

# Framework of Action 2024-2029

## to contribute to the prevention and progressive elimination of child labor in cocoa-growing communities of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana

### PREAMBLE

Driven by a common desire to continue their efforts aiming to contribute to the prevention and progressive elimination of child labor in the cocoa value chain in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana by addressing the root causes of this phenomenon;

Recognizing that child labor deprives children of their childhood, proper education and opportunity to develop to their full potential;

Recognizing the distinction between child labor and legal and nonhazardous work by children of legal working age, which does not interfere with children's participation in schooling, and which is in conformity with national law and consistent with international labor standards;

Recognizing the role played by cocoa farmers and their organizations, in support of the progressive elimination of child labor in the cocoa value chain in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana;

Recognizing that contributing to addressing the root causes of child labor requires immediate and comprehensive multistakeholder action and effective coordination;

Recognizing the vulnerability of cocoa farmers and the importance of contributing to the improvement of incomes of cocoa farmers and their workers to meet their basic household needs and to contribute to address poverty as a root cause of child labor;

Recognizing the importance of the principle of tripartism and of the promotion of social dialogue as part of a broader strategy for addressing child labor and the promotion of the rights of workers, consistent with national laws and international labor standards;

Recognizing the role of governments in enforcing their legal and policy frameworks and national regulations on labor and other relevant laws as part of their overall efforts to address child labor;

Recalling provisions in international, regional and national frameworks relevant to this Framework of Action and its Signatories, some of which create binding obligations, and only on states that ratify them:

- The 1998 International Labor Organization (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, as amended in 2022;
- The ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor;
- The ILO Convention No. 138 on Minimum Age;
- The United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child;

- The UN Sustainable Development Goals;
- The Durban Call to Action on the Elimination of Child Labor;
- The ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration);
- The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child;
- The African Union's Ten-Year Action Plan to Eradicate Child Labor, Forced Labor, Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery;
- The Regional Action Plan for the Elimination of Child Labor and Forced Labor in West Africa (validated in 2023 by the Economic Community of West African States);
- The African Regional Standard 1000 for Sustainable Cocoa (ARS 1000);
- The United States' Presidential Memorandum on Advancing Worker Empowerment, Rights, and High Labor Standards Globally;
- The Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana National Action Plans on Child Labor and relevant legislation on the protection of children and elimination of child labor.

Recalling relevant international frameworks guiding the Signatories, specifically the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and attendant OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct as well as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

## **OVERARCHING OBJECTIVE**

The Signatories have decided to work together to contribute to the prevention and progressive elimination of child labor in cocoa-growing communities of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana.

To do so, the Signatories will, in each case, as applicable, by 2029, contribute to the following, in order to address the root causes of child labor:

- Improve the well-being and development of children and their families in cocoa-growing communities;
- Improve the coverage of effective private Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation Systems (CLMRS), and their alignment and interoperability with the Système d'Observation et de Suivi du Travail des Enfants en Côte d'Ivoire (SOSTECI) and the Ghana Child Labor Monitoring Systems (GCLMS), as well as national cocoa traceability systems and child protection case management systems;
- Improve access to quality education as well as technical and vocational training;
- Strengthen social services and social protection;
- Increase household income and women's and youth empowerment in cocoa-growing communities in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana; and
- Promote social dialogue to address child labor and its root causes, including through efforts to engage farmers and workers at the community level in cocoa-growing areas and others active in cocoa production.

These actions, combined with efforts by other actors, and in other sectors, are intended to contribute to the prevention and progressive elimination of child labor in cocoa-growing communities of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana.

## **STRUCTURE OF THE FRAMEWORK OF ACTION**

The Signatories intend to use reasonable endeavors to establish the plan for implementing the Framework of Action (the "Action Plan") within six months following the signature of the Framework of Action.

The Action Plan will be added as an Annex to the Framework of Action and form an integral part thereof.

## **SECTION I: DECLARATION OF INTENT**

To reach the Overarching Objective, it is the Signatories' intent to focus on the following areas for collaboration, as appropriate:

- 1. Governments' National Child Labor Monitoring Systems (NCLMS), Private Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation Systems (CLMRS), national cocoa traceability systems and national child protection case management systems to identify, prevent, monitor and remediate child labor**

### **1.1 Improve the functioning of Government systems**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana (collectively, the Governments) will work on improving the functioning of their respective NCLMS, the SOSTECI (Système d'Observation de Travail des Enfants en Côte d'Ivoire) and the GCLMS (Ghana Child Labor Monitoring System) and the Child Labor Free Zones in Ghana, as well as labor inspection and national child protection case management systems, to ensure their further development and operationalization nationwide. The Governments will be responsible for monitoring and remediating cases of child labor including, but not limited to, remediating any cases identified through NCLMS, national cocoa traceability systems and national child protection case management systems.

This will require capacity strengthening, logistical support and technical assistance from other Signatories. The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. The Technical Expert Organizations (the International Cocoa Initiative, International Labor Organization, and the United Nations Children's Fund) will support with technical assistance and capacity building of the actors.

## **1.2 Implementation of robust and effective CLMRS<sup>1</sup>**

The international cocoa and chocolate industry will seek to scale-up CLMRS that prevent, identify and remediate child labor in support of the Governments' objective of nationwide coverage of systems and services to prevent, and address child labor.

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will ensure the supervision and quality control of private CLMRS systems.

USDOL intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. The Technical Expert Organizations will support with technical assistance and capacity building of the actors.

## **1.3 CLMRS are aligned, interoperable and connected with NCLMS in addition to national cocoa traceability systems and child protection case management systems**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will work with the international cocoa and chocolate industry to ensure that CLMRS are aligned, interoperable and connected with NCLMS, national traceability systems and national child protection case management systems. This will be done through a review of existing systems to ensure coherence and the development of necessary systems architecture to support full integration and interoperability. The development and roll-out of data sharing protocols will also be used, allowing for alignment, interoperability and connection of public and private sector systems subject to applicable laws and appropriate confidentiality protections and personal data protection.

USDOL intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. The Technical Expert Organizations will support with technical assistance and capacity building of the actors.

## **2. Quality education and vocational training for all children paying particular attention to the specific needs of girls**

### **2.1 Building, rehabilitating and equipping of primary schools**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will endeavor to ensure access to education for all children in cocoa-growing areas (in particular taking into account the specific needs of girls) by building, rehabilitating and equipping integrated schools, with the requisite classrooms, school canteens, toilets, teachers' accommodation, drinking water points, electricity, IT equipment and teaching materials as well as desks and chairs.

---

<sup>1</sup> The CLMRS should be consistent with existing international frameworks, including the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights; the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises; the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct; the OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains and the ILO's MNE declaration.

The international cocoa and chocolate industry will seek to support action in this area, including through existing and planned partnerships and/or through their individual programs.

USDOL intends to coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. The Technical Expert Organizations will support with technical assistance and capacity building of the actors.

## **2.2 Accelerated learning programs**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will extend accelerated learning programs (ALPs) for the reintegration of out of school children, to all cocoa-growing areas.

The international cocoa and chocolate industry will, as applicable, seek to support the ALPs, including through existing and planned partnerships as well as through their individual programs. The effective sharing of data (subject to applicable laws and appropriate confidentiality protocols and personal data protection), through the SOSTECI in Côte d'Ivoire and the GCLMS and Child Labor Free Zones in Ghana, will help children at risk or involved in child labor to gain access to these services.

USDOL intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. The Technical Expert Organizations will support with technical assistance and capacity building of the actors.

## **2.3 Secondary education**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will further strengthen and expand coverage of secondary education, through the construction, rehabilitation and equipping of school facilities, as well as the provision of school materials, paying particular attention to the specific needs of girls.

USDOL intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. Technical Expert Organizations will support with technical assistance and capacity building of the actors.

## **2.4 Support to children's primary and secondary education**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will provide educational support to children, paying particular attention to the specific needs of girls, including through school kits, scholarships, school feeding and tutoring.

The international cocoa and chocolate industry will seek to support this effort through existing and planned individual programmes or collective initiatives.

USDOL intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. Technical Expert Organizations will support with technical assistance and capacity building of the actors.

## **2.5 Technical and Vocational Education, Training and apprenticeships**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will further build and rehabilitate infrastructure dedicated to Technical and Vocational Education, Training (TVET) and apprenticeships, raising awareness amongst communities on the opportunities for apprenticeships and existing formal and informal TVET institutions, and developing inclusive vocational training and apprenticeship programs that take into account the profile of children at risk or involved in child labor.

Training programs should meet the needs of the local labor market and include specific activities to empower women and youth, including life skills and entrepreneurial training.

USDOL intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. The Technical Expert Organizations will support with technical assistance and capacity building of the actors.

## **2.6 Teacher training and deployment**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will further the training of teachers through continuous professional development programs and the deployment of the necessary numbers of teachers to schools.

The international cocoa and chocolate industry will seek to support the efforts of the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, by endeavoring to mobilize third party support from charitable foundations and civil society organizations to extend the continuous teacher training programs.

USDOL intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. The Technical Expert Organizations will support with technical assistance and capacity building of the actors.

# **3. Social services and social protection**

## **3.1 Birth registration**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will further extend access to functioning birth registration services in cocoa-growing areas.

The international cocoa and chocolate industry will seek to support efforts of the Governments by raising awareness in cocoa-growing communities on the importance of birth registration, by sharing data from CLMRS with relevant government services to identify children in need of registration (subject to applicable laws and confidentiality protocols and personal data protection), and by supporting their referral to relevant civil registration systems.

USDOL intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. The Technical Expert Organizations will continue to provide technical assistance and capacity building to the actors.

### **3.2 Healthcare and promotion of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will further strengthen and expand coverage of healthcare services through the construction, rehabilitation and equipping of healthcare infrastructures in cocoa-growing areas, through the provision and training of the necessary staff, and through awareness raising and protective measures.

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will enable and encourage agricultural stakeholders and communities to adopt safe agricultural practices and to eliminate or minimize work-related hazards and risks, including exposure to harmful substances, such as agrochemicals, promote increased availability of more efficient and safer machinery, equipment and tools and the use of sustainable technologies, in order to improve occupational safety and health and help reduce child labor.

USDOL intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. The Technical Expert Organizations will continue to provide technical assistance and capacity building to the actors.

### **3.3 Child protection**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will strive to strengthen and expand national child protection systems, including social centers, socio-educational complexes, judicial and child protection services, and the social service workforce, through the rehabilitation and equipping of existing centers, the construction of new centers, and the provision of necessary human resources and training for prevention services, case management and referrals.

The international chocolate and cocoa industry will seek to facilitate the referral of cases to child protection services by sharing data from the CLMRS where appropriate (subject to applicable laws and appropriate confidentiality protocols and personal data protection) and will seek to provide support through both existing and planned partnerships, as well as through their individual programs.

USDOL intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. The Technical Expert Organizations will provide technical assistance and capacity building support to other actors subject to their regulatory framework.

### **3.4 Health insurance**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will extend access to universal health insurance schemes to all households in cocoa-growing areas. Through existing and planned programs, the international cocoa and chocolate industry will seek to support these efforts by raising awareness in cocoa-growing communities of existing health insurance schemes as well as encouraging registration.

USDOL intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. The Technical Expert Organizations will support with technical assistance and capacity building of the actors

### **3.5 Pension schemes**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will continue to expand their pension schemes to all cocoa farmers.

The international cocoa and chocolate industry will seek to support the Governments by raising awareness of existing pension schemes, and by promoting registration through CLMRS where appropriate.

USDOL intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. The Technical Expert Organizations will support with technical assistance and capacity building of the actors.

## **4. Cocoa farming household income and women's empowerment**

### **4.1 Cash transfer programs**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will evaluate the effects of current cash transfer programs, make the results available to all relevant stakeholders, and engage other actors in expanding and providing support for those programs as appropriate.

Those members of the international cocoa and chocolate industry conducting such programs will seek to continue to support cash transfer programs, refine the approach based on experience and learning, and contribute to the improvement of knowledge and data sharing, subject to applicable laws and appropriate confidentiality protocols and personal data protection.

USDOL intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. The Technical Expert Organizations will support with technical assistance and capacity building of the actors.

### **4.2 Village Savings & Loans Associations (VSLAs) integrated into existing financial structures**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will support the creation and functioning of VSLAs by helping to set them up and by organizing financial literacy programs. Emphasis will be put on using VSLAs as a way to support women's empowerment.

The international cocoa and chocolate industry will seek to promote VSLA networks, support the linking of VSLAs to financial institutions, and create further links to women's empowerment.

USDOL intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. The Technical Expert Organizations will support with technical assistance and capacity building of the actors.



### **4.3 Income diversification**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will continue to support initiatives for income diversification through the development of additional income generating activities.

The international cocoa and chocolate industry will seek to continue to support initiatives for income diversification, including in the context of VSLAs.

USDOL intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. The Technical Expert Organizations will support with technical assistance and capacity building of the actors.

### **4.4 Agricultural service groups**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will, as part of their agricultural policies, support the creation of agricultural service groups of adult labor, operating consistent with international labor standards.

The international cocoa and chocolate industry will seek to continue to provide support to such groups, for example providing equipment or training, through individual company programs.

USDOL intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. The Technical Expert Organizations will support with technical assistance and capacity building of the actors.

### **4.5 Payment of premiums**

The Governments of Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana will continue to oversee all aspects of the certification programs.

The international cocoa and chocolate industry will seek to contribute to the payment of premiums through individual company programs, as appropriate.

### **4.6 Expansion of extension services to cocoa farmers**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will continue the implementation of extension services (including in the context of ARS 1000).

The international cocoa and chocolate industry will seek to support extension services through company programs in line with the national sustainability strategies.

USDOL intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. The Technical Expert Organizations will support with technical assistance and capacity building of the actors.

#### **4.7 Promotion and strengthening of cooperatives**

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana will support the development and professionalization of cooperatives through building their capacity and the implementation of their national regulatory frameworks.

The international cocoa and chocolate industry will seek to support the capacity of cooperatives in their supply chains with technical and financial support.

USDOL intends to support and/or coordinate with other U.S. government agencies to seek support for improvements in this area. The Technical Expert Organizations will support with technical assistance and capacity building to the actors.

### **INTERPRETATION**

As used throughout this Framework of Action, the term "international cocoa and chocolate industry" refers to World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) member companies that support this framework at the time of signing (Barry Callebaut, Blommer Chocolate, Cargill, Ferrero, Guittard Chocolate, The Hershey Company, Lindt & Sprüngli, Mars Wrigley, Mondelēz International, Nestlé, ofi (olam food ingredients), and Sucden). This does not preclude any other WCF member company or any non-WCF member company to support part or all of the framework in the future. The use of the term "international cocoa and chocolate industry" should not be interpreted to imply that every WCF member company will individually undertake all or any of the actions contemplated in this Framework of Action, including but not limited to in each paragraph in the Declaration of Intent section.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Overarching Objective should not be interpreted to imply that every Signatory will individually undertake actions in, or contribute to all of, the areas discussed therein.

The term "Signatories" refers to the Members of the Child Labor in Cocoa Coordinating Group (CLCCG) as defined by the CLCCG Bylaws, i.e. the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, the Government of Ghana, the United States Department of Labor and the international cocoa and chocolate industry as represented by WCF.

### **GOVERNANCE**

In order to meet the objectives of this Framework of Action, the Signatories will operate within the structure of governance as defined by the CLCCG Bylaws.

This Framework of Action does not create any obligations under international or domestic law. This Framework of Action supersedes and replaces any previous international arrangements/instruments/documents adopted in the context of the CLCCG with the same or a similar

purpose between any members of the international cocoa and chocolate industry represented by WCF or other trade associations, and the other Signatories.

### **DATE OF COVERAGE**

This Framework of Action will begin on November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024 and will remain in full force and effect until November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2029 (“Expiration Date”), or until terminated, whichever occurs first. Any extension beyond the Expiration Date must be by mutual written agreement and signed by the Signatories.

The provisions of this Framework may only be modified or waived by mutual written decision by all Signatories. Any Signatory may discontinue its participation in this Framework and any related arrangement at any time and for any reason with the expectation that the discontinuing Signatory is expected to give thirty (30) days prior written notice to the other Signatories.

### **ACTION PLAN**

Guided by the Framework of Action, the Action Plan, to be developed in the six months following the signature of the Framework, will specify the activities each Signatory plans to support, including for WCF member companies, as applicable, the activities of each company supporting the Framework. The Action Plan will identify activities for which collaborative programs are to be developed, in addition to progress indicators for each thematic area.

The undersigned support the Framework of Action to contribute to the prevention and progressive elimination of child labor in cocoa-growing communities of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana and aim to work with each other and the other major stakeholders to execute actions in support of this Framework of Action.

.....  
**Ms. Dominique Ouattara**  
First Lady; President of the National Oversight Committee for actions against trafficking, exploitation and child labor in Côte d'Ivoire (CNS)

*Republic of Côte d'Ivoire*

.....  
**Hon. Mr. Adama Kamara**  
Minister for Employment and Social Protection; President of the Inter-ministerial Committee against child trafficking, exploitation and child labor (CIM)

*Republic of Côte d'Ivoire*

.....  
**H.E. Mr. Frederick Daniel Laryea**  
Ambassador of Ghana to the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire on behalf of the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations

*Republic of Ghana*

.....  
**Ms. Thea Lee**  
Deputy Undersecretary for International Affairs  
U.S Department of Labor

*United States of America*

.....  
**Mr. Chris Vincent**  
President of the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF)

And hereby witness the commitment through this Framework of Action.

.....  
**Hon. Ms. Jessica Davis Ba**  
U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire  
*United States of America*

.....  
**Mr. Matthias Lange**  
Executive Director of the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI)

.....  
**Ms. Coumba Diop**  
Director, Country Office of the International Labor Organization (ILO) for Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Togo