the type of support provided.</p>
<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Metrics and concepts are needed for measuring and grading child labour severity, to allow for meaningful prioritization and measurement of impact</li> <li>- More evidence is needed on what type of support is more effective in what situation / for what child</li> </ul>		

#### 4. Follow-up

Core criteria that any CLMRS should meet	Additional criteria met by some CLMRS, but not all	Aspirations shared by most stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A CLMRS actively follows up on an individual basis with children identified in child labour, through repeated subsequent visits, to monitor any changes to their situation.</li> <li>- Follow-up visits take place at intervals of several months after identification and provision of support, to allow time for support to take effect, and to ensure that any improvement is not only short-lived.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some systems allow the detection of more subtle improvements of child's situation (e.g. a reduction in the number of hazardous tasks done/hours worked).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Systems should use a common definition to claim a child labour case has been successfully "resolved" (i.e. a child no longer requires close follow-up but continues to qualify for regular monitoring).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need for agreement on standards for follow-up visits to child labourers: how long and how often, and the level detail of data collected.</li> <li>- Need for a common definition to designate a child labour case as "resolved".</li> </ul>		

#### 5. Partnerships

Core criteria that any CLMRS should meet	Additional criteria met by some CLMRS, but not all	Aspirations shared by most stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National legislation is used to define cases of (hazardous) child labour, so long as it conforms to international norms.</li> <li>- Community members or representatives are directly involved in monitoring and/or the planning of remediation.</li> <li>- CLMRS harmonizes, coordinates, and links with existing services (public services and others) for all the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some CLMRS give an active role for monitoring and tracking to local and district-level authorities.</li> <li>- Some CLMRS share information with national authorities for coordination and consolidation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Data from all CLMRS implemented by any actor should be fed into national monitoring systems for consolidation and analysis (i.e. to ensure a coordinated response and facilitate learning).</li> </ul>

different steps (from awareness raising, to case identification and the provision of support) wherever possible.		- CLMRS leverages and strengthens existing services
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#### 6. Third-party verification

Core criteria that any CLMRS should meet	Additional criteria met by some CLMRS, but not all	Aspirations shared by most stakeholders
- N/A - Too few implementers currently conduct systematic third-party verification of data to consider this a minimum standard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some systems commission periodic independent audits/ reviews of data and reports.</li> <li>- Some systems publish third-party assessment reports.</li> </ul>	- Full transparency on a system's operations and outcomes (i.e. reporting on minimum criteria indicators) should be pursued prior to obligatory third-party verification.
<b>Comments:</b> - Systematic third-party verification of raw and reported data would be a "gold standard".		

### Proposed operational definition of a CLMRS

Based on the minimum standards from the tables above, a Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation System must be able to successfully implement the following core activities:

- **Raise awareness** on child labour and resulting harm amongst farmers, children and the wider community.
- **Identify children** in child labour through active, regular and repeated monitoring, using standardized data collection tools.
- **Provide support (prevention and remediation)** to children in child labour, and others at risk, and document the support provided.
- **Follow-up with children** identified in child labour and continue to monitor their status on a regular basis until they have stopped engaging in child labour and have satisfactory alternatives.<sup>7</sup>

### Suggested indicators

#### Core indicators

To determine whether a CLMRS meets this operational definition, implementers should report on the following core indicators:

#### Coverage:

- # of **households covered** by a CLMRS
- # of **children covered** by a CLMRS

*Coverage* implies that an assessment of child labour risk has been conducted at household level. A household can be considered covered by a CLMRS for one of two reasons:

- (i) they have received an in-person *monitoring* visit, including an interview with the child; and/or
- (ii) the household's risk has been assessed through a systematic analysis of reliable data about the

<sup>7</sup> ILO [Child Labour Monitoring](#)

household, using a transparent, documented method of risk assessment, and an evidence-based decision has been made either to include or exclude that household from in-person monitoring visits. A child can be considered covered if they live in a household meeting the definition above.

*Awareness-raising:*

- # and % of households covered by the system reached by awareness raising at household level

*Awareness-raising* at household level involves a visit by a trained and equipped person to a household to share information about child labour with adults and children. The percentage of households reached by awareness raising is the number of households *visited*, divided by the number of households *covered* by the CLMRS.

*Monitoring:*

- # and % of households monitored by a CLMRS
- # and % of **children monitored** by a CLMRS

*Monitoring* is an active process of identifying child labour. A household can be considered *monitored* by a CLMRS if they have received an in-person visit, including an interview with each child aged between 5 and 17. A child can be considered monitored if they have been interviewed. The percentage monitored is the number of children (or households) *monitored*, divided by the number of children (or households) *covered*.

*Identification:*

- # and % of children **identified** in child labour

A child is identified in child labour if recorded as (or observed) engaging in work that is classed as child labour according to national legislation, which are themselves derived from definitions contained in ILO conventions. The percentage of children identified is the number of children *identified* in child labour, divided by the number of children *covered*.

*Receipt of support (prevention and remediation):*

- # and % of children identified in child labour who **received support**
- # and % of children **not** identified in child labour who **received support**

*Support* includes the delivery of assistance, goods or services to prevent, mitigate and remediate child labour. It can be provided at child, household, or community level. A child can be considered as having received support if the assistance, good or service has been provided. Referral of a child to another service provider can only be counted as support once the assistance, good or service has been received, ie. through verification. The percentage of children who received support is the number of *children identified (or not identified) who received support*, divided by the number of *children identified (or not identified) in child labour*.

*Follow-up:*

- # and % of children identified in child labour who received **at least one follow-up visit**

Follow-up is the ongoing regular monitoring of children identified in child labour, through household visits, to understand their current situation and work status and track any changes. Regular follow-up visits should continue until a child can be considered “withdrawn” from child labour according to documented criteria. The percentage of children identified in child labour who received at least one

follow up visit is the number of *children identified in child labour who received at least one follow-up visit*, divided by the number of *children identified in child labour*.

*Work status at last follow-up:*

- # and % of children identified who reported not engaging in child labour at last follow-up

A child is counted as not engaging in child labour at their most recent follow-up visit if they report not having engaged in work that is classed as child labour according to national legislation. It is important to note that children not engaged in child labour may continue to qualify for further follow-up visits and may still be considered at risk. A common definition is needed to determine whether a child can be considered “withdrawn” from child labour. The percentage of children not engaging in child labour at last follow up is the number of *children identified who report not having engaged in child labour at their most recent follow-up visit*, divided by the *number of children identified in child labour who received at least one follow-up visit*.

Complementary indicators

To assess how effective a CLMRS is overall, implementers can report on the following indicators which cover all the common CLMRS elements, in addition to the core indicators listed above:

<b>Awareness-raising</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- # of people who participated in awareness raising activities in past year</li> <li>- Are awareness-raising sessions conducted with the following groups: community leaders, local authorities, school management committees, cooperative staff?</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- % of households covered who have had at least one monitoring visit (at household level or on the farm) within the last 12 months</li> </ul>
<b>Identification*</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- # and % of children covered who are considered <i>at risk of child labour</i>, according to a set of defined criteria</li> <li>- # and % of children monitored who do not attend school</li> <li>- # and % of children covered identified in child labour, by type of hazardous work</li> <li>- Average number of days worked per week, and hours worked per day, amongst the children identified</li> </ul>
<b>Support (prevention and remediation)*</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- # and % of children who received support, by type of support received</li> </ul>
<b>Follow-up*</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- % of children previously out of school who were attending school at last monitoring visit</li> <li>- % of children identified who reported not engaging in child labour for <i>two</i> consecutive follow-up visits</li> <li>- Average number of follow-up visits in past 12 months for children identified</li> <li>- % of children who are still engaging in child labour at follow-up visit, but work less, or do fewer hazardous tasks</li> </ul>
<b>Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Does the CLMRS directly involve community members or representatives into prevention, monitoring and / or planning of remediation?</li> <li>- Does the CLMRS give an active role for prevention, monitoring and follow-up to local and district-level authorities?</li> <li>- Does the CLMRS share information and data with national authorities for coordination and consolidation?</li> </ul>

	- Is the CLMRS linked with existing services (public services and others) for the provision of support?
<b>Third-party verification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Is any third party commissioned to verify data collected and key indicators reported?</li><li>- Is the CLMRS evaluated independently by a third party?</li><li>- Are reports on the third-party verification and impact evaluation published?</li></ul>

\*Reporting on indicators related to *support*, *identification* and *follow-up* should be disaggregated by sex and age-group.

## Annexes

### 1. List of the stakeholders interviewed

This study included consultation with a range of stakeholders concerned with child labour reduction and child protection issues in smallholder agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa. Stakeholders include representatives of industry, certification organisations, governments, international organizations and NGOs. All stakeholders had a specific interest or experience in the cocoa sector. The following table provides detailed information on the entities interviewed between December 2020 and January 2021.

#### Interview participants

Entity's name	Nature of the entity	Date of interview
Rainforest Alliance	Certifier	03/12/2020
Fair Trade	Certifier	03/12/2020
Ferrero	Cocoa industry	09/12/2020
Sucden	Cocoa industry	09/12/2020
Mars	Cocoa industry	10/12/2020
ILO (Côte d'Ivoire)	International Organization	10/12/2020
UNICEF (Ghana)	International Organization	10/12/2020
SOSTECI (Côte d'Ivoire)	Government	15/12/2020
UNICEF (Côte d'Ivoire)	International Organization	16/12/2020
World Cocoa Foundation - WCF	Cocoa industry platform	16/12/2020
Olam	Cocoa industry	18/12/2020
INKOTA	NGO platform	06/01/2021
Mondelez	Cocoa industry	12/01/2021, 19/01/2021
Lindt	Cocoa industry	12/01/2021
Blommer	Cocoa industry	18/01/2021
Save the Children	NGO	20/01/2021

### 2. Notes and slides from consultation workshop

#### Workshop participants

Christine Müller, Swissco Megan Passey, ICI Matthias Lange, ICI Laurent Foubert, ICI Anna Bruederle, ICI Regula Meng, Unicef CH&LI Ana Herrera, Ecom Beate Weiskopf, Gisco Charles Snoeck, Beyond chocolate Christiane Hellar, Hamburger Stiftung für Wirtschaftsethik Jana Sillen, Barry Callebaut Antonie Deliege, Unicef Ghana Lieke Guinee, Beyond beans Torben Erbrath, BDSI	Mark de Waard, IDH Mike Matarasso, WCF Anita Sheth, Fair Trade Friedel Huetz-Adams, Sudwind Mirjam van Leeuwen, Baronie Michiel Hendriksz, Farmstrong Evelyn Bahn, Inkota Simone Bengereel, Swissco Verra Morisse, GIZ Andres Tschannen, Mondelez Nikol Ostianova, Barry Callebaut Rafiq Khan, Unicef Ghana Elise Glaab, Ferrero Christian Robin, SECO
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Workshop documentation:

- [Notes from consultation workshop](#)
- [Slides presented at consultation workshop](#)

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