



CAOBISCO and European Cocoa Association response to the European Commission Staff Working Document on Combating Child Labour – September 2010

CAOBISCO and the European Cocoa Association (ECA) welcome the publication of the European Commission Staff Working Document on Combating Child Labour as it addresses several issues of interest to the global cocoa and chocolate industry. The paper outlines in a comprehensive manner the factors that contribute to the complex and sensitive issue of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL), as defined in ILO Conventions 182 and 138 and gives an opportunity to all stakeholders to partake in the debate.

The EU Commission Working Paper offers questions for further reflection from stakeholders:

Combating Child Labour: A Holistic, Development Oriented Approach

For nearly a decade now, the global chocolate and cocoa industry has made extensive efforts to tackle the occurrence of worst forms of child labour in the cocoa supply-chain. Efforts have been developed in collaboration with the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana through the development of their National Action Plans, non-governmental organisations and a host of other international organisations including the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI), the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Collectively the global chocolate and cocoa industry has spent more than 75 million US dollars over the past decade. We are currently supporting some 40 social and economic programs in West Africa that improve the lives of cocoa farming families and communities. By the end of this year more than three million direct and indirect beneficiaries will have been impacted by the industry's programs, including hundreds of thousands of cocoa farming families and more than one million children. A public Certification (see page 8) process is underway across the cocoa-farming sector in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, reporting on the incidence of the Worst Forms of Child Labour and on progress in reducing incidence. Changing traditional farming methods and bringing about real and lasting change to cocoa farming communities takes time, not just resources.

The following highlights are further developed in the full response

- ECA and CAOBISCO support the EU Council of Ministers invitation to organise a multi-stakeholder conference (including relevant third countries) to discuss progress made and further steps.
- Care should be exercised to create a coordinated EU and international approach to this issue, so that developing country governments are not subject to multiple and competing prescriptive agendas from a number of different institutions. The European Union has a key role to play in ensuring that the Member States, and other international stakeholders, such as the US, are aligned in their approach.
- Developing country governments engaged in combating child labour should be provided with trade and development aid assistance in support of their agricultural development, monitoring and remediation programming, including funding for educational initiatives in rural communities.
- In addition to being complex, child labour is a very sensitive issue. Fostering a dialogue *between* third countries that face the challenge and are taking steps to address it, i.e. through a regional approach, can ensure more effective exchange of practices.
- Trade restrictions and sanctions are not proven instruments to curb the occurrence of unacceptable child labour practices. Trade incentives (and the ability to check compliance), however, can drive progress.
- UNICEF and ILO (and more particularly IPEC) are the flagship organisations involved in programmes to address child labour. As these organisations work with many donor countries and agencies they should seek to further increase coordination of action on the ground, notably in terms of geographic targeting of activities.
- The private sector is engaged in a variety of initiatives that help address child labour issues, notably by working on the 'enabling environment' (e.g. programmes that address poverty alleviation, better farming practices, education, vocational training etc.). However sovereignty of third countries, and their role in providing infrastructure, basic health and education systems, should be respected.
- The Cocoa Industry welcomes the opportunity to further share lessons learnt on the ground.

What further actions could be envisaged in terms of improving cooperation with the EU in terms of development cooperation or information gathering?

As rightly outlined in the EU Commission staff working document, child labour is a complex phenomenon that finds its root causes in poverty and limited access to education. Following the UNSG's report on child labour and the resolution adopted at the last session of the UNGA, and the recent ILO report on child labour published at the Hague Global Child Labour Conference in May 2010, efforts in the international community are focused on new collaborative initiatives to address this challenging issue. In spite of decades of effort, work remains to be done. According to ILO, over 200 million children are engaged in child labour in multiple sectors across the developing world, of which 70 % is in agriculture and the informal sector.

The European Commission Staff Working Document on Combating Child Labour encourages widening the debate on the issue of Child Labour. In this respect, the Commission has succeeded in focusing policy makers on key questions related to trade and development initiatives, and increased stakeholder involvement. The EU Commission has demonstrated through its inter-service approach that although complex, child labour is most effectively tackled by joining up the various arms of development, trade and external relations with third countries.

ECA and Caobisco have actively participated in the recent Hearing in the EU Parliament and the DG Trade civil society dialogue that reinforced the case for effective political dialogue, development assistance, domestic policies, and trade measures when applied in a mutually supportive manner.

It is essential that this approach continue to be reflected in discussions that take place.

ECA and CAOBISCO support the EU Council of Ministers invitation to organise a multi-stakeholder conference with representatives of the business community, civil society, international organisations, third countries, EU Institutions, and Member States, to discuss progress made and what further steps may be taken.

The European Commission has successfully developed platforms for dialogue and exchange of views, bringing together a range of stakeholders on key issues, each providing their experience and expertise to issues with the intention of addressing challenges and finding relevant solutions. Such models have worked well in other EU policy areas, particularly related to consumer affairs in the case of "The EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health". We would suggest setting up a similar platform to address the challenge of child labour. This platform could notably help in organising the multi-stakeholder conference.

How could closer cooperation be developed with other governments or international organisations – such as the US and ILO – that are active in the elimination of child labour?

Given the broader, global nature of child labour, to truly move forward in a constructive manner in terms of development cooperation or information gathering, international organisations should also bring their experience and expertise to this forum. The ILO, UNICEF, UNSG, Council of Europe, and the OECD have all played key roles in making progress towards the elimination of child labour. If they could actively participate in a dialogue and exchange of views with the EU institutions and Member States, the platform referred to under the previous question would bring together the depth and breadth of experts required to continue this progress.

In September 2001, global chocolate and cocoa industry representatives, in partnership with United States Senator Tom Harkin and Representative Eliot Engel, signed a public and historic agreement, known as the Harkin Engel Protocol, or 'Cocoa Protocol' to work towards the elimination of the worst forms of child labour in the growing of cocoa beans and their derivative products from the cocoa sectors of Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana. The agreement laid out a series of date specific actions towards eliminating the Worst Forms of Child Labour, including the development of a public "certification"¹ system for cocoa farming. The "certification" system is underway. In addition, the Cocoa Protocol made a commitment to establish a joint international foundation to drive remediation efforts on the ground in Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana. The foundation was formed in 2001 and is called the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI). The Cocoa Protocol has been an important catalyst for change in the labour practices within the cocoa sectors of Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana and has successfully focussed international attention and resource in support of cocoa families and children.

In September 2010, industry reaffirmed its commitment through a new partnership with U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Senator Tom Harkin and U.S. Representative Eliot Engel and the governments of Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire. The Framework of Action places an emphasis on actions that foster safe, healthy, and productive environments for children and families through addressing hazardous labour practices, improving the livelihoods of farming families and access to quality education for children. The U.S. DOL will contribute \$10 million (USD) while industry has committed \$7 million in new funding to expand present sustainable efforts over 5-years with the possible addition of \$3 million for remediation activities. Part of the industry funds will be allocated to support a new public private partnership headed by the ILO's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC).

At the initiative of the Belgian Ministries for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Development, the OECD Sahel West Africa club (SWAC) began coordinating a regional initiative in 2008 on the issue of combating the worst forms of child labour on West African cocoa farms, with a view to building on the work carried out to date in the region. These efforts have seen "very strong international and domestic West African mobilization, and programmes and initiatives carried out have obtained considerable results" states the OECD's SWAC. This group now aims to build upon existing experiences and promote a complementary regional child labour approach.²

As stressed in the Commission paper, many sectors face similar challenges. Sharing examples of good practice is something we strive for in the global cocoa and chocolate industry. We therefore welcome the recent decision of OECD's SWAC, again with Belgian government support, to commission the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI) ³, to develop guidelines on emerging best practices to tackle the worst forms of child labour. Together with the OECD, we hope these experiences can be shared with other sectors so that we can all aim for more comprehensive and cohesive action towards the elimination of the worst forms child labour in agriculture in West Africa and the wider sub-Saharan region.

Through the cocoa protocol our industry works closely with colleagues and agencies in the US. In working with the governments of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire we have seen first-hand how difficult it can be to reconcile the different international stakeholder deadlines envisioned – the National Action Plans by 2015, and the ILO "Roadmap" by 2016, MDGs.

¹ See page 7 for certification definitions and further examples of cocoa sector initiatives to combat Worst Forms of Child Labour.

² OECD SWAC Joint paper Regional Initiative - combating worst forms of child labour on West African cocoa farms - June 2009: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/43/22/43641121.pdf>

³ Cf ICI Case Study in the EC Staff Working Document, page 51. <http://www.cocoainitiative.org/>

Care should be exercised to create a coordinated EU and international approach to this issue, so that developing country governments trying to engage are not subject to multiple and competing prescriptive agendas from a number of different institutions. The European Union has a key role to play in ensuring that the Member States are aligned in their approach. Further coordination with governments such as the US, would help ensure better alignment and coordination of action.

Is there scope for developing initiatives in support of national comprehensive child protection systems including child labour?

Importantly, Member States have stressed the need to promote dialogue and welcome joint action with key global players and stakeholders including the private sector. We welcome the Council's efforts to make progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Although child labour is not specifically singled out in the MDGs, child health is highlighted. The EU Commission and Council describe economic and social conditions as crucial determinants of health. Therefore unacceptable child labour practices could be considered as a crucial health determinant not only due to direct health risks posed by inappropriate and hazardous working environments, but also because it prevents children from attending school, ignoring their basic right to education and access to information that can be crucial to one's wellbeing.

Engaging developing country governments requires a constructive and sustained approach best conducted in international stakeholder forums. These forums are vital to improving the exchange of information and building national capacity to meet the challenges in the elimination of the worst forms of child labour.

We believe the examples set forth by the cocoa industry in addressing this issue, in conjunction with the governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, can offer examples of good practice that may help inform other agricultural sectors.

However, origin government national action plans, public certification efforts, international development partnerships – while vital and integrated component parts - will not, on their own, effect lasting change. Each component piece taken alone is significant, but it is the collective sum of these efforts that is required to make the necessary shift in the sectors that will ultimately benefit the children in these communities.

Developing country governments that take steps to address the challenges of child labour within their respective countries should be provided with trade and development aid assistance in support of their agricultural development, monitoring and remediation programming, including funding for educational initiatives in rural communities.

How can we ensure a more systematic approach to discussing child labour with third countries to strengthen commitments and follow developments, in particular in countries with high rates of child labour?

Countries that aim to combat WFCL must take necessary steps to address the problem at the national level, strengthening legislative and enforcement frameworks, and promoting citizen sensitisation and education projects. A strong policy environment in countries that face the challenge of child labour is the key to sustainable change. Countries who have taken action to tackle child labour should be specifically encouraged in their efforts by EU-specific actions, and by the wider international community. The inclusion of a specific call for proposals on child labour within

the Thematic programme 'Investing in People' is a welcome departure in this strategy and we would encourage the Commission to continue to identify where EU Development aid can be most effectively aligned with other efforts by International organizations and other governments on the ground.

The EU Commission staff working document, and indeed the EU Council conclusions, set a very positive precedent in having joint input from DG Trade, Development and RELEX. This demonstrates willingness on behalf of the EU to be coherent and consistent in its approach to combating Child Labour. This must now be harnessed so that all stakeholders can move forward towards shared goals.

Countries should be specifically encouraged in their efforts by EU-specific actions. In addition to being complex, child labour is a very sensitive issue. A name and shame approach is not conducive to openness and transparency. In addition to coordination between donor agencies and governments, fostering a dialogue between third countries that face the challenge and are taking steps to address it i.e. through a regional approach can ensure more effective exchange of practices.

How to ensure an appropriate follow-up within these countries, including technical assistance activities?

We have seen from our work under the Cocoa Protocol (see page 3) that there is a relationship between systematic data collection and the strengthening of origin government capacity (personnel as well as structural) to address the issue at a national level. In the case of cocoa, work conducted in conjunction with the governments of both countries has resulted in enhanced local capacity to develop effective national monitoring systems. The collaboration between all the stakeholders involved is also resulting in the development of agreed key indicators to measure progress against the elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. Governments must take the lead in addressing the issues in their own sectors, supported by international partners.

Donor governments should encourage national efforts with long term technical assistance, to see sustainable change. Assistance in strengthening census capacity and, more particularly, effective Child Labour Monitoring Systems at local level, is key.

How to better involve local civil society and international organisations in preparations and follow-up to human rights dialogue? How to involve other relevant stakeholders (corporations, social partners, research institutions) in the process?

Throughout the decade, the cocoa industry and its partners have engaged in consultation with key civil society experts and research institutes, as well as international flagship organisations such as the ILO. Industry partners and implementers include Africare, CARE International, CARITAS, European Institute for Cooperation and Development, Family Health International, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, GTZ, International Cocoa Initiative, International Fund for Education and Self Help, the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture, Rainforest Alliance, Utz certified, Fair Trade Labelling Organisation, Winrock International, and the World Cocoa Foundation, as well as many others.

OECD and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) both represent the kind of international stakeholder forums where governments, business, civil society and research institutions can meet and refine best practices and approach at a regional level. The OECD SWAC are currently also working on bringing the debate into the wider forum of the Inter Parliamentary Union,

which gathers elected parliaments from over 150 countries. The European Parliament is an associate member in this forum. The IPU fosters contacts, co-ordination, and the exchange of experience among parliaments and parliamentarians of all countries. It notably contributes to the defence and promotion of human rights - an essential factor of parliamentary democracy and development.

UNICEF and ILO (and more particularly IPEC) are the flagship organizations involved in programmes to address child labour. These organizations work with many donor countries and agencies. As the common denominator to a number of different initiatives they should seek to further increase coordination of action on the ground, notably in terms of geographic targeting of activities.

While the initial focus has been on encouraging the ratification of the core ILO Conventions, the focus of attention is now shifting towards monitoring their effective implementation, notably through the competent international monitoring bodies: how should the EU contribute to this monitoring process or complement it through its own action?

The cocoa sector is convinced that effective guidance and support from the EU and competent international bodies can strongly contribute to capacity building by providing technical advice or making recommendations to States on implementing their obligations to protect child rights. Monitoring is vital - many expert organisations such as the ILO engage in it.

The EU can play a notable role in the coordination of development funds to drive progress. Ultimately, monitoring needs to be seen as part of capacity-building at the national level in affected countries, and these national level efforts should be supported with EU diplomatic and financial assistance.

Should EU trade policy in relation to child labour be focused on trade incentives rather than trade restrictive measures (withdrawal of trade preferences, exclusion from public procurement or bans)?

There is widespread agreement among international rights and development organisations that sanctions would only result in further suffering, hardship and instability in affected countries, without improving the lot of those affected by abusive labour conditions. This was again confirmed by key stakeholders, such as the ILO and UNICEF, in the recent Hearing organised by the European Parliament and the European Commission civil society dialogue.

Sanctions ultimately hurt farmers by reducing demand for their supplies and do not drive lasting change on the ground. Millions of small family farmers produce cocoa responsibly, without the use of child labour, and for those farmers, trade restrictions would make things worse, not better.

Restrictive trade measures intended to eliminate or reduce producer incentives to use certain forms of child labour have been subject to much debate in many countries. As pointed out in the Commission Working Paper (page 20-21) there is limited experience globally with such measures as a successful way to address child labour. It is clear that trade restrictions would not have a direct impact on the main contributing factor of poverty, which causes children to work in the first place. Further to this, the ILO, in their recent Global Report, state such measures often run the risk of weakening the cooperative dialogue that has been harboured since the introduction of ILO Convention 182 and the key shift from denial of the existence of child labour to acceptance and action. The global cocoa and chocolate industry experience has consistently shown that a

constructive dialogue must remain open to really tackle the root causes of child labour and change the lives of millions of cocoa growing families for the better ⁴.

The European cocoa industry has responded to the Commission's public consultation on the GSP review. In this respect it believes that positive trade incentives (and the ability to check compliance) can be useful instruments to drive progress.

European business can play an important role in promoting the elimination of child labour. How to promote best practice as regards monitoring and reporting on child labour in CSR initiatives?

- **Corporate responsibility vis à vis human rights**

European business does play an important role in promoting the elimination of child labour. The corporate responsibility to respect human rights is recognised in the Tripartite Declaration of principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy⁵ and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises⁶. It is one of the commitments companies undertake in joining the Global Compact⁷. By spreading good business practices into the corporate community, including in developing countries, the UN Global Compact is indeed an effective instrument to help companies overcome WFCL challenges, notably in implementing principle 5 on the effective abolition of child labour.

As outlined in Special representative Ruggie's⁸ report: "*markets, if they are embedded within rules, customs and institutions, constitute powerful forces capable of generating economic growth, reducing poverty, and increasing demand for the rule of law, thereby contributing to the realization of a broad spectrum of human rights.*"

In this respect, most companies are obliged to follow the due diligence approach, i.e. "a process whereby companies not only ensure compliance with national laws but also manage the risk of human rights harm with a view to avoiding it".

- **Commission Communication on CSR & Socially Responsible Procurement**

The cocoa and chocolate industry welcomes the future communication on CSR and the future Commission guidelines on socially responsible procurement. Responsible companies monitor their supply chains by initiating supplier codes of conduct. They also engage in a host of collective and individual programmes that address responsible and sustainable cocoa growing notably product certification schemes developed by UTZ, Rain Forest Alliance, Fair Trade among others.

But to be clear, there are limitations. Indeed, the industry does not know of any system that currently, or in the near term, can guarantee the absence of worst forms of child labour, including trafficked labour, in the production of cocoa in West Africa. Like the public certification model

Terminology
The Cocoa Protocol covers "**process certification**", which includes: evaluation, reporting, and remediation on sector-wide labour practices and conditions in cocoa producing countries, while "**product certification**" identifies specialty cocoa and cocoa products produced in accordance with economic, social and environmental criteria that are developed by a private certification organisation, audited against, and which aim to offer the consumer a level of assurance on particular product attributes.

⁴ Accelerating action against child labour, Global Report under the follow up to the ILO declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work 2010 Pg 74 - 75

⁵ http://www.ilo.org/empent/WorkingUnits/lang--en/WCMS_DOC_ENT_DPT_MLT_EN

⁶ <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/56/36/1922428.pdf>

⁷ <http://www.unglobalcompact.org/>

⁸ <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G08/128/61/PDF/G0812861.pdf?OpenElement>

developed under the Cocoa Protocol, the private third party monitoring and certification systems are based on a set of minimum requirements and progress requirements – in other words, on a system of continual improvement.

The industry is aware of a number of public references around guarantees for products and appreciates the desire for certainty. In a recently distributed white paper the Fairtrade Labeling Organization states: “Child Labour is a very complex and intractable issue and while Fairtrade adopts a zero tolerance approach through its standards and compliance criteria, this principle is the starting point for a series of interventions through our own resources or in collaboration with others to help tackle the problem. No person or organization can simply guarantee that child labour does not occur in the supply chain, but Fairtrade can provide assurance that its standards, certification, and producer support services all contribute to a solution.”⁹

Different certification schemes are built on a matrix of variable priorities and should be merited on these even if the core principles underpinning them are fairly consistent.

ECA and CAOBISCO have consistently made three points when invited to respond on this issue:

- Authorities should not pick winners in relation to particular certification schemes in what is a post-competitive agenda
- Regulation or legislative action on this issue is inappropriate for the same reasons as above
- We support many pre-competitive initiatives which are aimed at a broad sustainability agenda in often very complex supply chains (eg. Cocoa). This approach also allows many thousands of small holder producers in the cocoa sector for example to continue to engage throughout the supply chain.

But the fact is that this is a long-term process of transformation in a developing sector. It will take the collective commitment of all those involved in the cocoa sector for us to see sustainable change.

- **Monitoring & reporting**

Over the last ten years, and in the framework of the Cocoa protocol, the global chocolate and cocoa industry, in conjunction with the governments of Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire and international civil society partners, have worked in unique partnership towards a public certification system. Both governments have conducted sector wide surveys on the incidence of child labour in their sectors, published the results, and submitted to independent verification to ensure the validity of the data reported. After reviewing the data, both countries developed and publicly disseminated their own time-bound national action plans (see page 8) to address the issue of unacceptable child labour in cocoa production, and have made considerable progress toward their stated goals. All of the interested stakeholders recognize that accurate detailed data is the key to driving effective remediation. Both governments have developed and are executing remediation plans at the community level with support from the industry and our international partners.

Monitoring and reporting processes in agriculture, as opposed to a factory context, are still in an iterative process of learning and refinement. It is critical that stakeholders maintain realistic expectations regarding the focus, scope, and outcomes of industry efforts; and these processes should not distract from the need to focus on remediation and effective on the ground programme

⁹ FLO’s Position Paper on Child Labour, March 17, 2010
[http://www.fairtrade.net/single_view1.html?&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=129&cHash=3e23e04ba4](http://www.fairtrade.net/single_view1.html?&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=129&cHash=3e23e04ba4)

development to address root cause issues. Further, in the cocoa sector it must be recognized and accepted that children are helping with farming tasks within a family and community environment of rural agriculture. With that as a base, community sensitisation and improving the coordination of a range of interventions can produce positive results.

The cocoa sector has been open and transparent in reporting efforts underway to assess the incidence of worst forms of child labour in cocoa-growing. Information has been made publicly available on a regular basis both through private sector information channels and through the producing governments' websites.

The certification studies carried out in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana were verified by independent bodies to assess relevance and reliability of data collected. Programmes such as those led by the ICI are independently evaluated to ensure they are effecting sustainable change on the ground¹⁰.

These efforts have been ground-breaking in scope as they represent the first effort that we are aware of, to address the issue of child labour across an entire small, family farm based agricultural sector in a developing country context. The efforts in the cocoa sector can serve as a baseline to realistically assess what can be achieved, and what is most effective in driving change.

It is only by working together in a spirit of trust and collaboration in high functioning partnership that we can hope to change the lives of the millions of children and families in cocoa.

- **Lessons learnt in Cocoa – concrete examples of programmes on the ground**

The cocoa supply-chain is complex. In West Africa, cocoa is predominantly grown in smallholder farms (of an average size of 2 hectares) with an estimated 1.5 million farmers engaged in cocoa farming. A number of actors and stakeholders interact in the cocoa supply-chain (from government-held structures, as is the case in Ghana, to private actors, such as the 'pisteurs' and traitants' in Côte d'Ivoire) before the international cocoa industry actually buys the beans.

The number of actors involved, combined with the difficult access to rural communities and lack of infrastructure, require well-thought out and coordinated remediation programmes.

The global chocolate and cocoa industry's commitment towards the elimination of the worst forms of child labour and forced labour in the cocoa sector was made early, and our experience is pioneering.

The industry is committed to a programme of investment and improvement of social conditions in cocoa producing countries. Collectively the global chocolate and cocoa industry has spent more than 75 million US dollars over the past decade. We are currently supporting some 40 social and economic programmes in West Africa that improve the lives of cocoa farming families and communities. By the end of this year more than three million direct and indirect beneficiaries will have been impacted by the industry's programmes, including hundreds of thousands of cocoa farming families and more than one million children.

The cocoa sector industry has developed programmes that address child labour both directly, such as the International Cocoa Initiative, and indirectly, eg through the Farmer Field Schools developed with the Sustainable Tree Crops Programme (STCP) by the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF)¹¹. These programmes work on the dissemination of good agricultural practices that in turn translate into generation of additional income for farmers. Awareness-raising programmes, such as those led by ICI

¹⁰ <http://www.cocoainitiative.org/programme-evaluation-in-ghana.html>

¹¹ World Cocoa Foundation: <http://www.worldcocoafoundation.org/>

help farmer communities understand the importance of schooling. They also provide modules that help towards budgeting of expenditure, including for schooling and child care.

The WCF is also working with women cocoa farmers and adapt certain programmes to ensure the women can be more involved and receive the necessary training to ensure that they are directly empowered to strengthen the lives of their families. Women often engage in off-farm economic activities that contribute to household income and are often also responsible for overseeing common household expenses such as food and their children's school-related expenses. WCF-supported programmes encourage women's involvement through activities that further women's small business skills. The ECHOES¹² Programme improves women's ability to fund their children's school-related expenses. Its three-tiered Family Support Scholarships are designed to help mothers keep their children in school while improving their existing enterprises.

Innovative work is being undertaken by the ICI on community sensitisation around the topics of child work and child labour. This has provided an invaluable means to better understand communities' perceptions of what can actually represent a threat to the development of the child, and why it is essential that children have access to regular education. A cornerstone of the ICI approach is to empower local communities to take action themselves as local capacity building remains key to the sustainable success of such initiatives. ICI works on multi-year programmes with local civil society implementing partners helping to build local capacity.

In concrete terms, the private sector can engage in a variety of initiatives that can help address child labour issues, notably by working on the 'enabling environment' (e.g. programmes that address poverty alleviation, better farming practices, vocational training etc.). It is however important that sovereignty of third countries, and their role in providing infrastructure, basic health and education systems, is respected. The cocoa industry welcomes the opportunity to further share lessons learnt on the ground.

For further background:

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Through its 2000+ companies, **CAOBISCO**, the Association of the Chocolate, Biscuits and Confectionery Industries of Europe, represents more than 245,000 direct employees and generates more than 51 billion Euros annual turnover. CAOBISCO industries show a production of 10,4 million tons of products; 4,4 billion Euros of exports, i.e. 10% of the total value of food exports from the European Union; and an import value of € 1,2 billion. In terms of raw materials usage we represent over 50% of world cocoa consumption, 30% of EU sugar consumption and are the major users of dairy and cereals.

The **European Cocoa Association** (ECA) is a trade association that groups the major companies involved in the cocoa bean trade and processing, in warehousing and related logistical activities in Europe. Together, ECA Members represent two-thirds of Europe's cocoa beans grinding, half of Europe's industrial chocolate production and 40 % of the world production of cocoa liquor, butter and powder.

On behalf of its members, ECA monitors and reports on developments impacting the cocoa sector, both at regulatory and scientific levels. In addition, ECA is actively engaged in European and International fora related to the industry's contribution to a sustainable cocoa economy.

¹² http://www.worldcocoa foundation.org/what-we-do/current-programs/ECHOES_summary.asp