



LEADING INNOVATIVE RESEARCH



**« CHILD LABOR IN COTTON FIELDS AND ARTISANAL GOLD
MINING SITES IN BURKINA FASO »**

« Reducing Child Labor through Education and Services - RCLES »

Counterpart International

**BASELINE STUDY
FINAL REPORT**

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Acronyms

ADPAD:	Assistance à Domicile aux Personnes Âgées Dépendantes - Home assistance for elderly dependent persons
AEJTB:	Association des Enfants et Jeunes Travailleurs du Burkina - Children and Young Workers of Burkina Faso Association
AIDS:	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AME:	Association des Mères Educatrices - Educator Mothers Association
ANPE:	Agence Nationale pour la Promotion de l'Emploi - National Agency for the Promotion of Employment
AP:	Action Program
APE:	Association des Parents d'Elèves - Students' Parents Association
APRODEB:	Association pour la Promotion des Droits des enfants au Burkina - Association for the Promotion of Children's Rights in Burkina Faso
BEPC:	Brevet d'Etudes de Premier Cycle – Secondary Education Certificate
CBE:	Circonscription of Basic Education
CEBNF:	Centre d'Education de Base Non Formelle – Non Formal Basic Education Center
CEG:	Collège d'Enseignement General – General Education School
CEP:	Certificat d'Etude Primaire – Primary Education Certificate
CNSPDE:	Conseil National pour la Survie, la Protection et le Développement de l'Enfant – National Council for the Survival, Protection and Child Development
COPEC:	Coopérative d'Epargne et de Crédit – Saving and Credit Union
CPB:	Caisses des Producteurs du Burkina – Producers' Fund of Burkina Faso
CRC:	United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child
CSPS:	Centre de Santé et de Promotion Sociale – Community Health Center
CVC:	Compétences de Vie Courante – Lifeskills Education
CVD:	Communauté Villageoise Départementale – Departmental Village Community
DLPVE:	Direction de la Protection et de la Lutte contre les Violences aux Enfants – Department of Protection and Fight against Violence toward Children
DLTE:	Direction de la Lutte contre le Travail des Enfants – Department for the Fight against Child Labor
DPAS:	Direction de la Prévention et de l'Action Sociale – Department for Prevention and Social Action
ECOWAS:	Economic Community of West African States
ENTE:	Enquête Nationale sur le Travail des Enfants – National Survey on Child Labor
FAARF:	Fonds d'Appui aux Activités Rémunératrices des Femmes - Support fund for Income Generating Activities
FP:	Family Planning
GPC:	Groupement des Producteurs de Coton – Cotton Producers Association
GRAG:	Global Research and Advocacy Group
HDI:	Human Development Index
HH:	Heads of Household
IGA:	Income generating Activities
ILO:	International Labor Organization
INSD:	Institut National de la Statistique et de la Démographie – National Institute of Statistics and Demography
MASSN:	Ministère de l'Action Sociale et de la Solidarité Nationale – Ministry of Social Action and National Solidarity
MECAP:	Mutuel d'Epargne et de Crédit des Artisans Producteurs – Artisanal Producers' Saving and Credit Mutual
MTSS:	Ministère du Travail et de la Sécurité Sociale – Ministry of Labor and Social Security
NGO:	Non Governmental Organization
ODI:	Organisation pour le Développement Inclusif – Organization for Inclusive Development
PDDEB:	Plan Décennal de Développement de l'Education de Base – Ten Year Plan for Development and Basic Education
PNSST:	Politique Nationale de Sécurité et Santé au Travail – National Occupational Safety and Health Policy

PNUD:	Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement – United Nations Development Programme
PRSP:	Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan
RBETEC:	Réseau Baoré-Tradition d'Épargne et de Crédit – Réseau Baoré Saving and Credit Union
RCLES:	Reducing Child Labor through Education and Services
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SST:	Sécurité et Santé au Travail – Health and Safety in the Workplace
TDH/L:	Terre des Hommes Lausanne
TOR:	Terms Of Reference
UN:	United Nations
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF:	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
URCCOM:	Union Régionale des Coopératives d'Épargne et de Crédit du Centre Ouest et du Mouhoun
WFCL:	Worst Forms of Child Labor

Background

According to estimates from the International Labor Organization (ILO, 2013), the number of children working around the globe has decreased by one third since 2000, from 246 million to 168 million. The same sources indicate that *“the greatest number of children workers can be found in Pacific Asia (nearly 78 million)”* whereas sub-Saharan Africa has the highest prevalence of child labor (21 per cent) relative to the whole population and that in 2015, 100 million of children will be touched by this issue.

For Burkina Faso in particular, ILO points out that it is among the African countries with the highest percentage of children workers, that is, 51.05 per cent. This country is among the poorest countries of the globe, ranked 181st out of 187 countries on the Human Development Index (HDI) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In an information session about child labor published by Counterpart International (2013), about 40 per cent of children aged 5 to 17 are involved in some sort of economic activity, in circumstances sometimes very characteristic of forced labor.

In Burkina Faso, the presence of children in cotton fields, quarrying sites and gold mining, is one of biggest manifestations of child labor. A recent study (in Burkina Faso) showed that more than two fifth (2/5) of children aged 5 to 17, and in average one third (1/3) of those aged 5 to 9, are economically active. In most cases, these children are involved in agriculture (69.2 per cent), domestic labor (19.2 per cent), trade (5.6 per cent), and gold mining (2.3 per cent). The causes of this phenomenon vary, and include, among other factors, the populations' lack of awareness, Burkina Faso's limited institutional capacities to tackle this issue, households' poverty, and economic hardships slowing down children's enrollment in school, etc.

Besides the fact that it hinders children's development and wellbeing, child labor also plays an important role in slowing down government's efforts for education. In addition, children are under hazardous conditions, exposed to a number of risks such as mercury toxicity in gold mining sites, chemicals, among other pesticides used in the cotton farms, etc. To this are added cumbersome tasks that, very often, cause serious injuries, and even disproportionate disabilities in a number of cases. These arduous and hazardous conditions under which children have to work, undeniably affect their health.

In order to address this issue, the government of the United States, under the auspices of its State Department of Labor, signed a cooperation agreement with Counterpart International to fight against child labor. Hence, the RCLES project (Reducing Child Labor through Education and Services) was initiated, targeting children working in cotton plantations, gold mining sites, as well as those at risk in three (3) regions in Burkina Faso: Boucle du Mouhoun, Cascades, and Hauts-Bassins.

One of the cornerstones of the project is to reinforce the monitoring system in order to keep a better eye on child labor and involve community organizations in the process. Through these strategies, the project aims not only at increasing awareness for both families and employers, but also at investing in mechanisms of social protection including psychological assistance for children previously involved in child labor, as well as social protection for children at risk of being involved. Moreover, the project aims at providing alternative livelihoods and income generating activities (IGA) for families sending their children off to work in order to satisfy their own subsistence needs.

In order to start the implementation phase of the project interventions, Counterpart International, the instigator, initiated a baseline study in the three targeted regions. This report represents the synthesis of the main lessons learned from the study.

1. Objectives of the study

As defined in the terms of reference, the goal of the study is to collect data on children involved or at risk of being involved in child labor in the three regions. Thus, the specific objectives set by the study are:

- ✓ Analyze children and parents' living and working conditions as well as their education level;
- ✓ Analyze the root causes of school drop-outs of children involved or at risk ;
- ✓ Evaluate and analyze questions related to access and use of social protection services by households and children ;
- ✓ Identify both formal and informal supplies of education for children ;
- ✓ Analyze learning conditions of formal and informal schools, as well as vocational training centers in targeted areas ;
- ✓ Analyze the institutional and environmental context at the central and local level (of the project areas) in order to fight against child labor in Burkina Faso ;
- ✓ Establish a list of 4000 children workers and potential beneficiaries who meet the minimum criteria of the project: name, address, professional status, academic status, etc. in cotton fields and gold mining sites in targeted areas ;
- ✓ Establish a list of 6000 children at high risk, potential beneficiaries, and who meet the minimum criteria of the project: name, address, professional status, academic status, in cotton fields and gold mining sites in targeted areas ;
- ✓ Establish a list of alternative opportunities, including sources of income and other resources for targeted households ;
- ✓ Allocate and represent the proportion of revenues made through those alternative opportunities, compared to the total income made by targeted households ;

2. Study areas

The study has been implemented in the following regions: Boucle du Mouhoun, the Cascades and Hauts-Bassins regions. The administrative map below provides details in the study areas.

2.1 Boucle du Mouhoun

The Boucle du Mouhoun regroups six (6) provinces: Bale, Banwa, Kossi, Mouhoun, Nayala, and Sourou, in North-West Burkina Faso, and consists of nearly 12 per cent of the national territory. The population is essentially rural, the average household size being estimated at 7.8 people, and representing the highest in the entire country (*Analyse des déterminants de pauvreté dans la Boucle du Mouhoun, Décembre 2004*). According to sources, the older the head of the household, the lower their contribution to the family total income; a situation that negatively affects the household's living conditions. In this region, it is estimated that the head of the household is 46.5 years old in average, against 44.4 for the national average. It is one of the main cotton producers of the country, where approximately one third (1/3) of all households are involved in the industry. The issue of child labor in this region is very persistent; indeed, 33.7 per cent of children in this region work.

2.2 The Cascades region

Located in the extreme West of Burkina Faso, the Cascades region is one of the richest in the whole country. It is composed of two (2) provinces (Comoe and Leraba), two (2) cities, three (3) urban communes, fourteen (14) rural communes, as well as two hundred and seventy (270) villages. The region constitutes a border area between Cote d'Ivoire and Mali. It covers an area of 18917 square kilometer, that is, 6.7 per cent of the national territory. Comoe covers 15826 square kilometer, while Leraba unfolds on 3091 square kilometer.

This region is also very affected by child labor. Indeed, nearly 25.5 per cent of children work. The existence of child labor in this region is mainly evident in gold mining sites as well as cotton and rice plantations.

2.3 The Hauts-Bassins region

The Hauts-Bassins region is located in the Western part of the country and has three (3) provinces: Houet, Kenedougou, and Tuy. In 2005, the region contained 10.54 per cent of the country's total population. It is the third region most affected, with 17.3 per cent of children being economically active.

The following map facilitates the localization of the provinces and communes selected in those regions.

Figure 1 : Carte des régions administratives du Burkina Faso



3. Methodology

The method combined both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Diverse data sources have been used for this study in order to adequately meet the objectives set above. In the three (3) study areas, a participative approach was adopted, through a close collaboration with the main actors in charge of the project implementation. Such

an approach facilitated the progress of the different field activities with the various target groups.

For an effective implementation, the study was articulated around the following main steps:

3.1 Prior to data collection

A first session involving the GRAG team and the M&E unit of the project enabled a review of the initially proposed procedure of this study. This session contributed to gather additional information regarding the project orientations, the sites and targets of the study. This led to reconsider the sampling frame and the selection method previously defined and adopted in the technical proposal on which is based the implementation of the study. In the process, a number of aspects were taken into account. Those include: 1) the making of a database of 10000 children from the household survey; 2) the necessity to increase the number of these households from the sampling of 1661 (households) initially intended; 3) the census of targeted children in the three regions by the project actors; 4) the resulting logistical implications as well as the adjustments necessary to the different stages of the project.

In a second session involving the operational team of the project from all provinces involved in the study, the following aspects have been addressed:

- 1) The random process used to select the 1661 households of the survey in the different provinces ;
- 2) Adjustments regarding the sampling selection process and the necessity to increase the number of households in order to adequately meet the requirements regarding a database of 10000 children ;
- 3) The census of children undertaken by project actors in targeted provinces, as well as the procedure adopted for this purpose ;
- 4) The importance of a harmonized census procedure of targeted children, in order to ensure the reliability of information included in the database ;
- 5) The progress of field activities (data collection) and the collaboration with local actors in the three regions.

Making a census of targeted children (aged 6 to 17) through households was one of the points discussed during the scoping meeting. Such an approach caused a change in the random sampling procedure initially proposed by RCLES in the terms of references of the study (which had become unsuitable) in order to adopt an approach that enables the selection of all households of the study.

3.2 Sampling Procedure

Data from the general census of the population, among other information provided by *Counterpart International*, were first used to draw the household sampling. The calculation basis of the sample relies on population estimates from 2013 on children aged 5 to 19. This enabled the establishment of the size of the survey sample on the basis of sex.

Initially, the calculation of the sample was done based on a random procedure using the Epi Info 7 software. On one hand, it takes into account the prevalence of child labor in each of the regions; on the other, it takes into consideration the total households per village compared to the demographic weight of the province. The choice of a rational

drawing agreed upon during the scoping session defined above, has led to the selection of 3333 households with at least 3 children, meeting the age criterion. Such an approach had been used to make the census of at least 10 000 children from households targeted by the project. On this basis, households were drawn from 32 targeted communes, with six (6) villages in average selected in each commune for a total average of eighteen (18) households per village.

3.3 Data collection tools

Data collection relied on a combination of tools intended for the different targets of the study. The elaboration of tools (the household questionnaire in particular) involved the collaboration of the RCLES project team. The objective was to produce supports integrating all orientations provided through the terms of reference of the study:

- 1) A questionnaire was developed to gather information on households composition, their resources and means of subsistence, children's education and employment status as well as their contribution to the household operations among other aspects taken into account for the purpose of the study ;
- 2) A census form of children working in cotton fields and gold mining sites where the surveys took place ;
- 3) Two interview guides were developed: one for employers and supporting staff, the other one for main actors, including those in the education system, shelters, organizations offering services to children, micro-finance, security forces, etc.

The treatment of information gathered through these tools enabled the quantification of child labor in targeted areas of the project. It also contributed to the characterization of the issue as well as the determination of a certain number of explanatory factors in Burkina Faso.

3.4 Training of surveyors

The training of survey teams lasted four days (October 2-5, 2013) and was essentially focused on the tools presented above. Sessions organized in this context gathered both surveyors and supervisors. The mission assigned to the later (supervisors) involved about two components: on one hand, to ensure the good progress of field activities based on the established work plan, on the other hand, to ensure the control of data collection operations in conformity with the approach agreed upon in that sense.

People involved in the training were recruited in the field, all from the different target areas of the project. In total, 21 agents in charge of data collection and 6 others identified to ensure the supervision took active part in the different steps of the training. This takes into account the study of the tools, their pre-test as well as their review/validation on the basis of the main lessons learnt.

First, a review of the project objectives as well as those related to the study enabled an upgrade of training participants, with regards to the main goals established by the project. This resulted in a better comprehension of the issues and quality requirements highlighted during the training.

Second, the training put emphasis not only on a good comprehension of the study process as well as the selection of survey units (households and other key information sources), but also on the selection process of main informants.

Third, the training also covered the in-depth study of questionnaires intended for households. Emphasis was put on the content of the questions and the information sought, mastery of the administration process to the respondents, management of the coherence of questions, etc. Consequently, this step enabled to insist on the logic behind filling the questionnaires. Beside, sessions devoted to role plays, animated by surveyors themselves enabled a better understanding of the household questionnaire.

A fourth step involved the use of consent form. Its mastery was one of the admission conditions of data collection team members including supervisors. Moreover, the training sessions contributed to building a team spirit.

A fifth step took place on October 4th, 2013, and was dedicated to the pre-test of the household questionnaire in the village of Koumi, located in the Houet province (16 Km away from Bobo-Dioulasso). The choice of this village was mainly based on the fact that it meets the main requirements of the study areas, and is part of a commune not belonging to any of the target areas of the RCLES project.

In general, the pre-test enabled the establishment of:

- 1) The levels of comprehension of questions asked and the facility of administration of the questionnaire;
- 2) The level of assimilation of the filing process of the questionnaire by surveyors;
- 3) The quality of supervision of the data collection process, considering the respect of instructions established for that purpose;
- 4) The duration of an interview with a given household, resulting in an estimation of the average number of questionnaires that could be daily administrated by each surveyor;
- 5) Logistical requirements for a good progress of the field activities;
- 6) Necessary adjustments in the process, including the review of the questionnaire on the basis of main lessons learnt from the pre-test.

Thus, the pre-test enabled to measure the degree of adhesion of the investigated population, given the susceptibility of the questions raised.

3.5 Data Collection

In the three (3) target regions, an important data collection system was put in place in order to adequately meet the study requirements. The deployment for the survey first took place in the Cascades region, followed by the Hauts-Bassins, then in the Boucle du Mouhoun region.

In the process, three (3) teams were constituted, with one (1) in each region. These teams were distributed on the basis of their geographical location and their understanding/familiarity of the realities on the ground to be able to carry out the household surveys. Each team was made of eight (8) members, given seven (7) surveyors and one (1) supervisor/controller responsible to ensure the good progress of the survey and to guarantee an efficient filling of the survey tools. Furthermore, she/he had to ensure that the information gathered were valid and met the established quality requirements.

In addition, a smaller team, composed of three (3) agents, was mobilized to carry out a series of in-depth interviews with the different subjects targeted by the study, and proceed to the census of children working in gold mining sites and cotton fields. One person was deployed per region.

3.6 Data collection results

Scoping meetings prior to data collection allowed for a certain number of adjustments to be made: the sampling (changed from a random method to a more reasoned choice) and the inclusion criterion of households with at least three (3) children (aged 6 to 17). On this matter, the survey teams held an orientation session in each region of the study in order to specify the modifications to the data collection process, including the selection of the respondents.

In total, 3501 households were selected in the thirty two (32) communes targeted by the project, following the steps below:

- ✓ In each commune, six (6) villages were chosen for the study;
- ✓ In each village selected, at least eighteen (18) households were chosen based on the criterion indicated above. This enabled the selection of 192 villages located in the thirty two (32) communes, distributed based on chosen provinces in the three (3) targeted regions.

Tableau 1: Number of communes and villages targeted by the survey

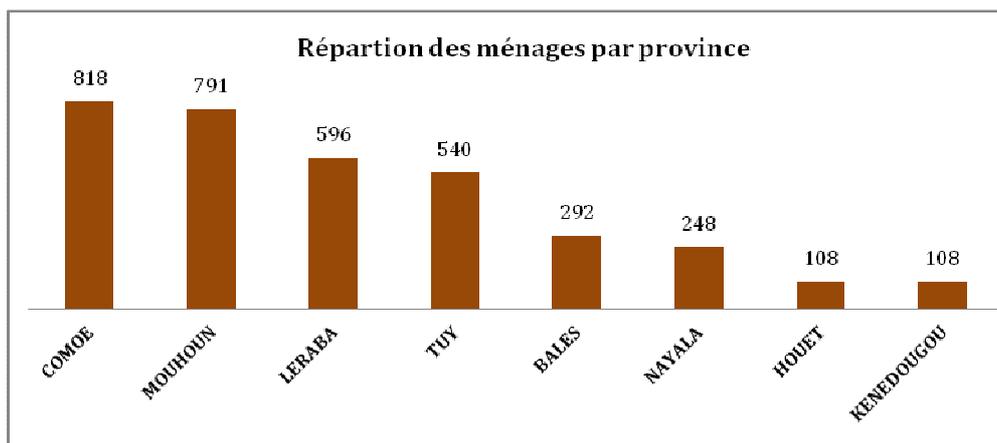
Regions	Provinces	Communes	Villages
Boucle du Mouhoun	Mouhoun	7	42
	Bales	3	18
	Nayala	2	12
Cascades	Comoe	7	42
	Leraba	6	36
Hauts-Bassins	Houet	1	6
	Tuy	5	30
	Kenedougou	1	6
TOTAL	8	32	192

Data in this table show that more than 78 percent of the villages are located in the provinces of Comoé and Mouhoun (42 villages each), Leraba (36 villages) and Tuy (around thirty villages).

The total number of surveyed households (N=3501) in the three (3) regions are spread out as the following graph shows. Cascades region covers 40.4 percent of the study sample, Boucle du Mouhoun 38 percent and Hauts-bassins 21.6 percent.

The total number of surveyed households (N=3501) in the three (3) regions are spread out as the following graph shows.

Figure 1: Distribution of the surveyed households based on the eight (8) provinces of the study



The Cascades region

Data collection affected 1414 households distributed in 13 communes located in the two provinces of Comoe and Leraba, where 42 and 36 villages respectively were involved in the study. Furthermore, nine (9) in-depth interviews were organized in the region. These interviews targeted stakeholders able to provide answers to a number of questions relevant to the study: police officer, president of Departmental Village Community (CVD), president of the Students' Parents Association (APE), cotton farmers (2), chief of gallery, provincial director of social action (in Banfora), secretary of the prefect, and inspector of the Circonscription of Basic Education (CBE) of Tiefora 1.

The identification of children meeting the inclusion criteria of the project took place in about fifteen gold mining sites in the region. At this level, the census of seventy seven (77) children had been done on the sites. This situation was justified by the closing of gold mining sites which happened during the data collection phase and resulted from a decision of the government of Burkina Faso. In most gold mining sites, security forces prevented all sort of activity, making it impossible to visit the sites and make a census of children. In spite of this situation, data collected in the field indicate that *"all sites in the Cascades region have officially been assigned to mining companies that will respect Burkina Faso's labor code as well as children's rights"*. In actual facts however, the situation, as it appears on data collected from households, is quite different. Information collected illustrates the presence of child labor characterized by the worst forms of exploitation.

In this region, two communes did not meet the inclusion criteria (of 6 villages). Those are the communes of Dankoro and Walankoto, with five (5) and two (2) villages respectively. Hence, the following adjustments were made:

- ✓ In the Dankoro commune: the village of Kadbogora, in the Niankorodougou commune, was initially chosen to complete the six (6) villages. Given the refusal faced and the difficulties regarding the deployment of the surveyor present in this village, the village of Damana (Soubakaniedougou commune) was then chosen to complement the five (5) villages of Dankoro.
- ✓ In the Walonkoto commune: the villages of Labola Foukora, Labola Kassianra, Labola Koumoussou and Lobola Sankrala from the Tiefora commune were chosen to complement the two (2) villages of the initial commune.

The choice of these two communes (Niankorodougou and Tiefora) is due to the fact that they host the majority of gold mining sites: 11 and 10 sites respectively. However, due to constraints in Kadbogora, the data collection team was deployed in the village of Damana to complement the five (5) villages in Dakora.

In the Cascades region, “*artisanal workers would come together to work in the same galleries equally, and would not employ children.*” According to the data, children present on the sites would be working with owners of crushing machines who are not chiefs of gallery. In addition, the interview with the Secretary of the prefect replaced the one intended with the prefect himself because the later was not present at the time of the collection of data. In the other communes visited, the prefects were either away or not available for an interview.

Tableau 2: Summary of key informants (in-depth interview) in the Cascades region

Communes/ Departments	Villages	Titles	Observations
Tiéfora	Fandjôrô-Karabôrôssou	Police officer	Interview in French
	Fandjôrô-Alkaïda	Chief of gallery	
Niangologo	Mitiérédougou	Cotton producer 1 President of APE	Interview in Dioula
	Nierbama	President of CVD	
Loumana		Cotton producer 2	
Banfora		Director, Social Action	
Tiéfora		Chief Inspector, CBE 1 of Tiéfora	Interview in French
		Assistant, Prefect of Tiéfora	

The survey teams covered the gold mining sites of the region which were identified and accessible during the data collection in order to make a census of children on the worksites. The following table shows the results:

Tableau 3 : Summary of children registered from the sites in the Cascades region

Communes	Gold mining sites visited	Registered Children	Observations
Tiéfora	Kansiara		Site under police supervision. No child worker has been found in the field.
Tiéfora	Fandjôrô-Karabôrôssou	9	Site under gendarmerie supervision. Children registered all live with their parents.
Tiéfora	Fandjôrô-Alkaïda	12	Sites under police supervision. Children registered all live with their parents.
Tiéfora	Fandjôrô-Dassopire	10	Site under police supervision. Children registered all live with their parents.
Sidéradougou	Moussobadougou		Site under police supervision. Access denied due to lack of mission order or of favorable response from the Governor.
Sidéradougou	Guégué		Site under police supervision. No child worker was found on the field.
Sidéradougou	Déguédégué		Absence of the police. Access to the site denied by populations in absence of the delegate (who was away).
Tiéfora	Moussoumourou	13	Site not under supervision.
Tiéfora	Gnagniagara	22	Site not under supervision.
Niangologo	Mitiérédougou		Site deserted for a new one opened at the border with Cote d'Ivoire.

Communes	Gold mining sites visited	Registered Children	Observations
Niangologo	Nierbama	11	Site not under supervision.
Niankorodougou	Bassouka		According to information collected on the field, all sites from the Niankorodougou commune would be properties of the GRYPHON mining company. Artisanal workers would have been driven off three months before the study.
Niankorodougou	Fourkoura		
Loumana			No site is operational in this commune according to the chief of police of Loumana.
Mangodara	Koflandé		Every site of the Mangodara commune would be the property of the SOBUCOP mining company. No child was found in the field.
Mangodara	Lagognigué		

In the Cascades region, fifteen (15) sites were visited during the study. In spite of the official closure of the sites (till October 31st 2013), characterized by a patrol of police forces in the field, data collection was carried out in places resulting in the census of seventy seven (77) children working in six (6) gold mining sites that investigators were able to access in this region.

According to data gathered on sites, “most of the time, those patrols prevented the labor of children under 18”, in a region where “most sites have been officially assigned to mining companies such as GRYPHON and SOBUCOP that respect the legislations present in the labor code as well as children’s rights in Burkina Faso”, as collected from one interlocutor interviewed for this study.

As presented in the following table, the survey on households in Cascades region enables to register in total 6944 children between 6 and 17 years of age from two (2) provinces (Comoé and Leraba).

Tableau 4: Distribution of children from age 6 to 17 years old, by Sex in the two (2) provinces in Cascades region

Provinces		Sex of the Child (N = 6944)		
		Masculine	Feminine	Total
COMOE	Absolute Figures(N)	2273	1983	4256
	Relative Figures (%)	53,41	46,59	100%
	Distribution (%) According to Sex*	24,21	25,91	24,98*
LERABA	Absolute Figure (N)	1476	1212	2688
	Relative Figures (%)	54,91	45,09	100%
	Distribution (%) According to Sex*	15,72	15,84	15,77*

* This figure is reported out of the total number of children surveyed (N=17041) in the eight (8) provinces studied.

The Hauts-Bassins region

The surveys were carried out on a total of 756 households distributed in the seven (7) communes located in the provinces of Houet, Kenedougou and Tuy. In the field, in-depth interviews involved: the prefect of the region, a police officer, the chief of Circonscription of Basic Education, health care agents, a chief of post, president of APE, two (2) chiefs of gallery, two (2) cotton producers, a CVD representative.

In that area, 3405 children meeting the inclusion criteria (between 6 and 17 years old) have been registered from the surveyed households. Out of the three (3) provinces of the region, the province of Tuy would be the most densely populated (N=2375) where more than half (53.94 percent) of the registered children are boys, against 46.06 percent of girls. The table below gives an overview of the registered children, respectively from the provinces of Houet, Tuy and Kéné Dougou.

Tableau 5: Distribution of children from ages 6 to 17 years of age, according to Sex, in the three (3) provinces of the region Hauts-Bassins.

Provinces		Sex of the Child (N =3405)		
		Masculine	Feminine	Total
HOUET	Absolute Figures (N)	255	219	474
	Relative Figures (%)	53,80	46,20	100%
	Distribution (%) According to Sex*	2,72	2,86	2,78*
TUY	Absolute Figures (N)	1281	1094	2375
	Relative Figures (%)	53,94	46,06	100%
	Distribution (%) According to Sex*	13,65	14,30	13,94*
KENEDOUGOU	Absolute Figures (N)	291	265	556
	Relative Figures (%)	52,34	47,66	100%
	Distribution (%) According to Sex*	3,10	3,46	3,26*

* This figure is reported out of the total number of children surveyed (N=17041) in the eight (8) provinces studied.

The Boucle du Mouhoun region

The surveys involved 1331 households from the twelve (12) communes of the region. For the qualitative part, ten (10) resource persons were investigated: prefect, president of CVD, president of APE, chief of the sanitary district of Bagassi, director of COPEC (Saving and Credit Union), chief of gallery, president of MECAP (Artisanal Producers' Saving and Credit Mutual), cotton producers of Nayala, police assistant, CBE of Bagassi. Beside, the census of 165 working children was made on the sites.

In the region, investigations in the village of Haperekuy spread to the village of Soakuy (commune of rural Dedougou). Indeed, the village of Haperekuy, initially selected did not procure the required 18 households (per village) due to its low population size. Given that the two villages were only separated by a road, the village of Soakuy was integrated to complement the data collection.

Tableau 6: Distribution of children from ages 6 to 17 years of age, according to Sex, in the three (3) provinces of the region Boucle du Mouhoun

Provinces		Sex of the Child (N =5443)		
		Masculine	Feminine	Total
MOUHOUN	Absolute Figures (N)	2086	1578	3664
	Relative Figures (%)	56,93	43,07	100%
	Distribution (%) According to Sex*	22,22	20,62	21,5*
BALES	Absolute Figures (N)	1034	745	1779
	Relative Figures (%)	58,12	41,88	100%
	Distribution (%) According to Sex*	11,01	9,73	10,44*

NAYALA	Absolute Figures (N)	692	557	1249
	Relative Figures (%)	55,4	44,6	100%
	Distribution (%) According to Sex*	7,37	7,28	7,33*

* This figure is reported out of the total number of children surveyed (N=17041) in the eight (8) provinces studied.

Most of the registered children are from the province of Mouhoun. In all the areas, the number of boys is higher than the number of girls: 56.93 percent in the province of Mouhoun (N=3664), up to 58.12 percent in Bales (N=1779) and 55.4 percent in the province of Nayala (N=1249).

In all the three regions of the study, the distribution of the registered children between 6 and 17 years old reveals a relatively small gap between boys and girls. In fact, out of 17041 children of the age group, the number of boys is 9388 and the number of girls is 7653.

The province of Comoé has the highest percentage of the registered children with a total of 4256 children, including 2273 boys and 1983 girls i.e. 24.98 percent. The province of Mouhoun follows closely with a total of 3664 children including 2086 boys and 1983 girls i.e. 21.5 percent. The provinces of Houet and Kéné Dougou count the lowest percentage of the registered children, with respectively a total of 474 including 225 boys and 219 girls i.e. 2.78 percent, and a total of 556 including 291 boys and 265 girls i.e. 3.26 percent.

3.7 Data management

Data management was the responsibility of supervisors/controllers. They ensured the supervision of the data collection process in the three (3) regions of the study, and the review and correction of all questionnaires completed. This was done based on procedures, defined by GRAG in advance, and that put emphasis on quality.

Before the data entry process, all households questionnaires as well as children census forms went through an additional screening, resulting in the validation of the work carried out by the survey teams. This step mobilized the supervision teams throughout the survey process. In addition, the doubling of the household sample that occurred during the adjustments mentioned above had repercussions on the agenda initially established for data collection and entry in the three regions.

The Epi Data software was used for data entry. This data was then transferred to SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) for an in-depth treatment and analysis.

3.8 Main limits and constraints

The study experienced a certain number of limits and constraints as articulated below:

- 1) The inadequacy of some information provided by the project to conduct the selection of the household sample in the three (3) regions. Indeed, GRAG received incomplete data from the RCLES project regarding the structuring of provinces and communes indicated for the study. Certain localities featured in the database used during the sample selection were actually inexistent in the project intervention areas;

- 2) A considerable omission on the project's part regarding nearly ten (10) communes targeted by the intended interventions. These communes had not been taken into consideration by the project during the sample selection, resulting in the various changes brought which explain in part, the increase of the study sample from 1661 households initially proposed to 3501 households effectively surveyed in the three (3) regions of the study;
- 3) The inexact distance between the different project areas indicated by the project, resulting in a number of repercussions which affected the implementation process, the data collection duration in particular. As a consequence, the study suffered an important excess in the budgetary provision initially agreed upon;
- 4) The difficulties voiced by the project officials regarding budgetary adjustments that would take into consideration aspects mentioned above;
- 5) The issues related to the identification of children on the sites in a timely fashion. *"The children were not fixed and would move from one site to another overnight"*, resulting in potential problems related to the reliability of information regarding their working status, including their census on the workplace;
- 6) The difficulties with accessing gold mining sites (most sites are located 15, 20, 25 or even more than 30 km away from the affiliated village). In certain areas, the intervention of people (guides) feared and accessible to artisanal workers was necessary to collect information. In the field, communication issues rose with the guides, and most of them demanded money in exchange for their time with the data collection team.
- 7) The duration of the study, designated for 90 days by RCLES representatives, was not sufficient to allow the study of all the educational structures that met the inclusion criteria defined by the project. Essentially, with regard to the Cascades and Hauts-Bassins regions, the study allowed for the investigation of all provinces without exhausting the communes at the structural level. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the eight (8) target provinces covered a total of seventy-three (73) communes, that is more than two times the total number of communes (thirty-two) implicated in the study, lower than the 33 communes surveyed solely in the Hauts-Bassins region;
- 8) The evaluation of the state of infrastructure (student housing, classrooms, canteens, functional latrines, etc.) required a different approach than that which was adopted in order to carry out this baseline study. The RCLES project could initiate a better-positioned study in relation to data collection that takes into account these different aspects;
- 9) It was not possible to gain access to the mines during the data collection period due to the official closing down of the artisanal gold mining sites. This prevented the gathering of adequate and exhaustive information on the location of sites as well as hindered the establishment of lists and counting of miners;
- 10) During the data collection process it was practically impossible to identify the cotton cultivators who employ children since the difference was not clear between exploitation within families and those who employed directly from the juvenile workforce. The mobilization of cotton farmers takes place primarily in July-August and November-December, two periods of large yields in the cotton fields in Burkina Faso. Similarly, it was difficult to compile a list of farmers due to the fact that the data collection period was not favorable;

- 11) The study was not able to identify the committees “against child labor” in the three (3) regions. However, organizations operating in the scope of children’s issues were surveyed and listed during investigations in the different provinces;
- 12) The availability, coverage and access to healthcare services are major obstacles in different communes within the study, as a result of the marked lack of infrastructure that meets norms and standards. It follows that the data collection teams found it difficult to collect information on this topic in the different target communes.

4. Results

Analysis of children’s situation (workers and non-workers)

This section of the report represents the main lessons learnt from the analysis of data from the three (3) regions. A first level of analysis puts emphasis on the living conditions, academic education, and working conditions of children and parents. Then, the analysis focuses on the causes of drop-outs of children involved in labor and at risk, and on the evaluation and analysis of questions regarding the use of social protection services by households and children. This is to determine the supply of both formal and informal education for children, to analyze learning conditions in formal and informal schools as well as vocational training centers in targeted areas. Finally, the economic conditions of households are analyzed in terms of the institutional and environmental structure at the central and local levels (in the study areas) to fight against child labor in Burkina Faso.

4.1 Living conditions of the child within the community and the cotton and gold industry

The analysis of the various insights collected for this study (from local authorities, potential employers, actors of the civil society, among others) enabled an assessment of the conditions in which the child evolves in society.

4.1.1 Role and place of the child in the community

The analysis of data collected in the study areas provides a tinted apprehension of the role and place of the child in the community. The collective perception toward the child shows that she/he is an individual with the right to education, a familial environment propitious to her/his development that would ensure a healthy future. According to the Chief of the health District of Bagassi (Boucle du Mouhoun), “*the child is a vulnerable individual whom we must take care of*”; an opinion supported by the Prefect of the Department of Lankoue (Sourou province) for whom “*the child has a very important place in the community*”. For the later, the child is the one “*we can rely on in the near future for the development of the community; she/he is therefore an actor of social life*”. The child is initiated to domestic work designed as a learning experience, a form of socialization. The sense of responsibility is instilled from a very early age. In this sense, the child’s enrollment in school could be perceived as a source of modern knowledge in order to be in line with the outside world.

In the study areas, children are employed in gold mining sites and cotton plantations where they carry out activities often beyond their physical capacities. According to the study data, a number of reasons are raised to justify child labor. In general, this situation results from precariousness which mainly characterizes families in which parents “*are not able to meet the basic needs of the members, particularly the children*”.

In the field, testimonies gathered show some compassion from employers who highlight the necessity to make sure *“the children do not take part in activities beyond their competence and physical strength”*. In reality, *“some children would willingly come to get hired (in a timely manner or not), while others would be accompanied by their parents who would assist to the recruitment”*. This is what says one of the surveyed farmer who points out that *“parents always agree on the nature of the tasks given to the child as well as the payment”*, resulting in *“the reduction of risks and even abuse from the employers”*. However, he adds, *“children who are not accompanied would often be victim of abuse despite the presence of witnesses other than family members”* during the recruitment.

Data analysis reveals that *“children who have never been schooled and carry out domestic tasks are less and less used in cotton plantations because of economic precariousness”*. Hence, they tend to reorient themselves toward gold mining sites *“where they can generally make much more money”*, as pointed out by an actor of the civil society investigated for this study. It is the case in the Nierbama locality where *“a number of children engages in artisanal gold mining more than cotton work”*. This assertion is confirmed by a community member who assesses that *“all children likely to work in farms are now going to gold mining sites”*. This, of course, also affects farmer, parents as admitted by one of them: *“it is becoming difficult for us”*.

Through the data, it comes up that the child, within the community, suffers monopolization at the expense of the peers. A member of APE describes it as follow: *“once artisanal workers come together in the form of a village and that your child is involved in artisanal gold mining, he is no longer your child, he is in another world”*. In this context, the “contagion effect” affects most children, even if certain parents are convinced that *“children who work come from other places”*. According to one of the study participants, *“employed children are not from this village, because I myself have used the services of some children; they dug my gallery, but I do not know their parents or their village of origin. That’s how we agreed”*.

In the three (3) regions, findings show that most parents or HH (Heads of Households) who took part in the study employ their own children or members of their family both in the cotton farm (1601 households) and gold mines (192 households). They carry out secondary type of tasks such as drawing water, cutting wood, carrying the fagot, weeding, etc. A number of these children *“were born on the sites without ever attending school”* said one of the study respondents. Thus, they are more likely to perpetuate acts they would have assimilated over time, and they will only imitate their parents *“like a farmer who teaches his children how to farm”* he added.

Data shows that many children, in the study areas work willingly. These children *“have never attended the school located six kilometers away, there are shallows, I don’t know how they can be enrolled”* noted one of the key informants. Moreover, the lack of school infrastructures correlated to other issues (parents too old, etc.) infringes children’s access to school and reinforce their exposition to child labor.

Generally, data illustrates a capital importance granted to children’s role in the community, especially when she/he is able to take care of her/himself and contributes to the family’s income. Such a perception is based on the mission assigned to the child with the family, responsible for *“taking over and ensure the old days of her/his parents”*. As reminded by one of the local figures interviewed for the study: *“the child has rights*

such as getting a good education, being enrolled in school, but he also has duties such as respecting parents, elders, and being obedient to orders and community norms”.

4.1.2 Role and place of the child in exploitation

Within the context of the study, half (50.83 percent) of the registered children (N=17041) between 6 and 17 years old are working, among other activities, on the cotton fields and/or on the gold mines which are located at any one of the eight (8) provinces. As presented on the table below, they include 57.57 percent of boys and 42.43 percent of girls on a total of N=8662.

Tableau 7: Distribution of children working in cotton fields according to sex

			Children Working in the Cotton Fields		Total
			Yes	No	
Sex	Masculine	Numbers of males (N)	3365	1622	4987
		Percent of males (%)	67,48	32,52	100
		Percent of work (%)	58,69	55,40	57,5
	Feminine	Number of females (N)	2369	1306	3675
		Percent of females (%)	64,46	35,54	100
		Percent of work (%)	41,31	44,60	42,43
Total	Numbers (N)	5734	2928	8662	
	Total of both sexes (%)	66,20	33,80	100	
	Percent based on work (%)	100	100	100	

Based on the data reported on this table, two-third (66.2 percent) of the working children (N=8662) registered from the three (3) regions of the study are working on cotton fields. Their status depends on their gender and most of them are boys (58.69 percent).

Table 8: Distribution of children working and going to school according to regions

			Regions			Total
			Boucle du Mouhoun	Cascades	Hauts-Bassins	
Sex	Masculine	Number of Males (N)	1756	175	929	2860
		Percent of Males (%)	61,40	6,12	32,48	100
	Feminine	Number of Females (N)	1445	134	841	2420
		Percent of Females (%)	59,71	5,54	34,75	100
Total	Total number of both sexes (N)	3201	309	1770	5280	
	Percent of both sexes (%)	60,63	5,85	33,52	100	

In all the households surveyed for the purpose of this study, the collected data reveal that 5280 children among the working ones pursue studies at the same time. As per this table, those children are unevenly distributed through the regions: 60.63 percent has been registered from Boucle de Mouhoun, 33.52 percent from Hauts-Bassins and 5.85 percent from Cascades region.

Roles generally assigned to the child, within the exploitation sector, give an overview of the cumbersomeness of the tasks as well as the potential risks in cotton fields and gold mining sites.

In the cotton fields

The type of activities reserved for children in cotton fields consists of tillage, spraying weeds, plowing, sowing, and sorting through germinating plants, among other tasks.

Cotton exploitation is generally a familial enterprise, whereby the producer mobilizes his children at the time of the plowing for instance. Children pull the cows (in turns) in order to alleviate their workload. Their participation in field work is significant.

Field work takes place over several months, from May to December, with peak in the intensity of the activities in July-August. This period of the year usually corresponds to the rainy season, with work hours difficult to estimate but varying between 7 and 17 hours a day, marked with breaks in the middle of the day. Nevertheless, data indicates that the work time depends on the area planted as well as the techniques and means used (manual labor, animals, tractors, etc.). The more the labor, the less the time spent working. Cotton harvest happens between October and December, a period during which most children live in the farms where they manage to save some money for the academic year. Given the considerable amount of work due to the harvest, *“producers usually make use of an external labor force in exchange of a payment”*.

Children’s remuneration is done on a daily basis. According to the study data, this remuneration varies based on age and the nature of the task, between 500 and 700 CFA Francs *“because some work better than others”*, stresses one of the informants on the site. Some employers treat the children based on their input (productivity) and age. Data collected indicate that the youngest (aged 7 to 10) make, in average, 400 CFA Francs a day and per child, against 500 CFA Francs a day for *“the second age segment (10 to 17 years) who usually work during the harvest”*. In exceptional cases, children are paid monthly (12500 or even 15000 CFA Francs for some of them), based on their duration in the cotton fields. In the three (3) regions, labor is local, and recruitment is done by regrouping children of the village. Each child can work 7 of even 8 hours a day. For the oldest, employers would grant supplementary motivations such as donations in clothes, food, etc.

The profile of children in cotton field varies. The recruitment of students would only occur during the harvest season, would be limited to non-school days, and the education level would vary between the 3rd and 4th year of secondary school.

In artisanal gold mining sites

In artisanal gold mining sites, children are busy picking up gravels, washing ore, looking for gold, helping machinists for the grind, selling food, etc.. These activities happen to be arduous, and some employers assign extra tasks such as fetching water (for the younger ones), while the older ones (15 and above) are more likely to be digging and crushing. These children are *“little capable hands”*. The working conditions, the number of daily work hours, the young age relative to the tasks, lead to the conclusion of worst forms of child labor. The following table gives a distribution of children (boys and girls) working in gold mines.

Tableau 9: Distribution of children working in gold mines according to sex

	Children who work in gold mines		Total
	Yes	No	

Sex	Masculine	Number of males(N)	229	4758	4987
		Percent of males (%)	4,59	95,41	100
		Percent of males working in mines (%)	58,72	57,52	57,57
	Feminine	Number of females (N)	161	3514	3675
		Percent of females (%)	4,38	95,62	100
		Percent of females working in mines (%)	41,28	42,48	42,43
Total	Total Number of males and females (N)		390	8272	8662
	Percent of both sexes (%)		4,50	95,5	100
	General / males working in mines (%)		100	100	100

Contrary to domestic labor which contributes to the socialization of the child and prepares her/him to adult life, gold mining work is condemned by most stakeholders interviewed for this study, who assert that *“this activity leads to school drop-outs”*. In the (3) three study regions, gold mining sites are pretty much everywhere and children are constantly there rather than at school. However, data show that those who attend school usually leave the sites after school breaks. They are employed during 2 or 3 months, and it is during the rainy season that there would be the highest number of students *“that the bosses, through remuneration, actually help for them to be able to afford school fees, uniforms, and supplies”*.

To have a *“hole”*, one only needs materials, a staff, and good relationship with the children and their parents. Just like with cotton exploitation, gold mining sites can be family businesses. The peak in activity level in gold mining sites happens during the dry season due to the lack of rain which is favorable to gold exploitation. Contrary to the organization structure of cotton fields, there is no given daily work schedule defined in gold mining sites. As indicated by the gallery manager interviewed for that purpose, *“we stop working when we are tired”*. Nevertheless, he specifies that the organization structure is better in gold mining sites. Work is performed in team *“in order to work for 2 to 3 hours before stopping, whereas other teams can spend all day in the hole”*.

The remuneration of children who work in gold mining sites is different from that of children working in cotton fields. In the mines, children get a part of the ore *“in proportion to the quantity they extract from the mine”* in exchange for their services. According to data, *“the money collected from the sale of the product is distributed to children”*. Depending on their status in the mining exploitation, data show that the child’s remuneration or motivation varies. Children who work during school breaks are *“paid weekly or monthly, depending on what was agreed upon with the gallery manager”*. Generally, these children can make up to 100 000 CFA Francs in exchange for their services, whereas *“those who work with the machinists are paid on a monthly basis and received between 35 000 and 50 000 FCA Francs”*. Data indicate cases of *“non-payment of employees’ salaries”* in spite of the cumbersomeness of tasks, and many children *“work with their fathers”* where others come together and manage their own *“hole”*.

Data analysis shows that children are more and more attracted to mining. In reality, parents are even more involved in the recruiting process of their children in the mines in order to prevent eventual inconveniences especially related to theft, violence, non-payment of salaries and abandonment, among other risks faced by children. During the recruitment, *“no information is required”*. Nevertheless, employers tend to have a preference for children who have had experience working with them in the mines.

Generally, students who are enrolled in mines “come at the start of the school break and leave after two months”. In the three (3) regions, 196 children work and attend school at the same time, mostly in the Cascades region (44.9 per cent). Data indicate that these students are employed by owners of crushing machines. They “do not come down in the mines, but rather, pick up gravels around the galleries, pound and wash them”.

Tableau 10: Distribution of children who are enrolled in school and who work in the gold mines (N=196)

Children Enrolled in School and Working in Gold Mines					
		Régions			TOTAL
		Boucle du Mouhoun	Cascades	Hauts Bassins	
YES	Numbers (N)	59	88	49	196
	Percentages (%)	30,10	44,9	25	100
	In the region	1,84	28,48	2,77	3,71
NO	Total Number(N)	3142	221	1721	5084
	Percentages (%)	61,80	4,35	33,85	100
	In the region	98,16	71,52	97,23	96,29
TOTAL	Numbers (N)	3201	309	1770	5280
	Percentages (%)	60,63	5,85	33,52	100
	In the region	100	100	100	100

4.2 Mechanisms of social protection

In Burkina Faso, the formal system of social protection, the public type (National Social Security Fund, Autonomous Officials’ Pension Fund, Workers’ Office of Health) or the market type (private insurances) only includes a small portion of the population, estimated at 9 and 1 per cent respectively, while issues raised by child labor in the study areas are significant.

Despite the opening of the social security fund for workers of the informal sector, through voluntary insurance, their coverage is still minimal. At the national level, Mutual Health Organizations increase since the 90s, in urban areas as much as in rural ones, with a coverage rate still low. Burkina Faso has an important network for Health and Safety in the Workplace (SST) composed of a workers’ health center, a national school of public health providing nurses with a specialization in SST, a Direction of Prevention and Social Action (DPAS) and a center for audiovisual production and training as well as prevention of professional risks. Burkina Faso is also developing a program of worker education in SST for a greater contribution of workers in social and economic objectives as well as those for the development of decent work. In October 2007, the Organization of the General States of health and safety in the workplace enabled the definition of the major axes that should orient consolidation and reinforcement actions of the SST. One of the first concretizations of these axes is the adoption, in 2010, of a National Politic of Safety and Health (PNSST).

4.3 Households

In cotton fields, children are exposed to various types of accidents listed throughout the data: snakebites, scorpion and thorn stings, as well injuries caused by wood sticks, inhalation of toxic products, assault, etc. In the field, actors such as the administrative services of the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Social Action intervene, with activities incorporating increasing awareness, in collaboration with local associations of the study areas.

In actual facts, there are measures aiming at returning some children to their families. As asserted by an official of the administrative services, *“we frequently decide to return some children to their households”*. Indeed, *“it is not enough”* he concludes, and to note a brake to social protection within households. At the national level, the dynamic is supported by some partners such as UNICEF which is one of the main state structures to promote the application of children’s rights.

Abuse cases have been reported, such as in Banfora where the victim (the child) has been returned to school. Abuses affecting children from other localities and without guardians in their work location are usually handled by local associations. In Banfora, data indicate that “TON”, an association, contributes significantly to the fight against child labor in cotton fields and gold mining sites. In the same spirit, the placement of children vocational training centers is coordinated in the field by ANPE. This is one of the strategies of the government of Burkina Faso who brings supports, on the regional level, *“the installation of training centers specialized in carpentry, mechanic work, sewing, etc. in order to prevent the recruitment of children in gold mining sites”*.

In the face of a lack of adequate initiative and action, challenges related to the magnitude of the phenomenon in the study areas still remain. To this is added the inexistence of assistance and social services in certain locations. It is the case in the Comoe Province where, despite the lack of partners to counter the effects of child labor, there is no implemented dispositive (in the province) to enable children to freely access health services. Rather, *“some sort of negotiation with health structures whereby any type of service would require a fee”* is frequent, stresses one informant. In case of an illness, fees are covered by the parents even if employers possess pills (Paracetamol) for primary care. In the case of snakebites, traditional methods are applied; a tourniquet is also used as solution while the child is being taken to the CSPS.

In artisanal gold mining sites, children are exposed to various problems:

- 1) Going back to a normal life is usually impossible for children, once they become active in mines, and some of them are not paid for their services for months;
- 2) Food and health problems, especially respiratory/pulmonary infections that children develop in the mines;
- 3) Instances of injury, very frequent in artisanal gold mining sites. The CSPS of Bagassi, in the Bale province, according to the CBE, receives very frequently children who broke their fingers while crushing stones. Some of them even lose their lives, especially in the case of landslide, among other fatal accidents that occur (asphyxia). And when *“there are deaths and that the parents are not identified”* says one interviewed subject, *“nobody talks about it, people simply ignore it”*. According to the sub-prefect of Lankoue, *“two cases of landslide have been registered. Serious accidents, sometimes deadly, (two cases of death in 2012) due to falling of rocks were noted. There are no helmets to protect their heads”*.
- 4) The propagation of pernicious practices: cases of doping were found, and on the sites, the use of narcotics such as cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs is expanding. *“Children are often under the effect of amphetamines”*, as explained by one of the study informant who argues that *“children working in these galleries are in danger; it is as if these children went to learn life. Learning in the wrong sense because those are occasions to learn to use drugs”*. He adds: *“in reality, what they are asked to do goes*

beyond their mental and physical strength, and there are no educative structure to emphasize moral values on those mining sites”.

- 5) Gold mining sites are places of debauchery where abuse, sexual exploitation and prostitution of girls aged 12 to 13 reach excessive levels. An administrative authority interviewed at Lankoue affirms that *“girls involved in prostitution make use of contraceptives in order to avoid pregnancy”*. Aware of the risks regarding pregnancy, *“parents go with their daughters to get family planning (FP) and in case of refusal from the parents, the girl starts to cry”*, she confides. Cases of rape happen on occasions, as stressed by one informant: *“the most striking case was about a mentally deficient young girl who died after being raped”*. To this situation is added the risks of sexual infections.

4.4 Exploitation

In the cotton fields, exposition to risks are even more significant and are usually related to the manipulation of chemicals in an environment where *“no prevention means is put in place to protect children, except advice about wearing clothes that cover the entire body, mufflers, cover mouths, glasses etc. These advices are provided by the people in charge of the Association of Cotton Producers”* says one of the informants in the Cascades region.

The absence of medical care mechanism for children workers is one of the preoccupations that came up during this study. In the case of accidents, some victims are left with no sort of assistance from their employers, as stressed by one of the respondents: *“in the case of accident or illness, if the child has a good boss, he might be taken to a health center. In the contrary, the child is left to himself. He could even be fired”*. This situation is made even more difficult by the lack of social protection mechanism in the study areas, where the lack of information and communication, especially toward the community, remains deplorable: *“it is only today, with you in the field, that I realize that people are interested in child labor; I was never really aware of it before”*.

Some employers however implemented inspection routines in the mines, as pointed out by one of them: *“each two or three days, I go down in the mines myself to make sure there are no cracks. Once I notice cracks in the holes, I ban descent in that hole. Hence, there is no landslide. There are signs before the landslide happens. I also make sacrifices so that my employees can be spared from any risk related to gold mining”*.

From the data analysis, the implication of mining workers in the general context of prospection and sensitization missions from the Ministry of Social Action (MSA) is made apparent. This is implemented at the regional level to prevent child labor in gold mining sites. However, it is important to note the difficulties regarding the implementation. The police is also being more and more involved and play an even more significant role with the patrols effectuated to chase the children away from mining sites.

At the community level, actions are being taken to ensure children’s security, fight against their exploitation in gold mining sites, and promote their stay in school in a context where *“there is no known actors”* to fight this cause in addition to *“the lack of coercive measures”*. Given this situation, increasing awareness is the approach adopted by the various village organizations, the APE, goodwill people, etc. to convince parents not to let their children work on mining sites. A strategy of door to door sensitization was adopted, and meetings are sometimes organized in the villages *“to encourage*

parents to enroll children who are not beyond the age to attend school, despite the fact that poverty is usually the reason given as justification of the presence of children on mining sites”, stresses an APE President interviewed for the study.

In the Boucle du Mouhoun region, the sub-prefect of Lankoue highlights the actions carried out, according to him, by “*the unique*” association of the locality managed by (Madam DC) who, “*through meetings she organized, attempts to convince women not to let children go on mining sites, and also to stress the risks they run that could be an obstacle to their future*”. Besides, data show that the group of cotton producers (GPC) of Dama organizes, from time to time, information and communication sessions on this problem, in addition to the sessions organized by the people trained for that purpose in Dedougou. Religious leaders, traditional and land chiefs also intervene to increase population awareness.

In terms of health, the organization AVO SIDA and the Rakieta center aim at fighting against HIV/AIDS. They carry out sensitization activities on the issue, especially towards girls who engage in prostitution because “*mine workers like sex in order to succeed in the holes*”, as pointed out by one of the informants interviewed in the Cascades region.

4.5 Education

As part of the study, the concept of education has been analyzed in terms of education supply and learning conditions provided to children in the formal and non-formal institutions throughout the provinces. In the process, the complete review of the data collected centrally and locally enables to identify the characteristics of the background. This helped to understand better the realities and the constraints in the education sector of the studied regions. The databases which were produced out of this cannot be included in the report because of its large content. Thus, those databases will be part of the deliverables submitted to RCLES project.

Supply of formal and informal education

While analysing the data related to the current purview on education in the three regions, protests towards education and infrastructure sector have been expressed here and there. This happens in Mitieredougou where, since the implementation of the school 22 years ago (in 2013), there have only been “*three classrooms with a notorious lack of tables, and the students’ parents are the ones who contributed to their purchases*”. It is not enough, says an actor of the civil society: “*we are not able to have all our children enrolled in school. They are too many compared to the classrooms*”, when an APE member in the Cascades region complains about teaching quality and highlights risks taken by the children by being in those classrooms where “*there are cracks on the walls, which are risks for the children who are seated directly on the floor, and where latrines are present*”.

A general observation, through the data, is the lack of vocational training centers in the study areas. In the case of children expelled from school, this lack would explain the use of gold mining sites as a training place that would prepare them for a better professional insertion. In the field, APE involving teachers raise parents and children’s awareness regarding the risks of mine work.

One exception emerges, through the locality of Koutoura where there are nearly sixty schools among which some are huts while the “*antiquity of other infrastructures*” is an

imposing characteristic of the décor. In this locality, a technical school was opened in 2012. Accessibility is less constraining, and the Burkinabe government implements cafeterias aiming at keeping children at school and making it easier for parents. To this is added a whole lots of other *“incentives for parents involving tuition fees support for education of girls, distribution of school supplies and textbooks”*, notes one CEB representative interviewed.

In the study areas, children’s enrollment in school requires spending that has a heavy impact on the households’ budgets: purchase of school supplies, transport, insurance fees, APE membership fees, etc. In Burkina Faso’s actual education system, families financially contribute to their children’s schooling even though the law mentions free education for all children aged 6 to 16. Some managed to pay their children’s school fees while others have to negotiate with the school to be able to pay in installments, a way of encouraging parents to keep their children in school. In its politic aiming at sustaining education, the government supports schools in supplies (books, pens, etc.), in medical care in case of illness, injury. The cafeteria and the *“cartable minimum”* are also initiatives of the State to support students.

Some constraints were raised, especially regarding the appropriate housing of teachers *“who travel every night to spend the night in Banforda”* as indicated by a student’s parent who adds: *“we built housing ourselves, given our financial capacities, but the teachers refused to live there. Thus, they do not arrive at school on time”*. This situation has important repercussions on the children’s quality of education *“without considering school drop-outs, with the exception of expulsion cases or due to parents’ lack of financial means to send their children to school”*.

If, on one hand, parents denounce the teachers’ attitude, the study data, on the other hand, points at the parents’ lack of involvement and promotion of their role in the education process and the children’s retention rate in school. *“Parents should carry out an introspection regarding what is rightfully theirs, the right to education for their children especially”*, says one respondent who estimates that *“a child’s education is not only the responsibility of the school, but also that of the parents who have a huge role to play”*. In this context, communication and a community dialogue is necessary to bring the different stakeholders to better approach this problem.

Primary schools are available in almost all study areas, and data imply that APEs are involved in mobilizing resources to support children’s insertion in school. APEs have a fund for their operations, and each month, parents contribute *“to support a part expenditures incurred by the operation of cafeterias, especially when the school is located far away from the village”*. Such a formula *“enables children to stay in school till the afternoon, which encourages in a way sending children to school”* highlights one of the study participants in the Cascades region.

In schools, insufficiencies are noted at the secondary level. This includes the lack of adequate space (classrooms) and material or school supply, the lack of teachers, among others. This highlights the problem of secondary education accessibility. Due to the lack of teachers in areas having high schools, some students admitted in the first year of secondary school or who passed their BEPC (Secondary school certificate) exam end up dropping out of school to work in mining sites. The following table provides the education status of children who appear on the census, for all study provinces

Tableau 11: Distribution (N) of school children by provinces

Number of school children in the 8 provinces of study		
1	BALES	1205
2	COMOE	2918
3	HOUET	291
4	KENEDOUGOU	406
5	LERABA	1821
6	MOUHOUN	2266
7	NAYALA	852
8	TUY	1761
Total		11520

Additional challenges regarding the distance (from the villages to the schools). As asserted by one informant, “parents don’t know if the child arrived at school or not, we don’t know”. Proximity is perceived as a factor facilitating monitoring, which explains the necessity of “establishing a school not far away from the villages to enable parents to keep an eye on their children by visiting the schools for better monitoring”. In addition, the absence of health center near the school is an important preoccupation in the sense that “if a child is sick at school, we must walk five kilometers to get there at take him/her to the hospital which is situated ten kilometers away in average” in an environment where “roads are impassable especially during the rainy season”, protests another respondent of the Cascades region.

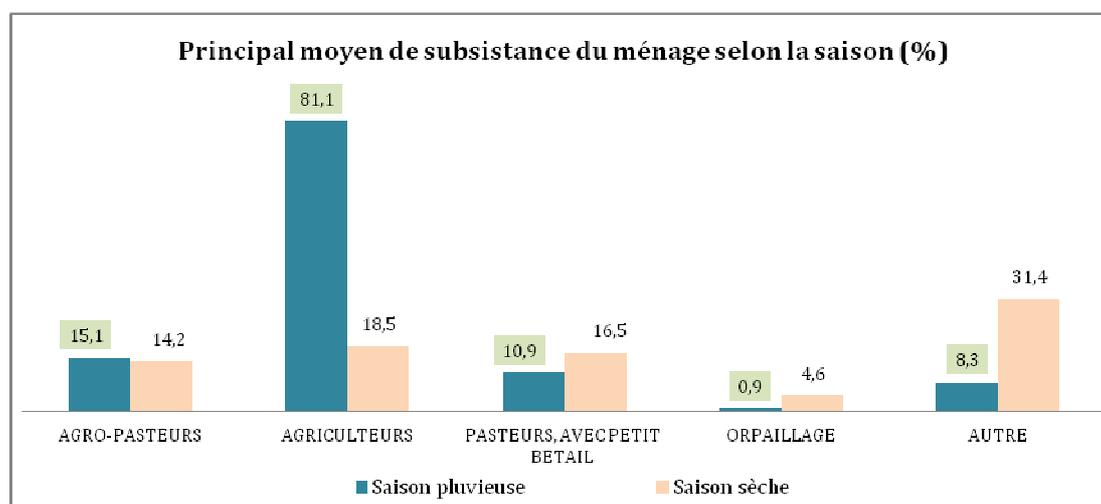
Analysis of learning conditions in formal and non-formal institutions shows a certain number of mechanisms, already in place in Burkina Faso, contributing to the keeping children in school and vocational training centers. It is the case of ANPE and CBNEF which intervene in that sense. ANPE trains young people in sewing jobs, electricity, etc., whereas CBNEF reaches out to children who never had the chance to attend a traditional school by providing various training areas. There are other challenges related to accessibility, and the “exorbitant costs are explanatory factors” in an environment where the government of Burkina Faso has adopted a law forcing the maintaining of children in school till the age of 16.

4.6 Subsistence resources

4.6.1 Subsistence of the households in the provinces of the study

In the study areas, subsistence agriculture is the main source of income of the households. During rainy season, it gathers 81.1 percent of the households and during dry season, it covers 18.5 percent of the activities.

Figure 1: Moyens de subsistance des ménages selon la saison



According to the data, one part of the studied households is permanently active with agropastoralism throughout the year, regardless of the season: 15.1 percent during rainy season and 14.2 percent during dry season. Besides, it is important to emphasize that one-tenth (10.9 percent) of the households of the study lives on small livestock breeding during rainy season. The percentage increases depending on the seasons and it reaches 16.5 percent of the households during dry season. Totally, livestock breeding is the major activity during dry season in the three (3) regions of the study (30.7 percent of cumulative percentage). The activity is supported with the practice of other activities during the same period of the year as pointed out by 31.4 percent of the surveyed households.

When emphasizing on the main agriculture production of the households, the data collected from the three (3) regions of the study reveal that at least four households out of ten (42.6 percent) are active with maize cultivation, followed by cotton, accounting around one-third of the households (31.1 percent). In addition, the production of other cereals such as sorghum (9.7 percent) and millet (8.6 percent) is considerable in order to meet the subsistence needs of the households in all the provinces of the study.

Figure 2: Main product cultivated by the household



Based on the above mentioned data, the definition of households’ vulnerability profile reveals a classification based on three (3) main characteristics:

1. The most deprived households include pastoral people owning small livestock, farmers, gold-washers. This group represents less than one household out of ten within the eight (8) provinces of the study;
2. The less deprived households in the provinces of the study, devoting themselves to subsistence agriculture, represent at least two-third (2/3) of the households;
3. The households which can be classified as intermediate include livestock farmers /agro-pastoralists from average fifteen (15) percent of the households from all the provinces of the study.

In the course of 2012 and 2013, various crises happened in the regions of the study and they affected the subsistence capabilities of almost all the households of the study. The following table presents perfectly the nature of those crises.

Tableau 12: Major intervention impacts and impacts on the subsistence of households (years 2012 and 2013)

Nature of impacts and impacts on the subsistence of	Year
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households	2013		2012	
	N=3508	%	N=3185	%
Delayed rainfall/ Drought	868	24,8	660	18,9
Serious illness/An accident to a member of the household	509	14,5	580	16,6
Increase of price of buying agricultural goods	372	10,6	242	6,9
Increase in price of buying food for livestock	201	5,7	87	2,5
Rare Illnesses in livestock	199	5,7	259	7,4
Illnesses of culture	154	4,4	166	4,7
Death of an active member of the household	151	4,3	199	5,7
Increase in price for buying non-food products	129	3,7	160	4,6
Increase in price of buying food products	127	3,6	169	4,8
Pouring rain/ Floods	112	3,2	221	6,3
Price decrease for buying agricultural goods	78	2,2	80	2,3
Price Decrease for buying agricultural goods	65	1,9	57	1,6
Theft of money, household items, personal items	64	1,8	102	2,9
Decrease of the price of sales cattle/ Products of livestock	52	1,	15	0,4
Damaged House/ Dismantled(termites)	39	1,1	59	1,7
Decrease of the access of credit	35	1	31	0,9
Loss/Insufficient of employment of a member of the household	27	0,8	33	0,9
Human Epidemics (Meningitis, etc.)	26	0,7	13	0,4
Fire/ Bush Fire/ Wildfire	20	0,6	27	0,8
Crickets / Insects	16	0,5	8	0,2
Conflicts/ Violence	15	0,4	17	0,5
Other impacts affecting households	249	7,1		

The data analysis of the above table reveals that the delayed rains and the drought have hugely affected the subsistence of the households. From year to year, the situation increases from 18.9 percent in 2012 to 24.8 percent in 2013. In addition, the cost of agricultural inputs increases from 6.9 percent to 10.6 percent as well as the cost of feeding stuffs (from 2.5 percent to 5.7 percent) respectively in 2012 and 2013.

Tableau 13: Principal source of water supply used by households for drinking

Source of Supply	Number of Households	Percentages (%)
Fountain/Drilling	2182	62,33
Family Well	730	20,85
Village Well	448	12,80
Tap Water	93	2,66
River/Backwater	29	0,83
Other	19	0,54
Total	3501	100

On this table, the data reveals that spring/borehole represents the main source of water supply for around two-third (62.33 percent) of the studied households. Water from the well is also widely used in the provinces of the study and 20.85 percent of all the households use their home well and 12.8 percent of the other households resort to the village well for their water needs.

To a lesser extent, few households of the study (less than 1 percent) resort to backwater/river water. However, due to the risks of infection (diarrhea, cholera, etc.), emergency measures are required to support the population in drinkable water supply.

4.6.2 Income generating activities for households

Strengthening households' capacities as well as their subsistence resources constitutes one of the main axes in fighting against child labor in the study areas. It starts by an easier access to credit for households so that they can undertake income generating

activities (IGA) and meet their children's needs in order that the later will not have to work. This credit would also allow households involved in agriculture (rice, cotton, etc.) to upgrade their rudimentary production techniques, mainly used in the study areas, and which explain, in part, children's significant involvement in mines and cotton fields.

Indeed, the use of rudimentary techniques requires the mobilization of the entire family labor (children and adults) in order to produce in a subsistence level fashion. In the study areas, although characterized by some sort of free primary education but where interviewed households use rudimentary agricultural methods, the later tend to be less inclined to send or keep their children in school, given the short term opportunity cost related to their children's absence in the fields.

4.6.3 Microfinance

Microfinance constitutes one of the mechanisms that can contribute to support the insertion process, through IGA. In the three (3) regions, operational microfinance services have been implemented everywhere: RBETEC (Reseau Baoré-Tradition d'Epargne et de Crédit) grants financing to animal breeders, traders, and farmers at the beginning of the farming campaign; MECAP finances education by granting credits to parents in order to facilitate children's enrollment or the purchase of school supplies; TDH, an NGO, also supports vulnerable people by providing them with lump sums; in addition, other institutions, (CPB) Caisse des Producteurs du Burkina, (ODI) Organisation pour le Developpement Inclusif, etc. are located in the different regions.

Mechanisms of credit access are defined. It requires providing documents to obtain an agreement, and credits are granted to develop IGA such as trade, animal husbandry, agriculture, etc. However, access to credits assumes membership to the financing structure by the opening of an account and a seniority of at least two months, even though the funding only benefits GIE/EIG (Economic Interest Grouping) among other organizations, as well as the people affiliated to the groups officially established.

For the credit management and its profitability, there is a Fond d'Appui aux Activités Rémunératrices des Femmes - FAARF (Support Fund for Women's Income Generating Activities) that accompanies women's groups and associations/organizations to access it. Such a mechanism is reinforced by the creation of Credit Union (as it is the case in Tiefora in the Cascades region) which grant credits to small producers. Beneficiaries are trained for a rational use of the resources. Reimbursement is generally not an issue if the initial objective is not changed, and the reimbursement rate of 10 per cent was judged reasonable based on the feedback collected throughout the interviews carried out during the study.

In the study areas, there is no support mechanism for households and young people to undertake IGA. Rather, it is the government of Burkina Faso who, by promoting girls' education, provides parents with the support (some amount of money) to enable APE, AME (Mother Educators Association) to carry out activities. However, it is important to highlight the fact that IGA do not cover all schools (often in a district, three schools are chosen) given the limited resources of the government. In such a situation, access to credit enables to popularize IGAs and could reduce a little bit the problem of child labor. It also enables households to have income, though low, that contributes to meet children's primary needs and ensure their insertion/retention in the educative system.

Data expose a lack of adequate, quality services that intervene in the fight against child labor at the community level. Yet, there is, in Burkina Faso, NGOs and unions that militate in favor of children by considerably investing in the fight against the worst forms of labor: Association des Enfants et Jeunes Travailleurs du Burkina (AEJTB), Plan Burkina, GTZ, Aide à l'Enfance Canada, Association pour la Promotion des Droits des enfants au Burkina (APRODEB), Terres des Hommes Lausanne (Tdh/L), etc. in a context where the application of laws against child labor faces many challenges.

At the operational level, some NGOs intervene in villages, without any action carried out on the mining sites. It is the case with the project ADPAD (Assistance à Domicile aux Personnes Agées Dépendantes) based in Ouagadougou and targeting children enrolled in school; a project promoting school retention, supports schools by providing desks, and raises students' awareness regarding school drop-out. In spite of the government's efforts as well as its partners, the fight against child labor overflows with challenges. Such is the conclusion of the person in charge of the Credit at MECAP who maintains that *"the lack of concrete actions for the abandonment of child labor"* and thinks that the arrival of the RCLES Counterpart project will contribute to the eradication of this problem.

To face this situation, the RCLES project will have to rely on the use of efficient techniques that are adapted to the local context in order to improve, in a sustained manner, the households' situation in the three (3) regions. In this sense, RCLES could create partnerships to improve children's life skills, not only in a particular way, but also in a more general manner. This partnership could be done with organizations already established and working in that direction: UNESCO, UNICEF, etc.

5. Strategic Analysis

5.1 Institutional, political, and environmental context in fighting against child labor in Burkina Faso

The issue of the WFCL (worst forms of child labor) comes as a one of the priorities of child protection in Burkina Faso. Hence, at the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (MTSS), as well as the Ministry of Social Action and National Solidarity (MASSN), there are specific directions. At the MTSS, it is the Direction of the Fight against Child Labor (DLTE) created in 2007. At the Social Action Ministry, it is the Direction of Protection and Fight against Violence against Children (DLPVE).

In the study areas there are not many institutions fighting against child labor. However, with the implementation of the International Program for the Elimination of Child labor (IPEC) in Burkina Faso, in October 12th 1999, ILO has supported the Burkinabe government through Ministries in charge of labor, employment and Social Action in the fight against child labor. This program contributed to shed the light on the situation of many children who undergo WFL (worst forms of labor). IPEC created a bridge between national institutions, the civil society and technical and financial partners with regard to fighting against WFL (worst forms of child labor), and initiates a series of actions (raising awareness, advocacy, and capacity reinforcements) aiming at combining national efforts and better organize the fight against child exploitation.

In the same dynamic, UNICEF also initiates actions with the Burkinabe government through the MASSN, the Ministry of Security, the Ministry of Arts, Tourism and Communication, to stem the problem of WFCL. UNICEF supports national and

international NGOs such as APRODEB, TDH/L and other local organization, in the implementation of projects regarding the withdrawal, rehabilitation and social reinsertion of children victim of WFL.

5.2 Legislative and regulatory framework

Burkina Faso has an institutional opportunity through its Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan (PRSP) to inscribe the fight against child labor. The aim is to guarantee poor people's access to basic social services and broaden opportunities in terms of employment and IGA for the poor. These two PRSP axes are about the promotion for the poor's access to education services, the reduction of vulnerability, the intensification and modernization of agriculture.

Burkina Faso outlaws work for individuals below the age of 16, and no child below 18 should be working in mining companies, in accordance with the law. In the regions targeted by RCLES, this is far from being respected and the study data show that Burkina Faso is not in conformity with the ILO conventions regarding the minimum age for employment. In this context, the permanent Secretary of the National Council for the Survival, Protection and Development of the Child (CNSPDE) maintains that "*children work in artisanal gold mining sites throughout the country*", but adds that "*mining companies respect the convention on children's rights and do not employ individuals below the age of 18*". (Source: *Le travail des enfants dans les mines d'or au Burkina* <http://www.ohchr.org>). Such a position is inscribed in an absolute contradiction with the findings of this study, thus the necessity, on the government's part, to effectively apply adopted laws in order to ban child labor in Burkina Faso.

It is important to keep in mind the fact that Burkina Faso endorsed all international conventions and took judiciary measures to ensure children's protection. Under the respect of international obligations arising from Burkina Faso's ratification of the United Nations Convention with regards to the Rights of Children (CDE) and the international labor convention, especially ILO's convention N°138 on the minimum age for employment and convention N°182 on the worst forms of child labor, a number of legislative measures were taken:

- ✓ The adoption of the law N° 2008-28/AN of Mai 13th, 2008, regarding the labor code of Burkina Faso which states the minimum age for employment at 16 instead of 15, as on the previous labor code. Moreover, this law, after defining the worst forms of child labor, prohibits it absolutely;
- ✓ The adoption of the law N° 2008-29/AN of May 15th, 2008 regarding the fight against human trafficking and similar practices;
- ✓ The order N°2008-0027/MTSS/SG/DGSST of December 26th, 2008, regarding the exemption of the minimum age for employment. This text authorizes children involvement in light labor tasks. The main characteristics of light tasks are that they should not negatively affect children's health and their security, nor should they impede their education;
- ✓ The adoption of the decree N°2009-365/PRES/PM/MTSS/MS/MASSN of May 28th, 2009 regarding the determination of the list of hazardous work prohibited to children in Burkina Faso. This text, which elaboration involved the participation of all actors of the fight against child labor at the national level, indicates, by activity sector, the types of tasks prohibited to children. One of its dispositions anticipates

its periodical revision in order to take into consideration the emergence of new tasks harmful to children.

Furthermore, it is important to stress, with the existence of DLTE since 2007, the main missions that were assigned through the Order N°2007-002/MTSS/SG/DGSST in the article 12:

1. Elaborate, follow up and update the national dynamic to fight against child labor and WFCL ;
2. Participate and contribute to discussions about child labor and its worst forms;
3. Ensure the secretary of the Directory Committee for the fight against child labor;
4. Follow up the relationships with national, regional, sub-regional and international institutions regarding the fight against child labor;
5. Assist and advise users of the department, professional associations, workers organizations, employers, as well as youth and children workers movements in the fight against child labor and its worst forms;

Hence, DLTE has significantly contributed to the writ of 2009-365/PRES/PM/MTSS/MS/MASSN regarding the determination of the list of hazardous tasks prohibited to children in Burkina Faso. Such a decree represents a juridical reference enabling to tackle this issue. In the process, emphasis will be on information and raising awareness following the adoption of the decree 2009-365/PRES/PM/MTSS/MS/MASSN on the list of hazardous work prohibited to children in Burkina Faso.

DPLVE has also been created in 2007, in conformity with MASSN new organization chart. DPLVE works for the protection of children vulnerable/victims of the worst forms of violence. DPLVE contributed to the review of the legislation on child trafficking (law 029-2008/AN of May 15th 2008) with a specificity making it a model in the ECOWAS region given the fact that it highlights the criminal character of making others beg as an act of WFCL. Since its existence, DPLVE worked for the merger of two plans: the National Action Plan against Child Labor and the Action Plan against Sexual Violence. These two plans, merged, resulted in one document providing orientations to the MASSN regarding child protection especially. It allows to better manage one of the components of WFCL which is child trafficking and violence.

In Burkina Faso, legislation on child labor are mainly based on texts on Labor Law. Among them, we have:

- ✓ Law N°033-2004/AN about the Labor Code of Burkina Faso;
- ✓ Order N°539 ITLS-HV of 07/29/1954 regarding child labor;
- ✓ Order N°958 FPT/DGTLS of 10/07/1976 related to the apprenticeship contract.

Article 28 of the Labor Code states that none can have minors as apprentices. Article 147 of the same code specifies that *“the minimum admission age to any type of employment should not be below 15”*.

Article 9 of the order N°958 FPT/DGTLS of 10/07/1976 related to the apprenticeship contract states that no one can be an apprentice if they are not 15, at least. Before this minimum age, no exemption is possible.

Article 5 of the Labor Code prohibits forced labor. Every worker must engage freely in labor. Regarding children, legally, they do not have the capacity to engage in labor. Thus, consent provided by a child to an employer is not valid. The employer who hires a child in such conditions incurs penalties of crime related to forced labor as planned by the article 388 of the Labor Code.

Order N°539 ITLS-HV of 07/29/1954 related to child labor regulates children's hiring conditions. Children 15 or older can be hired, given certain conditions. These conditions are related to the nature, location, and duration of the work as well as weights to be carried. Indeed, according to article 1 of this order, all institutions, regardless of their nature, agricultural, commercial or industrial, public or private, secular or religious, even vocational training or charity institutions, as well as family businesses, or individuals, it is prohibited to employ children below the age of 18 for tasks exceeding their physical capacities, and being potential sources of harm or, given their nature and related conditions, are likely to affect their morality.

Articles 2 and 11 describe conditions and tasks in which children must and can be employed. Articles 12 to 39 on the other hand describe tasks harmful to children's morality, exceeding their physical capacities representing dangers prohibited to children.

Hence, it is prohibited to employ children in the making, manufacturing, and sale of prints, posters, drawings, carvings, paintings, emblems, images and other objects that the sale, supply, exposition, display or distribution are likely to negatively affect children's morality or have a negative influence on them. It is also prohibited to employ children in any type of work in places where the tasks cited above are carried out. It is an obligation for the chiefs of institutions in which children are employed to ensure a good and decent environment in their workplace.

To ensure the protection of children, their employment has to undergo certain formalities. The employer is required to get a written authorization from the parents or guardians, and declare it at the Labor Inspection which, at any time, can carry out unannounced controls to verify if working conditions are in conformity with the law. They can require a medical exam for that purpose. If the young worker is declared physically unfit for the kind of work he is being employed to do, he/she will have to be redirected to a task meeting his/her physical aptitude or, if impossible, he/she will have to be fired with a payment of fees under normal dismissal.

The violation of the Order regulations is punished, in conformity with the article 35 that provides criminal sanctions. The Penal Code, in some of its laws, indirectly regulates child labor. Indeed, the article 434 of the Penal Code prohibits access to bars, clubs, theaters and other entertainment places to minors below 18 who are not accompanied by their parents or guardians, except when the entertainments are specially organized for young people. If access to a place is prohibited to children, then they consequently cannot be employed there.

Regarding the subsequent, it would be appropriate to conclude that an effective application of the laws would ensure an optimal protection of children as needed for their education and physical and moral wellbeing/development. However, a number of factors limit their application, especially related to:

- ✓ Mobility, due to the fact that more and more adults move children from the countryside to the city or from one country to another in order to find jobs;
- ✓ The limited capacities of DSST, medical labor inspection and the Health Workers Office;
- ✓ The absence of coercive measures and actors intervening in the fight against child labor;
- ✓ Child abuse and overexploitation both by their families and by their employers ;
- ✓ Violence perpetrated against minors in the face of their parents' non-action.

6. Recommendations

In the context of efficiently fighting against WFCL in Burkina Faso, the RCLES project will have to work closely with the Burkinabe government and focus its actions in various activity sectors aiming at promoting a positive social change. Through the following recommendations, a particular emphasis is put on education, social protection, human rights, livelihood and economical production (IGA).

Education and training

- ✓ Pursue efforts carried out to ensure the enrollment in school of as many children as possible in the targeted areas and, at the same time, maintain these children in the educative system as long as possible and include a module about “*child labor*”;
- ✓ Incorporate Counseling Centers in schools to raise children’s awareness regarding the value of education and the harms of child labor;
- ✓ Build primary schools in every villages to reduce the accessibility gap and open CEG and high schools in the targeted areas as a response to challenges regarding the excess of students in classrooms;
- ✓ Provide students with uniforms and support them on the health and nutrition level, etc.;
- ✓ Provide existing school cafeterias with resources, implement cereal banks and ensure their implementation in all schools in order to keep students at school during their lunch breaks;
- ✓ Reinforce the recruitment of teachers and train them on the issue of child labor;
- ✓ Rehabilitate and adapt structures and training centers specialized in animal husbandry, agriculture, mechanical engineering, carpentry, masonry, etc.

Social protection

- ✓ Raise the awareness of the population more intensely (especially parents in target areas) on the risks children in gold mining sites and cotton fields are exposed to;
- ✓ Promote children’s withdrawal from labor through a better involvement of social protection services, including actors from the civil society;
- ✓ Reinforce protection services for children in cotton fields and gold mining sites in target areas through the increase of resources (human, logistical, etc.) regarding the proximity issue.

Livelihood

- ✓ Improve households’ living conditions to efficiently fight poverty and precariousness in the study areas;
- ✓ Support the agricultural sector (millet, cotton, sesame, etc.) by providing populations of the study areas with inputs and farm equipment.

Income generating activities

- ✓ Reinforce access to loan to promote the development of IGA;
- ✓ Mentor the youth in the target areas in learning trades (welding, mechanics, carpentry, etc.)
- ✓ Encourage young people in the development of local entrepreneurship with an emphasis on the skills mentioned above;
- ✓ Raise the populations’ awareness for an increase use of micro-credit/finance;

- ✓ Create a partnership between NGOs and micro credit/finance services in target areas, in order to enable populations, even the poorest, to access loans at a reasonable rate ;
- ✓ Increase the number of projects intended for young people in targeted areas, similar to the one initiated by the Ministry of Livestock with the project “volaille” (poultry), city halls with “*le nettoyage*” (in the Boucle du Mouhoun region).

Human rights

- ✓ Reinforce the prevention and repression of infringements found with regards to regulations including the Labor Code;
- ✓ Increase employers’ awareness on children’s rights and wellbeing;
- ✓ Organize training workshop for police agents regarding the importance of the application of regulations against the WFCL;
- ✓ Encourage the effective application of regulations and implement appropriate control mechanisms;
- ✓ Organize a community dialogue gathering all individuals able to promote and accompany the insertion/reinsertion process of children in the education system, through the project’s interventions in target areas;
- ✓ Adopt an integrated collaboration approach between the various programs to whom child labor is a priority (administration of labor, education, health, justice, employers and workers organizations, NGO, etc.).

Conclusion

The prevalence of child labor notoriously affects children aged 6 to 17, schooled or not, employed in degrading or inhumane conditions in cotton fields and gold mining sites in the three regions targeted by the RCLES project in Burkina Faso.

Throughout the study data, children's involvement in economic activities, at an age considered intolerable or condemned by the labor law, is only the result of households' poverty/precariousness. The study enabled to highlight economical realities in the three targeted regions as well as the survival strategies that are implemented. In this context, the survival of the quasi-totality of households visited depends on the participation of all members, including children, perceived as ultimate option to be able to meet the subsistence needs of the family. Indeed, the needs are various and children would rather work to be able to feed, clothe, cure themselves, etc., ignoring the immediate risks and the long term effects of labor on their lives and health.

Any strategy to overcome this situation will have to include parents who are the principal actors for an effective change to take place. For this, a significant improvement of households' agricultural means of production as well as their financial conditions will be necessary. If households could access loans more easily, they would be able to make better investments that would decrease children's presence in artisanal gold mining sites or cotton fields. For such achievement, it is important to support populations in developing IGA through the funding of small projects. In this context, the implementation of micro-finance systems intended by the RCLES project is of significance. It would contribute to the improvement of households' living conditions, the creation of resources favorable to children's enrollment and retention in school; the corollary being the significant reduction of poverty and, consequently, of child labor in targeted areas.

At the operational level, the RCLES project will have to collaborate closely with local authorities and structures of the regions. In this context, it is urgent to structure the different actors' interventions in order to build a synergy that will contribute to a better handle of the challenges registered throughout the results of this study. By reference, the Strategic Framework of fight against poverty (PRSP) in Burkina Faso provides directions aiming at guaranteeing poor people's access to basic social services on one hand, and increasing work and IGA opportunities on the other hand. In the approach, the RCLES project will have to support structures intervening in the micro-finance sector to facilitate households' access to loans so that they can engage in IGA. Structures of the agro-pastoral sector will be able to act through the training, the reinforcement of capacities and production means, among others. Simultaneously, the RCLES project will have to work closely with education stakeholders in order to provide the most vulnerable places with schools, to encourage parents in those areas to enroll their children in school, support education and promote children's retention in school.

Countless challenges emerge, and for which it is urgent to create an appropriate framework, with alternative education and training options for children in the targeted areas. In addition, a certain number of difficulties represent significant obstacles to Burkina Faso's set objectives, especially those regarding the protection of children's rights. This situation results from the trouble with applying legislations against child labor; an issue that seems "*aberrant*" with regards to the study results from the three

regions when we know that households owe their subsistence to their involvement in gold mining sites and cotton fields. Thus, parents would be unable to focus on their children's education given their "*uncertain future*".

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