

# MAPPING WORKING CONDITIONS AND CHILD LABOR RISKS IN NESTLÉ'S COCOA SUPPLY CHAIN IN CAMEROON



## FLA Member/Affiliate Update

Nestle ended its membership as an FLA Participating Company in April 2025. The company's reports can still be found at [Fairlabor.org](https://Fairlabor.org)

APRIL 2022



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# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**The Fair Labor Association (FLA)** Principles of Fair Labor and Responsible Sourcing for the Agriculture Sector<sup>1</sup> require that the supply chains of affiliated companies are subject to FLA's annual due diligence process. Nestlé affiliated with the FLA in 2012 and committed to adopt and implement the [FLA's Work Place Code of Conduct](#) and the [FLA's Principles of Fair Labor and Responsible Sourcing](#) to identify and remediate labor issues in its cocoa supply chain. As part of the company's annual due diligence cycle, FLA undertakes field-level assessments for Nestlé in various countries.

In 2020, the FLA's due diligence included a baseline assessment and mapping of the Nestlé cocoa supply chain in Cameroon. The assessment informed FLA recommendations that resulted in an action plan that the company developed with its Tier 1 Supplier during 2020-2021. The action plan is being released in conjunction with this report.

Cocoa plays an important role in Cameroon's economic growth and development as the country's main cash crop. Nestlé procures cocoa from Cameroon through Tier 1 suppliers. The Tier 1 supplier assessed for this report is one of the country's three largest cocoa buyers, trading 27 percent of cocoa in Cameroon. Cocoa is mostly sold in a free-market (supply and demand) system in Cameroon with farmers choosing to supply to any buyer/company. At the time of the FLA visit, Nestlé and its Tier 1 supplier has established full traceability to 2,368 farmers clustered in 12 cooperatives from which Nestlé sources. At the time, the supplier was

in the initial stages of setting up a Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System (CLMRS) with support from the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI).

The objective of this mapping exercise was to highlight gaps in the internal management systems and labor issues in the cocoa production in Cameroon and evaluate and make recommendations on the CLMRS roll-out. To collect information on the working conditions and child labor in the communities, the FLA team visited three cooperatives and six cocoa producing communities supplying to those cooperatives. The team interviewed 106 people including the supplier staff, cooperative staff, community leaders, workers, and 49 farmers.

## KEY FINDINGS:

► **Attitude and practices around child labor:** Cocoa producers and cooperative management had access to information about child labor, yet the producers considered that any work undertaken by children is okay, if the child has the physical capability. Producers believed that children should learn the work in case they don't succeed at school. In such cases, children can undertake cocoa farming to support their parents and take over the farms from parents as they age.

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<sup>1</sup> FLA's Principles of Fair Labor and Responsible Sourcing closely align with 12 international guidelines and benchmarks including the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGP) and the OECD-FAO Guideline for Multinational with Agricultural Supply Chains.

No active child labor case was observed during farm visits. Parents have positive attitude towards children's education. Further awareness building could improve existing knowledge, attitudes, and practices around child work in the communities and avoid child labor.

- ▶ **Lack of worker profiling and written contracts for hired workers:** Eighteen percent of the interviewed cocoa producers hired at least one worker. Most producers neither maintained the profile of their workers (age, gender, hours of work, compensation), nor had written contracts with workers, pre-disposing workers to human rights risks. Further, the growers hiring workers have not been trained on decent work principles such as forced labor, employment relations, responsible recruitment, and working conditions.
- ▶ **Forced labor risk for workers:** The FLA team came across a worker who reported abuse related to retention of wages, breach of oral agreement and unilateral change of terms and conditions by the employer, lack of consent, lack of written contract, and no access to a grievance mechanism. Several interviewed producers said that they were not in favor of workers exiting employment at their own will. These indicators point toward the risk of forced labor.

- ▶ **Lack of grievance mechanisms for workers:** The grievance mechanism provided by the supplier existed for actors with whom they had direct relationships (producers, cooperatives) but did not cover farm workers. The mechanism was not communicated to workers and there is no process to handle workers' grievances.
- ▶ **Lack of chemical management training:** All farmers interviewed use chemicals, and a majority had not received training in chemical management. Seventy percent of producers in Cooperative 1, 45% in Cooperative 2, and 56% in Cooperative 3 have not benefited from trainings in farm level health and safety management.
- ▶ **Lack of expected CLMRS outcome indicators:** At the time of the FLA assessment, CLMRS was at an early stage, setting up the system with a focus on child labor and monitoring a sample of households and farms. Gaps were noticed in establishing key outcome indicators that would facilitate measuring impact overtime. Remediation plan development, implementation of actions, and integration of forced labor are planned for 2021-2022.

FLA will continue to assess and report on these aspects of the CLMRS system as they become mature, incorporating training and other elements to mitigate forced labor risks. FLA provided recommendations for the existing gaps.

## II. INTRODUCTION

In March and April 2020, [Fair Labor Association \(FLA\)](#) conducted a baseline assessment at three cooperatives and 14 related communities that started participating in [Nestlé's Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System \(CLMRS\)](#),<sup>2</sup> implemented in partnership with the [International Cocoa Initiative \(ICI\)](#),<sup>3</sup> and one of its Tier 1 suppliers in Cameroon.

The objective of this baseline assessment and mapping was to inform Nestlé's recently launched CLMRS in Cameroon. Nestlé started CLMRS in Côte d'Ivoire in 2012<sup>4</sup> following FLA's review in 2011 of its cocoa supply chain.<sup>5</sup> CLMRS expanded in 2017 to Ghana with ECOM,<sup>6</sup> and in 2019 to Cameroon with Cargill<sup>7</sup> — Nestlé's Tier 1 cocoa suppliers.<sup>8</sup>

Nestlé developed the CLMRS to identify and remediate child labor as part of its broader Nestlé Cocoa Plan<sup>9</sup> with an objective to improve the lives of cocoa farmers and their families and address root causes of child labor.<sup>10</sup> ICI implements and manages the program on the ground with Nestlé's suppliers.<sup>11</sup> As part of Nestlé's affiliation with FLA, and commitment to the FLA standards,<sup>12</sup> FLA undertakes annual independent external assessments (IEA) and publicly reports on field level conditions dating to 2012. At the onset of a social compliance program in a new country or commodity, FLA undertakes a baseline assessment and mapping.<sup>13</sup> This report presents the findings from the FLA's baseline of the Nestlé cocoa supply chain in Cameroon.

Nestlé's main cocoa supplier in Cameroon is one of the top three cocoa trading companies operating in the country. The supplier buys cocoa locally, through its joint-venture and supplies it to Nestlé and other international buyers. The cocoa supplied to Nestlé is purchased from 2,368 fully traced producers clustered in 12 cooperatives in the supplier's sustainability program and linked to one certified buying center (Agency) in Obala. The Tier 1 supplier operates one central warehouse in Douala and 19 buying centers called "agencies", in five of Cameroon's seven cocoa producing regions.

In 2019, the supplier commissioned a child labor risk assessment to a local civil society organization to understand the existing labor

2 <https://www.Nestlé.com/sites/default/files/2019-12/Nestlé-tackling-child-labor-report-2019-en.pdf>

3 <https://cocoainitiative.org/about-ici/about-us/>

4 <https://www.Nestlé.com/sites/default/files/2019-12/Nestlé-tackling-child-labor-report-2019-en.pdf>

5 <https://www.fairlabor.org/report/assessment-Nestlé-cocoa-supply-chain-ivory-coast>. FLA reports published on the CLMRS in Côte d'Ivoire can be found at fairlabor.org.

6 <https://cocoainitiative.org/news-media-post/ici-and-Nestlé-launch-clmrs-in-ghana/>

7 <https://www.cargill.com/2017/cargill-and-ici-improve-childrens-lives>

8 A full list of Nestlé's cocoa direct suppliers in Côte d'Ivoire is published here <https://www.Nestlé.com/sites/default/files/asset-library/documents/library/documents/suppliers/supply-chain-disclosure-cocoa-cote-ivoire.pdf>

9 <https://www.Nestlécocoaplan.com>

10 FLA conducted a social impact assessment of the CLMRS in Nestlé's cocoa supply chain in Côte D'Ivoire in 2019.

11 In recent CLMRS models, including in Cameroon, the ICI facilitates, and the Tier 1 supplier leads the ground implementation.

12 FLA's Principles of Fair Labor and Responsible Sourcing for Agricultural Supply Chains and FLA's Workplace Code of Conduct for the Agriculture Sector. Both available at <https://www.fairlabor.org/agriculture-principles>

13 FLA conducts five types of annual assessments: 1) Baseline Assessment and Mapping, 2) Independent External Monitoring (IEM), 3) Independent External Verification (IEV), 4) Focused Assessment, and 5) Social Impact Assessment (SIA), depending on the maturity of an affiliated company's social compliance program in a country and commodity.

risks. The study collected useful information on the child labor context, the legal framework, and existing child protection services. In the third quarter of 2019, Nestlé with the supplier started the CLMRS pilot in Cameroon with ICI<sup>14</sup>. The pilot was planned for one year (to the end of 2020) and covered 1,295 cocoa households from seven cooperatives in one Agency in Obala-N'tui. In the second year of the rollout, the aim was to reach 2,368 cocoa producers in the

12 cooperatives. Eventually, the supplier's<sup>15</sup> strategy is to develop a risk based CLMRS, optimizing resources by concentrating efforts in the high-risk areas and on Nestle high-risk Tier 2 (Agencies) and Tier 3 (cooperatives) suppliers.

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14 One staff person from ICI's Côte d'Ivoire's office relocated to Cameroon to oversee this pilot.

15 Nestle Tier 1 supplier

### III. ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

**Given that Nestlé is in the process of launching the CLMRS** in the country, FLA carried out a baseline assessment and mapping study<sup>16</sup> in line with the FLA's agricultural Independent External Assessment (IEA) procedures with the following objectives.

- 1) Assess Nestlé's supplier internal management system (IMS)** to implement the CLMRS in its supply chain. FLA benchmarked the supplier's IMS against its [Fair Labor and Responsible Sourcing](#) standard.
- 2) Conduct a child labor<sup>17</sup> focused assessment** (and report on other labor issues<sup>18</sup>) on sampled farms and communities to collect data on child labor prevalence and knowledge, attitude, and practices (KAP).

- 3) Make recommendations** to inform the foundational elements of the CLMRS in Cameroon.

Topics such as child labor remediation and integration of other labor issues such as forced labor will be assessed by the FLA in the future assessments.

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16 *Excerpt from the FLA's Independent External Assessment (IEA) Procedures on the Mapping Study:* FLA will use this IEA in the preliminary stage of a Company affiliation (first year), or when a new country or commodity is rolled under the FLA IEA process, during the implementation plan, for an existing affiliate. This form of assessment allows for a better understanding of the supply chain, the stakeholders involved, status of company's current internal supply chain and labor standards management system, the workers' profile, and the associated labor risks. Results of the mapping helps the FLA and Companies understand the gaps on which they can work to strengthen their internal management systems and, develop or refine their monitoring and remediation program.

17 FLA used ILO definitions of child labor (ILO Convention 138) and worst forms of child labor (ILO Convention 182). <https://www.ilo.org/ipecc/facts/ILOconventionsonchildlabour/lang-en/index.htm>

18 While the focus of this assessment is on child labor, the FLA team reported other labor issues that were noticed during the assessment. Some of these may be underlying causes of child labor.

## IV. ASSESSMENT APPROACH

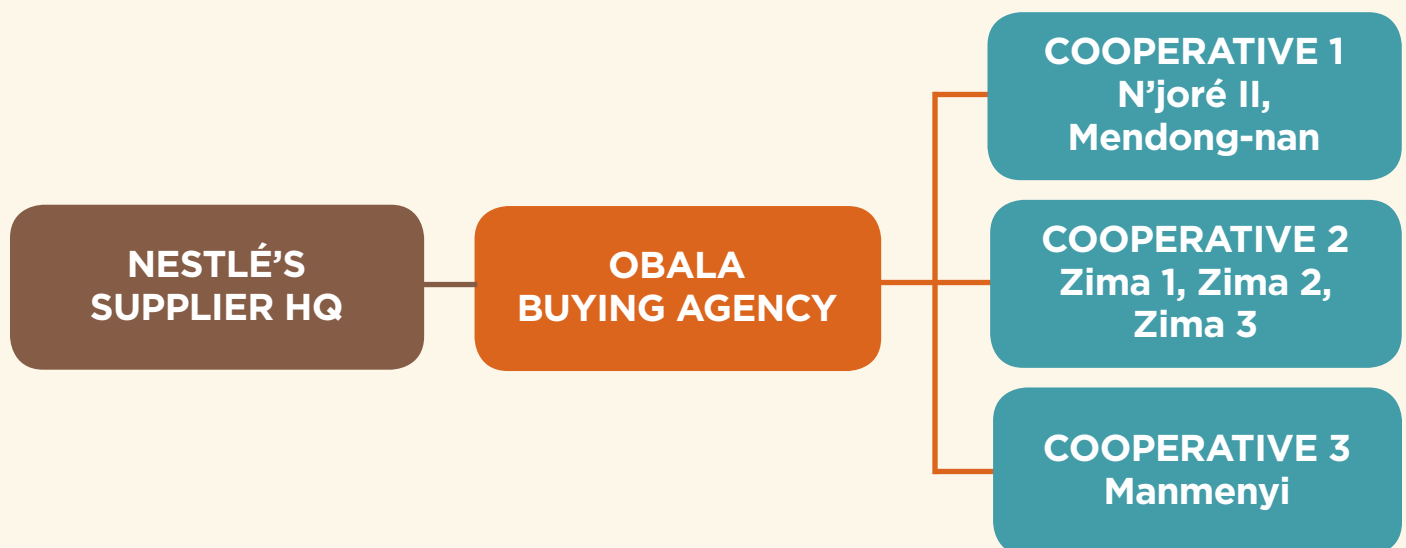
FLA's assessment included the following components:

- 1. Review of internal management systems and CLMRS rollout:** The FLA team<sup>19</sup> collected information on Nestlé and its supplier's cocoa supply chain and on the role and responsibilities of various supply chain actors, including staff of the supplier, ICI, agency, and cooperatives. FLA conducted interviews and document review of the CLMRS rollout (plan, scope, data collection, trainings, stakeholder engagement, etc.). The data collection started with online interviews with supplier and ICI staff, followed by in-person meetings. A questionnaire was deployed based on FLA principles. The team reviewed existing documents and datasets and collected final pieces of information from the supplier team in August 2020.

- 2. Child labor risk mapping:** FLA visited Nestlé supplying farms and communities during the post-harvest cocoa season and conducted a labor risk assessment, with a focus on child labor. A visit was made to the central warehouse in Douala, one buying center for the supplier (agency) in Obala. Under this agency, three cooperatives, four communities and 49 producers<sup>20</sup> were visited (Table 1). The FLA conducted 106 interviews covering representatives from the cooperatives, community

<sup>19</sup> FLA team included five persons: the FLA manager for Africa, the FLA program associate for Africa, one independent assessor from Societal Compliance Initiative, an FLA accredited monitor, and one independent assessor from Ethical Trade Services based in Cameroon. FLA's senior director of Supply Chain Innovation and Partnerships provided overall supervision and quality review of the assessment. <sup>20</sup> Initially, the FLA planned to interview 60 producers, 20 producers per cooperative. Given the COVID-19 related movement restrictions and border closures measure imposed on March 17, 2020, by the government of Cameroon, the team completed interviews with nine producers in Cooperative 3.

**Figure 1: IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE AND VISITED COOPERATIVES**





leaders, farmers, and workers. All visited communities were in central Cameroon. In this report, the three visited cooperatives are identified as Cooperative 1, Cooperative 2, and Cooperative 3.

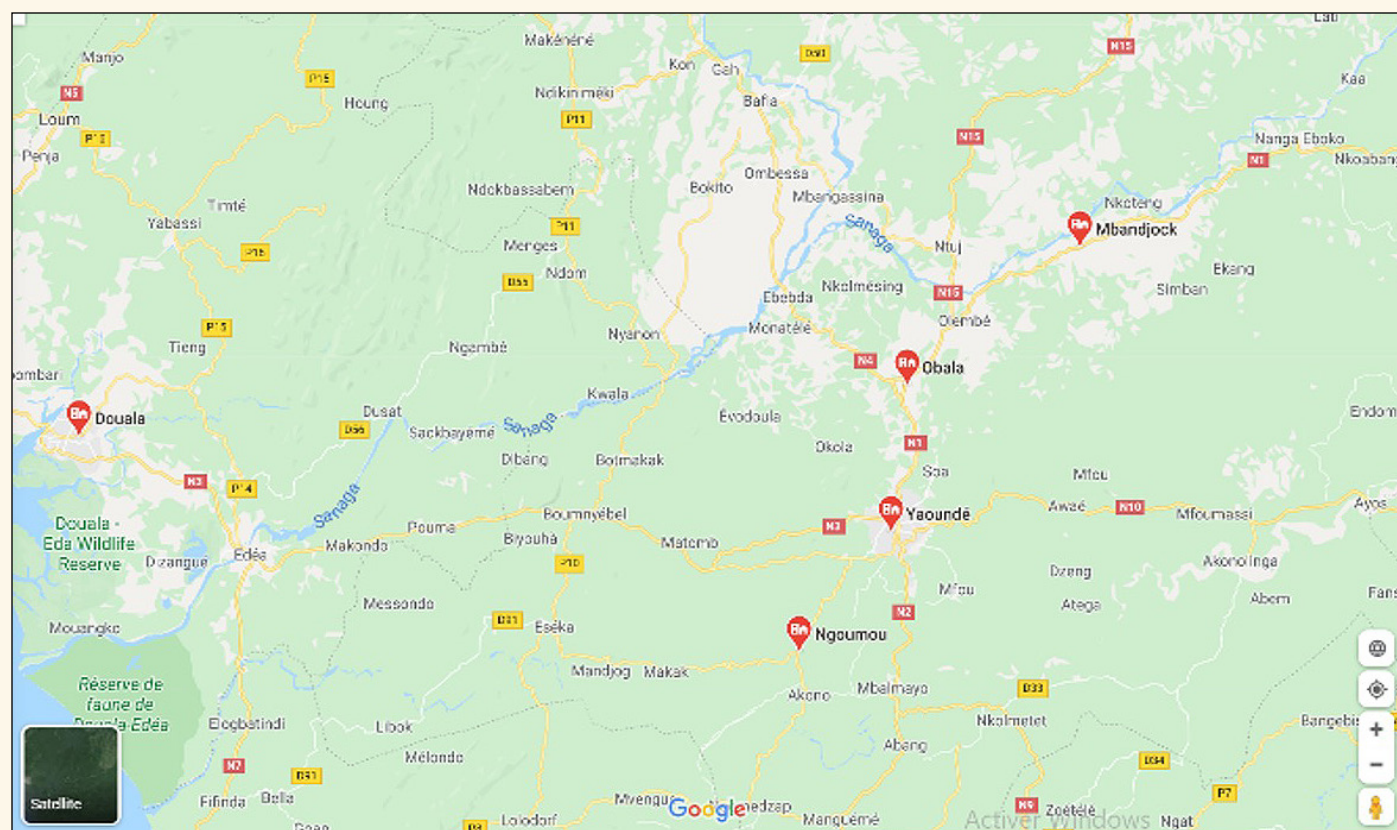
The team used qualitative and quantitative methods including individual interviews, focus-group discussions, visual observations, and documentation review. Interviews with farmers and workers helped build an understanding of the worker recruitment process, working conditions, age-verification process, presence of underage workers, tasks performed, and knowledge, practices, and attitude

toward child labor. Interviews with relevant community members aided collection of contextual information on social norms toward education and child labor.

**3. Data aggregation and analysis:** The team collated and analyzed data from sources including:

- a. Analysis of supplier's internal management system and CLMRS roll out.
- b. Analysis of labor issues with focus on child labor.
- c. Analysis of the knowledge, attitude, and practices on child labor in the visited communities and the cocoa households.

## Figure 2: LOCATION OF THE VISITED CITIES AND COMMUNITIES





**TABLE 1: VISITED COOPERATIVES AND SAMPLE SIZE**

Area	Location	Organization	Program	Year	Number of		Total Interviews conducted during the assessment				
District/ Department/ Sub prefect	Community	Office or Cooperative	Sustainability or Certification	Established	Communities per cooperative	Producers in the cooperative	Farmers	Workers	Community stake- holders	Supply chain actors	IMS/ Manage- ment
Douala	Douala	Supplier HQ					0	0	0	0	7
Obala	Obala	Supplier Buying Agency	Utz/RA certification since 2015	2007	107	3388 identified, traced, and certified	0	0	0	6	10
M'bandjock	N'joré II	Cooperative 1	None so far	2017	8	108 (91 male 17 female)	17	0	2	4	1
	Mendong-nan						4	3	0	1	0
Obala	Zima	Cooperative 2	UTZ/RA Certification, CLMRS, Coop Academy	2013	11	282 (207 males 75 females) Official paying members were 95	19	0	0	8	3
Ngoumou	Manmenyi	Cooperative 3	Community Project as part of Supplier Sustainability Program	2006	40	450 (419 male 31 female)	9	1	0	2	9
							49	4	2	21	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>						<b>106</b>				

# V. FINDINGS

## I. SUPPLY CHAIN MAPPING

### The cocoa supply chain in Cameroon

is composed of a number of actors. A comprehensive overview of cocoa production in Cameroon, main regulations on child labor and stakeholder mapping is included in Annex 1. For this assessment, FLA identified the following main actors in the cocoa supply chain of Nestlé supplier:

- ▶ **Exporter** (Nestlé supplier)
- ▶ **Agencies** (buying centers)
- ▶ **Cooperatives** (or other farmers' organizations)
- ▶ **Local Buying Agents** (direct and independent)
- ▶ **Cocoa Producers or Farmers**

**Exporter:** The assessed supplier accounts for 27 percent of the total cocoa exports (approximately 275,000 tons<sup>21</sup>) from Cameroon.<sup>22,23</sup> A local Cameroon-based supplier is headquartered in Douala, Bonabery quarters and was established in 2000. In 2011, the Cameroon supplier partnered with a U.S. based agri-business company, to establish a joint venture in Cameroon<sup>24</sup> (Nestlé's supplier, hereafter called "supplier").

Nestlé's supplier sources cocoa beans from its own buying centers or agencies, local buying agents, and farmers' organizations through two systems (Box 1), and supplies beans to its processing units or to other processors (buyers). To collect cocoa from the producers, the supplier operates one central warehouse in Douala and 19 buying centers (agencies), in five of Cameroon's seven cocoa producing regions (Table 2).

### Box 1: COCOA IS PURCHASED THROUGH TWO SYSTEMS

**Market System:** Under this system, cocoa producers and their organizations gather their harvest and plan a market day to sell to the potential buyers. The buyers could include exporters buying centers, traders, and local buyers, who make their offers. The best bid in terms of pricing and honoring the commitment to transport beans, wins the sale. This system is encouraged by local officials as it offers more liberty to the producers to negotiate price with the buyers.

**Direct System:** Under this system, the cocoa producers market their crops individually and directly to the buyers. This choice is often made based on poor experiences with farmers' organizations, urgent financial need, debt that binds farmers to the buyers, or services they receive from the buyers.

**Agency or Buying Centers:** These are regional offices set up by the supplier where they directly hire people. The agencies (buying centers) serve as a collection point in the localities. The supplier has established 19 agencies in five of the seven cocoa producing regions of Cameroon. The agencies serve as regional branches that collect cocoa beans

21 The top 10 cocoa producing countries in 2019 order of volume are: Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Indonesia, Nigeria, Cameroon, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, Dominican Republic, Colombia. [http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#rankings/countries\\_by\\_commodity](http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#rankings/countries_by_commodity)

22 <https://www.businessincameroon.com/agriculture/2708-8280-cameroon-three-traders-alone-accounted-for-56-of-cocoa-exports-in-2017-18> Nestlé's assessed supplier plans to boost sustainable farming and increase cocoa exports by 30% to 100,000 tones.

23 The civil unrest in the southwest part of country, which was the supplier's main sourcing location, reduced the supplier's activities in that region but did not alter its lead market position.

24 <https://www.reuters.com/article/cocoa-cameroon-cargill/cargills-cameroon-venture-targets-100000-t-of-cocoa-purchases-in-2018-19-idUSL8N1P5535>

**TABLE 2: LOCATIONS OF SUPPLIER'S CENTRAL WAREHOUSE AND 19 BUYING CENTERS**

	Cocoa producing regions	Number of Buying Centers	Locations
1	The Littoral	1	Douala (Central Warehouse)
2	Southwest	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Muyenga</li> <li>• Moyuka</li> <li>• Mbonge</li> <li>• Kumba</li> <li>• Konye</li> <li>• Bachu</li> <li>• Tombel</li> <li>• Mgussi</li> </ul>
3	Centre	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obala (<i>FLA visited this region</i>)</li> <li>• Ntui</li> <li>• Mbagassina</li> <li>• Talba</li> <li>• Makenene</li> <li>• Bokito</li> <li>• Bot Makak</li> <li>• Bafia</li> </ul>
4	South	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sang Melema</li> <li>• Ebolowa</li> </ul>
5	East	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yokadouma</li> </ul>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>20</b> (19+1 Central Warehouse)	

from cooperatives, farmers' organizations, direct or independent local buying agents, or directly from farmers and send them to its central warehouse in Douala. The FLA team visited one of the 19 agencies in Obala that was set up in 2007. It employs 25 workers, including five permanent and 20 temporary workers. It sources cocoa beans from 18 cooperatives and 43 local buyers including 28 direct local buyers and 15 independent local buyers. The agency covers 111 villages and is Utz/RA certified since 2015.

**Cooperatives:** These are farmers' organizations<sup>25</sup> that gather several cocoa producers who by choice work together so that they have leverage to negotiate better price during the market days. The

supplier works with 227 cooperatives under 12 agencies, including 18 cooperatives that are linked to the Obala agency from which 12 were supplying Nestlé at the time of the assessment.

<sup>25</sup> The Farmers' Organizations are groups of farmers who have agreed to come together to negotiate better prices for their beans. In most cases, they convene based on geographical location. These groups can take various forms:

**CIGs:** Common Initiative Groups are grassroots organizations that gather small number of farmers in a geographic area who work together on economic activities. CIGs collect the cocoa beans of their members and deliver to the Unions of CIG or to cooperatives.

**Unions of CIGs:** Medium-sized groups that gather several CIGs and cover a wide geographic area.

**Federation of CIGs:** Umbrella organizations of Unions of CIGs grouped together at the department or regional level. By forming a federation, CIGs have the framework to solve challenges for their members such as market access, access to finance, etc.

**Cooperatives:** Bring together a set of Unions of CIGs.

Female and male farmers can be members of a CIG, Union of CIG, or cooperative without restriction. These organizations come together in a National Association of Coffee and Cocoa Producers. See Annex 1 for more information.



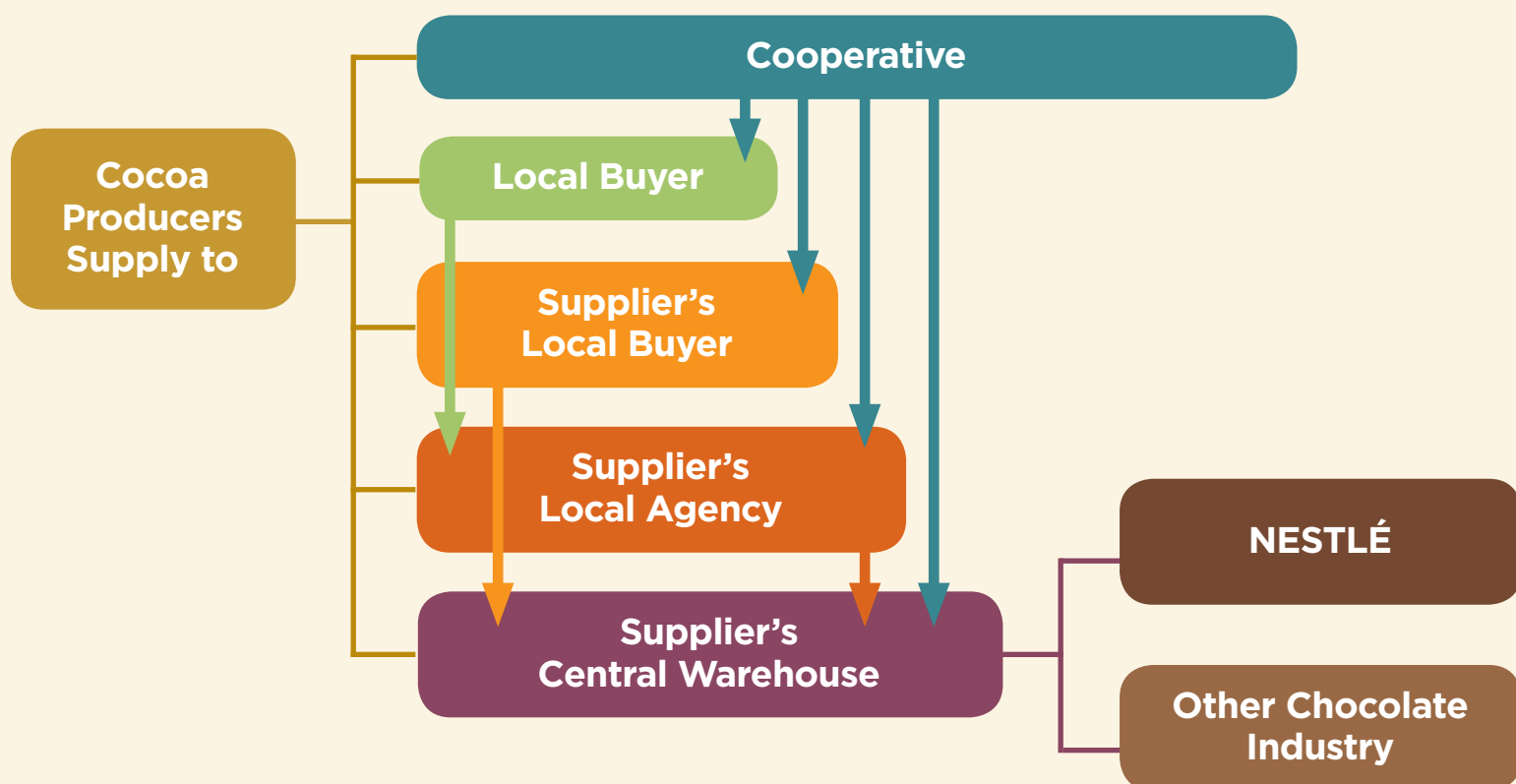
**Local Buying Agents (LBAs):** These are registered local individuals who buy and sell cocoa. There are two types of LBA. There are individuals who have financial means to buy cocoa beans and sell to the buyer of their choice. They are called independent LBAs. The second type are persons mandated by an agency or directly by the exporter to purchase cocoa beans in the communities. The supplier provides cash advances obliging them to sell their cocoa to the supplier. They are called direct LBAs.

**Cocoa Producers or Farmers:** The Nestlé supplier engages with 51,180 traced cocoa producers in Cameroon.<sup>26</sup> For this assessment, the base group comprised 2,368 cocoa farmers supplying to Nestlé

through 12 cooperatives linked to the Obala agency (six cooperatives under Obala agency are not yet included in the Nestlé program). No company owns or operates cocoa farms directly. Farmers grow cocoa on their own or family land and deliver to various buyers. Any company can buy from any producer and any producer can sell to any buyer (open market). No company can claim that it has an exclusive supply chain, including Nestlé's supplier, who is making efforts to gain the loyalty of the cocoa suppliers by working through the cooperatives.

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.businessfrance.fr/cameroun-telcar-cocoa-1er-exportateur-de-feves-a-achete-43-700-tonnes-de-cacao-certifie-en-2016-2017-soit-plus-de-50-de-ses-expeditions>

**Figure 3: STRUCTURE OF NESTLÉ'S CAMEROON COCOA SUPPLY CHAIN**



## II. PROFILE OF ASSESSED COOPERATIVES

### a. Cooperative 1 in Mbandjock

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**Cooperative 1** is headquartered in Mbandjock<sup>27</sup>. It collects beans from its members and transports them to the marketplace. The management<sup>28</sup> checks the best price offered by the buyers and communicates it to its members. Post-sale, the cooperative retains 50 FCFA (about US\$ 0.08)<sup>29</sup> per kilo of the cocoa sale to fund the following activities:

- ▶ **15 FCFA per kilo for the functioning of the cooperative board** (mandatory)
- ▶ **20 FCFA per kilo for agrochemical products** (not compulsory for producers to pay this money, if they don't pay, they will not receive the benefit from this service)
- ▶ **15 FCFA per kilo for children schooling fees** (not compulsory for producers to pay this money, if they don't pay, they will not receive the benefit from this service)

The initial set-up and registration cost of the cooperative is about USD 20, contributed by the potential members equally. Once registered the cooperative membership fee is about USD 4. It was reported that during the last harvest, of the total volume, 99.97% came from male cocoa producers and 0.03%

from female producers, even though the female cocoa producers make up 20% of the membership. This needs further investigation to determine if the cause is the size of the women's plots or there are other factors. The cooperative maintained information about each producer and the quantity. Cooperative 1 was not certified at the time of the visit and was one of the 17 cooperatives in the CLMRS pilot.

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27 Assessors visited two communities in Mbandjock about 51 kilometers from Obala. It has eight sections. The village of Ndjoré II was established in 1976. It has 6,000 residents and is located in Mbandjock, in Haute-Sanaga department in the Centre. It is 51 kilometers from Obala on the road connecting Yaoundé to Bertoua. The Ministry of Planning manages the village. It is populated by six ethnic groups: Eton, Anglophone, North people, Malien, Bamoun, Bafia. The village does not have one chief; a group of the heads of the various ethnic groups meet and decide on plans. The village has one nursery with two classes and one primary school with six classes since 1994. There are three private clinics, but no public health center. The nearest public health center is seven kilometers away in Njoré I. A public hospital is under construction. Malaria is a main health issue. The village has one water pump that does not adequately serve all the residents. In the event of a breakdown, a contribution of FCFA 500 per household is raised to cover maintenance costs. The second community visited in Mbandjock is Mendong-nan. It is a cluster of several agricultural camps located about seven kilometers from Mbandjock, on the other side the Sanaga River. There is no school, no potable water and no health center. For such needs, residents must travel to Mbandjock. Producers face challenges in transporting their products due to poor road conditions. Also, they must cross the Sanaga River in canoes, a trip that is costly and dangerous.

28 The cooperative management board is comprised of president, vice president, general secretary, treasurer, local presidents/administrators (eight people, one person per section). The cooperative holds an annual general assembly to renew its board members. The participants in the general assembly are local office members and members of the central board.

29 Exchange rate at the time of the assessment US\$ 1= FCFA 580.

### b. Cooperative 2 in Zima

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**Cooperative 2** is based in Zima<sup>30</sup>. Zima is composed of three communities (Zima 1, 2, 3) that supply cocoa beans to Cooperative 2. It had 282 producers including 207 males and 75 females. Among these producers, 95 (83 males and 12 females) were official paying

members (about USD 20 for the social part and about USD 6 for registration).

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30 Zima is located about 10 kms from Obala and has about 800 inhabitants. It is governed by a village chief and 14 assistants representing family groups. Zima has a primary school with six classes and four village water pumps. The nearest health center is five kilometers away; some children living in the camps walk three kilometers to attend school.

The cooperative collects cocoa beans from the producers. Each sector maintains a list of the producers and the quantity. Both sector and producer name are written on the cocoa bag so that the owner can be identified during the market day. Nestlé's supplier sends trucks to collect the cocoa beans from the cooperative. The supplier does not provide any funds to the cooperative but pays an advance when the cooperative communicates a promised tonnage. Post-sale, the cooperative management puts a levy of FCFA 140 per kilogram per producer:

- ▶ **FCFA 60 for agrochemicals**
- ▶ **FCFA 15 for the cooperative operation**
- ▶ **FCFA 20 for the sector operation**
- ▶ **FCFA 25 for personal saving**
- ▶ **FCFA 20 for marketing charges**

At the time of the visit, Cooperative 2 was participating in three active sustainability programs of the supplier (RA/Utz certification since 2016, Coop Academy since 2017, and CLMRS since November 2019).

### c. Cooperative 3 in Manmenyi

**Cooperative 3** is headquartered in Ngoumou<sup>31</sup>. It was created in 2006 and had 450 producers including 419 male and 31 female. During 2019, only 100 producers were reported to be active, including 85 male and 15 female. The cooperative collected cocoa beans from the producers and managed the traceability and the supervision of its producers. The cooperative had collection points in various sections. Each producer is required to transport their product from the farm to these collection points. Cooperative 3 management sensitizes

farmers on the functioning and the maintenance of the internal management system. FLA assessors had to cut short the visit to this cooperative given the movement restrictions orders of the government of Cameroon due to COVID-19 on March 17, 2020. Hence, the team was unable to collect more information from this cooperative.

<sup>31</sup> The village of Manmenyi is located in the district of Ngoumou, in the department of Méfou-et-Akono. Most of the population belongs to the Etenga ethnic group. In this community, cocoa is the main income crop. The village has neither a source of potable water nor a school. The nearest health center is located in Akok-bekoé, about 1.5 kilometers away.

## III. SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

The current focus of the supplier's sustainability effort is on improving productivity and living conditions of the producers. There are three main programs, with the FLA's focus being on the third of these:

- a. Rain Forest Alliance-Utz Certification**
- b. Coop Academy**
- c. Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System**

### a. RA/Utz Certification

Nestlé's supplier has engaged in the RA/Utz certification program<sup>32</sup> since 2011 in Cameroon. Between 2011 and 2019, 51,180 cocoa producers

participated in the certification program.

<sup>32</sup> <https://utz.org/what-we-offer/certification/products-we-certify/cocoa/>



From 2016 to 2017, the supplier purchased 43,700 tons of certified cocoa and distributed premium worth about USD 4,400 to about 15,000 certified producers.<sup>33</sup> The certification program is geared toward agencies as opposed to individual cooperatives or farmers. For an agency's certification, it needs to declare a certain number of producers from its supplier cooperatives and conduct annual inspection and remediation activities in its supplier base.

## b. Coop Academy

The Coop Academy is part of the supplier's global sustainability program.<sup>34</sup> First launched in Côte d'Ivoire in 2013 in partnership with the International Finance Cooperation (IFC), the Coop Academy is an abbreviated-MBA program for Farmers' Organizations' Managers<sup>35</sup>, who post-training can disseminate information to other farmers and assist the better management of their organization. By 2020, 560 farmers (managers) from 140 farmer organizations participated in the Coop Academy in Côte d'Ivoire and Cameroon.<sup>36</sup> The Coop Academy was launched in March 2016. The four-year objective was to reach 900 managers from 227 farmer organizations, eventually benefiting 50,000 farmers.<sup>37</sup> By 2020, the Coop Academy covered 227 cooperatives and benefited 51,180 cocoa

In 2019, the supplier had 11 certified agencies that covered 46,773 certified producers, including 3,388 from the Obala agency. Among those suppliers, 2,368 were members of the 12 cooperatives from which Nestlé sourced (41% of the total certified volume).

33 <https://www.businessfrance.fr/cameroun-telcar-cocoa-1er-exportateur-de-feves-a-achete-43-700-tonnes-de-cacao-certifie-en-2016-2017-soit-plus-de-50-de-ses-expeditions>

producers' households in 1,067 communities in four cocoa producing regions in Cameroon.

34 The sustainability program of the supplier aims to build positive change in cocoa communities globally by improving farmer and community livelihoods through alternative sources of income, an ecosystem of social services, encompassing training and coaching, environmental protection, technology and innovation, and the value of partnerships. The supplier estimates that the wellbeing of the cocoa farmers' family and communities depends on both their income from cocoa and the broader resilience of their households. About 350,000 people in Cameroon have benefitted from access to potable water. More information: <https://www.cargill.com/sustainability/cocoa/sustainable-cocoa> and <https://www.cargill.com/static/cocoa-sustainability/en/index.html#page=14>

35 Endorsed by the government, it combines 28-days of intensive classroom training with a year of personalized on-the-ground coaching. The aim is to help farmers develop their financial and management knowledge and skills to enable them to improve their business operations and support long-term success through the growth of their cooperatives.

36 <https://www.cargill.com/story/cargill-coop-academy> In September 2019, the supplier and IFC renewed their partnership, allowing the introduction of new initiatives to strengthen cocoa producing cooperatives and their communities, including Coop Academy 2.0. This plan was to add 40 additional cooperatives to the academy, bringing the total to 120 reached through training and tools focused on improving their cocoa business and sustainability, and increasing profitability. <https://www.cargill.com/2019/cargill-and-ifc-announce-coop-academy-2.0-to-empower-cocoa>

37 <https://www.cargill.com/story/professionalizing-cocoa-farming-organizations-through-the-car...>

## c. Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System (CLMRS)

The CLMRS, part of the broader Nestlé Cocoa Plan<sup>38</sup>, is designed to prevent, identify and address child labor. It seeks to address root causes of child labor, such as lack of education infrastructure, shortages in the labor force, and poverty, through a series of focused interventions.

Activities such as promotion of gender equality and tackling child labor (through identification, raising awareness, and providing remediation) help farmers to improve the quality of their products as well

38 <https://www.Nestlécocoaplan.com/>

as their income and livelihoods.<sup>39</sup> CLMRS activities are built around six steps (Box 2).<sup>40,41</sup>

Nestlé's supplier incorporated the CLMRS<sup>42</sup> in its sustainability program in Cameroon in 2019 and conducted the following three activities.

**Activity 1: Introduction of the CLMRS to relevant stakeholders:** ICI presented CLMRS to the representatives of Nestlé's supplier in Douala and Obala including the General Director, leaders of 17 cooperatives, the Deputy Ministry of Agriculture, UTZ/RA, and the sub-prefect of the Obala district<sup>43</sup>.

**Activity 2: Inform farmers and communities about CLMRS:** Fourteen communities (about 500 farmers) in the Obala agency were informed about CLMRS to obtain commitment and cooperation.

**Activity 3: Adapt the CLMRS and data collection tools to the Cameroonian context:** Considering the local conditions, existing sustainability activities, and national legislation on child labor<sup>44</sup>, the

## Box 2: CLMRS STEPS

**STEP 1: Home and farm visits:** Community liaison people (CLP) visit the cocoa households and farms of all the cooperative members to raise awareness of child labor and conduct surveys.

**STEP 2: Identification:** A CLP identifies the children at risk of doing hazardous work. The definition used to define child labor is a person under the minimum age of work performing hazardous work. The same definition is used as a proxy for child labor.

**STEP 3: Database:** The information is entered into database via a mobile app.

**STEP 4: Follow-up:** The situation is discussed with children to assess the causes of child labor to identify the most suitable intervention.

**STEP 5: Remediation:** Assistance is provided to the child, family, or community as appropriate. The CLP visits the family on a regular basis to check if the child has stopped performing hazardous work.

**STEP 6: Measurement:** Effectiveness is measured, i.e., how many children have stopped doing hazardous work.

supplier and ICI adapted CLMRS where most activities were led by the supplier. Details are presented in Table 3.

39 <https://www.Nestlé.com/csv/raw-materials/Nestlé-cocoa-plan>

40 <https://www.Nestlé.com/sites/default/files/2019-12/Nestlé-tackling-child-labor-report-2019-en.pdf>

41 Nestlé 2019 Tackling Child Labor report on CLMRS in Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana highlighted monitoring 78,580 children ages 5–17, with 18,283 identified as child labor performing hazardous work (23%), and 15,740 children who benefited from at least one form of remediation. Nestlé encourages its supplier to have a CLMRS. <https://www.Nestlé.com/sites/default/files/2019-12/Nestlé-tackling-child-labor-report-2019-en.pdf>

42 <https://www.cargill.com/static/cocoa-sustainability/en/index.html#page=8>

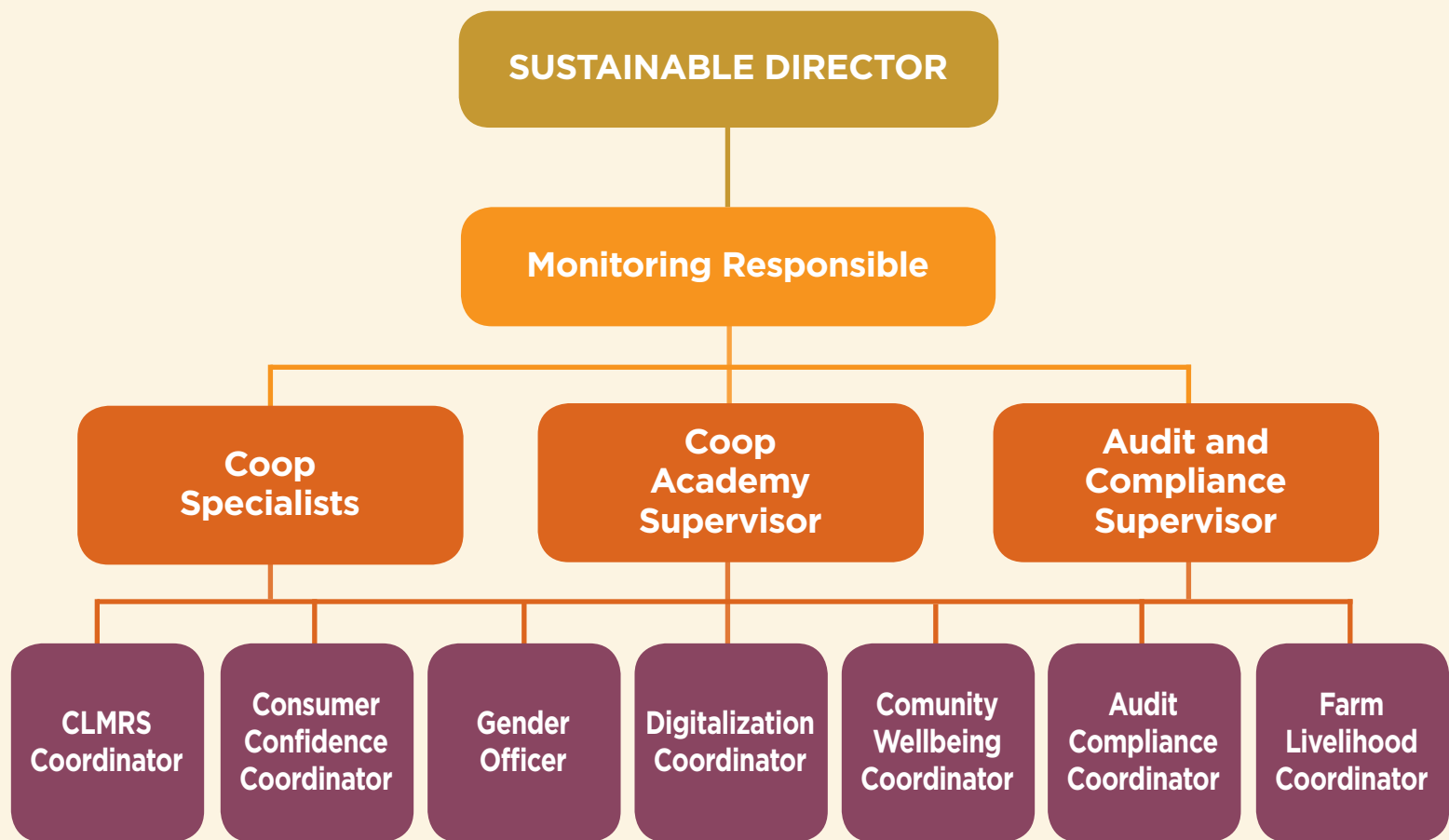
43 The child labor issue is less researched and known in Cameroon, according to interviews. The assessment team was sensitive about presenting the concept to get stakeholder buy-in.

44 <http://www.dol.gov/ilab/media/reports/iclp/tda2005/tda2005.pdf>

# IV. SUSTAINABILITY TEAM STRUCTURE

The supplier’s sustainability team is organized as follows (Figure 4).

Figure 4: STRUCTURE OF SUPPLIER’S SUSTAINABILITY TEAM IN CAMEROON



The Sustainability Director heads the overall department work and is assisted by Monitoring Responsible. The Monitoring Responsible supervises eight Project Coordinators. Each Project Coordinator is responsible for a specific portfolio:

- 1. Farm Livelihood Coordinator
- 2. Audit Compliance Coordinator
- 3. Community Wellbeing Coordinator
- 4. Digitalization Coordinator
- 5. Coop Academy Coordinator
- 6. Gender Officer

- 7. Consumer Confidence Coordinator
- 8. CLMRS Coordinator

At agency there was one Audit and Compliance Supervisor, one Coop Academy Supervisor, one Verifier, and a few Coop Specialists. The same field agents were used for all sustainability program activities (certification, Coop Academy, and CLMRS). The CLMRS team structure is presented in Figure 5. By the end of 2020, 5,076 farmers in 140 communities were monitored by the CLMRS.



**Figure 5: CLMRS IMPLEMENTATION STAFF**



## V. INTERNAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (IMS) EVALUATION

The FLA team assessed and benchmarked the supplier's internal management system (IMS) to implement the CLMRS against the FLA standard, the [Principles of Fair Labor and Responsible Sourcing](#).

**TABLE 3: IMS EVALUATION OF SUPPLIER'S INTERNAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM RELATED TO THE CLMRS ROLLOUT**

	FLA Principles	Efforts of Nestlé's Supplier and ICI	Areas of Improvement
1	Labor Standards	<p>Company has developed and published a supplier code of conduct with inclusion of child labor clause<sup>45</sup>.</p> <p>The CLMRS defines hazardous task based on national decree on child labor in Cameroon, international conventions, and list of hazardous and light work in the cocoa sector in the subregion (specifically in the Ivory Coast and Ghana where the legal environment is specific to the cocoa sector). In addition, based on the international legislation ratified by the government of Cameroon, CLMRS provided a definition of child labor and hazardous work.</p>	Supplier code is not aligned with Nestlé's code of conduct and the FLA Code of Conduct.

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.cargill.com/about/supplier-code-of-conduct>

2	<b>Company Staff and Implementing Partner Training and Goal Setting</b>	<p>The supplier is in the process of establishing a CLMRS structure and team. A trained ICI staff member has temporarily relocated to Cameroon to facilitate the set up.</p> <p>In collaboration with ICI and the supplier sustainability team, child labor awareness and sensitization tools (image box, awareness poster, leaflet) have been adapted and updated to the Cameroon context.</p> <p>Data Collection Officers (86: one general supervisor, one group facilitator, 73 farmer coaches and 12 supervisors) were trained on the worst forms of child labor, children's rights and duties, parental duties, hazardous work, light work, interview techniques for producers and children, sensitization tools and techniques, and data collection tools.</p> <p>Interviews with these officers reflected their awareness of the concepts and their role in the process.</p>	<p>CLMRS has some monitoring targets for household data collection and some output indicators. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One annual (refresher) training on CLMRS for all cooperatives/Supplier staff</li> <li>• One individual awareness on child labor and hazardous task for all farmer where child labor cases has been identified</li> <li>• Two community awareness sessions on child labor per year.</li> </ul> <p>Further outcome indicators need to be established to assist in evaluation of the performance (impact) of the program overtime.<sup>46</sup> For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total number of workers and children who attend the trainings</li> </ul>
3	<b>Supplier Training</b>	<p>Fourteen communities in Obala (500 farmers) were informed about CLMRS to obtain their cooperation.</p> <p>Fifty-six cooperative leaders and facilitators from 17 cooperatives and the Obala agency were trained on child labor, the importance of CLMRS, and the role of leaders in CLMRS implementation.</p>	<p>Some interviewed producers and cooperative management are not clear about what constitutes hazardous work for children.</p> <p>The cocoa producers had not received awareness building training on other labor standards covering topics such as employment contracts, wages, hours of work, health and safety, forced labor, etc., even though 18% of the producers engage hired workers on their farms.</p> <p>Given that all producers use agrochemicals, the FLA team focused on understanding if producers have been trained in agrochemical usage. The findings are as follows:</p> <p>At Cooperative 1, 70% of the producers mentioned that they have never benefited from a training.</p> <p>At Cooperative 2, 45% of the producers reported not receiving training. (The cooperative has three active sustainability programs, RA/Utz certification since 2016, Coop Academy since 2017, and CLMRS since 2019).</p> <p>At Cooperative 3, 56% of the producers have not received broad health and safety training, only on agrochemical treatment. (The cooperative is certified.)</p>

<sup>46</sup> One of the lessons learned from the assessment of Nestlé's CLMRS program in the Ivory Coast conducted by FLA was that to evaluate a program against its goals, it is important to incorporate a goal setting exercise as the program is set up in a new country or region. The activity could include a set of output and outcome indicators against which the progress of the program can be measured.

4	<b>Functioning Grievance Mechanism</b>	<p>A grievance mechanism provided by the supplier exists at the agency and cooperative levels where producers can report their grievances.</p>	<p>The existence of the grievance mechanism is not sufficiently communicated and known to the producers.</p> <p>The supplier grievance mechanism does not currently cover the workers employed at the farms. The only grievance mechanism available to workers is the community-level grievance mechanism.</p>
5	<b>Monitoring</b>	<p>Adaptation of the ICI child labor data collection form to the local context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locality (Fa)</li> <li>• Overview of the Farmer's Household (Fb)</li> <li>• Farm Visit (Fc)</li> <li>• Child Worker Monitoring (Fd)</li> <li>• Community and Proximity Sensitization (Fe)</li> </ul> <p>With the support of the monitoring and evaluation team of ICI Abidjan, the supplier conducted a knowledge, attitude, and practices baseline survey among 560 producers.</p> <p>Partnership with local a civil society organization to perform a child labor focused assessment.</p> <p>Household profiling in the framework of CLMRS to identify child labor prevalence.</p>	<p>Given that the agency is certified, the certification body's code of conduct requires that the agency carry out at least one annual assessment on all the producers' farms to ensure that the producers are meeting the certification requirements. Most producers including those of certified cooperatives did not receive an assessment. Certification notwithstanding, the agency does not have a system in place to monitor the farms supplying it.</p> <p>Cooperative 1 currently does not have any sustainability program. None of the producers reported any assessment visit until the FLA visit.</p> <p>At Cooperative 2 (certified), 65% of producers reported no assessment in 2019.</p> <p>At Cooperative 3 (certified), 67% of producers reported no assessment in 2019.</p> <p>At the farm level, 18% of producers hire workers. There is no system in place to profile the workers on the farms and monitor their working conditions.</p> <p>Written employment contracts seldom exist at the farm. Without these it is difficult to understand the terms of engagement with workers.</p>
6	<b>Collection and Management of Compliance Information</b>	<p>The supplier's data collection system (Source Trace) was adapted to allow for CLMRS data collection and storage.</p> <p>Three data collection phases are defined:</p> <p><b>Phase I (December 2019 – February 2020):</b> Collection of locality data (Fa), household data from each farmer (Fb), identification and monitoring of child workers (Fd) and sensitization in each household. Phase I data collection started on December 20, 2019 and was scheduled to be completed by February 20, 2020. About 5,100 farmers were visited including all Nestlé producers (2,368).</p> <p><b>Phase II (March 2020):</b> Community sensitization was delayed due to COVID-19 related movement restrictions.</p> <p><b>Phase III (April – May 2020):</b> Farm visits. Coordination meetings were held with all supervisors and partial debriefing meetings on data collection with all coaches and supervisors.</p>	<p>The data processing on the information collected through the CLMRS had not started at the time of the FLA visit. The type of data analysis undertaken will be reviewed in subsequent assessments.</p>



7	<b>Timely and Preventative Remediation</b>	<p>The supplier's sustainability program and CLMRS was in the process of including prevention and remediation of child labor.</p>	<p>While awareness raising interventions had started, other remedial activities had not started at the time of the visit. The plan was to initiate remediation activities in Cameroon in the fourth quarter of 2020. FLA will verify child labor remediation in future visits.</p> <p>The agency was certified and required to develop remediation plans based on the CLMRS. The role and responsibility of the agency and types of remediation activities to be undertaken were not clear to interviewed producers.</p>
8	<b>Responsible Procurement Practices</b>	<p>Traceability efforts have been established to map producers. All the producers supplying to Nestlé are traceable.</p> <p>Introduction of a certification program in supplier's agencies.</p>	<p>None of the three assessed cooperatives have a formal written contract with the supplier.</p> <p>At Cooperative 2, 40% of the interviewed producers did not have a contract with the supplier. They supplied non-certified cocoa to the cooperative.</p> <p>At Cooperative 3, 44% of the interviewed producers did not have a contract with the cooperative.</p> <p>At Cooperative 1, no producer had a written contract with the cooperative or the supplier. The cooperative registered the personal information of its members in a file.</p> <p>The contractual issue can be explained as the certification program was in progress in the two first cooperatives but not in the third. At the time of the visit, the supplier in charge of Cooperative 1 said that the sustainability activities were about to start with the cooperative.</p>
9	<b>Consultation with Government, and civil society organizations</b>	<p>CLMRS was presented to the supplier's general director, leaders of 17 cooperatives, the Deputy Ministry of Agriculture, UTZ/RA, and the sub-prefect of the Obala district.</p> <p>The supplier had a partnership with the local CSO to conduct a focused assessment on child labor.</p>	<p>Nothing to report.</p>
10	<b>Independent Verification</b>	<p>The roll-out of the CLMRS has been subject to FLA IEA.</p> <p>Annual audits are conducted by the assessors of the certification bodies.</p>	<p>Nothing to report.</p>

## VI. WORKING CONDITIONS EVALUATION

**This section presents the findings from the farm level.** While the emphasis is on the child labor, other gaps in workplace standards identified by the FLA assessment team are reported:



### 1. WORKER PROFILE AND RECRUITMENT PROCESS

During the assessment, the FLA team came across four types of workers in the cocoa farms, including:

1. **Family workers**
2. **Hired casual workers (daily and/or task based)**
3. **Hired annual or seasonal workers, and**
4. **Sharecroppers.**

About 82% of producers interviewed reported that they work with their family members in cocoa, as they did not have the financial means to hire workers. The family workers included a producers' spouse, children, and other relatives (brothers, nephews, cousins, etc.)

Producers who were not able to recruit workers often hired daily and/or task-based workers. Twelve percent of producers

reported that they prefer casual or daily workers. According to the producers, long term workers were less productive, completing the same amount of work over a longer period of time. Secondly, producers had to pay them a monthly salary irrespective of the volume of work. Six percent of producers reported hiring annual/seasonal workers, who worked on the farms for a longer duration of time and undertook several tasks. Most hired workers were recruited in the community or employed based on recommendations by other workers.

Finally, there were sharecroppers where the farmer leased the land to a sharecropper to manage and then split the harvest at the end of the season. During the assessment, the FLA team did not get a chance to meet a sharecropper.



### 2. EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS and



### GRIEVANCE MECHANISMS

**FLA Code of Conduct: Employers shall adopt and adhere to rules and conditions of employment that respect workers and, at a minimum, safeguard their rights under national and international labor and social security laws and regulations.**

*FLA benchmarks cover (1) human resource management systems, (2) recruitment and hiring, (3) terms and conditions,*

*(4) administration, (5) worker involvement, (6) right to organize and bargain, (7) work rules and discipline, (8) access to training for family members, (9) HSE management system, and (10) grievance procedures.*

Among the producers at Cooperative 1, none had written contracts with their workers. Even though 29% of the producers mentioned having a written contract with their workers,

none were able to present a copy to FLA. The contracts were mostly verbal agreements between the producer and the worker on the basis of the prevailing market wages and conditions set by the community. A majority of the producers at Cooperative 2 (75%) did not have a written contract with their workers. Among the five producers who had hired workers, two of them had written contracts. At Cooperative 3, no producers had written contracts with their workers.

A lack of written agreements predisposes workers to sub-optimal working conditions. In this assessment, the lack of a written contract is not due to illiteracy. Almost all of the interviewed producers have at least basic education. Therefore, it is anticipated that having only verbal agreements is due to cultural practice and habit. In these cases, a verbal commitment is taken as a proof of signature. The FLA team across one worker where the oral agreement was breached by the employer (Box 3).

### ***Grievance Mechanisms***

The supplier had a grievance mechanism available for the producers who were part of the agency. In case of a grievance, the producer can raise a concern either to the cooperative management or the farmer coach, who would relay the information to the consumer confidence coordinator at the agency. The complainant can also directly approach the consumer confidence coordinator.

Interviews with the producers revealed that not all producers were aware of the grievance mechanism. Producers who were aware only talked to the cooperative management or to the farmer coach because of easy access. None of them knew of an escalation process to the supplier, if the cooperative management or the farmer coach was not responsive.

Based on the interviews with the agency management it can be concluded that the supplier grievance mechanism currently does not cover farm workers. The mechanism was not communicated to the workers and at the agency level there is no process to handle workers' grievances (Box 4). The agency mentioned that they do not cover workers as the cooperative or the agency did not have a direct contract with the workers and the issues should be resolved at the community level. As part of the human rights due diligence framework, it was also agency's responsibility to provide tools and support to the cooperatives and farmers.

It was mentioned that the community members and workers have a community level grievance mechanism for complaints. The community leaders were responsible for resolving a conflict between two parties if it was brought to the attention of the community leaders. To answer questions on the effectiveness and the use of this community-level grievance mechanism, a focused assessment, which was not in scope for this FLA assignment, is required.



### 3. CHILD LABOR

**FLA Code of Conduct: No person shall be employed under the age of 15 or under the age for completion of compulsory education, whichever is higher.**

*FLA benchmarks cover, (1) minimum age for employment, (2) immediate family members, (3) right to education, (4) young workers, (5) apprenticeships and vocational training, (6) children on premises, and (7) removal and rehabilitation of child laborers.*

#### Knowledge, Attitude and Practices

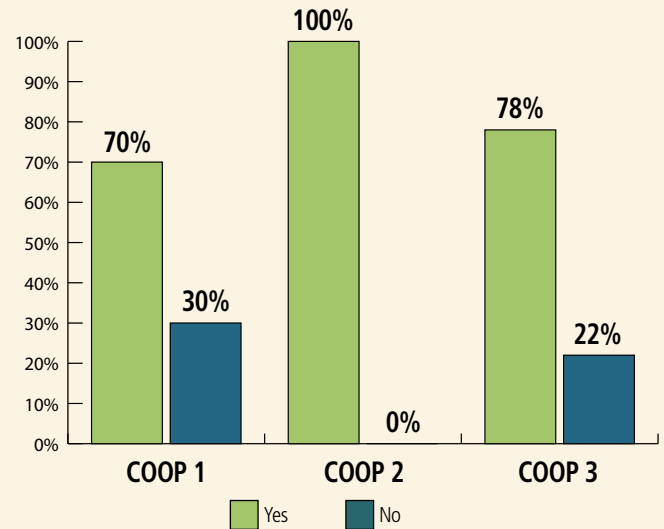
At Cooperative 1, monitors visited two communities, Ndjoré II and Mandong-nan. In these communities, 70% of producers mentioned that they have been informed about child labor. At Cooperative 2, all the interviewed producers reported that they were informed about child labor. At Cooperative 3, 78% of the producers interviewed reported being informed about child labor (Figure 6).

#### Information Sources

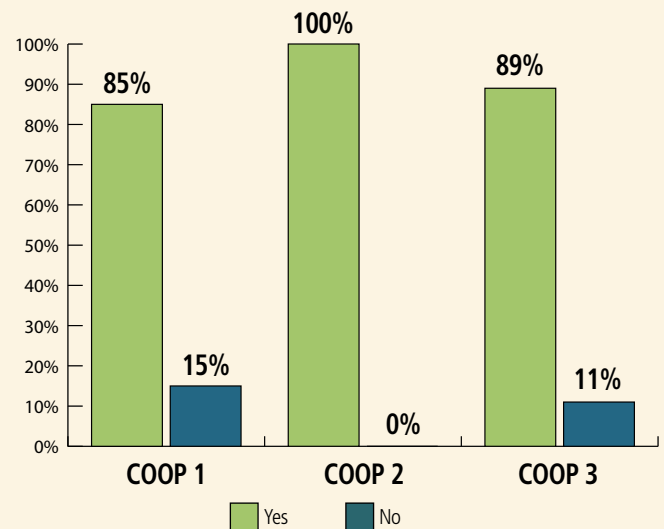
Assessors via interviews identified five sources of child labor information available to the producers and in some cases to workers. The access to these channels varied by cooperative and depended on the sustainability program in which they were participating.

1. **Government awareness campaign** (through mass media, radio and television) — *accessible to all.*
2. **Training from the supplier** as part of the RA/Utz certification program — *only accessible to certified producers.*

**Figure 6: IS THE PRODUCER INFORMED ABOUT CHILD LABOR?**



**Figure 7: DOES THE PRODUCER KNOW THAT THEIR CHILDREN LESS THAN AGE 14 MUST ATTEND SCHOOL?**



3. **Training in the Farmers' Field School** as part of the supplier Sustainability Program that included producers' monitoring and supervision — *only accessible to certified producers.*
4. **CLMRS awareness** — *accessible to producers and workers.*



5. **Other** (cooperative meetings, peer-to-peer through word of mouth, community discussions, etc.) — *available to producers and in some cases to workers.*

At Cooperative 1, among 43% of the interviewed producers, the government awareness message was the main source of information on child labor. Twenty-one percent of producers attributed child labor awareness to a training provided by Agro Produce Management Service<sup>47</sup>. The remaining third mentioned knowing about child labor through other sources. No sustainability program was operating in this cooperative; hence, information is not directly provided by the supplier initiated programs.

At Cooperative 2, the producers mentioned four sources of information, including training by the supplier's supervisors (40%), CLMRS and MINADER's ASPA (Appui aux Stratégies Paysannes et à la Professionnalisation de l'Agriculture) program (15% including five percent through CLMRS), and training sessions at the farmers' farm school (35%). Ten percent of producers named other sources.

At Cooperative 3, the producers reported the main sources of information as training sessions and meetings organized by the cooperative (86%) at their offices, and communication during the meetings of the cooperative members (14%). The FLA team noticed that when the cooperative took lead in awareness building and training, it had better impact on the producers.

Awareness of child labor included knowledge of the age which attending school is compulsory. At Cooperative 1, 85% of the

### Box 3: CHILD LABOR DEFINITIONS IN CAMEROON'S LOCAL LAWS

The Labor Code sets the minimum age for employment at age 14.

The law prohibits youth between the ages of 14 to 18 from moving heavy weights, performing dangerous and unhealthy tasks, and working in confined areas.

The Labor Code specifies that children cannot work in any job that exceeds their physical capacity.

Labor law requires that employers provide training to children between 14 and 18 years.

Under the Labor Code, the Labor Inspectorate may require women and children to be examined by a medical professional to make sure their work does not exceed their physical capacity.

The government does not explicitly prohibit forced or compulsory labor by children.

Under CLMRS, three kinds of child work are defined:

1. **Child socializing work** is an unpaid task performed by a child under the supervision of an adult for the purposes of education and social inclusion, and which is not likely to harm him or her and have a negative impact on school attendance or rest time.
2. **Child labor** is an activity which deprives children of their childhood, harms their physical and mental development, and compromises their education.
3. **Worst forms of child labor** are intolerable, unacceptable, and inherently wrong.

interviewed producers were aware that children under age 14 must attend school. At Cooperative 2, 100% of producers were aware, and at Cooperative 3, 89% of producers were aware of the requirement (Figure 7).

<sup>47</sup> Agro Produce Management Services is an organization that works for the certification of cocoa alongside the Dutch bean trader Theobroma.

Regarding awareness about the minimum age of work, 70% of producers at Cooperative 1 were aware that children under the age 13 should not perform farm work and that the minimum age for employment is 14 years old.

At Cooperative 2, 95% of producers knew that their children under the age of 13 must not work on farms. However, 30% of producers did not know that the minimum age for employment is age 14.

At Cooperative 3, 67% of the interviewed producers knew that children under age 13 must not perform farm work, while 78% were aware that children under 14 years old should not be employed.

### **Cooperatives' Management Knowledge and Reported Practices in the Communities<sup>48</sup>**

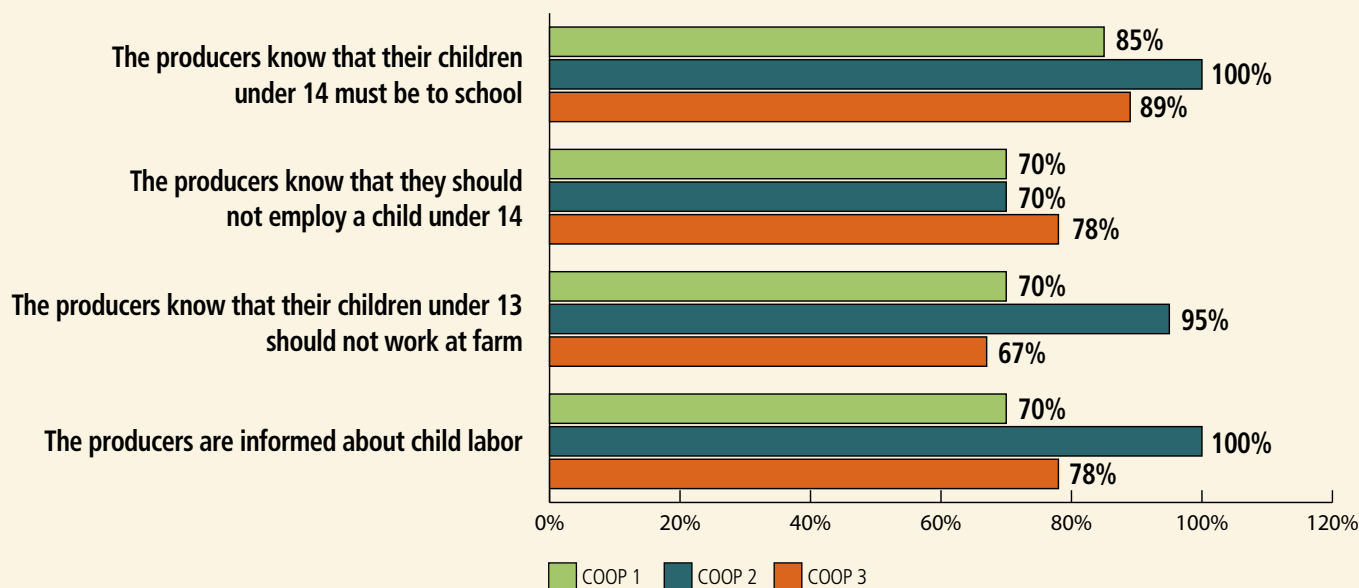
Interviews with Cooperative 1 management highlighted that they attended a child labor

awareness session conducted by the supplier in February 2020. Participants were aware of the government-broadcasted child labor messaging on television and radio. The cooperative management acknowledged that children were involved in cocoa production and that some children perform non-hazardous work based on their physical capabilities. The villages under Cooperative 1, had migrant families from West Africa and Central Africa, who had children working along-side their parents on the cocoa farms.

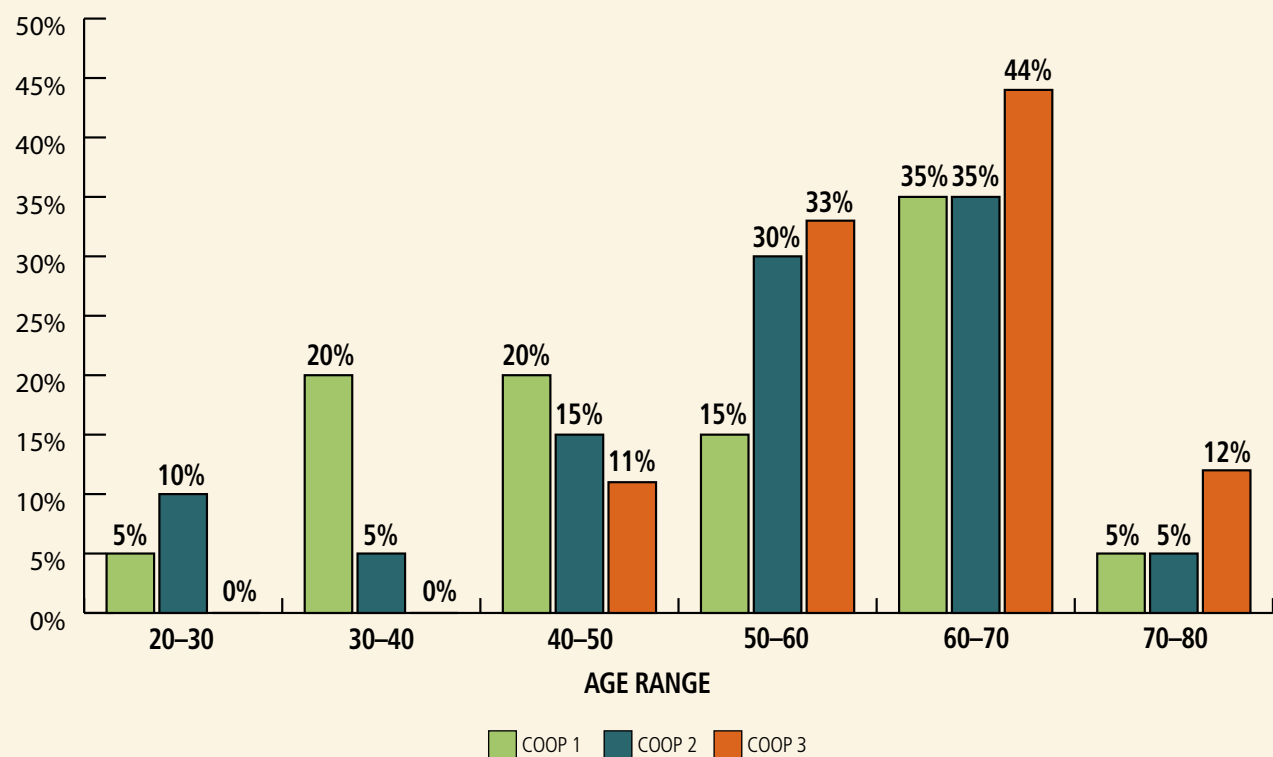
According to Cooperative 2 management interviews, the cocoa producers received farm assessments by the supplier and Ministry of Agriculture. The areas covered during the assessment were good agricultural practices, child labor, and health, safety, and environment. The cooperative management

<sup>48</sup> Information from Cooperative 3 is missing as the FLA Team cut short its assessment visit due to COVID-19-related government mandated control orders.

**Figure 8: COOPERATIVES' KNOWLEDGE OF CHILD LABOR**



**Figure 9: PRODUCERS' AGE**



reported that they learned about child labor through training by the Ministry of Agriculture in 2014 and by a representative of the supplier through training and awareness efforts at the household level in late 2019.

According to the cooperative, children worked based on their will and strength and were not forced to work. From ages 14 to 17, children performed all the tasks that they were able to perform under the supervision of their parents. They reported some tasks continue to be performed by children, some below age 14, such as:

- ▶ **Cocoa pod gathering**
- ▶ **Farm clearing by children from ten years onwards**
- ▶ **Cocoa bean transportation during pod opening, and**
- ▶ **Beans detachment from the placenta.**

The FLA team noted that producers and cooperative management, despite having information on child labor, often had low awareness and an attitude that any work that a child can perform based on their physical capability is acceptable. Producers believed that their children should learn the work in case they do not succeed at school. In such cases, they believe the children can undertake cocoa farming to support their parents and take over the farms as the parents age. Seventy-one percent of producers interviewed were over 50 years old, and most between ages 60 and 70 (Figure 9). The youngest producer was 25 years old and the oldest was age 78. The producers said they believed that if they let their children grow up without making them work, children will either become lazy or thieves.

The FLA team did not encounter any child labor in the visited cocoa farms<sup>49</sup> and noted that most children from the interviewed households attend school. According to the interviews, 96% of the 212 school age children identified in the visited households attended school. The reasons for not attending school included disease (one), refusal to continue education (three), and lack of financial means (three). In two instances, no reason was provided.

In the visited communities, education was highly encouraged and promoted in the households. According to the producers, it is the only means they have for their children to break out of the poverty cycle, have an opportunity at upward mobility, and improve their standard of living. At the cooperative level, a special education levy exists to help

producers save some of their cocoa earnings for their children's education.

The education system in Cameroon supported school attendance in various ways, according to stakeholder interviews. Each of the visited communities had at least one public school. Primary school education has been free since 2000. There is no age limitation to attend school, meaning that regardless of age anyone who wished to learn to read and write can attend a public school starting at the primary level. The FLA team noted that all the interviewed producers, including women, were able to spell their names.

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49 A limitation of this study is that the field-visit took place during a low production period and the COVID 19 outbreak. Hence, many producers were not working, which limited the opportunity for assessors to observe farm-level activities.



#### 4. HARASSMENT AND ABUSE and



#### NON-DISCRIMINATION

**FLA Code of Conduct: Every employee will be treated with respect and dignity. No employee will be subject to any physical, sexual, psychological, or verbal harassment or abuse.**

*FLA benchmarks on harassment and abuse include, (1) discipline, (2) violence, (3) sexual harassment, and (4) security practices.*

**FLA Code of Conduct: No person shall be subject to any discrimination in employment, including hiring, compensation, advancement, discipline, termination, or retirement, based on gender, race, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, political opinion, social group, or ethnic origin.**

*FLA benchmarks on nondiscrimination include, (1) recruitment and employment practices, (2) compensation discrimination, (3) discrimination in access to training and communication, (4) marital or pregnancy-related discrimination, (5) health-related discrimination, and (6) respect of culture and religion.*

The daily management and functioning of the cooperatives were governed by a statute and internal regulations, often based on the code of conduct. The application of these provisions could sometimes give rise to harassment and abuse. According to the cooperative internal regulation, the producer who provided poor quality cocoa beans faced a sanction (e.g., a fee-deduction in the money paid to the



producer by lowering the total volume sold). For example, if a producer delivered 100 kilograms of poor quality cocoa, the cooperative management could decide to pay the producer only for 90 kilograms while keeping the cost per kilogram the same. All producers were aware of these sanctions, and did not see

this as a concern. In all visited cooperatives, a levy was made as described above by the cooperative management. Interviews with producers, including women, highlighted that women producers were free to join the cooperative and independently sell their produce. No gender-based discrimination was noticed.



## 5. FORCED LABOR

**FLA Code of Conduct: There shall not be any use of forced labor, including prison labor, indentured labor, bonded labor, or other forms of forced labor.**

*FLA benchmarks cover (1) freedom in employment and movement, (2) work of family members, (3) personal worker identification, and (4) other documents under forced labor code.*

No one is forced to work, according to interviews with producers, workers, and family members. However, no one agreed that workers were able to end their employment with the producer at will. Indicators of forced labor in cocoa farming were mostly related to direct pressure by threats of withholding wages or indirect pressure by retention of documents to force workers or their family members to work without their consent or outside the terms and conditions of the employment contract (Box 4).

At Cooperative 1, all of the producers with hired workers indicated that the workers were free to end their employment at any stage. At Cooperative 2, one-quarter of the producers with hired workers, communicated their reservations about the unilateral termination of a work contract by a worker. According to the producers, this would be

### Box 4: CASE STUDY, “THEY DID NOT KEEP THE PROMISE.”

The FLA team noticed one case of abuse related to retention of wages, breach of oral agreement and unilateral change of terms and conditions, lack of workers consent, lack of written contract, and worker having no access to grievance mechanism. All of these indicators point toward risk of forced labor.

At Cooperative 3, in the community of Akok-Bekoé, in Manmenyi village, the FLA team interviewed a 68-year-old worker responsible for a cocoa farm of 3.5 ha spread over three sites. The workers were recruited based on an oral agreement where the producer (currently supplying to Nestlé) agreed to pay him FCFA 45000/month (about US\$ 80 per month)\*.

However, after one month, the producer's wife altered the terms of the agreement and paid FCFA 15,000/month, (about US\$ 26.65) with a promise to pay the worker the balance at the end of the campaign because they were not able to pay the initial amount in the transition period.

This decision was made without a discussion or the consent of the worker. The worker was not aware of any place where he could take this grievance and get it resolved.

*\*The legal minimum wage in Cameroon was FCFA 36,270/month (US\$ 64.45).*

an encouragement for workers to no longer respect their commitments.

The producers at Cooperative 3 who had employed a worker, indicated that they are not in favor of workers terminating their contract when they wish. They preferred that the departure of the worker always be negotiated and agreed to with the producer.

Most of the contracts in the assessed communities were oral, which specified only broader provisions like type of work to be undertaken, start date, end-date, compensation, and sanctions in the case of misconduct. Details such as a notice period or contract termination were seldom discussed.

Many workers were paid upon completion of an activity or at the end of a time-period (usually monthly). Workers said they feared they would lose their compensation for the time they already worked if they were to exit midway through the engagement. The producers reported that if the workers do not work for the entire month, they do not pay for the number of days worked. For example if a worker decides to leave after 20 days of working in the first month he will not be paid at all. FLA identified risk of forced labor that Nestlé should pay attention to going forward. The risks involve lack of contracts, inability to end agreements at will, and wage withholding. Nestlé should monitor for these risk indicators in its ongoing assessments, so that risks can be mitigated.



## 6. FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**FLA Code of Conduct: Employers shall recognize and respect the right of employees to freedom of association and collective bargaining.**

*FLA benchmarks cover (1) right to freely associate, (2) anti-union behavior, (3) protection of union representatives, (4) employer interference, (5) collective bargaining, and (6) right to strike.*

According to the interviews, workers were free to join associations. In Zima, the team

met with the president of an informal workers' association. He reported that all young girls and boys in the community could join any association. The workers' association was established out of the recognition of a recurring need in the community. The costs of the services were fixed per task based on prevailing community practices and discussions with the producer who was requesting the labor service. The FLA team did not come across any cases of violation of this code provision.



## 7. HOURS OF WORK

**FLA Code of Conduct: Employers shall not require workers to work more than the regular and overtime hours allowed by the law of the country where the workers are**

**employed. The regular workweek shall not exceed 48 hours. Employers shall allow workers at least 24 consecutive hours of rest in every seven-day period. All overtime**

**work shall be consensual. Employers shall not request overtime on a regular basis and shall compensate all overtime work at a premium rate. Other than in exceptional circumstances, the sum of regular and overtime hours in a week shall not exceed 60 hours.**

*FLA benchmarks include, (1) rest day, (2) meal and rest breaks, (3) protected workers (pregnant or nursing women, young workers), (4) overtime, and (5) public holidays and leave.*

All producers and workers interviewed reported working an average of three hours per day (8 a.m. to 11 a.m.) with 24 hours of rest time per week. The seasonal workers mentioned having about three months of

break from March to May each year. About 80% of producers in Cooperative 1 reported one day rest per week, 10% reported two days of rest per week, and 10% did not specify. They reported they rest anytime they feel tired.

At Cooperative 2, 55% of producers reported one rest day per week and 40% reported taking two rest days per week. Five percent of producers reported five rest days per week. At Cooperative 3, 11% of producers had no specific day off. Twenty-two percent took one rest day per week and 67% reported two rest days per week. The FLA did not observe any case of excessive working hours for the farmers in the cocoa farms.



## **8. COMPENSATION**

**FLA Code of Conduct: Every worker has a right to compensation for a regular work week that is sufficient to meet the worker's basic needs and provide some discretionary income. Employers shall pay at least the minimum wage or the appropriate prevailing wage, whichever is higher, comply with all legal requirements on wages, and provide any fringe benefits required by law or contract. Where compensation does not meet workers' basic needs and provide some discretionary income, each employer shall work with FLA to take appropriate actions that seek to progressively realize a level of compensation that does.**

*FLA benchmarks include, (1) minimum wage and living wage, (2) farmer income, (3) wage payment and calculation, and (4) workers awareness and fringe benefits.*

Apart from one case of an individual worker (Box 3), the FLA team did not come across other compensation violations. Producers who participated in the certification program received an annual bonus based on the tonnage of certified product delivered. At Cooperative 2, 65% of producers reported receiving an annual bonus. In the other cooperatives, several producers were not certified and did not receive additional compensation (17% at Cooperative 3; 18% at Cooperative 1). These results indicated that the producers in the certified cooperatives have better benefits.

Some producers complained about lack of timely payments by the cooperative as the money was dispersed after the cocoa sale and buyer payment. There was some time gap between the delivery of the cocoa and compensation. The sale-deposit system was found to be a standard process at most cooperatives.



## 9. HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT

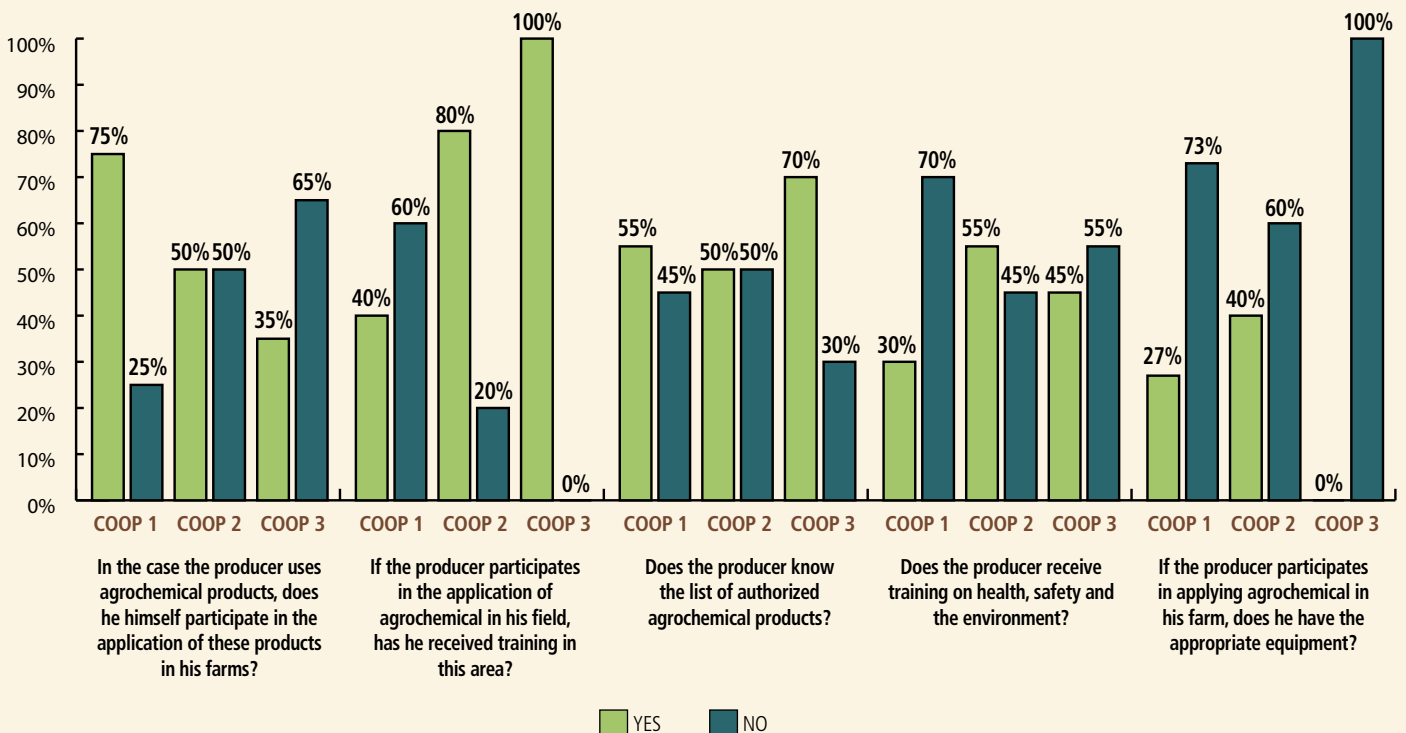
**FLA Code of Conduct: Employers shall provide a safe and healthy workplace setting to prevent accidents and injury to health arising out of, lined with, or occurring in the course of work or as a result of the operation of employer facilities. Employers shall adopt responsible measures to mitigate negative impacts that the workplace has on the environment.**

*FLA benchmarks cover, (1) document maintenance, permits and certificates, (2) evacuation requirements and procedure, (3) safety equipment and first aid, (4) personal protective equipment, (5) chemical management, (6) protection of reproductive health, (7) infrastructure, machinery safety and ergonomics, and (8) medical facilities.*

The FLA team encountered some risks related to health, safety and environment (HSE) in the assessment. All producers reported using agrochemicals, but chemical management training was lacking. Seventy-five percent of producers at Cooperative 1 apply agrochemicals; 70% mentioned that they have never received an HSE training, including on use of chemicals. Sixty percent of producers reported never being trained on agrochemical application. Forty five percent of producers did not know the list of authorized and forbidden products. Chemicals were purchased locally.

At Cooperative 2, all producers used agrochemicals on their cocoa farms. Despite their participation in a sustainability program,

**Figure 10: SECURITY AT WORK**

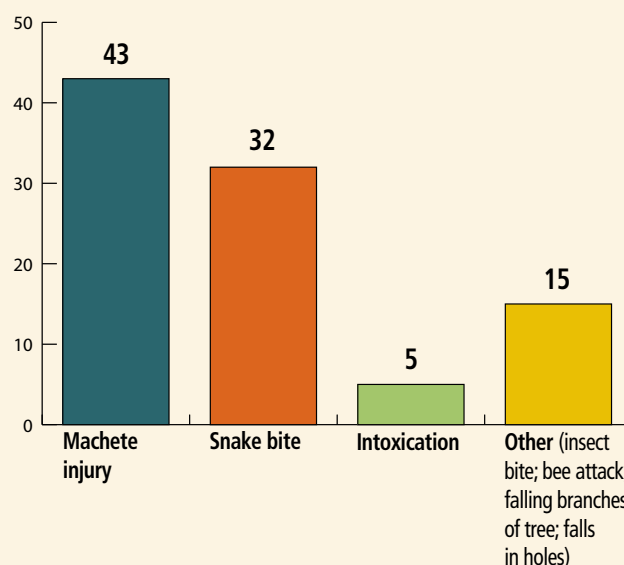




50% of producers were directly involved in the agrochemical treatment without knowing the list of authorized products. Among them, 30% had never received training on chemical application. Forty-five percent of producers said they have not received any HSE training.

At Cooperative 3, 78% of producers used agrochemicals and 33% were directly involved in application. All of the interviewed producers reported benefiting from training in agrochemical application from MINADER. However, 22% were not aware of the the list of dangerous and forbidden products. Fifty-six percent said they had not received training in other HSE topics, apart from agrochemical treatment.

**Figure 11: HAZARDS RELATED TO THE CONDUCT OF THE PRODUCER'S TASKS**



**Note:** The total is more than 60 because one person can experience more than one injury.

## VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**The FLA recommendations** are divided into two categories: (1) to Nestlé and its Tier 1 supplier to improve the supply chain labor standards management system; (2) to agencies and the cooperatives to improve their producer management and assessment system and support producers to maintain labor standards at the farm level.

### TO NESTLÉ AND ITS SUPPLIER

*Building on the areas of improvement presented in Table 3, FLA has the following recommendations.*

#### i. Define output and outcome indicators for the CLMRS

FLA recommends that given the program is in the pilot stage, Nestlé, and the supplier in association with ICI, agencies, and cooperatives clearly define the output and outcome progress indicators

and projected timeline. This will help the supplier and FLA measure progress over time for impact evaluation. Some examples of the indicators are presented in Table 3.

## **ii. Training of internal staff and supplier trainings on labor standards**

While some efforts to train and build awareness among internal staff and producers of child labor and productivity improvements were noticed, these training efforts can be strengthened in frequency and thematic areas. Almost one-fifth of

the producers (18%) have hired labor. FLA recommends targeting these growers to educate them about other decent work principles such as forced labor, employment relations, responsible recruitment, and working conditions.

## **iii. Development of an annual training calendar and pre-and post-evaluation system**

FLA recommends that the supplier develop an annual training calendar that describes the number of trainings for internal staff, agency staff, cooperative management, and the producers. The calendar should include topics to be covered, location of trainings, intended number of beneficiaries it plans to reach, and expert training partners. The

training calendar should be submitted to FLA for verification in subsequent assessments. At the time of the delivery of the training, the supplier should keep a list of attendees and pre- and post-evaluation data to assess knowledge gained. Over time, changes in attitudes and practices should be assessed.

## **iv. Introduction of a functioning grievance mechanism for producers and workers in association with the agencies and the cooperatives**

FLA recommends that the supplier include awareness building around its existing grievance mechanism in its producer trainings because the producers are not fully aware of the mechanism. For workers, FLA recommends that the supplier and ICI conduct a dialogue with a sample of existing hired workers at the farm level to identify the grievance redress channels that are currently available to them in

their communities, and discuss which grievance channels will be most appropriate for them. The supplier should consider the UNGP's eight effectiveness criteria<sup>50</sup> while developing this grievance mechanism with the agency and the cooperative, or connecting workers with the existing channels.

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<sup>50</sup> [Guiding Principle 31](#) provides a list of effectiveness criteria.

## **v. Map the farmers who are in the CLMRS program**

Within the Obala agency, it is not clear which of the 4,000 producers supply to Nestlé. FLA recommends that Nestlé move toward full traceability by selecting a certain number of cooperatives within the Obala agency to execute the CLMRS program. If Nestlé

continues working at the agency level, the system should be evenly applied to all farms, ensuring that no matter the source of the cocoa all producers are part of the CLMRS program, applying similar standards for decent working conditions.

## **vi. Introduce a worker profiling form and simplified written worker contract**

FLA recommends that CLMRS introduce a worker profiling tool at the farm level where information on hired labor can be collected at the time of farm visits and in a continuous manner by the farmer. This could be achieved through a basic worker register collecting name, age, gender, type of work undertaken, hours of work, and compensation. The supplier should work with the agencies, cooperatives, and producers to introduce this system at the farm level.

FLA recommends that the supplier develop a simple worker contract template that could be introduced to the producers and workers. The template should include the main terms and conditions of the employment relationship. The supplier can reach out to the two producers who already provide a written contract to its workers and discuss how to socialize and deploy it at other farms.

## **vii. Enhance data sharing among various departments at the supplier**

FLA recommends that the supplier build an internal mechanism for the management of sustainability activities' data so that it is readily available at any time to all the departments and during external assessment.

Currently, the data are housed across individuals and departments without centralized visibility on the supply chain, traceability, sustainability efforts, certified volume by cluster, etc.

## **viii. Define concrete remedial activities and develop standard operating procedures**

FLA recommends that the supplier build a remediation plan with guidelines articulating the roles and responsibilities of the agency, cooperative, producers etc., the type of support (financial, technical, human resources, travel support, etc.) that the supplier will provide to execute remedial activities. The plan should be socialized with the agency and the cooperatives.

While ICI will work closely with the supplier on child labor related interventions, other labor standards (worker contract, grievance mechanisms, etc.) need more attention and corresponding intervention plans. These could be embedded in the overall supplier sustainability program.

## **ix. Introduce written purchasing agreements with producers, including requirements around child labor and other decent work principles**

FLA recommends the supplier assist the agencies in testing formal and written purchase agreements with the cooperatives and cascade these formal purchasing agreements among

the cooperatives and the producers. The purchase agreement, in addition to volume, advances, services, and costs, should indicate labor standards requirements, including any

disciplinary actions that will be taken if the producers fail to comply. The agreement should commit to provide access to the farms

for assessments. Having a formal purchase agreement will aid the producers to avail bank services, if they wish to.

## **TO THE AGENCY AND COOPERATIVES**

### **x. Strengthen producer trainings**

FLA recommends the agency integrate or emphasize other labor standards in the training and awareness activities that it holds for its cooperatives and producers. The agency should introduce ways to

increase the communication about the grievance mechanism among producers. The cooperatives should lead awareness building in the communities so that these efforts reach the maximum number of producers.

### **xi. Strengthen farm level assessment system**

As part of the certification requirements and cascading mechanism, the agency needs to have a robust system in place to verify if producers are fulfilling the labor standard and certification requirements. Currently the agency's farm level monitoring system is weak. FLA recommends the agency enforce the internal monitoring activities for all labor standards by conducting regular farm inspection visits and monitoring a

representative number of producers annually. FLA further recommends that the agency develop a monitoring plan that describes who will conduct the assessment, the frequency, sampling size, tools, data management system, etc. The agency should work closely with the supplier and ICI to see how the CLMRS approach can be used to overlay the system or vice versa (so as to avoid creating duplication).

### **xii. Strengthen producer-level remediation system**

Even though the agency is certified, FLA was not able to identify a system in place that can put remediation activities at all farms. The role and responsibility and the types of remediation activities that the agency can undertake is

not clear to the interviewed producers. FLA recommends that the agency work closely with the supplier and the cooperatives to define how remediation activities will be introduced to the producers and workers.

### **xiii. Strengthen grievance mechanism for workers and introduce written worker contract**

FLA recommends that the agency and cooperatives update their grievance mechanism by adding provisions for workers.

Cooperatives should assist the producers and workers to have a simplified written worker contract.

# Annex: CAMEROON COUNTRY REPORT: COCOA

## COCOA PRODUCTION IN CAMEROON

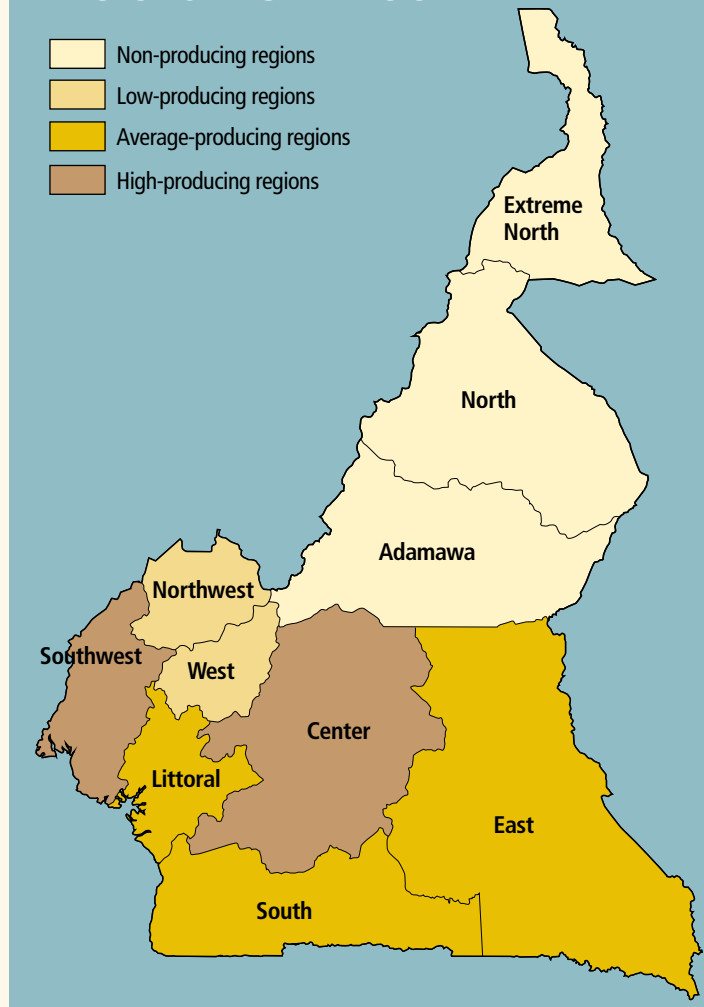
### Agriculture occupies a dominant place in

Cameroon's economy, employing 70% of its workforce, accounting for 42% gross domestic product (GDP), and 30% in export revenue. Cameroon produces a variety of agricultural commodities both for export and for domestic consumption. Local farmers produce numerous crops, including millet, sorghum, peanuts, plantains, sweet potatoes, and cassava, for domestic consumption. The most important cash crops are cocoa, coffee, cotton, bananas, rubber, palm oil kernels, and peanuts.<sup>51</sup> Coffee and cocoa are grown in the Central and Southern regions, bananas in the southwestern areas, and cotton in several northern provinces.

With a population of more than 25 million in 2018,<sup>52</sup> Cameroon has one of the most diversified economies in Central Africa. In 2018, the growth rate of its GDP was estimated at 3.8%.<sup>53</sup> According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER), the contribution of agriculture to Cameroon's economic growth amounted to slightly more than 76% in 2017,<sup>54</sup> owing in part to the cultivation of cocoa supplied to large multinationals.

Cameroon is the fifth-largest cocoa producing country in the world with 275,000 metric tons per year.<sup>55</sup> Cocoa plays an important role in the country's economy. It is the nation's third-largest export, contributing about US\$426 million to national income annually. Cameroon's ambition was to expand this to 600,000 MT per year.<sup>56</sup>

Figure A1: COCOA-PRODUCING REGIONS IN CAMEROON



51 <https://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/economies/Africa/Cameroon-AGRICULTURE.html#ixzz5WLuBkuH>

52 <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cm.html>

53 <https://www.afdb.org/fr/countries/central-africa/cameroon/cameroon-economic-outlook/>

54 <http://apanews.net/index.php/news/8-de-contribution-de-lagriculture-a-leconomie-camerounaise>

55 The top ten cocoa producing countries in 2019 order of volume are: Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Indonesia, Nigeria, Cameroon, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, Dominican Republic, Colombia. [http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#rankings/countries\\_by\\_commodity](http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#rankings/countries_by_commodity)

56 [https://www.idhsustainabletrade.com/uploaded/2019/05/2-pager-Roadmap-to-deforestation-free-cocoa-Cameroon\\_EN.pdf](https://www.idhsustainabletrade.com/uploaded/2019/05/2-pager-Roadmap-to-deforestation-free-cocoa-Cameroon_EN.pdf)



Cocoa is grown in seven out of 10 regions in Cameroon and harvested throughout the year with peak activities taking place between October and February, similar to other West African cocoa producing countries. The percentage of total cocoa purchased from the country's regions are Centre (50%),<sup>57,58</sup> Southwest (32%), Shoreline (seven percent), South (five percent), East (three percent), West and Northwest regions (about one percent each).<sup>59</sup> The southwest part of the country has witnessed a decline in cocoa production as cocoa growers are abandoning the crop due to violence between security forces and the separatist groups in the region.<sup>60</sup>

Cocoa farming is dominated by an estimated 400,000 to 500,000 smallholder farmers, producing about 450,000 hectares, with a typical farm size of two to 10 hectares. Cocoa is the main cash crop and source of employment for more than 75% of the rural population. In developing areas, most rural communities derive 90% of their incomes from cocoa.

According to the National Cocoa and Coffee Board (ONCC), the cocoa trade market in Cameroon is dominated by three companies that together account for 56% of the total production: Telcar Cocoa (Cargill) (27%), Olam Cam (20.7%),<sup>61</sup> and Ndongo Essomba (eight percent).<sup>62</sup> These three companies congregate in the group GEX. Other companies operating in the cocoa sector include Produit Cam, Delta, Nea Liko, and UTI. Another important player is SIC Cocoa, a local subsidiary of Swiss Barry Callebaut which has the largest processing

and local grinding capacity, and about 25% of the market.<sup>63</sup> Some local processing is done by Chococam, a subsidiary of South African company Tiger Brands. The balance is processed by small-scale processors<sup>64</sup>. Cameroon exports 90% of cocoa before processing. Of the exported cocoa, 69% of the production during 2016–2017 was exported to the Netherlands. Most of the cocoa is used by the chocolate processing and manufacturing companies.

57 Centre is the second largest region in Cameroon and occupies 69,000 km<sup>2</sup>. Yaounde, the political capital of Cameroon is in the Centre and attracts people from the rest of the country to live and work. Centre's towns are important industrial centers, especially for timber. Agriculture is an important economic factor, especially due to the province's most important cash crop, cocoa, grown throughout but mainly in the Mbam division. The largest plantations are outside of Yaounde and mainly to the northwest between the Nyong and Sanaga Rivers. Other major cocoa centers include the Sanaga River valley near Nanga Eboko and the regions around the towns of [Akonolinga](#), Obala, and Saa. Some of these plantations are owned by farmer populations of Bassa and Ewondo. Outside of the capital and the plantation zones, farmers grow food crops such as plantains (south) and cocoyams and yams (west and northwest). Rice and yam cultivation takes place along the banks of the river Sanaga in the Upper Sanaga division. Groundnuts, maize and other cereals are common in the province's less humid north, and cassava grows throughout. This region is one of Cameroon's most important cash-crop zones benefiting from its hot, humid climate and developed infrastructure. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Centre\\_Region\\_\(Cameroon\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Centre_Region_(Cameroon))

58 <https://www.businessincameroon.com/agriculture/0808-8247-cameroon-cocoa-production-rose-during-the-2017-2018-campaign-despite-unrest-in-the-southwest>

58 The National Cocoa and Coffee Office (ONCC) provided figures of 2017/2018 <https://afs4food.cirad.fr/>

59 The 2017/2018 cocoa campaign took place in a security context that did not allow the Southwest, traditionally the leading producing region, to deliver all of its production <https://www.tresor.economie.gouv.fr/Articles/df25523c-af44-4c0f-8c9b-4154ca4e364a/files/54791643-180f-47ed-859a-cf945a2aa6e0>

60 <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-cocoa-cameroon/cameroon-farmers-abandon-cocoa-plantations-amid-crackdown-idUSKBN1F11T2>

61 Olam is an affiliated company with the FLA. FLA conducted a similar baseline in Olam's cocoa supply chain in Cameroon in 2019.

62 <https://www.businessincameroon.com/agriculture/2708-8280-cameroon-three-traders-alone-accounted-for-56-of-cocoa-exports-in-2017-18>

63 [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328584392\\_Cocoa\\_Exports\\_of\\_Cameroon\\_Structure\\_and\\_Mechanism\\_of\\_Operation](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328584392_Cocoa_Exports_of_Cameroon_Structure_and_Mechanism_of_Operation)

64 <https://www.businessincameroon.com/agro-industry/1208-8250-cameroon-s-cocoa-processing-capacity-to-be-boosted-with-the-commissioning-of-atlantic-cocoa-s-plants-in-kribi>

## RISKS IN COCOA PRODUCTION

Cocoa farmers and workers in Cameroon face several socioeconomic and working conditions risks. Yield per hectare is low due to aging trees. Farmers have poor access to credit that limits their ability to invest in upgrading their farms, farming practices, and adoption of innovative technology.<sup>65</sup> Other factors include weather-related uncertainty, the presence of black pod and insects, and indiscriminate use of fertilizers and pesticides — a practice traditionally used by older generation farmers.<sup>66,67</sup>

Farmer income and worker wages remain sub-optimal. The low price of cocoa and the fluctuating market due to volatile world commodity prices make it difficult for farmers to cover their investments. They struggle to make living incomes or provide living wages to their hired workers. Cocoa producing families do not earn sufficient income to maintain a decent standard of living. Often, cocoa farmers are not able to afford paying an adult workforce. Therefore, smallholder farmers mostly rely on family members (women and children) for production of cocoa and other food crops. Farmers hire extra labor and utilize community services groups<sup>68</sup> during the peak season.<sup>69</sup>

Community-based stakeholders express concerns about the informal nature of employment relations in the cocoa sector. Civil society organizations describe precarious working conditions for farmers and workers. Field work takes place in open air, exposing farmers and their families and workers to high temperatures, rain, and close contact with animals. Chemicals and fertilizers are often used without utilization of Personal Protective Equipment. Farmers and workers are often exposed to insect and snake bites, parasites, allergies, poisoning, and

intoxication from chemical exposure. During the peak season from October to February, demand for workers is high, and most people work long hours without proper rest.

The United States Department of Labor-Bureau of International Labor Affairs (USDOL-ILAB)<sup>70</sup> and the International Labour Organization (ILO)<sup>71</sup> have reported child labor as an endemic problem in Cameroon's cocoa sector. Children often perform hazardous tasks such as handling chemicals, lifting heavy loads, climbing trees, using machetes, clearing fields, etc. Children engaging in cocoa production complain about neck pain, backache, and pain in their shoulders and arms.<sup>72</sup> The national minimum age to work is 14 years<sup>73</sup> and for hazardous work it is 18 years.<sup>74</sup>

Forced labor and trafficking has been reported in cocoa production. According to the National Institute of Statistics in 2007, more than two million young people between the ages of five and 17 were victims of forced labor.<sup>75</sup> According to USDOL-ILAB,<sup>76</sup> Cameroon is a source, transit, and destination country for child trafficking from neighboring countries

65 [https://stud.epsilon.slu.se/6438/1/Fule\\_CB\\_140218.pdf](https://stud.epsilon.slu.se/6438/1/Fule_CB_140218.pdf)

66 <http://www.icco.org/sites/sps/cameroon.html>

67 [https://stud.epsilon.slu.se/6438/1/Fule\\_CB\\_140218.pdf](https://stud.epsilon.slu.se/6438/1/Fule_CB_140218.pdf)

68 Community Services Group are informal groups of the farmers in a community who help each other on the farms. There is no exchange of money but mostly of labor services.

69 [https://www.unicef.org/wcaro/english/Briefing\\_paper\\_No\\_2\\_-\\_children\\_working\\_in\\_commercial\\_agriculture.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/wcaro/english/Briefing_paper_No_2_-_children_working_in_commercial_agriculture.pdf)

70 <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/cameroon>

71 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FRG6NMVKHDs>

72 [http://www.globalfoodsec.net/static/text/FAO\\_child\\_labour.pdf](http://www.globalfoodsec.net/static/text/FAO_child_labour.pdf)

73 Section 86 of the Labor Code; Article 2 of Order N° 017 on Child Labor

74 Articles 9 – 23 of Order No 017 on Child Labor; Section 86 of the Labor Code.

75 <https://www.afrik.com/cameroon-evolution-dans-la-lutte-contre-le-travail-des-enfants>

76 <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/cameroon>

in Central and West Africa. Some traffickers resort to kidnapping children, as increased public awareness has resulted in fewer parents entrusting their children to labor intermediaries. The ILO reports that in Cameroon, teachers earn money for hiring out students to work on either their own farms or other farmers' cocoa farms.<sup>77</sup> During our assessment, the FLA team did not come across cases of teachers asking

children to work in the visited areas. The crisis zones in Cameroon are the country's largest cocoa producing regions. Once the situation stabilizes, further investigation on the cocoa harvest must take place.

<sup>77</sup> ILO (2007c) Rooting out child labour from cocoa farms. Paper No. 1: A synthesis report of five rapid assessments. By R. Rinehart, International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), Geneva: International Labour Organization (ILO). <http://www.ilo.org/ipeinfo>

## REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS PROMOTING LABOR AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Cameroon has ratified 50 international conventions (Table A1) and most international legal instruments for the protection of children. The most important are:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and its optional protocols.
- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
- ILO Convention No. 138 on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment
- ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor
- United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and
- Additional Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

**Table A1: INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS RATIFIED BY CAMEROON**

FUNDAMENTAL		
Convention	Date	Status
C029 - Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)	07 Jun 1960	Enacted
C087 - Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948 (No. 87)	07 Jun 1960	Enacted
C098 - Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)	03 Sep 1962	Enacted
C100 - Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)	25 May 1970	Enacted
C105 - Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)	03 Sep 1962	Enacted
C111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)	13 May 1988	Enacted
C138 - Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) <i>Minimum age specified: 14 years</i>	13 Aug 2001	Enacted
C182 - Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)	05 Jun 2002	Enacted

GOVERNANCE (PRIORITY)		
Convention	Date	Status
C081 - Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81) <i>Excluding Part II</i>	03 Sep 1962	Enacted
C122 - Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122)	25 May 1970	Enacted
C144 - Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144)	01 Jun 2018	Enacted
TECHNICAL		
Convention	Date	Status
C003 - Maternity Protection Convention, 1919 (No. 3)	25 May 1970	Enacted
C009 - Placing of Seamen Convention, 1920 (No. 9)	25 May 1970	Enacted
C010 - Minimum Age (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 10)	25 May 1970	Enacted
C011 - Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 11)	07 June 1960	Enacted
C013 - White Lead (Painting) Convention, 1921 (No. 13)	07 June 1960	Enacted
C014 - Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921 (No. 14)	07 June 1960	Enacted
C016 - Medical Examination of Young Persons (Sea) Convention, 1921 (No. 16)	03 Sep 1962	Enacted
C019 - Equality of Treatment (Accident Compensation) Convention, 1925 (No. 19)	03 Sep 1962	Enacted
C026 - Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery Convention, 1928 (No. 26)	07 Jun 1960	Enacted
C033 - Minimum Age (Non-Industrial Employment) Convention, 1932 (No. 33)	07 Jun 1960	Enacted
C045 - Underground Work (Women) Convention, 1935 (No. 45)	03 Sep 1962	Enacted
C077 - Medical Examination of Young Persons (Industry) Convention, 1946 (No. 77)	25 May 1970	Enacted
C078 - Medical Examination of Young Persons (Non-Industrial Occupations) Convention, 1946 (No. 78)	25 May 1970	Enacted
C089 - Night Work (Women) Convention (Revised), 1948 (No. 89)	25 May 1970	Enacted
C090 - Night Work of Young Persons (Industry) Convention (Revised), 1948 (No. 90)	25 May 1970	Enacted
C095 - Protection of Wages Convention, 1949 (No. 95)	07 Jun 1960	Enacted
C097 - Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97) <i>Has excluded the provisions of Annexes I to III</i>	03 Sep 1962	Enacted
C099 - Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Convention, 1951 (No. 99)	25 May 1970	Enacted

C106 - Weekly Rest (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1957 (No. 106)	13 May 1988	Enacted
C108 - Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention, 1958 (No. 108)	29 Nov 1982	Enacted
C116 - Final Articles Revision Convention, 1961 (No. 116)	29 Dec 1964	Enacted
C123 - Minimum Age (Underground Work) Convention, 1965 (No. 123) <i>Minimum age specified: 16 years</i>	06 Nov 1970	Enacted
C131 - Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131)	06 Jul 1973	Enacted
C132 - Holidays with Pay Convention (Revised), 1970 (No. 132) <i>Length of holiday specified: 3 weeks. Has accepted the provisions of Article 15, paragraph 1(a) and (b).</i>	07 Aug 1973	Enacted
C135 - Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135)	05 Apr 1976	Enacted
C143 - Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143)	04 Jul 1978	Enacted
C146 - Seafarers' Annual Leave with Pay Convention, 1976 (No. 146) <i>Length of annual leave specified: 60 consecutive days for officers and 3 consecutive days per month for seamen</i>	13 Jun 1978	Enacted
C158 - Termination of Employment Convention, 1982 (No. 158)	13 May 1988	Enacted
C162 - Asbestos Convention, 1986 (No. 162)	20 Feb 1989	Enacted

## NATIONAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS ON CHILD PROTECTION

At the national level, Cameroon has a legislative and regulatory<sup>78</sup> framework for the protection of children's rights.

**Special Laws:** To operationalize the policy of combating violence or exploitation of children.

- Law No. 2005/015 of December 29, 2005 on the fight against trafficking and trafficking in children repealed and replaced by Law No. 2011/024 of December 14, 2011 on the fight against trafficking and trafficking in persons.
- Ordinance No. 81/02 of June 29, 1981 on the organization of civil status and various provisions relating to the status of natural persons, amended, and supplemented by Law No. 2011/011 of May 6, 2011. This ordinance provides for

the signaling of a newborn child (Article 38), paternal power and custody children born out of wedlock (Article 47), alimony for children left in the care of an abandoned wife (Article 76).

<sup>78</sup> **The Constitution**, in its preamble, guarantees freedom and security to every individual, with a specific concern for the protection of children and young people. **In criminal matters**, many provisions of the Penal Code can be mentioned to punish cases of attacks on the physical or mental integrity of the child. Article 350 of the Code entitled "Offenses Against the Child" aggravates penalties when an offense is committed against a child. **In the social field**, the Labor Code prohibits forced or compulsory labor (article 292, paragraph 3) and excludes the employment of children under 14 years of age and their use in work that is dangerous or exceeds their strength (articles 86 and 87). The said Code provides for sanctions against the perpetrators of these offenses (art.167). In addition, the decree of 27 May 1969 on child labor prohibits and draws up a list of types of work likely to corrupt the morals of children. **In civil matters**, the Civil Code institutes the maintenance obligation between ascendants and descendants (article 203), between adoptive parents and adoptees (article 355), and paternal power (articles 371 to 387); all things that contribute to the prevention and suppression of the trafficking and exploitation of children. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/cameroon>



- Law No. 97/12 of January 10, 1997 setting the conditions of entry, stay and exit of foreigners in Cameroon and its implementing Decree No.

2000/286 of October 12, 2000 which requires parental authorization for children for the issuance of a travel document.

**Table A2: NATIONAL STANDARDS ON CHILD LABOR AND CHILD PROTECTION**

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	14	Section 86 of the Labor Code; Article 2 of Order N° 017 on Child Labor
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Articles 9–23 of Order N° 017 on Child Labor; Section 86 of the Labor Code
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Articles 9–23 of the Order on Child Labor presents some information. Cameroon, currently does not have a list of hazardous work.
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Sections 2–6 of the Law Relating to the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Slavery; Articles 11, 342-1, 352, and 353 of the Penal Code; Section 2 of the Labor Code (54; 56; 57)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	No		Sections 2 and 4–6 of the Law Relating to the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Slavery; Articles 11, 342-1, and 352–354 of the Penal Code
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Articles 294 and 344–347 of the Penal Code; Articles 76, 81, and 82 of the Law on Cybersecurity and Cybercriminality
State Compulsory	Yes*	18	Article 12 of the Decree Concerning the Status of Non-Defense Military Personnel; Article 2a of the Decree Establishing the Conditions for Admission to Military Training Schools for Officers
State Voluntary	Yes	18	Article 12 of the Decree Concerning the Status of Non-Defense Military Personnel; Article 2a of the Decree Establishing the Conditions for Admission to Military Training Schools for Officers
Compulsory Education Age	No	12‡	Preamble of the Constitution; Articles 9 and 16 of the Law Orienting the Education System (61; 62) Article 13(2)(a) of ICESCR provisions.
Free Public Education	Yes		Articles 46 (2), 47, and 48 of the Decree on the Organization of Public Schools (32)

\* No conscription (63)

‡ Age calculated based on available information (29)

## INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD PROTECTION

The government of Cameroon has several agencies that are responsible for the implementation of the rights of a child. The Ministry of Social Affairs is statutorily assigned to ensure social protection of vulnerable persons among whom are children needing special protection. To pursue this objective, the government has created operational structures, including:

- Direction for the Social Protection of Childhood
- Regional Delegations (10 RD)
- Departmental Delegations (58 DD)
- Technical Operational Units: Social Centers and Social Action Services.
- Centers for Early Childhood Care
- Centers for Reception and Rehabilitation of Maladjusted Social or Delinquent Children, and
- National Commission for the Protection of Children in moral danger, delinquent, or abandoned.

These institutional efforts for child protection are supported by the active efforts of various national private social partners, NGOs, and associations in the legal, health, education, and psychosocial fields. Additionally, several national programs and projects benefit from the support of bilateral and multilateral partners such as UNICEF, World Bank, Cameroon Plan, SOS Kinderdorf, ILO, and the nations of Belgium and Italy.

Although the government has implemented programs to assist victims of child trafficking and children engaged in street and domestic work, the scope of

these programs is insufficient and does not address the full extent of the child labor problem, according to USDOL-ILAB. Government-run centers can temporarily house victims, but space is insufficient. In addition, the FLA's research did not find evidence of programs that specifically address child labor in agriculture, mining, and quarries. In view of the current gaps in ensuring social protection of children and the provision of care to vulnerable children, the main challenges facing the country include:

- Lack of a national social protection policy for children
- Lack of a credible and autonomous national authority for coordinating child protection interventions
- Lack of an available dynamic national database on vulnerable children
- Gaps in the adoption process of the draft laws on the Child Protection Code and the Code of Persons and the Family
- Culmination of the adoption of the status of social workers
- Low number of social staff and lack of continuous development of their technical capacities
- Culmination of the process of defining national standards for intervention in the supervision of vulnerable children
- • Low financial resources allocated to the social sector in general and to social affairs, and
- Lack of robust partnerships and programs for children and funding partners.

**Table A3: KEY POLICIES AND SOCIAL PROGRAMS RELATED TO CHILD LABOR**

<b>POLICY</b>	<b>Description</b>
National Action Plan for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Cameroon (2015–2019) – Ministry of Justice	Aims to combat exploitative child labor by disseminating standard operating procedures for the National Referral System, raising awareness about how to identify and report cases of child trafficking, increasing punishments for offenders, and building the capacity of labor inspectors. Also aims to improve access to education for vulnerable groups by increasing the number of teachers and classrooms, establishing a legal framework to regulate parent-teacher associations, and increasing the rate of educational attainment for girls. Research was unable to determine if this policy was active during the reporting period.
Decent Work Country Program (2014–2017)	Incorporated child labor concerns into the strategy for work. In March 2017, convened a three-day interim assessment and provided training to labor inspectors, including child labor issues.

<b>PROGRAMS</b>	<b>Description</b>
Project to Fight the Phenomenon of Street Children (Project 559) (Funded by the Govt. of Cameroon)	MINAS-funded program that provides street children with health care, education, and psychosocial care. Through its partnership agreement PAIRPPEV with the National Employment Fund, supports the reintegration of street children and provides vocational training opportunities. In 2017, MINAS conducted awareness-raising activities about the negative impacts of child labor and conducted a two-week campaign in the capital to round up children underage engaged in street vendor activities. The children were released to their parents, who were informed about the risks of child labor.
Country Program Action Plan (2013–2017)	UNICEF- and MINAS-implemented program that aimed to improve social protection and preventive health care and ensure access to primary education. In 2017, Nascent Solutions converted its school feeding program to a village mobile reading program due to prolonged school closures in the Northwest. This literacy initiative served over 18,000 students per month.
School Feeding Program	\$12 million U.S. Department of Agriculture-funded McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program, which improves literacy and nutrition in 92 primary schools, benefitting 40,000 children in the Northwest region.
Services for Displaced or Refugee Children (Funded by the govt. of Cameroon)	UNICEF programs that provide educational services to children affected by conflict, including: CARED2, which offers accelerated education curriculums for children in refugee camps in the Far North; ETAPES, which establishes temporary schools and protection centers in Adamawa and East regions; and the Child Protection and Education Project, which works with Catholic Relief Services in the East to enroll and retain refugee children in schools. In 2017, provided education to 93,190 children ages three to 17 living in internally displaced persons or refugee camps. The government also built eight schools in the far North region for Nigerian refugees.

World Bank Projects	Aim to provide social safety nets and improve educational outcomes, including <a href="#">Social Safety Nets</a> (2014–2018), a \$50 million program by the Ministry of Economy, Planning, and Regional Development to provide direct cash transfers to vulnerable families for healthcare and education expenses, and the <a href="#">Equity and Quality for Improved Learning Project</a> (2014–2018), a \$55.8 million program by the Ministry of Basic Education to distribute textbooks for grades one to three, to promote girls’ education, increase the number of teachers in Cameroon, and improve access to primary education as part of the Education for All initiative. In 2017, the Social Safety Nets expanded to include 6,000 participants in the far North who are affected by displacement due to Boko Haram activities, and nearly doubled the total number of project participants to 411,048 individuals by September 2017. This project increased the number of contracted teachers from 2,970 to 5,898 and reduced the ratio of students to textbooks from 6:1 to 4:1 in 2017.
Cameroon Institute of Childhood (ICE) Rehabilitation Project (2017–2020)*‡	\$2.9 million project financed by MINAS and its partners to rehabilitate a center in Betamba, which serves children in conflict with the law and provides vocational training to area youth. The government contributed \$552,000 in 2017 and pledged \$1.1 million in 2018. One of several centers for vulnerable children operated by MINAS.

\* Program is funded by the government of Cameroon.

‡ The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor.

## STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

The cocoa sector in Cameroon is regulated by the government and several other active stakeholders.

### a. Government Ministries

Several ministries regulate the cocoa sector in Cameroon. These include:

- i. Ministry of Trade
- ii. Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
- iii. Ministry of Labor and Social Security, and
- iv. Ministry of Economy

The Ministry of Trade regulates cocoa trading in Cameroon. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER) oversees cocoa production from seed to fermentation and conducts extension and agricultural advisory activities. In cocoa producing areas, MINADER has charged “heads of posts” or

“extension agents” with raising producers’ awareness about Good Agricultural Practices. The Ministry of Labor and Social Security is involved in the agriculture sector and tasked with ensuring labor standards and social security through advice, inspections, and resolution.

The following ministries are involved in the fight against child labor, including in the agriculture sector. These are:

- i. Ministry of Justice
- ii. Ministry of Social Affairs
- iii. Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and Family

- iv. Ministry of Defense's National Gendarmerie, and
- v. General Delegate for National Security.

To promote labor rights and child protection, the government of Cameroon

has undertaken several actions around regulatory and institutional frameworks.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>79</sup> [http://www.minas.cm/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=211&Itemid=217&lang=fr](http://www.minas.cm/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=211&Itemid=217&lang=fr)

## b. National Coffee and Cocoa Board

The NCCB<sup>80</sup> is a public administrative office with financial autonomy under the supervision of the Ministry of Trade. The NCCB oversees the quality control of export-oriented cocoa from Cameroon. Agents appointed by the NCCB conduct technical visits to the facilities of accredited quality control bodies, factories, and warehouses, to assess their quality.

The NCCB promotes and preserves the cocoa originating in Cameroon. The NCCB monitors international cocoa and coffee agreements and represents Cameroon in international cocoa organizations. NCCB is entrusted by the government to conduct

studies of the cocoa sector and maintain the information management system, INFOSHARE, for the cocoa and coffee sectors in Cameroon. NCCB links various stakeholders (exporters, manufacturers, forwarding agents, companies in charge of quality control) and collects information on aspects of the cocoa supply chain such as the purchasing price for farmers, procurement schedule, names of active exporters in the field, reporting of poor practices by some exporters, etc.

<sup>80</sup> NCCB was established by Decree No. 91/271 of June 12, 1991 and amended and supplemented by Decree No. 97/141 of August 25, 1997 following the liberalization and dissolution of the National Office for the Marketing of Commodities (ONCPB).

## c. International Organizations

Several international organizations including industry associations, civil society organizations, United Nations agencies, federation of trade unions, and certification bodies are active in the cocoa sector. These include:

- International Coffee and Cocoa Organization
- World Cocoa Foundation
- International Labour Organization
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
- Plan International
- UNICEF
- SOS Children Village
- Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging, and
- Rain Forest Alliance/UTZ.

## d. Interprofessional Council for Coffee and Cocoa

The Interprofessional Council for Cocoa and Coffee, known as Interprofession, is a non-

profit private association created in 1991 with a mission to increase efficiency of the cocoa



and coffee sectors. It brings together all national cocoa stakeholders including groups of producers, buyers, millers, local processors, and exporters, who adhere to its statutes. The organization's general assembly currently covers the following groups:

- Producers' organizations: associations, unions, cooperatives, common initiative groups, producing about 250 tons of cocoa (and coffee) and about 100 members. This group has 40% voting rights in the general assembly (24 delegates).
- Organizations of buyers, manufacturers, and packers. This group has 10% voting rights in the general assembly (six delegates).
- Professional organizations of exporters. This group has 40% voting rights in the general assembly (24 delegates).

- Professional organizations of industrial transformers. This group has 10% voting rights in the general assembly (six delegates).

Interprofession has objectives, which include:

- Supporting producer organizations in conjunction with projects in production areas
- Proactively marketing cocoa (including taxation)
- Providing advice to professional organizations
- Sanctioning noncompliance with rules of professional and interprofessional ethics, and
- Ensuring the implementation of rules that ensure fair and healthy competition among members of professional organizations affiliated to the organization.

## e. Professional Agricultural Organizations

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For two decades, sub-Saharan African states have disengaged themselves by unilaterally transferring responsibilities to Professional Agricultural Organizations (PO). As part of its economic liberalization policy and new agricultural policy, the Cameroon government since 1990 has set up regulatory language to promote the emergence of POs. Since 1992, Cameroon has a flexible and simplified regulatory framework to facilitate the constitution and legalization of POs.

Under the 1992 reform, the Common Initiative Groups (CIG) were set up to form grassroots organizations. The law allows them to be grouped together in village-level unions and around economic activities whose scope remains wide in the rural sector.

Federations or confederations are umbrella organizations of CIGs grouped together at a wider geographic or territorial scale. The federations exist at the level of a department or region. Through their associations, groups are a more appropriate framework for solving difficult problems (e.g., market access, access to external financing).

Confederations are unions of federations existing at the national level. These are not very active in the landscape of the PO structure. For cocoa, the National Confederation of Cocoa Producers of Cameroon is one of the few known confederations that is active with 15,000 members in 17 federations, 93 unions, and 509 joint initiative groups.