

PROGRESS IN ADDRESSING CHILD LABOR IN OLAM'S COCOA SUPPLY CHAIN IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE: An Analysis of Beneficiaries' Perceptions



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FLA Member/Affiliate Update

of ended its membership as an FLA Participating Company in January 2026. The company's reports can still be found at Fairlabor.org

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COVER PHOTO: School building of Kagbè, rehabilitated by the CLMRS 1.

ABOUT FAIR LABOR ASSOCIATION

Fair Labor Association promotes and protects workers' rights and improves workplace conditions through collaboration among business, civil society, and colleges and universities. FLA conducts transparent and independent monitoring to ensure that rigorous labor standards are upheld wherever FLA affiliates source their products, identifies root causes of non-compliances, and proposes solutions to workplace problems.

ACRONYMS

CDM	Community Development Manager
CLA	Child Labor Analyst
CLG	Cooperative Labor Group
CLMRS	Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System
COA	Community Operations Agents
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FLA	Fair Labor Association
IGA	Income Generating Activities
ILO	International Labour Organization
IEA	Independent External Assessment
MRA	Monitoring and Remediation Agents
NORC	National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago
OFI	Olam Food Ingredients (Olam)
OFIS	Olam Farmer Information System
RSR	Regional Sustainability Representatives
SHG	Self Help Group
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
UNCRC	United Nations Convention of the Rights of Children
VSLA	Village Savings Loan Association

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Olam¹, one of the world's largest suppliers of cocoa beans, has allocated resources to a Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System (CLMRS) to improve its child labor monitoring and data management system. The goal of the CLMRS is to reduce child labor on the cocoa farms from which Olam sources.

To better evaluate if Olam's CLMRS in Côte d'Ivoire is helping the company meet its requirement under FLA standards to eradicate child labor, FLA piloted an assessment methodology to measure the perceived impact among local stakeholders. Data from three cooperatives and eight communities participating in Olam's CLMRS were compared to a control group (one cocoa cooperative and two communities) where Olam has not yet implemented a CLMRS.

FLA interviewed 451 people including producers, family members of producers, community stakeholders such as local school authorities, women's associations, and village leaders. In this assessment, FLA went beyond an audit-based compliance methodology and evaluated whether the cocoa farmers, workers, and their families perceived a benefit from Olam's interventions. The evaluation included their perceptions of whether the CLMRS has resulted in a reduction in child labor.

FLA found that Olam's CLMRS is helping to raise awareness about child labor and providing additional incremental benefits to cocoa producing families.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- ▶ Child labor monitoring and sensitization, provision of school kits (that include uniform,

books, and supplies), and facilitation of birth certificates were considered the most effective interventions to reduce child labor.

- ▶ Seventy-two percent of interviewed producers believe that child labor is decreasing in their communities.
- ▶ Greater results could be accrued by including the wives of producers in awareness trainings and other interventions.
- ▶ Cooperatives and producers with Olam's CLMRS reported increased awareness about child labor and the legal age for hiring young workers. However, producers still lack knowledge about the minimum age for light work. About 44% of producers are at risk of using children less than 13 in farm work.
- ▶ While producers' awareness of age requirements is improving, underage workers continue to perform certain hazardous work on family farms such as transporting heavy loads of cocoa beans and using sharp tools.
- ▶ Ten percent of producers reported that their children (including those under 13) work on family farms. Among the children interviewed, 93 % reported doing work on cocoa farms during their free time.
- ▶ Olam is facilitating the establishment of local Cooperative Labor Groups (CLGs) that can support farm activities at various cocoa farms.

1 <https://www.olamgroup.com/about-olam/group-overview/olam-food-ingredients.html>

Olam should work with the CLGs to strengthen the age-verification process during recruitment of workers to the groups.

- ▶ Producers and their families appreciate the schooling support provided through the CLMRS. Twenty-two percent of the producers reported having received education-related support from Olam at least once. Since school canteens attract children to school, operationalizing the canteens could attract more children and help working parents with childcare.
- ▶ Money earned from the Income Generating Activities (IGAs) contributes to a family's food security and education for their children.

- ▶ Changing ingrained practices that contribute to child labor is difficult and requires intervention over a long period. Training and awareness-building activities should incorporate techniques that address the behaviors that contribute to child labor.
- ▶ In interviews conducted with 53 community-level stakeholders, 72% were aware of the CLMRS and said it was useful.
- ▶ Based on the various data sources, it appears better results are achieved in cooperatives where there are several mutually reinforcing interventions in place within the CLMRS.

II. INTRODUCTION

Since 2013, FLA has published annual **Independent External Assessments (IEAs)** measuring working conditions in Olam's cocoa supply chain in Côte d'Ivoire against the FLA Code of Conduct and Compliance Benchmarks for the Agriculture Sector². Furthermore, FLA verifies Olam's human rights due diligence system against FLA's Principles of Fair Labor and Responsible Sourcing for the Agriculture Sector.³

Olam's cocoa sustainability program was launched in 2004⁴. In October 2012, Olam affiliated with FLA⁵. In 2013, FLA organized the first independent evaluation of Olam's cocoa supply chain in Côte d'Ivoire. The assessment identified child labor and gaps in the labor standards management systems. FLA made several recommendations⁶. As an FLA

affiliate, Olam committed to remediating the non-compliances identified. As part of their response, Olam began addressing child labor in its cocoa supply chain through CLMRS. Between 2013 and 2019, FLA undertook annual assessments to measure the working conditions in Olam's cocoa supply chain in Côte d'Ivoire.

2 https://www.fairlabor.org/sites/default/files/fla_agriculture_coc_and_benchmarks_october2015_0.pdf

This standard is based on the ILO Core Conventions.

3 https://www.fairlabor.org/sites/default/files/ag_p1_p10_final_051821.pdf The FLA Principles closely align with several international standards including the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and the OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains.

4 <https://www.olamgroup.com/olam-cocoa-compass.pdf>

5 Olam's two high risk commodities where included under FLA Agriculture Program scope – Cocoa and Hazelnuts.

6 <https://www.fairlabor.org/2013-olam-independent-external-assessments>

From 2020 to 2021, FLA used a revised due diligence methodology that goes beyond a compliance-based assessment to evaluate Olam's CLMRS. FLA determines the type of assessment based on the status of supply chain mapping and traceability; the maturity of a company's labor standards program in that commodity; and known labor risks in the country.⁷ For example, companies with limited traceability undergo mapping exercises, while companies with operational remediation programs implemented for several years undergo a social impact assessment, which analyzes the perception of impact of a company's interventions.

FLA used three sources and a combination of data collection techniques for this assessment: primary data from field observations and in-person interviews in a representative sample of cooperatives and communities; FLA IEA reports from 2013–2018; and secondary data from Olam's CLMRS since 2016.

The SIA in Côte d'Ivoire gathered primary information to evaluate whether the cocoa farmers, workers, and their families have benefited from Olam CLMRS's interventions; their perception of Olam's interventions; and their satisfaction level with the interventions.

FLA collected data from 10 communities that belonged to four cooperatives supplying cocoa to Olam. Of the four cooperatives, one (and its two communities) was a control group where Olam had not implemented the CLMRS. Data from the control group were used to compare findings against the other cooperatives. In these

10 communities, FLA interviewed 451 people to capture their perceptions of Olam's interventions on the CLMRS. These interviews included producers, women, children, and local stakeholders such as school authorities, village leaders, cooperatives, and women's associations and youth associations.

This report highlights the findings and provides recommendations in the framework of continuous improvement. FLA will continue to assess Olam's progress on child labor elimination goals as mentioned in the Cocoa Compass⁸ and benchmark them against the FLA standards.

⁷ **Baseline Mapping:** This assessment is used in the preliminary stage of a company's affiliation, or when a new country or commodity is rolled under FLA agriculture program. The baseline mapping allows for a better understanding of the supply chain, stakeholders involved, status of company's current supply chain and labor standards management system, workers' profile, and labor risks. Results of the baseline mapping aids the company to develop or refine their monitoring and remediation program.

Independent External Monitoring (IEM): FLA starts conducting IEMs when the company has started to implement its internal monitoring and remediation program. An IEM allows the assessment of labor conditions at the farm level and first level processing if it overlaps with the farms based on the [FLA Agriculture Workplace Code of Conduct and Monitoring Benchmarks for the Agriculture Sector](#). FLA further gathers data through stakeholder interviews in the community including civil society organizations (CSOs), government officials and community leaders, and supply chain actors. FLA examines company internal monitoring systems (IMS) at the country level, against [FLA's Principles of Fair Labor and Responsible Sourcing for Agricultural Supply Chains](#).

Independent External Verification: FLA conducts an IEV in a farm or cluster of farms, where FLA has previously conducted an IEM, and after the completion of company's corrective action plan. FLA uses IEV to verify the effective implementation of a company's corrective action plan and assess if the actions have led to addressing of the non-compliances.

Social Impact Assessment: FLA uses SIA after several IEM and IEV cycles, and post company's remediation implementation. SIA allows to delve deeper into company's interventions and determine if the actions have led to improvement in conditions for the workers. For advanced programs there is an expanding demand to measure their impact on worker well-being. This goes beyond assessing legal compliance. Improvements are measured against outcome, output, and impact indicators, as well as against farmers and workers perception of these improvements and their satisfaction level.

⁸ <https://www.olamgroup.com/news/all-news/press-release/cocoa-compass-olam-cocoa-commits-to-living-incomes-for-farmers.html>

III. BACKGROUND

I. CHILD LABOR IN THE COCOA SECTOR IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE – A PERSISTENT ISSUE

Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana are the world's top two cocoa producers – the countries supply almost 43% and 12%, respectively, to the global supply.⁹ An estimated 1.56 million children are reported to be engaged in child labor in these two countries. Of these, 43% are reported being involved in hazardous work such as exposure to agro-chemicals, lifting heavy loads, burning fields, and using sharp tools. Most of these children work on family farms.¹⁰

Cocoa is one of the most important cash crops in Côte d'Ivoire. About 800,000 smallholder farmers, grouped in communities and cooperatives, produce cocoa. Overall, some 4.5 million people, including three million children, live in cocoa-growing communities.¹¹ The cocoa communities include Ivorian farmers and their families who work on the farms. Additionally, there are producers and workers¹² who originated from countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali, and Guinea¹³ and whose families also work on cocoa production.¹⁴

A study published by NORC in October 2020 estimated that from 2018 to 2019, 34% of all children living in the cocoa communities were engaged in child labor, and 32% of all children were involved in hazardous work.

Historical trends indicate that amid a 62% increase in cocoa production between 2008–09 and 2018–19 in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana aggregated, the prevalence of child labor in cocoa production increased by 14%, while the prevalence of hazardous child labor increased by 13%.¹⁵ Some of this is attributed to the increase in the total acreage under cocoa production, and the government of Côte d'Ivoire raising its minimum working age from 14 to 16 in 2015.

Box 1: CHILD TRAFFICKING IN THE COCOA SECTOR

Almost all (99%) of children work on their families' cocoa farms. About one percent are migrants, often trafficked from neighboring countries like Burkina Faso or Mali, and may be as young as 10 years old.

A study by Tulane University and Walk Free Foundation in 2018 estimated that 0.42% of adults working in cocoa experienced forced labor in Côte d'Ivoire between 2013 and 2017. The same study found that 0.17% of children working in cocoa in Côte d'Ivoire were forced to work by someone other than a parent.

Source:

<https://www.walkfreefoundation.org/news/resource/cocoa-report/>

Olam prioritized child labor in its internal monitoring and remediation efforts given the importance of addressing child labor in Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa sector established by the Harkin-Engel Protocol and campaigns in the United States¹⁶ and other networks in Europe,¹⁷ as well as issues identified in FLA assessments.

9 <https://engagethechain.org/sites/default/files/commodity/Cocoa%20Brief%20Engage%20the%20Chain%20FINAL.pdf>

10 <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/our-work/child-forced-labor-trafficking/child-labor-cocoa>

11 <https://www.unicef.org/csr/css/synthesis-report-children-rights-cocoa-communities-en.pdf>

12 Daily, contractual, annual workers, and sharecroppers

13 <https://www.unicef.org/csr/css/synthesis-report-children-rights-cocoa-communities-en.pdf>

14 https://www.fairlabor.org/sites/default/files/documents/reports/Nestlé_gender_dialogue_gals_economic_empowerment_training_follow-up_2016.pdf

15 A study commissioned by the U.S. Department of Labor-Bureau of International Labor Affairs in 2015 was conducted by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago to identify the interventions carried out in the cocoa sector in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana and measure progress toward achieving a 70% reduction in the worst forms of child labor and other goals by 2020, as outlined in the 2010 Declaration of Joint Action. <https://www.norc.org/Research/Projects/Pages/assessing-progress-in-reducing-child-labor-in-cocoa-growing-areas-of-c%3%B4te-d%E2%80%99ivoire-and-ghana.aspx>

16 International Labor Rights Forum <https://laborrights.org/industries/cocoa>

17 Make Chocolate Fair <https://makechocolatefair.org/campaign/who-we-are>; Voice Network www.voicenetwerk.eu/

II. CHILD LABOR DEFINITIONS AND STANDARDS

Box 2: CHILD LABOR DEFINITIONS AND STANDARDS

WHO IS A CHILD?

The UNCRC (1989) defines child as “every human being below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.”

WHAT IS THE FLA STANDARD ON CHILD LABOR?

FLA’s standard states that “no person shall be employed under the age of 15 or under the age for completion of compulsory education, whichever is higher”. In countries where the economy is insufficiently developed and educational facilities lacking, the minimum age for employment can be 14. Child labor is work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential, and their dignity, and is harmful to their physical and mental development. It involves activities that are:

- mentally, physically, socially, or morally dangerous and harmful
- interferes with their schooling.

In Côte d’Ivoire the legal minimum age for work is 16 years.

WHAT IS LIGHT WORK?

ILO Convention 138 allows light work that is age appropriate, not dangerous, and conducted outside school hours under parental supervision from the age of 12. In Côte d’Ivoire the legal minimum age for light work “also called “travail socialisant” is 13 years.

WHAT IS HAZARDOUS WORK?

The FLA Workplace Code of Conduct and Benchmarks for the Agriculture Sector, in line with ILO Convention 182, states that “no person under the

age of 18 shall undertake hazardous work, i.e., work which is likely to “harm the health, safety or morals of persons under 18” or undermine their long-term development.

Such work includes, but is not limited to:

- the application of agricultural chemicals, pesticides, and fertilizer
- lifting or moving heavy materials and goods
- use of farm equipment, tools, and machinery
- working at heights or confined spaces
- working in extreme conditions (heat, excessive hours, without breaks and at night).

WHAT ARE THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR?

ILO Convention 182 defines worst forms of child labor as following activities:

- work, which is likely to harm the health, safety, and morals of children (hazardous work)
- slavery
- child trafficking
- debt bondage
- serfdom
- forced labor (e.g., children in armed conflict)
- sexual exploitation (prostitution, pornography, and pornographic performances)
- involvement in illicit activities (production and trafficking drugs, other crimes, organized beggary).

Table 1: CHILD LABOR STANDARDS

CATEGORY	LEGAL REQUIREMENTS IN CÔTE D’IVOIRE	FLA CHILD LABOR BENCHMARKS
Light Work (non-hazardous activities)	<p>The minimum age for light work is age 13</p> <p>HOURS OF WORK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maximum working hours per week during school days: 10 hours ● Maximum working hours per day during school days: 2 hours ● Maximum working hours per week outside of the school day: 14 hours ● Maximum working hours per day outside of school days: 4 hours ● Minimum daily rest: 14 hours per day ● Minimum rest per week: 1 day ● Minimum continuous rest during school holidays: at least half of the total holiday duration ● Working time: Not before 7 a.m. and not after 7 p.m. or during school hours. <p>EXAMPLES OF LIGHT WORK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Helping measuring distances between the plants ● Extracting cocoa beans by hand after an adult has broken the pod ● Washing beans <p>Other details on light work are included in the document ARRETE Number 2017-016 MEPS/CAB</p>	<p>In accordance with national laws and ILO Convention 138, children of producers not younger than 12 years may be involved in light work on their parents’ farm provided that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The work is not dangerous and not harmful to their health or development. 2) The work does not prejudice their attendance at school and is done within reasonable time limits after school or during holidays. 3) The work is appropriate to the child’s age and physical condition, and does not jeopardize the child’s social, moral, or physical development. 4) The child’s parents provide supervision and guidance.

Apprenticeship	The minimum age for admission to apprenticeship: 14 years	<p>Employers may allow temporary workplace and apprenticeship education programs for young workers (14 or 15 – 18 years old), which are customary seasonal employment so long as such persons are closely supervised and their morals, safety, health, and compulsory education are not compromised in any way and all local, state, and national laws regarding the employment of young workers are observed.</p> <p>Employers shall comply with all regulations and requirements of apprentice or vocational education programs.</p>
Working Age	Minimum age for work: 16 years	<p>Employers shall comply with all national laws, ratified international conventions, fundamental labor rights, regulations and procedures concerning the prohibition of child labor.</p> <p>Employers shall comply with ILO Convention 138 and shall not employ anyone under the age of 15 or under the age for completion of compulsory education, whichever is higher. If a country has a specified minimum age of 14 years due to insufficiently developed economy and educational facilities, employers might follow national legislation but must work to progressively raise the minimum age to 15 years.</p>
Compulsory Schooling	Up to the 16th birthday	<p>Resident and migrant children whose parents are involved in farm activities shall have guaranteed access to quality education. If there are no schools available in the area where children live or stay, the employer shall work with local authorities and/or other relevant stakeholders to facilitate access to education or provide alternative forms of schooling on the farm or in nearby communities.</p>
Hazardous Work	<p>MINIMUM AGE FOR HAZARDOUS WORK: 18 years EXCEPTIONS: Hazardous activities can be undertaken by children 16-18 years provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Their health and safety, and morals are guaranteed ● They have received a specific and adequate training or vocational training in relation to the activity <p>LIST OF HAZARDOUS WORK FOR AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY (INCLUDING COCOA):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tree felling ● Burning of fields ● Sale, transportation, handling, and application of agrochemicals ● Hunting ● Charcoal production or logging ● Land clearing ● Tree stump removal ● Digging a hole ● Pod-breaking with a sharp object /tool ● Harvesting with a machete or a sickle ● Handling of motorized equipment/machines <p>HOURS OF WORK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maximum of 40 hour per week ● No night work <p>ALLOWABLE WEIGHT TO CARRY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Boys and girls 14-15 years: 8 kilograms ● Boys and girls 16-17 years: 10 kilograms ● By wheelbarrow, boys, and girls 14-17 years: 40 kilograms <p>Other criteria on carrying weight by train cart, tricycle, 3-4-wheeler, hand cart is detailed in the document ARRETE Number 2017-017 MEPS/CAB</p>	<p>Employers shall comply with all relevant laws that apply to young workers, (e.g., those between the minimum legal working age and the age of 18), including regulations related to hiring, working conditions, types of work, hours of work, proof of age documentation, and overtime.</p> <p>No person under the age of 18 shall undertake hazardous work, i.e., work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of persons under the age of 18.</p> <p>SUCH WORK INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the application of agricultural chemicals, pesticides, and fertilizers, ● use of farm equipment tools and machinery, ● lifting or moving of heavy materials or goods, ● carrying out hazardous work such as underground or underwater or at dangerous heights. <p>Every activity performed by a young worker must be supervised by an adult.</p> <p>Employers shall maintain a list of all young workers, their entry dates, proof of age and description of their assignment.</p>

IV. OLAM'S CLMRS

OLAM'S COCOA COMPASS¹⁸

Olam started its cocoa sustainability program in 2004 with a focus on environmental stewardship and improving cocoa farmers' livelihoods. Olam began building the CLMRS in 2013-2014, after an initial assessment by FLA. The focus was on addressing child labor through a range of interventions. In 2019, Olam launched Cocoa Compass, committing to eliminate child labor in its direct cocoa supply chain and ensuring that all cocoa farmers' children in its direct supply chain

have access to education by 2030. The overall aim is to create a future for cocoa in which farmers can earn a living income, children are protected, and nature is preserved. CLMRS is part of the overall Cocoa Compass strategy, which is now operational in all managed sustainability programs across nine countries.

¹⁸ <https://www.olamgroup.com/olam-cocoa-compass.pdf>

OLAM'S CHILD LABOR DEFINITION

Olam's standards on child labor in Côte d'Ivoire are aligned with the local and international legislation outlined in Table 1. Olam has five categories that flag child labor or risk of child labor in its CLMRS:

1. Hazardous work;
2. Excessive hours worked, whether hazardous or not;
3. School attendance compromised;
4. Dropped out of school to work; and
5. Forced labor in children.

OLAM'S CLMRS IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

During the 2019–2020 season, Olam sourced from 119,384 producers from 197 cooperatives in Côte d'Ivoire. The cooperatives that supply to Olam were implementing CLMRS with various buyers. From 2016 to 2020, a CLMRS was implemented in 94% of Olam's 197 cooperatives, according to the company. To support implementation, Olam identified CLMRS representatives in all sourcing communities and cooperatives.¹⁹

management. If child labor is identified during monitoring, Olam implements remediation measures.

Olam provides a premium to the cooperatives based on the certified volume of cocoa purchased, which raises the purchasing price above the government-set farm gate price. Olam requires that at least 30% of the premium received by the cooperative is spent on social activities. Olam has defined three CLMRS steps with several sub-activities (Table 2).

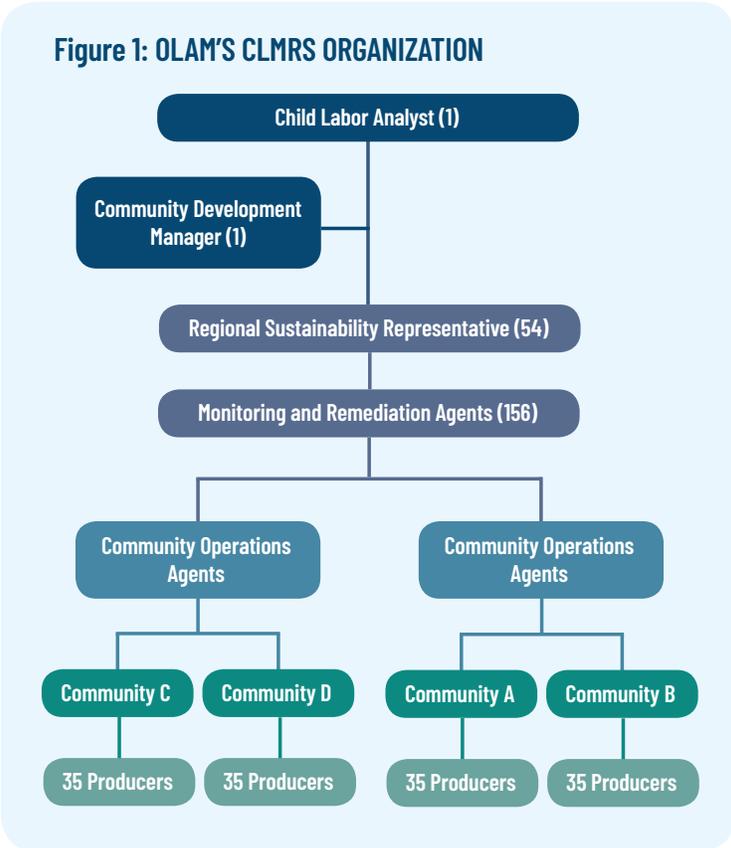
Together with brand partners, Olam funds the group administrators, CLMRS personnel, and farmer trainers. Olam organizes training and capacity building activities for the cooperative

¹⁹ During the 2020-21 campaign, Olam had 210 supplier cooperatives.

To manage the CLMRS program in Côte d'Ivoire, Olam relies on a team of 1,476 people (Figure 1):

- ▶ **Community Development Manager (CDM)** (one person) oversees strategy development, procedure, and CLMRS tools in collaboration with the Child Labor Analyst (CLA). The CDM conducts capacity building of CLMRS field personnel, manages the administration and logistics of the program, and validates and monitors the implementation of the remediation plans.
- ▶ **Child Labor Analyst (CLA)** (one person) oversees Olam global child labor strategy for cocoa, and ensures communication with customers and external stakeholders, validates, and monitors the implementation of the remediation plans.
- ▶ **Regional Sustainability Representatives (RSR)** (54 people) supervise activities of the CLMRS at the cooperative level. They assist in developing remediation plans, ensuring the verification of collected data, and providing basic technical support to the CLMRS Monitoring and Remediation Agents (MRA) at their cooperatives.
- ▶ **Monitoring and Remediation Agents (MRA)** (156 people) are responsible for the functioning of the CLMRS. They monitor their team's progress on Olam's data management and information platform called (OFIS²⁰) and develop remediation action plans in collaboration with the RSR.
- ▶ **Community Operations Agents (COA)** (1,266 people) are responsible for collecting data from producers' households while ensuring investigation and follow-up of any violation of children's rights at the farm and household levels. COAs are responsible for creating household-level awareness of child labor, conducting unannounced farm visits, profiling producers' households, and undertaking community profiling.

Table 2: OVERVIEW OF OLAM'S CLMRS	
CLMRS STEPS	SUB-ACTIVITIES
Step 1: IDENTIFICATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community profiling to identify communities at risk 2. Household profiling to identify households at risk 3. Profiling of children to identify children at risk or in child labor
Step 2: TRAINING, AWARENESS, and MONITORING	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community awareness raising 2. Proximity awareness raising 3. Household visits 4. Farm visits
Step 3: CORRECTION and REMEDIATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Schooling support <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. facilitation of birth certificates b. payment of school fees c. distribution of school kits d. refurbishment of schools building or new builds including latrines e. construction of school canteens 2. Setting up alternate IGAs to strengthen the economic status of the households 3. Setting up CLGs to enhance workforce in the communities 4. Establishing Village Savings Loan Association (VSLA) to promote access to finance (mostly for women) and women empowerment



²⁰ <https://ofis.olamdigital.com/#/login>

V. DATA COLLECTION

During 2020-21, as part of its annual due diligence process, FLA assessed Olam's CLMRS program through an SIA²¹ that captured the perceived impact of and satisfaction with the interventions by their beneficiaries, which include cocoa farmers, women, and children. The assessment determines if there are differences between the cooperatives, and if the beneficiaries consider certain interventions more useful than others.

FLA used a control group (two communities from one cooperative) with no CLMRS at the time of the assessment and compared its data with those collected from three cocoa cooperatives with active CLMRSs. Within each cooperative there were several communities. FLA collected data from 10 communities under these four cooperatives.

The use of this methodology reflects a growing need to measure the impact of interventions and increase the overall understanding of their benefits. It marks an evolution from regular inspections, certification visits, or traditional compliance evaluations that can reveal labor violations but often fall short in measuring how stakeholders perceive the efficacy of interventions and remediation measures. Use of the control group served to reveal "what could be the level of the cooperative where the CLMRS is not implemented."

FLA started by reviewing the 2016-19 CLMRS data provided by four cooperatives.

- 1. Cooperative 1** in Bangolo (control group). There was no active CLMRS. The cooperative was in a certification scheme in 2018²² and conducted training and some activities on child labor without the support of any buyer.

- 2. Cooperative 2** in San Pedro (CLMRS implemented by a customer's implementing partner). FLA collected data from Olam about this cooperative. Olam's customer shared the data with Olam.
- 3. Cooperative 3** in Hiré (CLMRS implemented by Olam with support of two customers). In this cooperative, a CLMRS committee appointed by the cooperative undertakes household-level data collection and conducts child labor awareness sessions. Together with a partner, Olam implements the VSLA aimed at increasing household incomes.
- 4. Cooperative 4** in Soubré (CLMRS implemented by Olam on behalf of a customer). In this cooperative, Olam collects household data and enters it in OFIS. It conducts child labor awareness training and other interventions related to child labor remediation.

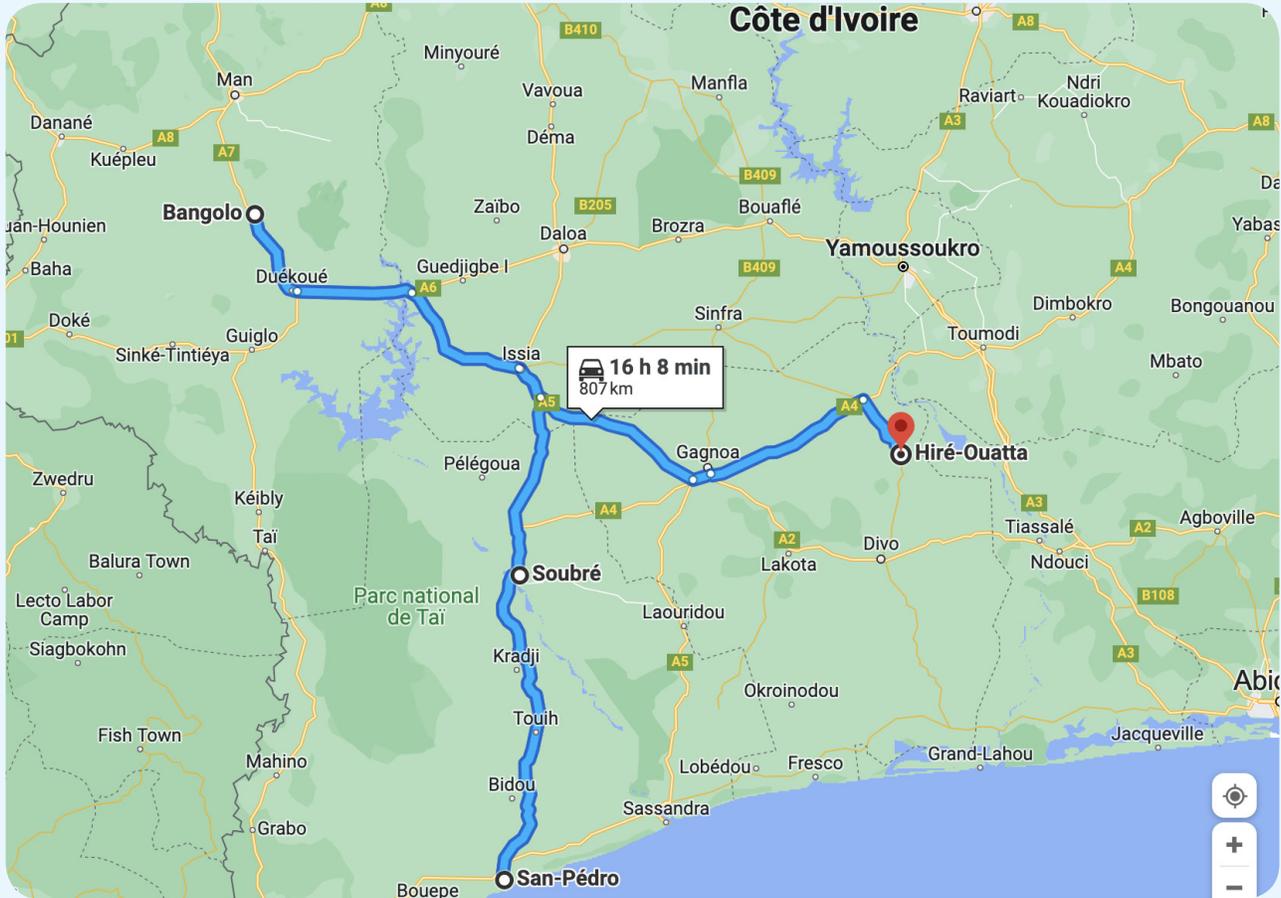
FLA visited 10 communities supplying to the four assessed cooperatives. The population of these communities ranged from 180 to 16,000 inhabitants. Various ethnicities, such as Guéré, Dida, Baoulé, Bété, Malinké, and Burkinabé, resided in these communities. The community members engaged in two types of economic activities: agriculture (cocoa, coffee, rubber, rice, food crops)

²¹ FLA piloted this approach in Turkey in the hazelnuts sector in 2018: https://www.fairlabor.org/sites/default/files/documents/reports/social_impact_assessment_final.pdf

In 2019, FLA piloted the SIA methodology in the cocoa sector in Côte d'Ivoire without the use of counterfactual. <https://www.fairlabor.org/sites/default/files/documents/reports/addressing-child-labor-cocoa-cote-divoire-oct-2020.pdf>

²² This information was not available to FLA before starting this assessment.

Figure 2: MAP OF FOUR ASSESSED COOPERATIVES



and trade. Five communities had a local market; the others could access markets located within three to five kilometers.

Located in the four major areas of cocoa production, the cooperatives collectively represented 2,479 of Olam’s cocoa producers. FLA interviewed 451 people, including:

- 172 producers²³
- 33 community leaders (village chiefs, elders, and youth leaders)
- 62 women beneficiaries (of CLMRS and IGA interventions)
- 105 children
- 10 members of the CLMRS committee
- 10 hired workers

The assessment team collected qualitative information through individual interviews and focus group discussions. The team visited 11 cocoa farms during field visits.

Box 3: VISITED COOPERATIVES AND COMMUNITIES

(Names have been anonymized)

I. COOPERATIVE 1 BANGOLO

1. Community 1
2. Community 2

II. COOPERATIVE 2 SAN PEDRO

3. Community 3
4. Community 4
5. Community 5

III. COOPERATIVE 3 HIRÉ

6. Community 6
7. Community 7

IV. COOPERATIVE 4 SOUBRÉ

8. Community 8
9. Community 9
10. Community 10

²³ Cooperative 1: 43, Cooperative 2: 44, Cooperative 3: 43, Cooperative 4: 42

FLA conducted interviews with producers and 54 other stakeholders²⁴. Annex 1 includes details of the methodology, sampling, and limitations.

SIA FOCUS AREAS

The SIA examined selected activities in five CLMRS intervention areas.

- i. CLMRS monitoring focusing on the identification of child labor;
- ii. Awareness raising in the communities and households on child labor;
- iii. Access to workforce by the establishment of CLG;

- iv. Enabling education through school building or refurbishment, provision of school kits, and facilitation of birth certificates; and
- v. Improving households' economic resilience through the establishment of IGA and VSLA.²⁵

24 The stakeholder interviews included representatives from three chocolate companies, two chocolate industry associations, implementing partners executing CLMRS activities, 20 education and health authorities (15 teachers and 5 doctors), and Olam local staff.

25 VSLA was a methodology originally developed by CARE to help support poor local communities to help collectively do micro-savings over a period and manage these savings in a professional and transparent way. <https://www.care.org/vsla>

Box 4: PROFILE OF FLA ASSESSED COCOA PRODUCERS

GENDER:

The 172 cocoa producers interviewed during this assessment were predominantly male (94%) with land ownership. Women used the land owned by their spouse to grow food crops (and seldom for cash crops such as cocoa). For information on gender roles in cocoa production, review FLA reports ([Nestle gender report](#), [cocoa community report](#)) on this topic.

COCOA PRODUCTION:

Sixty percent of the producers were growing cocoa for more than 20 years, and 17% of producers reported establishing their cocoa farms in the past decade. The 172 producers farmed cocoa on 866 hectares. The farm size of the producers varied from 0.5 to 27 hectares. Sixty-eight percent of producers had farms less than five hectares; only four producers had farms more than 20 hectares.

AGE:

The average age of cocoa farmers was 43. The youngest was 22; the

oldest was 74. Sixty-seven percent were between age 31 to 60. The number of producers above age 60 (14.5%) dropped given the physically demanding nature of cocoa production. Fewer young producers between age 20 to 30 (8%) were cocoa farmers, which is attributed to a diminishing interest to engage in cocoa farming among the younger generation. The lack of interest is considered a main reason for insufficient labor in cocoa communities.

CHILDREN AND FAMILY SIZE:

Producers (148 out of 172) reported that they have 592 children under age 18, while 692 children reside in their households. The average family size was six people. Some producers said that they have more children than their own residing in their household, including nephews and nieces, younger brothers, and sisters. Twenty-four producers did not have any children. Producers reported one to 16 children in their households; in some cases, they reported more than one spouse. There were 337 children below age five. Sixty-one percent of the 692 children were between ages six and 16.

VI. FLA INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL DUE DILIGENCE DATA

Olam joined the FLA Agriculture Program in 2012. Between 2013 and 2018, FLA assessors²⁶ visited 960 cocoa farms in 48 communities clustered in 20 cooperatives in Olam’s supply chain.

Table 3: DATA ON CHILD LABOR CASES IN OLAM’S COCOA SUPPLIER FARMS (2013-2018, FLA IEA)

YEAR	NUMBER OF COOPERATIVES VISITED	NUMBER OF COMMUNITIES VISITED	NUMBER OF FARMS VISITED	TOTAL NUMBER OF WORKERS ON THE VISITED FARMS	CHILD LABOR (FAMILY)		CHILD LABOR (HIRED)	
					Young	Child	Young	Child
2013	3	3	60	30	0	0	0	0
2014	2	5	100	185	14	2	0	0
2015	3	8	160	312	5	6	0	0
2016	3	7	140	299	0	0	0	0
2017	5	13	260	331	3	2	1	0
2018	4	12	240	220	2	8	0	1
TOTAL	20	48	960	1,377	24	18	1	1

An overview of the worker profile is presented in Table 3. The table includes the number of children who were physically present on farms working at the time of field visits. This method does not accurately report child labor, since the number of children present at the farms during farm visits cannot be the only indicator of child labor prevalence. Child labor is better determined by assessing the household situation and looking at the community-level perceptions and norms about child labor. FLA presented the risk of child labor in the assessed households in published reports.²⁷

The definition of child labor changed in Côte d’Ivoire in 2015; previously the FLA standard which considers children up to age 15 engaged in farm work to be child laborers had applied. Beginning

in 2016, FLA adjusted its reporting to reflect 16 years as the minimum age after a revision by the government.²⁸

²⁶ <https://www.fairlabor.org/transparency/fla-accredited-monitoring-organizations>

²⁷ A sample of public reports may be found at <https://www.fairlabor.org/report/independent-external-monitoring-olams-cocoa-supply-chain-2015-2019>

²⁸ Per FLA monitoring benchmarks applicable in the agriculture sector, the minimum age to work is 15 years. Children can be involved in light work only on family farms and in accordance with the national law and ILO Convention 138. Children between ages 12-13 can only be involved in work that 1.) is not dangerous and not harmful to their health or development; 2.) does not prejudice their attendance at school and is done within reasonable time limits after school or during holidays; 3.) is appropriate to the child’s age and physical condition, and does not jeopardize the child’s social, moral, or physical development; and 4.) The child’s parents provide supervision and guidance. Beginning in 2015, FLA adjusted its reporting in Côte d’Ivoire to reflect children up to age 16 as engaged in child labor to match the revised legal minimum age from age 14 to age 16 in Côte d’Ivoire. Light work on family farms is permitted for children age 13 and older. A further complication was that assessors do not collect data on the type of work performed by the children, limiting the ability to determine children performing hazardous work.

TAKEAWAYS:

- ▶ **Children and young workers continue to perform similar work as adults:** FLA found that children and young workers on family farms perform various activities, such as picking cocoa, transporting cocoa beans, and clearing the farm with sharp implements. In most cases, young workers (ages 16–17) worked as many hours as adults and performed similar activities, including using chemicals, swinging a machete, and carrying heavy loads — all considered hazardous work.
- ▶ **Child labor has multiple deep-rooted causes:** Interviews revealed external factors as drivers of family-based child labor. These could

include a shortage of adult workforce, small landholdings, an increase in the cocoa acreage, low income, and fluctuations in cocoa farm gate prices (including a roughly 35% drop in 2017)²⁹. These factors affect farmer income and suggest why some producers engage their children in farm work.³⁰

29 <https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2017/03/03/518328252/a-dip-in-global-prices-creates-cocoa-crisis-for-ivory-coasts-farmers?t=1588709895111>

30 Another factor could be the presence of migrant workers, who travel and settle with their families from neighboring countries and are involved in cocoa production in Côte d'Ivoire. Migration may leave young workers more vulnerable to forced labor risks—an issue that has not been identified in the CLMRS. Migrants sometimes live in settlements closer to farms and further from schools. This may affect school attendance for their children. A focused assessment is needed to identify the challenges involved of child labor among the cocoa-producing population from neighboring countries working in Côte d'Ivoire; such an examination was outside of the scope of this assessment.

VII. EVALUATING OLAM'S CLMRS

I. CHILD LABOR DATA GATHERING

From 2016 to 2020, Olam profiled 63,000 producer households in Côte d'Ivoire as part of its CLMRS and identified 161,000 children under age 18. A review of Olam's data show:

- 151,000 (94%) children were of school age (5-16 years);
- 11,675 children (7%) were in a child labor situation. Of these, 88% (10,227) engaged in hazardous work (mostly in family farms); and
- 33,762 children (21%) did not have birth certificates.

Table 4 presents the number of children in producers' households and school-age children (ages 5-16) in the three assessed cooperatives with active

CLMRS. Data from Cooperative 1 (control group) were not available as the CLMRS did not initiate. For Cooperative 2, the data were compiled in Olam customer's implementing partner's online database. Some data were not current.

There were 2,897 registered children in the profiled households in the three visited cooperatives. Olam's field data show that of these children, 24% (696) had no birth certificate, and 19% (557) participated in child labor, including 338 involved in hazardous work³¹.

31 NORC reported the percentage of child labor at 34%. FLA will not be able to validate the prevalence of child labor (nine percent across three assessed cooperatives or six percent across 210 cooperatives) in this assessment as large-scale data was not collected.

Table 4: PROFILE OF THE ASSESSED COOPERATIVES (CLMRS DATA, JUNE 2020)

COOPERATIVE	COOP 1	COOP 2	COOP 3	COOP 4 ³²	TOTAL
Year when cooperative started CLMRS	–	2017	2018	2016	
Total producers registered in the cooperative	405	814	702	558	2,479
Total producers supplying to Olam	405	814	702	558	2,479
Number of producers visited by the FLA for SIA	43	44	42	43	172
CLMRS communities under each cooperative	0	4	5	16	25
Number of children in registered households	–	904	1,334	659	2,897
Number of girls in registered households	–	397	573	304	1,274
Number of boys in registered households	–	507	761	355	1,623
Number of school-age (5-16 years) children	–	–	1,025	505	1,530
Number of girls in school-age	–	–	472	234	706
Number of boys in school-age	–	–	553	271	824
Number of total children attending school	–	375	919	379	1,980
Number of girls attending school	–	155	402	174	731
Number of boys attending school	–	220	517	202	939

Olam staff reported on the challenges to collect data on child labor. It took time and training for cooperatives and farmers to openly disclose child labor cases, and a fear of penalty still looms. The cooperatives selected for this assessment had a longer duration of CLMRS than average, which could explain their openness to disclosing child labor cases. Additionally, they had surveyed more farmers and children than other cooperatives, which could explain the higher percentage of child labor.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

▶ **Olam has defined targets and made public commitments:** Olam has publicly committed to eliminating child labor, ensuring all children of cocoa farmers have access to education, improving cocoa farmer livelihood, enabling 150,000 cocoa farmers to achieve a defined living income (US\$ 7,300 per year) in its direct supply chain by 2030.³³

- ▶ **Olam has allocated resources to building its CLMRS:** Olam has 1,476 dedicated staff members including headquarters and field staff and community agents that support the CLMRS. Olam works closely with the cooperatives, providing training to implement the CLMRS.
- ▶ **Cooperatives are the most important delivery agents:** Cooperatives are the most important means to relay information to producers and implement social programs. The most efficient way to conduct widespread awareness on child labor could be through training via cooperatives that can further disseminate information within their direct membership.

³² Cooperative 4 has the highest number of communities registered and the lowest number of registered children. Most of its communities are camps and the population is not properly registered.

³³ <https://www.olamgroup.com/news/all-news/press-release/cocoa-compass-olam-cocoa-commits-to-living-incomes-for-farmers.html>

II. CLMRS AWARENESS

Based on data collected by FLA in the four cooperatives, 74% of producers reported some knowledge about CLMRS. Cooperative disaggregated data analysis indicates that in Cooperative 1 (control group) 51% of producers were not aware of any type of CLMRS (through Olam or other implementing partners). The other 49% of producers mentioned having heard about the CLMRS. Assessors noted, however, that they were talking about child labor in general and not specifically about the CLMRS. Cooperative 1 was under a certification scheme for one year and sensitized its member

producers on child labor and collected some household-level data. Hence, when asked if they were aware of child labor programs, some responded affirmatively.

In Cooperative 2 and Cooperative 3 where Olam implemented CLMRS in collaboration with its customers, 91% of interviewed producers were aware of the CLMRS. At Cooperative 4, where Olam initiated CLMRS in 2016, 64% of producers had knowledge about the CLMRS. Two-thirds of all respondents (67%) have heard about the CLMRS in the last two or three years.

Table 5: AWARENESS ABOUT CLMRS

RESPONSE	# OF PRODUCERS	% OF PRODUCERS	COOPERATIVE 1 (Control Group) # (%)	COOPERATIVE 2 (One brand customer & Olam) # (%)	COOPERATIVE 3 (Two brand customers & Olam) # (%)	COOPERATIVE 4 (One brand customer & Olam) # (%)
Yes	127	73.8%	21 (49%)	40 (91%)	39 (91%)	27 (64%)
No	45	26.2%	22 (51%)	4 (9%)	4 (9%)	15 (36%)
TOTAL	172	100%	43 (100%)	44 (100%)	43 (100%)	42 (100%)

TAKEAWAYS:

► **Some awareness on child labor exists in all cooperatives:** Most cooperatives and their member farmers have some awareness about CLMRS due to awareness-building activities happening in the country.

► **Cooperatives where the CLMRS is run with customers have higher awareness about CLMRS:** In the cooperatives where Olam runs the CLMRS with direct intervention of a brand customer (Cooperative 2 and Cooperative 3), the awareness about the CLMRS was highest. In the cooperative where Olam solely runs CLMRS, the awareness is better than the control group.

III. CHILD LABOR SENSITIZATION AND AWARENESS

Olam trains and equips its CLMRS committees with flipcharts to undertake sensitization sessions on

child labor with households after they have been profiled as part of their CLMRS. In the three CLMRS

cooperatives, Olam organized 263 community-level awareness sessions and 2,186 individual awareness-raising sessions. Combined, the sessions reached 3,791 individuals (adults and children) (Table 6). FLA verified some of this information during field-level interviews.

ACCESS TO AWARENESS BUILDING SESSIONS ON CHILD LABOR

SIA data shows that 89% of all interviewed producers reported being sensitized on child labor.

In Cooperative 1, awareness was generated by cooperative and government-run programs, and 79% of producers reported being sensitized.

In Cooperative 2 and Cooperative 3, a higher percentage of producers (95% in each) reported being sensitized.

Box 5: ORGANIZATIONS CREATING AWARENESS IN THE COMMUNITIES: PRODUCERS' RESPONSES (n=172)

- Cooperatives: 36%
- Olam's field agents with cooperatives: 24%
- Government campaigns through ANADER and media: 16%
- A brand customer's implementing partner's field agents: 11%
- Others such as NGOs: 2%
- No Response: 11%

Percentages have been rounded.

In Cooperative 4, 86% of producers reported attending training sessions on child labor awareness.

Based on interviews with community leaders across the 10 communities, 27 of 33 community leaders (90%) have heard of Olam and the child labor training sessions. They attributed CLMRS interventions to Olam and other organizations.

Table 6: AWARENESS SESSIONS PER COOPERATIVE (AS OF JUNE 2020)

COOPERATIVE	COOP 1	COOP 2	COOP 3	COOP 4 ³²	TOTAL
Producers supplying to Olam	405	814	702	558	2,479
Community awareness sessions	0	32	201	30	263
Individual awareness sessions	0	282	179	1,725	2,186
Total awareness sessions (community and individual)	0	314	380	1,755	2,449
Number of SIA communities visited by FLA	2	3	2	3	10
Total sessions (community and individual) in 10 visited communities	0	215	221	–	436
Number of women covered in all communities	0	307	–	301	608
Number of men covered in all communities	0	321	–	1,027	1,348
Number of children covered in all communities	0	778	–	397	1,175
Number of people covered by the awareness sessions per cooperative	0	1,406	660	1,725	3,791
Number of women covered in 10 visited communities	0	195	–	–	195
Number of men covered in 10 visited communities	0	242	–	–	242
Number of children covered in 10 visited communities	0	538	–	–	538
Number of people covered in 10 visited communities	0	975	–	–	975
Number of children registered in the households of the 10 communities (from CLMRS)	–	–	674	–	674

Most producers mentioned that they have been aware of the child labor sensitization sessions for more than two years. When asked about the number of sessions they attended through Olam or its customers, they reported one to five. One person reported participation in 11 awareness sessions run by Olam and one of its customer's implementing partners.

Some producers (mostly in Cooperative 2 and Cooperative 3) reported that their spouses benefitted from the trainings. Most producers (80%) either did not respond to the question of who else benefits from the training or reported that the awareness sessions were limited to the male members of the cooperative. A small percentage of women attended the awareness sessions on child labor, as the trainings were understood to be for farm owners, who in most cases were men.

In the control group (Cooperative 1), the primary source of child labor information was dissemination by the cooperative (51%) and through a government campaign run by ANADER and media (20%). About one-fifth of producers did not respond to this question.

In Cooperative 3, most producers (49%) were sensitized through Olam, followed by the cooperative (26%) and the government (18%).

In Cooperative 4, 45% of producers were sensitized by the cooperative, followed by Olam (22%) and the government (17%).

There was a strong correlation between the entity running the CLMRS and producers' awareness of them. For example, the producers in Cooperative 2 only knew about Olam's customers implementing partner (41%).

AWARENESS ABOUT LEGAL MINIMUM AGE FOR LIGHT WORK (13 YEARS)

To verify the impact of awareness sessions, FLA assessed producers' awareness level across the four cooperatives. There is general recognition about child labor, and when asked what child labor means, producers provided statements such as:

"Child labor means not sending children to school."

"Child labor means making the child do difficult work or hazardous work that prevents their development."

"Child labor means employing children under 16 years old."

When FLA assessors inquired about the legal minimum age for light work, 35% of the producers were aware of the minimum age for light work (13 years and older). Twenty percent thought it to be higher (Table 7). Yet, 44% either believed it to be less than age 13 or said they did not know, suggesting a gap in awareness and a risk among these producers to engage in child labor.

Disaggregated data of the cooperatives show that the percentage of producers who lack awareness about the minimum age for light work in the control group (Cooperative 1) was 51% versus Cooperative 2 (44%), Cooperative 3 (37%), and Cooperative 4 (45%). Of all the producers who were unaware of the minimum age for light work (n=76 producers), 29% were in the control group (Cooperative 1), 25% were in Cooperative 2 and Cooperative 4, and 21% were in Cooperative 3.

Table 7: AWARENESS ABOUT MINIMUM AGE FOR LIGHT WORK (13 YEARS)

AT WHAT AGE DO CHILDREN LEARN HOW TO WORK IN THE FAMILY FARM?	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE	COOPERATIVE 1 (Control Group) # (%)	COOPERATIVE 2 (One brand customer & Olam) # (%)	COOPERATIVE 3 (Two brand customers & Olam) # (%)	COOPERATIVE 4 (One brand customer & Olam) # (%)
Do not know	9	5.23%	5 (11.63%)	0 (0%)	2 (4.65%)	2 (4.76%)
Less than 5 years	1	0.58%	1 (2.33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
From 5 to 12 years	66	38.37%	16 (37.21%)	19 (43.18%)	14 (32.56%)	17 (40.48%)
From 13 to 16 years	61	35.46%	11 (25.58%)	18 (40.91%)	20 (46.51%)	12 (28.57%)
From 17 to 18 years	29	16.86%	10 (23.26%)	6 (13.64%)	5 (11.63%)	8 (19.04%)
From 19 to 21 years	6	3.48%	0 (0%)	1 (2.27%)	2 (4.65%)	3 (7.14%)
TOTAL	172	100%	43 (100%)	44 (100%)	43 (100%)	42 (100%)

PRESENCE OF SELF-REPORTED CHILD LABOR CASES UNDER 13 YEARS

Of all assessed producers, 17 (10%) reported that they involve children under age 13 on family farms. Ten producers noted involving 23 children under age 13 on family farms. The remaining seven producers did not answer how many children they involve on family farms. Cooperative disaggregated data does not reveal significant differences in the number of producers who mentioned involving children at farms or the total number of children reported to be in child labor situations.

Interviews with community leaders and school authorities highlighted that children work on the farms during their off days and holidays. FLA confirmed this during the focus group discussions with children. During the focus group discussions and individual interviews with 195 children, 90% of children said they worked on a farm during

their free time, elaborating that the tasks they perform range from light to hazardous, such as pod opening, carrying heavy loads, weeding, and using tools like machete or daba. The children mentioned that they undertake these tasks by choice. One-fifth of the children mentioned that they had been injured by a sharp tool while working. Three percent reported snake bites.

AWARENESS ABOUT LEGAL MINIMUM AGE FOR WORK AND HIRING WORKERS

In Côte d'Ivoire, the legal minimum age for employment is age 16, which corresponds to the typical age of completion of compulsory education. The minimum age to undertake hazardous work is 18. According to national law, young people ages 16 to 17 may undertake hazardous work if conditions permit for the protection of children's safety and morals, if supervised by an adult, and if proper training has been received.

FLA assessed the awareness of the producers on the legal minimum age of employment (Table 8).

Only one producer mentioned the correct minimum age of employment. Based on a data review, it appears that there is a lower risk of employing child labor among the 81% of producers who mentioned the minimum age as above 16 years.

Fifty percent of producers mentioned the minimum age to be 18 years, given that they considered cocoa production work to be labor intensive with several hazardous activities. The remaining 19% of producers said the minimum age was under 16 years or did not provide a response.

AWARENESS ABOUT COMPULSORY SCHOOLING

In 2015, Ivorian legislation made school compulsory for all children ages six to 16, in line with making education a fundamental right for every child. Eighty-seven percent of the assessed producers said it is mandatory to enroll children in school. Thirteen percent of producers believed that it is not compulsory or did not know, indicating a lack of awareness about the compulsory education law. Four producers mentioned that their children under age 16 work on farms and do not attend

school. The reasons noted were the children’s refusal to attend school or a lack of the parent’s financial means to send their children to school.

Qualitative interviews across all cooperatives reveal that children continue to assist their parents and family members on farms while attending school. Often, children accompany their parents to the farms during holidays due to a lack of childcare facilities in the community. Parents considered farm work a means of teaching their children so they would be fit to take over management of the farm from their parents.

TAKEAWAYS:

- ▶ **Access to child labor awareness sessions is higher in cooperatives where Olam collaborates with other companies:** In Cooperative 1, 79% of producers reported having access to child labor awareness sessions (either run by the cooperative or the government). In Cooperative 2 and Cooperative 3, a higher percentage of producers (95% in each) reported being sensitized. In Cooperative 4, 86% of producers reported attending trainings on child labor awareness.

Table 8: AWARENESS ABOUT MINIMUM AGE FOR LIGHT WORK (13 YEARS)

MINIMUM LEGAL AGE TO WORK	NUMBER OF PRODUCERS RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE OF PRODUCERS (%)
19 and above	50	29%
18 years	86	50%
17 years	4	2.4%
16 years	1	0.6%
Under 16 years	19	11%
No response	12	7%
TOTAL	172	100%

- ▶ **Women do not benefit from the trainings:** Women play an essential role in cocoa production and ensuring their children’s education,³⁴ yet the findings show that trainings do not include the spouses of male cocoa producers. Women perceive that the trainings are meant only for male producers. Efforts should be made to include the wives of producers in trainings.
- ▶ **Knowledge gaps continue to exist on the legal minimum age of light work (age 13):** Producers lack knowledge about the minimum age for light work. Forty-four percent of producers were found to be at risk of using child labor given their knowledge gap. Ten percent of producers self-reported involving children under age 13 on family farms. A majority (90%) of children reported helping on cocoa farms during their free time, performing all types of work. Nineteen percent of children mentioned that they had been injured by a sharp tool while working.
- ▶ **Awareness sessions need to consider techniques that alter knowledge, attitudes, and practices**

(KAP): Focus group discussions revealed that communities have a challenge to breaking existing habits. To realize long-term change, all stakeholders (including Olam) conducting child labor awareness trainings should consider integrating techniques that address KAP on child labor in CLMRS interventions. Qualitative feedback suggests few differences among the four cooperatives with respect to awareness and behavior change.

- ▶ **More producers are aware of hiring age and compulsory schooling:** Eighty percent of the assessed producers knew that people younger than age 16 should not be hired and that parents are required to send children to school. Disaggregated data show awareness about compulsory schooling in the four cooperatives as Cooperative 1 (81%), Cooperative 2 (86%), Cooperative 3 (93%), and Cooperative 4 (85%).

³⁴ https://www.fairlabor.org/sites/default/files/documents/reports/Nestlé_gender_report_7-9-14_0.pdf
https://www.fairlabor.org/sites/default/files/documents/reports/women_and_youth_nutrition_in_cocoa_communities_english_july_2015.pdf

IV. COOPERATIVE LABOR GROUPS

Producers and community members raised concerns about the unavailability and unaffordability of the workforce in their communities. One of the remediation actions that Olam piloted was establishing a Cooperative Labor Group, a group of workers arranged by the cooperative to serve as workforce in the community. The group does not belong to a specific community and is located at the cooperative headquarters. These groups, according to Olam, exist at Cooperative 3 and Cooperative 4. In addition, a customer’s implementing partner established a Community Service Group (CSG)³⁵ in Cooperative 2. During the field visits, FLA found CLG/CSG in three communities including

Community 3 and Community 4 in Cooperative 2 and Community 9 in Cooperative 4.

ASSISTANCE FOR FARM WORK

Of all assessed producers ($n=172$), 92% reported requiring and receiving some help to conduct their

³⁵ CSG is an informal collective made up of 10 or more producers (and in some cases their family members) to make workforce available when needed. These are structured on the principles of self-help groups (SHG), and often evolve from such groups. During peak production on farms, members of the CSG can request support from fellow group members. SHGs are informal associations of people who voluntarily come together to find ways to improve their situation. Groups are usually self-governed, peer-controlled, and include people with similar socio-economic backgrounds with a desire to achieve a common purpose. There are numerous problems related to poverty, illiteracy, lack of credit, lack of work force etc., in the villages. These problems cannot be tackled at an individual level and need collective efforts.

Table 9: ENTITIES SUPPORTING FARM WORK ALONGSIDE PRODUCER

PRODUCERS SEEKING HELP FOR FARM WORK	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE	COOPERATIVE 1 (Control Group)	COOPERATIVE 2 (One brand customer & Olam)	COOPERATIVE 3 (Two brand customers & Olam)	COOPERATIVE 4 (One brand customer & Olam)
Family Members	70	40.7%	14	19	18	19
Children	4	2.3%	2	1	1	0
Contractor	18	10.5%	8	6	2	2
Sharecropper	24	14%	3	10	8	3
Daily Workers	10	6%	2	1	3	4
CLG or CSG or SHG	32	18.5%	6	5	10	11
No Assistance / No Answer	14	8%	8	2	1	3
TOTAL	172	100%	43	44	43	42

farm work. Disaggregated data show no significant difference in the percentage of producers who sought help. It ranged from 84% in the control group to 95% each in Cooperative 2 and Cooperative 3 and 93% in Cooperative 4. Twelve producers reported not seeking any help, and two producers did not respond to the question.

Forty-three percent of all producers relied on family members (including their children) for farm work. (Table 9) One-quarter of producers mentioned hiring a contractor or sharecropper to conduct work for the entire season. At the time of the assessment, six percent of the producers relied on daily workers and 18.5% relied on either a CLG or CSG. Disaggregated data suggest no difference among the producers based on the help they sought.

AWARENESS ABOUT AND RELIANCE ON CLG, CSG AND SHG FOR WORKFORCE

Producers reported that they relied on existing self-help groups (SHG) in their communities to address workforce needs. Sixty-six percent of producers reported knowing an SHG in their community, and 12% reported awareness of a CLG

or CSG. Most community groups have been created by the producers. In some instances, the village youth, cooperative, and community or church head have created community groups. Awareness about SHGs is high in the control group (Cooperative 1). The awareness of a CSG is highest in Cooperative 2. (Table 10) Apart from SHGs and the CSG, no farmers said they were aware of a workforce group in their community or at the cooperative level.

Twenty-five percent of producers in Cooperative 3 and Cooperative 4 reported relying on a community group (CLG, CSG, or SHG) for workforce. Two CSGs were created as part of the CLMRS in Cooperative 2 and several producers (16 of 44) were aware of these groups. Only eight producers were members and fewer reported using its services. They relied mostly on SHGs because of lower costs.

Seventy-six producers identified themselves as being part of either an SHG or a CSG. Of these producers, 90% belonged to the SHG, which are comprised of producers, youth members, and women associations. SHGs are not regulated by the community or the cooperative to ensure that children are not

Table 10: TYPES OF COMMUNITY GROUPS PRODUCERS ARE AWARE OF

WHAT TYPE OF GROUP ARE YOU AWARE OF?	# OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE %	COOPERATIVE 1 (Control Group) # (%)	COOPERATIVE 2 # (%)	COOPERATIVE 3 # (%)	COOPERATIVE 4 # (%)
CSG	21	12%	2 (4.7%)	16 (36.4%)	1 (2.3%)	2 (4.8%)
Self-help group	113	66%	38 (88.3%)	26 (59%)	21 (48.8%)	28 (66.7%)
Do not know	38	22%	3 (6.97%)	2 (4.6%)	21 (48.8%)	12 (28.5%)
TOTAL	172	100%	43 (100%)	44 (100%)	43 (100%)	42 (100%)

WHO CREATED THE GROUPS?	# OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE %
Olam	4	2.3%
Another customer's implementing partner	17	10%
Producers	91	53%
Do not know	38	22%
OTHERS	22	12.7%
TOTAL	172	100%

ENTITY	%
Village Youth	43%
Cooperative	34%
Community / Church Head	10%
Others	13%

part of these groups. During the field visit, representatives of two SHGs reported that some children younger than age 18 worked with them during school holidays. They did not take precautions about the type of work performed, conducting the same tasks, and working the same hours as the adults in the group.

HIRING OF WORKERS AND AGE VERIFICATION PROCESS

Sixty producers reported using hired assistance (104 workers). Many producers (70%) who hired workers reported hiring one or two people. One producer reported hiring seven. Other producers, except for two who did not respond, said they do not hire anyone under age 16. All hired workers were males living in the local or neighboring

Box 6: NUMBER OF SCHOOLS IN VISITED COMMUNITIES

- I. COOPERATIVE 1 BANGOLO
 - Community 1 - 5
 - Community 2 - 1
- II. COOPERATIVE 2 SAN PEDRO
 - Community 3 - 0
(Olam's customer is building one. Yet to be completed)
 - Community 4 - 1
 - Community 5 - 4 including 1 nursery
- III. COOPERATIVE 3 HIRÉ
 - Community 6 - 1
 - Community 7 - 1
- IV. COOPERATIVE 4 SOUBRÉ
 - Community 8 - 0 (nearest school is 2 kms away)
 - Community 9 - 1
 - Community 10 - 1

communities. Twenty producers confirmed that they conduct age verification. Sixty-one percent of producers reported no age verification during worker recruitment. This included producers who had hired workers around the assessment and those who had done so at least once in the past.

Some producers stated that they “guesstimate” the age of potential workers based on physical appearance. Reasons for not verifying a worker’s age were a lack of identification documents and low literacy among producers, which made it difficult to verify written documentation. Disaggregated data show no difference across producers’ recruitment processes.

Forty-six percent of producers reported being able to complete their cocoa farm work, while 52% reported difficulties in completing their work on time.

Cooperative 4 had the highest number of producers unable to complete their work. That means producers need external support, which they may not receive or can afford. Olam set up one CLG in Cooperative 4 and two producers reported being part of it. Community members said that while discussions to set up a CLG started between Olam and the cooperative, Olam has yet to support the CLG with farm equipment. Therefore, these groups either do not exist or are not operational in 70% of the assessed communities.

V. ENABLING EDUCATION

The community-level stakeholders in eight of the 10 communities visited reported the presence of at least one government-sponsored school. Most schools were conventional school buildings, though some are *appatams* (sheds). The schools were built mostly by the community or the government.³⁶

Half of the existing schools had a functional

TAKEAWAYS:

- ▶ **Follow up is needed to operationalize the CLG:** CLG could be an effective way to address labor shortages so that producers do not rely on children. While Olam had initiated discussions with the cooperatives to establish the CLGs, 70% of communities did not have one. In communities where CLGs existed, it appeared they were not helping producers meet workforce needs. Hence, producers have yet to realize the impact of this intervention.
- ▶ **Consider leveraging and equipping the SHGs:** SHGs are useful and established structures in most communities. However, their self-governance places them at risk of employing children. Olam could consider tapping into existing SHGs and professionalizing them to assume the role of a CLG while meeting labor standards.
- ▶ **Improvements are needed in the age verification process during recruitment:** Since producers lack capacity to verify age in a proactive manner, Olam could work with cooperatives to develop a simple, standard one-page worker contract for producers to capture age, agreed upon tasks, employment duration, and agreed-upon compensation. At a minimum, the contract could capture a worker’s self-declared age. Such a contract would provide workers with security and clarity on the terms and conditions of their employment.

canteen. Two communities had a school within three kilometers.

³⁶ The schools in Côte d'Ivoire are built mainly by three entities: government, community, or private organizations or individuals. When the government builds a school, it considers a radius of 5 km. Community members can initiate building a school in their community, so that the school is close by. In these instances, the government approves the school and assigns teachers.

A needs assessment conducted by Olam in the communities identified gaps around school infrastructure:

- Six communities needed a school building
- Three schools needed renovation
- Six schools needed equipment such as desks and benches
- Four schools needed a canteen building
- One school needed canteen equipment
- Five schools needed teachers' housing
- Three schools needed toilets

Village-level school authorities shared some of the challenges they considered inconducive to teaching and learning, such as a lack of equipment, books, and school kits (supplies). Schools in Community 1 and Community 10 did not have toilets, and children reported this to be a concern because they had to relieve themselves in the open or go home. According to school authorities, some children did not enroll because they did not have birth certificates. Olam undertook some measures to address these gaps.

ACCESS TO SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

Eighty-five percent of producers reported a school in their community. Cooperative 2 had the highest number of producers who mentioned not having access to school. In Community 3, located in Cooperative 2, had a school under construction at the time of the assessment.

Seventy-six percent of producers said their children have access to a school. In Cooperative 1 (control group) 86% of producers reported having access to school. Sixty-five percent of producers in Cooperative 4 mentioned having access to a school and 75% producers in Cooperative 2 stated having access to school.

Across cooperatives, 80% of producers said their children were enrolled in school. At least 18 children across the four cooperatives reported they were not

Box 7: ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN TO ENABLE EDUCATION FOR ALL COOPERATIVES*

- Distributed 32,208 school kits
- Facilitated 5,643 birth certificates
- Constructed 198 classrooms
- Rehabilitated 144 classrooms
- Built 19 houses for teachers
- Constructed seven school canteens
- Provided 13,233 school desks and benches
- Constructed 21 school latrines

An estimated 40,000 children have been reached by these interventions, and 2,341 children were removed from child labor situations.

**Per Olam CLMRS Data 2016-2020*

enrolled in a school, most in Cooperative 4. A lack of money to send children to school and a lack of children's interest to attend school were among the reasons provided. Eleven percent of producers did not have children.

SCHOOL CANTEENS

Thirty-nine producers mentioned that their children have access to a school canteen. Of these, 50% reported that children from their households eat at the school canteen. Nine producers in Cooperative 3 reported using the school canteen; four producers each in Cooperative 2 and Cooperative 4 said they used the school canteen. Two producers in Cooperative 1 said their children eat at the school canteen.

Parents reported that children could eat at home during school lunch break. Sixty-three percent of producers whose children use the canteen believe that their children's interest in the school improved due to the canteen. In focus groups, producers shared that they appreciate school canteens because they allow children to have lunch at a low cost (US\$0.05 to 0.1 per day), especially when parents are in the fields. Parents and school

authorities reported that school attendance is high on the days the canteen operates. Canteens generally open two days per week.

While the government provides grants to school canteens, the support is not sufficient to cover the entire school year even with only one meal per student per day. School authorities said there are often delays in receiving the funds that support the canteens. From time to time, community members support school canteens with voluntary initiatives.

SCHOOL KITS

Twenty percent of producers mentioned receiving school kits. Nearly 50% of children reported having received a school kit at least once, but they could not specify which entity provided the kits to them.

CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Eighty percent of producers who responded about their children's academic performance mentioned it to be quite good, good, or excellent. Community members highly appreciated the academic support. It was not possible to assess if support from Olam is enhancing academic performance, as neither children nor school authorities established a link between CLMRS and academic performance.

TAKEAWAYS:

► School canteens attract children to school:

Operationalizing school canteens could be a way to attract more children to school and address childcare needs of parents working on cocoa farms during the day.

► Awareness about Olam's interventions:

Awareness about school support interventions is five times higher in Cooperative 2 and Cooperative 3 compared to the control group. In Cooperative 1 and Cooperative 4, awareness was 14% among producers. Olam has yet to start its

Box 8: ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN TO ENABLE EDUCATION IN VISITED COOPERATIVES UNDER CLMRS*

OVERALL:

- Distributed 248 school kits, including 38 in Cooperative 2 and 210 in Cooperative 3
- Facilitated 175 birth certificated, including 77 in Cooperative 2, 73 in Cooperative 3, and 25 in Cooperative 4
- Renovated and/or built school infrastructure and donated school equipment in four communities

COOPERATIVE 3: Olam, customer, and the cooperative:

- Built a three-classroom school in Community 6 and donated 75 desks and benches, one storage unit and 400 textbooks
- Renovated the school in Community 7 and donated a storage unit and 400 textbooks

COOPERATIVE 2: Olam, customer, its implementing partner, and the cooperative:

- Built a school in Community 3
- Donated 75 desk and benches to the school in Community 5 (2019-20 school year)
- Distributed 38 school kits
- Facilitated 77 birth certificates (2017-2020)

COOPERATIVE 4: Olam, customer, and the cooperative:

- Facilitated 25 birth certificates (2016-2020)
- Renovated one school in Community 9
- Built latrines in a community school

COOPERATIVE 1: Control:

- Distributed 80 school kits in Community 2
- Contributed US\$200 to the school building

**Per Olam CLMRS data*

intervention in Cooperative 1. While Cooperative 4 has one of the longest histories with a CLMRS, awareness of school support low.

- **Household-level interventions were patchy and can be strengthened:** None of the producers said they were aware of household support, such as school fees, school uniforms, facilitation of birth certificates, bridging classes, and home tutoring. Thirty-eight of producers said they received education-related support from Olam

at least once. Awareness in Cooperative 2 (17%) and Cooperative 3 (18%) were higher than in Cooperative 1 (two percent) and Cooperative 4 (one percent).

- ▶ **Producers from Cooperative 3 attribute their children’s education directly to Olam’s interventions.** Cooperative 3 producers credited Olam school support for the education of 24 children.

- ▶ **Olam with its partners should consider scaling these interventions:** Interviews with school authorities, parents, and children indicate they appreciate the schooling support and are satisfied with it. Olam should consider expanding these activities. Currently, the distribution of school kits and facilitation of birth certificates is not proportional to the number of children in the communities.



School Director of the Primary School in Community 7.

“NEVER BEEN SO PROUD BEING THE DIRECTOR OF THIS SCHOOL”

MR. YAO KOFFI JEAN PAUL is the director of the government primary school in Community 7 (Cooperative 3). He joined the school as a teacher in 2010. In 2012, he was promoted to school director.

The school was built in 1977 with six classrooms. It had never been renovated and was in poor condition. When it rained, the roof leaked, disturbing classes. The school did not have potable water. Study materials provided by the government were insufficient. The situation was not conducive to learning for the school’s 98 boys and 101 girls.

In 2018, the school benefited from school kits provided by Cooperative 3 under the Olam CL RMS. According to the director, the school kits came as a relief for parents who could not afford books for their children. He stated that the kits helped in slightly improving the interest and attention of students. Teachers can deliver better lessons when required textbooks are available, he said.

In 2020, the school was renovated with support from Cooperative 3, Olam, and one of its customers. Two cabinets were donated to store books and equipment. The renovation included a well, making potable water available.

He reported the school attendance rate was about 80 percent. He believes that the renovation contributed to reducing child labor in the community. The director said that he has never been so proud being the Director of this school, as he is today. He thanked Cooperative 3, Olam and its customer.



Renovated school in Community 7 (Cooperative 3).

VI. INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES

Cocoa producers often found it challenging to maintain an adequate standard of living given insufficient and unpredictable income due to volatile commodity prices.³⁷ Olam has publicly committed to ensuring a living wage to 60,000 cocoa farmers by 2024, and 150,000 by 2030. Olam's framework for farmers' livelihood and sustainable production has four components: 1) increased cocoa productivity; 2) crop diversification; 3) financial inclusion and innovation; and 4) improved traceability³⁸.

FLA's assessment of households' economic well-being focused on the creation of IGAs through crop diversification, including cassava and rice farming, and the establishment of VSLAs to increase family incomes by helping women earn additional money that can contribute to overall household expenses.

To promote savings, Olam enabled and supported the VSLA, which facilitates access to a pool of savings created by members. Members can take small loans to cover expenses, including food, healthcare, education, or hiring farmworkers. The savings prove especially useful during the off-season when cocoa earnings are exhausted. Olam and one of its customers started IGAs in these communities in 2018.

In Cooperative 2, four collective IGAs were created (establishment of two cassava plots, donation of a rice huller, and donation of a crusher). Fifty-eight people benefited, including 33 people in Community 3 and 25 people in Community 4.

In Cooperative 3 (Community 6 and Community 7), FLA identified three collective IGAs (a cassava plot, a beans plot, and a rice field). In addition, 45 women in Community 7 started individual IGAs. Eight VSLAs (four each in Community 6 and Community 7) were

Box 9: TYPE OF IGAs IN VISITED COMMUNITIES

I. COOPERATIVE 1 BANGOLO

- Community 1 – No IGA
- Community 2 – No IGA

II. COOPERATIVE 2 SAN PEDRO

- Community 3 – Crop Diversification IGA
- Community 4 – Crop Diversification IGA and a shelter
- Community 5 – No IGA

III. COOPERATIVE 3 HIRÉ

- Community 6 – Crop Diversification IGA
- Community 7 – Crop Diversification IGA

IV. COOPERATIVE 4 SOUBRÉ

- Community 8 – No IGA
- Community 9 – No IGA
- Community 10 – No IGA

established. These VSLAs gathered 240 women as members. The fourth VSLA of Community 6 created a collective IGA (one hectare cassava plot). The VSLA savings have motivated several women to move from the collective IGA to an individual IGA. FLA interviewed 62 women who benefited from the IGA to understand their impact. Responses were triangulated with interviews of community members, village leaders, VSLA members, and children whose parents participate in an IGA.

PARTICIPATION AND YEARS IN THE IGA

FLA interviewed 56 producers – Cooperative 1 (seven), Cooperative 2 (21), Cooperative 3 (23) and Cooperative 4 (five) – whose spouses participated in IGAs at the time of the assessment. Cooperative 2 and Cooperative 3 combined represented 79% of the producers who reported being in an IGA.

³⁷ Cocoa Barometer <https://www.voicenetwork.eu/cocoa-barometer/>

³⁸ <https://www.olamgroup.com/content/dam/olamgroup/products/Beverages-and-Confectionery-Ingredients/cocoa/cocoa-sustainability/cocoa-sustainability-pdfs/Olam-Cocoa-2019-CFI-Progress-Report.pdf>

FROM UNDER ONE DOLLAR A DAY TO FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE: SUCCESS STORY OF KONAN AYA JACQUELINE

KONAN AYA JACQUELINE is a 54-year-old, married Ivorian woman and mother of six children. She has three attending school, two in college and one in university. She also cultivates plantains. Initially, she was not able to save any money. In 2017, she joined a VSLA initiated by Olam and one of its customers. Through the VSLA she started saving 500FCFA (about US\$1) which represented one share. After one month, viewing the advantages of the VSLA, she quickly grew from one share to five shares, 2500 FCFA (US\$5). At the end of the first annual cycle, she saved 80,000 FCFA (US\$160). With those savings, she bought a cow for 180,000 FCFA (US\$360) with another women VSLA member. A year later, they sold the cow for 310,000 FCFA (US\$620).

Meanwhile, she continued to accumulate savings. At the time of the interview, she reported being able to meet the financial needs of her children. She aspires to increase her savings. In 2019, she joined a women's collective IGA set up by Olam's customer. She considers this to be a great initiative and believes it must continue to empower women economically in her community. Thanks to this initiative, she said, women in her community feel more united and motivated to build their economic independence.



Konan AYA Jacqueline.

Of these 56 respondents, 18.5% reported their spouse has been involved in an IGA for one year or less. Forty percent of producers confirmed that they have been involved for at least two years. Twenty-seven said their spouse has participated for three years or more.

INCOME AND CONTRIBUTION TO HOUSEHOLD EXPENSES

Among 172 producers, 21% reported that their spouse's income (and the overall household income) had increased in recent years. The distribution by cooperative includes Cooperative 1 (4), Cooperative 2 (17), Cooperative 3 (12), and Cooperative 4 (four). In comparison to the control group, Cooperative 2 and Cooperative 3 reported more income. Cooperative 4 did not report more income.

Half of the producers who participated in the survey confirmed that their spouse contributed to household expenses regardless of IGA

participation. Contributions by spouses varied by cooperative. According to producers, spouse contributions to household expenses were as follows: Cooperative 1 (37%), Cooperative 2 (60%), Cooperative 3 (56%), and Cooperative 4 (48%). While spouses contribute to many household expenses, respondents noted the most significant contributions were toward food, children's education, and healthcare.

Of 172 households, 60% of producers mentioned that they are solely responsible for paying their children's school fees. Twenty-six percent of producers reported that the couple together contributed to education-related expenses.

INCREASE IN CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS HOUSEHOLD EXPENSES

Thirty-one producers reported that their spouses' contribution toward household expenses increased over time. Of these producers, 42% belonged to Cooperative 2 and 25% were from Cooperative 3. In Cooperative 1, 20% were members. Fifty-five

percent said that it had been one year since their spouses' contribution to the household expenses increased.

TAKEAWAYS:

► **IGA earnings go toward food security and children's education:** Almost half of the respondents who confirmed their spouse's contribution in family expenses stated that female household members support food expenses. Thirty percent mentioned contribution toward children's education.

► **Beneficiaries reported satisfaction with the IGA:** IGA beneficiaries appreciate the support received. According to interviews, the program makes them self-sufficient and able to contribute to household expenses, especially to their children's schooling.

► **Establish VSLAs and IGAs in all communities:** The assessment shows that IGAs do not exist in all communities. Olam should consider stepping up these efforts.

VII. OVERALL PERCEPTIONS

FLA asked producers, community members, and stakeholders about their perceptions of child labor reduction and the effectiveness of Olam's interventions.

CHILD LABOR REDUCTION

More than two-thirds of community members believed that child labor is decreasing in their

communities. Among producers, including those from the control group, 72% reported that child labor is declining in the communities. Sixty-four percent said that child labor is "not used," and 27% said it is "less used." Most producers perceived that this decline is because of the awareness sessions and the community-level child labor monitoring efforts going on for the past few years.

Table 11: PRODUCER'S PERCEPTION ABOUT OLAM'S INTERVENTION

PRODUCERS' RESPONSES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%) Rounded off	COOPERATIVE 1 (Control Group)	COOPERATIVE 2 (One brand customer & Olam)	COOPERATIVE 3 (Two brand customers & Olam)	COOPERATIVE 4 (One brand customer & Olam)
Not Useful	1	0.6%	0	0	0	1
Fairly Useful	5	3%	2	1	2	0
Neutral	27	15.4%	4	6	4	13
Useful	51	30%	2	23	20	6
Very Useful	24	14%	0	5	15	4
No Answer / Not heard / Not benefitted	64	37%	35	9	2	18
TOTAL	172	100%	43	44	43	42

Table 12: CLMRS ACTIVITY MAP – PER COOPERATIVE

COOPERATIVE	COOPERATIVE 1 (Control Group)	COOPERATIVE 2 (One brand customer & Olam)	COOPERATIVE 3 (Two brand customers & Olam)	COOPERATIVE 4 (One brand customer & Olam)	TOTAL
Child Labor Monitoring	–	+	+	+	+++
Child Labor Community Awareness Sessions	+	+	+	+	++++
Child Labor Individual Awareness Sessions	–	+	+	+	+++
Community Labor Groups	–	+	–	–	+
School kits	+	+	+	–	+++
School fees	–	–	+	–	+
Birth certificates	–	+	+	+	+++
School building	–	+	+	–	++
School renovation	+	–	+	–	++
School equipment	–	+	+	–	++
Income Generating Activities	–	+	+	–	++
Number of different activities deployed per cooperative	3	9	10	4	

PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF OLAM'S INTERVENTIONS

Across all cooperatives, 47% of producers believed that Olam's interventions have been fairly useful,

useful, or very useful. Thirty-seven percent either did not provide an answer or did not know about Olam interventions. Fifty-five percent of those who mentioned not knowing about Olam's interventions

Table 13: PRODUCERS' WILLINGNESS TO RECOMMEND CLMRS TO OTHERS

WILL YOU RECOMMEND THE INTERVENTIONS TO OTHERS?	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%) Rounded off	COOPERATIVE 1 (Control Group)	COOPERATIVE 2 (One brand customer & Olam)	COOPERATIVE 3 (Two brand customers & Olam)	COOPERATIVE 4 (One brand customer & Olam)
No Answer	2	1%	2	0	0	0
Somewhat	5	3%	2	2	1	0
Fairly	12	7%	1	3	6	2
Strongly	70	41%	2	26	32	10
Not Applicable	66	38%	33	11	1	21
Do Not Know	17	10%	3	2	3	9
TOTAL	172	100%	43	44	43	42

were from the control group. Twenty-eight percent were from Cooperative 4.

FLA mapped the interventions in the communities and the actors involved in these interventions. The two cooperatives with more CLMRS interventions in place displayed greater progress.

Community members and producers perceive child labor community awareness sessions as most effective among the various activities. Not participating in child labor awareness sessions did not impact whether respondents considered them effective. Other interventions considered effective

were child labor monitoring, child labor individual awareness sessions, provision of school kits, and facilitation of birth certificates.

PRODUCERS' WILLINGNESS TO RECOMMEND CLMRS

About half of the producers said that they will recommend CLMRS to others. Cooperative 3 had the highest number of producers with the most positive CLMRS experience. As compared to the control group, there was a significantly higher number of producers in Cooperative 2 and Cooperative 3, compared the Cooperative 1 (control group), who said they would recommend CLMRS.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FLA's assessment presents granular differences between the various cooperatives and the outcomes of Olam's interventions. Olam can use the information for follow-up.

- ▶ Results of Cooperative 4 are not widely different from the control group. Progress in this cooperative appeared to be slow, despite it being the oldest in Olam's CLMRS. FLA recommends that Olam follow up with the cooperative management to review these findings, identify the root causes for slow progress, and determine what changes will be required in program implementation.
- ▶ Several interventions and the status of Cooperative 1 are mapped in this report. Olam now has insights on the ground level of this cooperative in comparison to the other three.

Olam can use the information to build and expedite its CLMRS program.

- ▶ Given the trust-building and the maturity of the program in Cooperative 3, this cooperative could be an ideal candidate to pilot the implementation of Olam's living income commitment and increase producers' income.

The assessment shows that the impact of interventions in cooperatives where there are several holistic and mutually reinforcing interventions in place yielded better results. Hence, Cooperative 2 and Cooperative 3 fared better than the control group and Cooperative 4. As a follow-up, Olam should consider implementing the full package of the CLMRS activities across its cooperatives and communities.

Overall, the perception of the impact of interventions in Cooperative 3 is slightly better than Cooperative 2. FLA has not undertaken a cost-benefit analysis in this SIA. Hence, it is difficult to determine the cost of the implementation of the program by various entities vis-à-vis achieved outcomes.

FLA notes all of Olam’s interventions. In terms of the most effective interventions, child labor monitoring and sensitization, school kits, and the provision of birth certificates are considered the most effective interventions. Gaps in the knowledge about allowable light work exist in

the communities and must be addressed in future sensitization activities.

Regular follow-up is needed to make the CLGs are operational in most communities. Olam should consider professionalizing the existing SHGs by enabling and facilitating them into formal associations.

Schooling support (including access and use of school canteens) and income-generating activities are considered necessary and very effective by the community members, but these activities have not reached scale. It is recommended that Olam intensify its efforts in these areas. ■



School building of Kagbe, rehabilitated by the CLMRS.

Annex: METHODOLOGY, SAMPLING & LIMITATIONS

FLA's social impact assessment (SIA) comprises a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, including primary and secondary data. Primary data collection included field visits, key informant interviews, field observations, interviews with Olam's Internal Monitoring System (IMS) center staff and focus group discussions at the intervention sites.

Quantitative data collection occurred in the field during the short-season harvest period. Data were collected from documentation and internal monitoring reports provided by Olam and the cooperatives. FLA selected four cooperatives and 10 communities for the assessment. Research included visits to 11 farms and interviews with 172 producers. The objective was to reach interviewees

well-positioned to provide insights on more than one evaluation area and to understand the interconnectedness of the interventions.

FLA staff designed a SIA questionnaire that used a combination of multiple-choice, close-ended, and open-ended questions. A Likert scale was used for questions about perceptions and satisfaction levels. Data collection methods incorporated child-sensitive approaches for interviews with children following the ILO-IPEC guidelines on research on the worst forms of child labor and UNICEF's Principles of Ethical Reporting for Children.³⁹

³⁹ <https://www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=3026> and <https://www.unicef.org/media/reporting-guidelines>

Figure A1: DATA GATHERING METHODOLOGY CHART

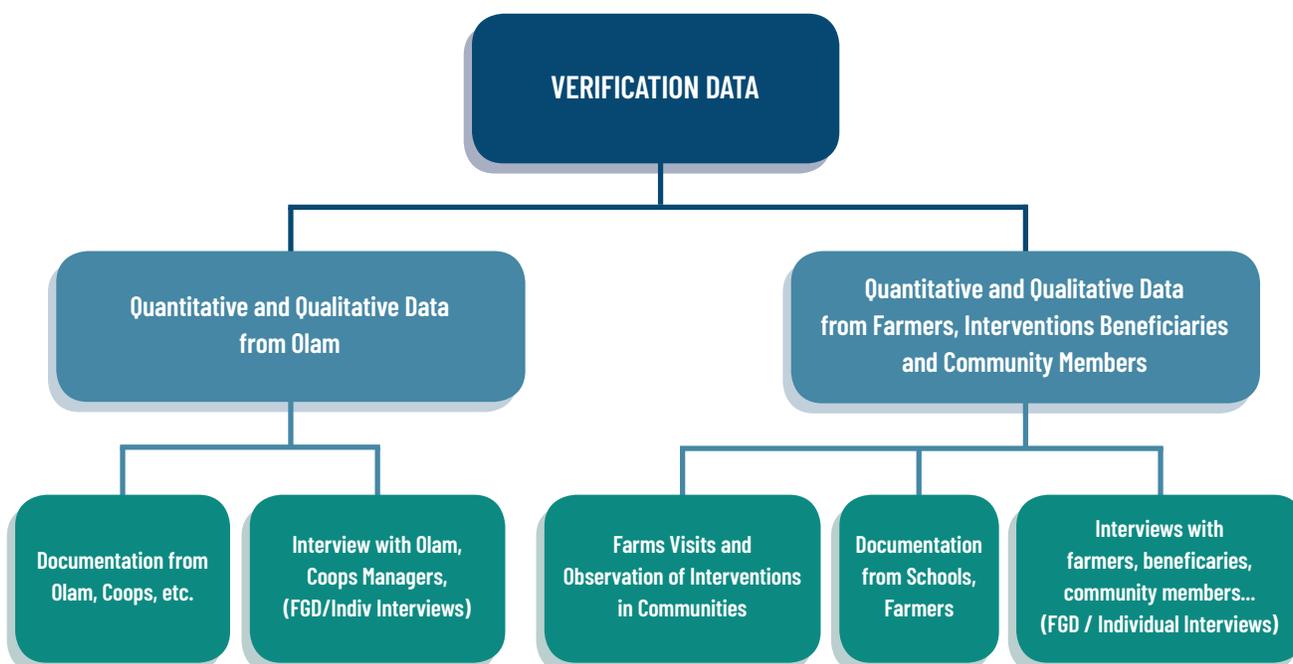


Table A: PROFILE OF INTERVIEWEES

Organization	Location	Total number of producers	Visited Communities	Date of integration into the CLMRS	IMS / Management	Stakeholders		Program beneficiaries					
						Project partners	Community stakeholders	Farmers	Workers	Children	Women	GSC	TOTAL
Olam	Abidjan	119,384	Ref to the communities of the coops	NA	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Olam Customer	Abidjan	NA	Gôgô	NA	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Customer Implementing Partner	Abidjan	NA	NA	NA	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Coop 1	Kahin	405	Kahin	NA	3	0	10	22	0	11	0	0	46
			V 1 Yaokro	NA	1	0	5	21	1	15	0	0	43
Coop 2	Dagadji	814	Yao Ngokro	2017	2	1	8	17	0	25	21	8	82
			Joseph Carrefour	2017	1	1	2	9	2	10	11	1	37
			Gagny	2017	4	1	5	18	0	7	0	0	35
Coop 4	Grand Zattrry	558	Golikro	2016	1	1	2	9	0	0	0	0	13
			Yaobakankro	2016	1	1	7	13	7	10	0	1	40
			Mahieoua	2016	2	1	4	20	0	10	0	0	37
Coop 3	Hiré	702	Gogo	2018	4	1	8	22	0	12	17	0	64
			Kagbè	2018	4	1	2	21	0	5	13	0	46
TOTAL			10		26	13	53	172	10	105	62	10	451

The FLA team conducted the assessment in four cooperatives and 10 communities. One-on-one interviews and focus-group discussions yielded input from 451 individuals. Of the four cooperatives, one cooperative (and two communities) was used as a control group to compare the findings.

FLA analyzed data from Olam’s 2016-2020 CLMRS data and reviewed FLA IEA data from 2013–2018.

LIMITATIONS

Since there was no baseline data collected in the intervention locations, it was challenging to

identify trends over time. Data collected from a control group allowed for the identification of changes throughout the program evolution and measurement of impact compared to an area where no interventions had been introduced. Given that the control location had previously participated in a certification program, it does not represent an ‘untouched’ community where no interventions have occurred. Another limitation is the lack of specific and measurable goals for the CLMRS program. For example, the program was designed to reduce and eliminate child labor in the Olam cocoa supply chain, yet no specific output metrics were developed and identified.

SCOPE, KEY STEPS, AND TIMELINE OF THE SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The scope of the assessment included the following:

- ▶ Map individual activities undertaken to achieve the overall goal of reducing child labor.
- ▶ Define intended output, outcome, and impact indicators for each activity evaluated under the SIA.
- ▶ Measure if the interventions contributed to changes (level of awareness, key results) in Olam's cocoa supply chain through work with its implementing partner and other stakeholders.
- ▶ Describe which program activities have been more successful.

The steps of the assessment included:

- 1. Mapping of interventions, development of key indicators, methodology, tools, and sampling:** Olam filled out a FLA provided tool to capture information on type of intervention, location, inputs (human, financial, technical, technological etc.) and expected output, outcome and impact

and related indicators (key results chain) for all key program areas. FLA, together with Olam, determined the main evaluation questions. FLA developed data collection methodology, tools, and finalized sampling, fieldwork dates, and locations.

- 2. Field-level data collection:** FLA team visited 10 communities under four cooperatives during the short cocoa harvest season. The field visits took place from June 17 – July 5, 2020.
- 3. Desk-based CL RMS information clarification, development of case studies and data analysis:** FLA conducted quantitative and qualitative analysis and requested clarifications from Olam and cooperatives.
- 4. Report Writing and Quality Review:** FLA drafted the SIA report based on the analysis for publication purposes and finalized the report design.
- 5. Corrective Action Plan:** Olam developed a corrective action plan based on the SIA findings.