



## Final Report - UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire

# Promoting the Rights of children in the Cocoa Producing Areas in Cote d'Ivoire

March 2019

SC149906

Submitted to Dutch Committee for  
UNICEF





## Promoting the Rights of children in the Cocoa Producing Areas in Cote d'Ivoire

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## SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT

Project title	<b>Promoting the Rights of Children in the Cocoa Producing Areas in Côte d'Ivoire</b>
Donor	Dutch Committee for UNICEF
Grant reference	SC189905
Project allocation	805,286.65 USD
Funds received	<b>805,286.65 USD</b>
Spent amount	<b>805,286.65 USD</b>
Funds still available	<b>0 USD</b>
Duration	36 months
Project period	April 2016 – March 2019
Reporting period	April 2016 – March 2019
Goals	<p><b>Overall Objective:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Develop systemic, community-based interventions</b> that strengthen the protective environment for children in selected cocoa growing communities in Cote d'Ivoire, protecting them from violence, abuse, and child labour and promoting children's rights more generally.</li> <li>• <b>Engage the private sector in Cote d'Ivoire, especially the cocoa sector, to increase awareness of holistic approaches to children's rights, and to increase action</b> to respect and support children's rights in cocoa growing and processing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Specific Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness raising around child protection and the worst forms of child labour.</li> <li>• Strengthening mechanisms for detection, referral and care for child victims of violence, exploitation, abuse and the worst forms of child labour</li> <li>• Strengthening the capacity of the social welfare services</li> <li>• Offer alternatives to child labour in cocoa growing</li> <li>• Improving the access of children and families to justice</li> <li>• Engaging the private sector on child rights, with special focus on cocoa sector</li> </ul>
UNICEF contacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboubacar Kampo, Representative, <a href="mailto:akampo@unicef.org">akampo@unicef.org</a></li> </ul>

## COVERAGE BY SOCIAL MEDIA

**UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire** added 3 new photos.  
April 5, 2017 · 🌐

Gaston Kambou, qui a maintenant 15 ans, était un de ces enfants qui travaillent dans le secteur de l'agriculture. Grâce à des séances de sensibilisation, son père l'a retiré du champ et lui a permis de suivre une formation professionnelle de son choix. Avec ses copains, il a choisi de devenir éleveur de poulets et rêve d'une grande ferme d'élevage. Pour chaque enfant, une enfance et un futur. [Unicef Nederland Anader](#)



**UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire**  
Published by Sophie Chavanel 🇵🇹 · May 17, 2017 · 🌐

Issiaka, 11 ans, a repris l'école après deux ans d'arrêt durant lesquels il travaillait comme porteur au marché local de San Pédro pour 1500 CFA par jour. Son père, un fermier, l'avait retiré de l'école en raison de la baisse du prix du cacao. Il a toutefois changé d'avis grâce à la sensibilisation et à une réorganisation de son travail en coopération avec d'autres planteurs. Issiaka est très heureux et rêve de devenir président. Pour chaque enfant, un avenir meilleur.







UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire

Publié par Fanta' Styck [?] · 18 mars, 11:57 ·

Le sourire de cette jeune fille dans sa salle de classe à San Pédro, dans l'ouest de la Côte d'Ivoire en dit long.

Elle est l'une des plus d'un millier d'enfants qui ont fréquenté une classe passerelle, un mécanisme qui permet aux enfants hors de l'école de réintégrer le système d'éducation.

En Côte d'Ivoire, bien que l'école soit obligatoire pour les enfants de 6 à 16 ans, 1,6 millions d'enfants ne vont pas en l'école et la majorité sont des filles.

Ce projet financé par Unicef Nederland est l'une des interventions pour lutter contre le travail des enfants dans les communautés productrices de cacao.

Pour chaque enfant, le droit à l'éducation. 📖

Anader



15 729

Personnes touchées

1 593

Interactions

Booster à nouveau



UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire

Published by Fanta' Styck [?] · September 20, 2017 ·

En Côte d'Ivoire, un enfant sur cinq est soumis à un travail dangereux. La plus grande cause du travail des enfants est la pauvreté extrême. L'UNICEF travaille sans relâche pour offrir des écoles, des soins de santé et des services sociaux universels pour sortir les familles du cycle de la pauvreté. Pour chaque enfant, une enfance.



## 1. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE CONTEXT AT PROJECT INCEPTION

Côte d'Ivoire's impressive growth (estimated at 7.8% in 2018), masks wide disparities between regions and social groups. Unfortunately, the growth is not equitably distributed in the country.

Poverty levels in 2016 were high; unpublished data from the 2015 Standard of Living Survey shows a poverty rate of 46.3% (living below 737 FCFA per person per day – equivalent to 1.5 US Dollars), including 35.9% in urban settings and 56.8% in rural settings. Poverty levels were particularly striking among cocoa farmers, mostly living in the west and south west of the country.

Côte d'Ivoire is the largest producer of cocoa in the world (about 40% of the world's cocoa is grown in Cote d'Ivoire). There are an estimated 800,000 cocoa farmers in Cote d'Ivoire, most of whom own small farms of 1 to 3 hectares, with an annual income of 2000 US Dollars. Recent over-productivity in the sector has led to stocks of cocoa rotting in warehouses or stuck on trucks in the port of Abidjan. The subsequent lowering in prices in 2017 (by 30% to farmers) has driven farming families further into poverty.

In 2013, there were an estimated 1.4 million children (5-17-year-old) working in Côte d'Ivoire (Enquête nationale sur le travail des enfants (2013)), of which 49 % in the agriculture sector. Most of these child labourers come from farming families and live and work on the land with their families. Many of them have come over generations from neighbouring countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali, Togo, Benin, Niger, Guinea and Ghana. A smaller, but unknown number of children migrate alone from neighbouring countries, posing a higher potential for exploitation and abuse of children, who could be separated from their parents. A smaller number may even be victims of child trafficking. Children who work in cocoa production, are oftentimes deprived of adequate schooling. Further, due to carrying heavy loads of cocoa from the farms to the assembly points, they are exposed to different types of risks and hazards, including exposure to pesticides, insect and snake bites, machete wounds, fatigue and back problems.

In 2016, in light of the Harkin-Engel Agreement, the National Plan for fighting Against Child Labour and Child Trafficking and the focus of the industry on sustainable cocoa production and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), numerous Government, NGO and private sector initiatives and projects were being implemented in Cote d'Ivoire to improve productivity, community development and child rights in cocoa producing areas. These include initiatives focused primarily on productivity issues facing farmers, such as the African Cocoa Initiative and the Dutch Sustainable Trade Initiative. There were also initiatives focusing primarily on child labour, such as projects implemented by CARE and the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI). Others use a combined approach to improved agricultural practices and larger community development interventions, including interventions which directly impact children, such as access to primary education or birth registration. However, the impact of these interventions is yet to be demonstrated and coordination among these initiatives and projects remains weak.

\*\*\* The contextual data used in the report refer to the data available at project inception.





© UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire/2017/Frank Dejongh/ZIBE Bah in the farmer's school field.

## 2. Programme Objectives

The Dutch Committee for UNICEF has provided 750.000 Euros for a period of 36 months to **promote the rights of children in the Cocoa Producing Areas in Cote d'Ivoire.**

### Overall Objective:

- **Develop systemic, community-based interventions** that strengthen the protective environment for children in selected cocoa growing communities in Cote d'Ivoire, protecting them from violence, abuse, and child labour and promoting children's rights more generally.
- **Engage the private sector in Cote d'Ivoire, especially the cocoa sector, to increase awareness of holistic approaches to children's rights, and to increase action** to respect and support children's rights in cocoa growing and processing.

### Specific Objectives:

- Awareness raising around child protection and the worst forms of child labour.
- Strengthening mechanisms for detection, referral and care for child victims of violence, exploitation, abuse and the worst forms of child labour
- Strengthening the capacity of the social welfare services
- Offer alternatives to child labour in cocoa growing
- Improving the access of children and families to justice

Engaging the private sector on child rights, with special focus on cocoa sector

### 3. COUNTRY INFORMATION AND DEVELOPMENTS

Main events regarding child labour and cocoa production during the project implementation are listed below:

- A new cooperation agreement on child trafficking between the Governments of Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire has been signed, **November 2016**.
- The World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) organized the WCF Partnership Meeting in **October 2016**. UNICEF and other partners participated on a joint panel on "Joining Forces to Promote Child Protection and Tackle Child Labour".
- **In January 2017** an international staff member joined UNICEF Cote d'Ivoire as Corporate Partnership Specialist; his primary focus was to advance the cocoa industry engagement towards a positive impact on children's rights and to develop a broader private sector engagement strategy for the office.
- UNICEF identified a group of technical partners and established closer collaboration with them aiming at strengthening UNICEF's expertise in the field of cocoa. Among others, Farm Strong, Voice international, International Cocoa Initiative Foundation (ICI), are the most relevant.
- **In February 2017** important steps were taken toward the establishment of a strategic global collaboration between UNICEF and Mars Inc. The partnership will cover the full spectrum of the company's activities (from supply to marketing practices) and the impact they have on children. UNICEF Cote d'Ivoire had an important role in the discussion as the cocoa supply chain has been highlighted as the first priority of intervention for both organizations.
- **In June 2017**, the Minister of Labour and Social Protection signed two new pieces of legislation on child labour: the revision of the list of hazardous work and the development of a new list of light work for 13-16 years old. This new concept of light or "socializing work" has been brought in particularly by the First Lady. UNICEF and the ILO sent joint feedback on the new legislation to the Government raising some concerns about the new legislation. Some of the points were taken into account. UNICEF will continue to follow-up on the implications for future data collection on child labour.
- **In August 2017**, the Child Labour Coordinating Core Group (CLCCG) held its seventh meeting, which was attended by the US Department of Labour, a delegation of Cote d'Ivoire composed of the Cabinet of the First Lady, the Minister of Labour and Social Protection and the Minister of Women, Child Protection and Solidarity and a delegation from Ghana. UNICEF Cote d'Ivoire also took part in this important event and presented the first results from its study on the Child Rights in cocoa growing communities.





© UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire/2017/Frank Dejongh/The Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF at the conference of First Ladies on violence, abuse against children and Child trafficking and Child Labour.

- **In October 2017**, the meeting of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Sahel First Ladies on violence, abuse against children and Child trafficking and Child Labour took place - leading to a Declaration by the First Ladies on their contribution to child protection in the region. UNICEF's Deputy Executive Director – Fatoumata N'diaye – gave the key note speech and UNICEF Cote d'Ivoire was key in influencing the Declaration and linking it into broader regional agreements with ECOWAS.
- **In October 2017**, the Belgian Economic Mission organized a forum on the prevention and elimination of child labour in the cocoa growing areas. The event, chaired by the First Lady of Cote d'Ivoire and the Princess of Belgium, has been an occasion for UNICEF – invited as speaker - to advocate once again for a more holistic consideration of children rights in cocoa.
- **January – March 2018** – a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between UNICEF and MARS (leading chocolate company) including two axes of intervention: children rights in supply chains and child friendly marketing. Cocoa in Cote d'Ivoire has been identified as the top intervention priority. A workshop among UNICEF experts and MARS took place in Abidjan in March 2018 to jointly define the action plan for 2018 and explore synergies among the two organizations.
- **In February 2018**, signature of an agreement between the National Surveillance Committee on actions against child trafficking, exploitation and child labour and the non-partisan and objective research organization (NORC) at the University of Chicago on establishing a formal framework on cooperation for carrying out applied research on child labour in cocoa growing areas in Cote d'Ivoire. UNICEF staff played a key role in the writing



of the agreement and will continue to support the stakeholders whilst ensuring that the methodology for the study is sound.

- **In March 2018**, the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2016 data was published providing new data for child labour in Cote d'Ivoire. The latest data show that 31.3 % of children are working in Cote d'Ivoire and 21.5% in dangerous conditions.
- **In April 2018**, UNICEF presented during the 4<sup>th</sup> World Cocoa Conference in Berlin the findings of its study on child rights in cocoa growing communities. During the same event, UNICEF convened a meeting with +40 international stakeholders from Governments, industry and civil society to lay out the basis for collective actions on child labour root causes in Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana.
- **In July 2018**, UNICEF joined the 8<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the **Child Labour Coordinating Core Group (CLCCG)** and presented findings from the study on child rights in cocoa growing communities during the final roundtable session. This quadripartite high-level meeting, bringing together since 2010 the United States, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and the actors of the cocoa and chocolate industry, had an ambitious central theme: "accelerate the pace of progress by 2020 and beyond: intensify good practices to combat child labour in the cocoa sector in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana".
- In November 2018 the **2018-2020 strategic planning workshop on the fight against the worst forms of child labour in Côte d'Ivoire** was held. The workshop, organized by the Government in partnership with the ILO, UNICEF and the ICI Foundation, aimed to develop the 2018-2020 National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking, Exploitation and Child Labour. This new planning process was heavily influenced by the results of the study on child rights in cocoa growing communities.



© UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire/2017/Frank Dejongh/A practice course in the farmers school field.

## 4. PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

### Objective 1: Awareness raising and social mobilization

The aim of this component was to organise awareness raising activities at community level on child rights, especially their rights to protection and education including mobilization through traditional leaders and through groups of women and young persons.

- During the implementation of the project, the implementing partner Agence Nationale d'Appui au Developpement Rural (ANADER) and the local services of the Ministry responsible for Child Protection organized awareness raising activities and discussions on child protection and the worst forms of child labour.
- The Ministry responsible for child protection uses a Community Animation Approach, whereby social workers work with communities to go through a series of 6 modules on child protection and then set up a child protection forum in the community – to identify vulnerable families and children at risk of exploitation and abuse.
- Local child protection committees (94), in collaboration with three local social centres (Meagui, San Pedro et Soubre), organized discussions and focus group sessions (groups of 5 to 10 people) with the villagers and their children to talk about the worst forms of child labour. **32,000 people from 54 villages** in the San Pedro Region participated in awareness raising activities and discussions on the worst forms of child labour.
- ANADER has a more classic approach that focusses more on child labour. Awareness raising activities in **40 villages** through Cooperative members, Farmer Field Schools and public awareness raising reached **33,900 people**. The Implementing Partner used the new decree on hazardous work to spark discussion on the damaging effects on children and ways to better protect and support them.
- Funds from the project also contributed to the financing of a workshop to evaluate

*“Thanks to the project, today I know the legal framework on child labour. With my friends, we set up a local committee to continue to sensitize our parent on the risks or dangers on using children in the cocoa farm” said Traore Ibrahim, President of Young Association of the Sessoumanbougou village.*

the Community Animation Approach and how it can be improved in the future.

People are now more aware of child rights and child labour, thanks to the many campaigns and the involvement of the First Lady. However, changes in practices are slow as the general socio-economic situation of families has not changed. In 2018, UNICEF undertook a comprehensive child protection

baseline survey in San Pedro in order to be able to track changes in social norms change over



time. The survey is still being finalised and will serve as a baseline for future programming.

## **Objective 2: Strengthening mechanisms for detection, referral and care for child victims of violence, exploitation, abuse and the worst forms of child labour**

In terms of strengthening a child protection system and ensuring that cases are effectively in place for identification and referral, local level coordination among different actors is essential. However, it still often represents a barrier to the effective delivery of services. The National Child Protection Policy lays out a structure of coordination from national to local level. During the implementation of this project, UNICEF worked to support the setting up and functioning of these local coordination mechanisms or “platforms” in San Pedro, Meagui and Soubre.

The aim of this component was to: support the setting up and functioning of three child protection platforms (local coordination mechanisms between child protection actors); and strengthen child protection community mechanisms in the targeted districts for identification and referral of child victims to local social service centres for assistance.

- During the implementing period, UNICEF has continued to work closely with the Regional Direction of the Ministry responsible for Child Protection to improve the functioning of the local child protection platforms and ensure coordination between the different child protection actors. **Three child protection platforms (San Pedro, Meagui and Soubre) were set up** in 2016 and supported throughout 2017 and 2018. The local child protection platforms are composed of the local staff of the: Ministry responsible for Child Protection, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Security, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, NGOs and ANADER. They meet monthly. They discuss the cases of children who are victims of abuse, violence and exploitation and coordinate case management between different child protection partners. Since the project began, the local child protection platform of San Pedro managed around **152 cases of child victims of abuse**, exploitation and violence referred by the local child protection mechanisms. Information from the platforms in Meagui and Soubre has been harder to collect and this will need more supervision moving forward. The project provided 3 motorcycles to the local child protection platforms. In San Pedro, the platform took the next step and developed a local child Protection Action Plan.
- During the implementing period, the Ministry responsible for Child Protection officially set up **54 local child protection committees**. Local child protection committees aim to prevent the worst forms of child labour and other child protection issues through awareness raising activities and referral of child victims to the social welfare services. **These committees are officially recognized** through the signature by the Prefect of the decrees of designation of the members. In San Pedro the local child protection committees referred over 150 cases of children victims of abuse, exploitation and violence to the social services they also identified vulnerable families whose children were at risk of participating in hazardous child labour and organised home visits and small group awareness raising activities to sensitize families on the dangers of child labour.



© UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire/2017/Frank Dejongh/Cocoa pods

### Objective 3: Strengthening the capacity of the social welfare services

Social services and their social workers are the front-line actors in Cote d'Ivoire who are best placed to deliver services to children in need. As part of the implementation of the National Child Protection Policy, UNICEF has developed a strategic approach to supporting these front-line services. Providing training and supervision for case management, purchase of equipment (e.g. motorbikes and computers) and budget support to ensure they can fulfil their mandate. **This experience will be developed into an investment case for the Government to highlight how with minimum resources and supervision, these front-line services can make a major impact on the lives of vulnerable children and their families.**

- During the implementation of the project, UNICEF strengthened the capacity of the social welfare services in San Pedro, Meagui and Soubre through the provision of motorcycles, training and supervision. Social workers now make more visits to the field and work with the community child protection mechanisms to manage cases. More needs to be done to provide accurate data collection on case management and this will be a priority in 2019-20.
- **24 social workers** were trained on case management for child victims of exploitation and violence and the worst forms of child labour.



## Objective 4: Offer alternatives to child labour in cocoa growing areas

### Services to beneficiary children

Under this component, the project aimed to withdraw **1500 children** engaged or at risk of being engaged in child labour in the cocoa sector and to ensure their rehabilitation and reintegration into appropriate educational programmes (e.g. literacy classes, and vocational training).

- During the implementation of the project, the main local partner, Agence Nationale d'Appui au Développement Rural (ANADER) identified **1661 children** aged 5-13 (618 boys and 416 girls) and aged 14 -17 (425 boys and 202 girls), victims or at risk of the worst forms of child labour.
- For children under 13 years old who could still go to school, **39 bridging classes** were opened. At the end of the accelerated training, **1034 children** were then enrolled attended in public schools in October 2018.
- For children aged between 14- 17, all 627 children identified benefit from literacy training. **39 literacy centres** were opened and equipped to enable these children to read and write.
- **204 children** aged 14-17 previously engaged in child labour activities, were redirected to apprenticeships with local craftsmen. Social services and the chamber of local trades first consulted each child aspiration and preferences, matched them with the apprenticeships offer in their respective zones and then assigned children to the overview of a specialised craftsman. The professions selected included hairdressing, carpentry, mechanics, tailoring, etc. The social workers then played a role in following up on the children to ensure they were doing well and not being further exploited by the craftsmen. The Chamber of Local Trades reinforced this by providing briefing sessions and support to the craftsmen.



© UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire/2018/Children attending the community bridging class in a village in the San Pedro region



© UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire/2018/Apprentice dressmaker girl with the craftsman responsible for the shop and her training



The remaining **423 children** participated in the Farmer Field Schools. These Farmer Field Schools allowed older children and farmers to learn about good agricultural practices. At the same time, they participated in discussions about hazardous child labour to sensitise them about the risks of hazardous work.



© UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire/2018/Children and older farmers attending a Farmer Field School session in a cocoa plantation

### Services to households

**Although economic strengthening of vulnerable families was not an initial “specific objective” of the project, it is widely recognized that the root cause of child labour is household poverty.** In order to withdraw the children engaged in or at risk of becoming engaged in the worst forms of child labour it is important to support their families to increase their income and diversify their activities. The project experimented with two ways to support

families: **a cash transfer to the most vulnerable families (based on the Government/World Bank cash transfer system) and the setting up of Village Savings and Loan Associations.**

- During the implementation of the project, **1452 households (430 in the first reporting period, 834 in the second reporting period and 188 in the current reporting period)** were identified for economic strengthening support. Around 60% (997) of the **1,661** children identified as victim or at risk by the project had a link with the households identified for economic strengthening. On the basis of community diagnoses carried out by the social welfare services, criteria for the selection of families have been established. The criteria were:
  - Single parent family;
  - Larger families (+5 children) with low financial resources;
  - Households in which at least one child is engaged in the child labour and/or out of school;
  - Households that rely on child labour to make ends meet. Be a family living only resources obtained from child labour.
- **212** chiefs of households received support to create Income Generating Activities. These include: chicken farming; equipment to process local vegetables and increase their selling price once transformed; and improved planting materials for farming diversification (particularly rice).

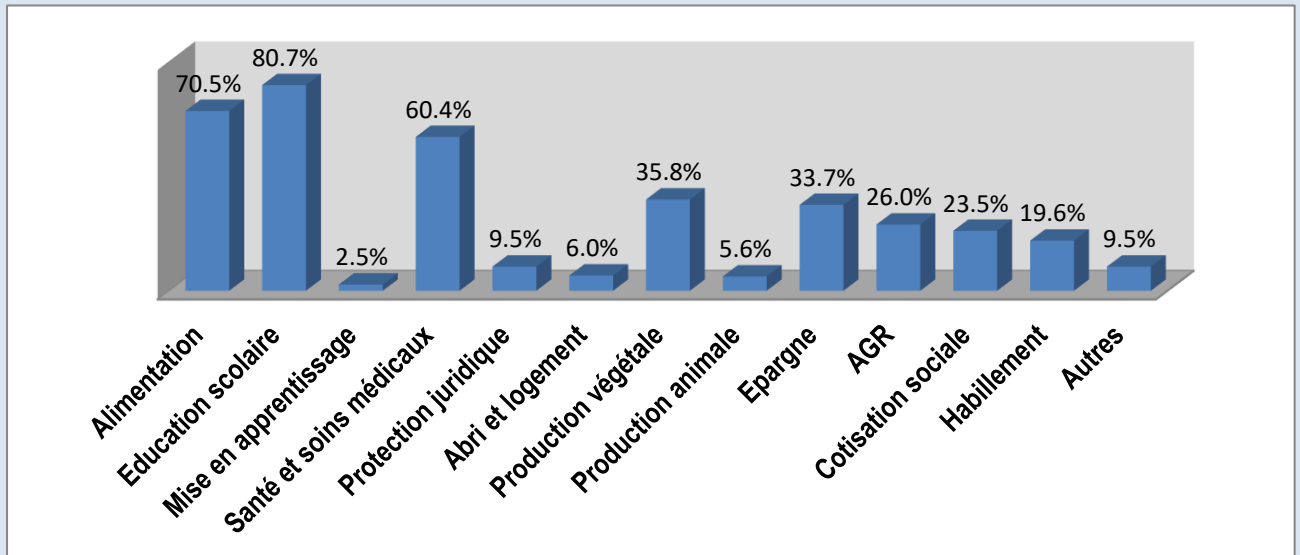
“Thanks to the funds received through the Cash Transfer program, I increased my income and I was able to enroll my child at School and also to send him to the hospital when he became ill” said Bamba Matila from Sessoumanbougou village.

- **510** adults participated in the Village Savings and Loan Associations. 30 Village Savings and Loan Associations were set up and are functional in 30 communities. Village Savings and Loan Associations is an association that brings together between 25 to 30 members and whose main activities are savings and loans. Members regularly contribute an amount agreed upon in advance. With the money thus saved, they give take loans. These loans are granted in agreement with all members of the association. The reimbursement of the loans is made with interest that

increases the amount available in the fund. At the end of the cycle, the members divide the money according to the amount saved by each member and the savings are thus remunerated. The total savings for the 30 Village Savings and Loan Associations at cash-out was 17,000,000 FCFA. The funds saved will allow members to pay for their children to attend school and to engage in other income generating activities. The cash-out is planned for August 2019, just before the next back to school period.

- **300** families have received a cash transfer of 144,000 FCFA over a period of 12 months.

- Funds provided through the Cash Transfer programme tended to be spent by parents in the best interest of their children even though no specific conditions were imposed on them. As an example, the most frequent utilization of such funds have been enrolling children in school; in fact when interviewed, several parents confirmed that they were struggling to cope with the costs of education (e.g. registration fees, the purchase of school uniforms and school supplies, etc.) while thanks to the program they overcame such barriers and were able to put their children back to school.



**Source:** Assessment of the types of spending of the Cash Transfer in project areas

- 430** chiefs of household have been trained in agricultural entrepreneurship and income diversification. The training was related on the creation of Cooperatives, Business Management techniques and an introduction to new technical production skills. This training took place in the Farmers' Field Schools each month. These training courses enable farmers to better manage their income; increase their productivity; and diversify their income

### Objective 5: Improving the access of children and families to justice

This component of the project aimed to improve children and families' access to justice. During the implementation of the project:

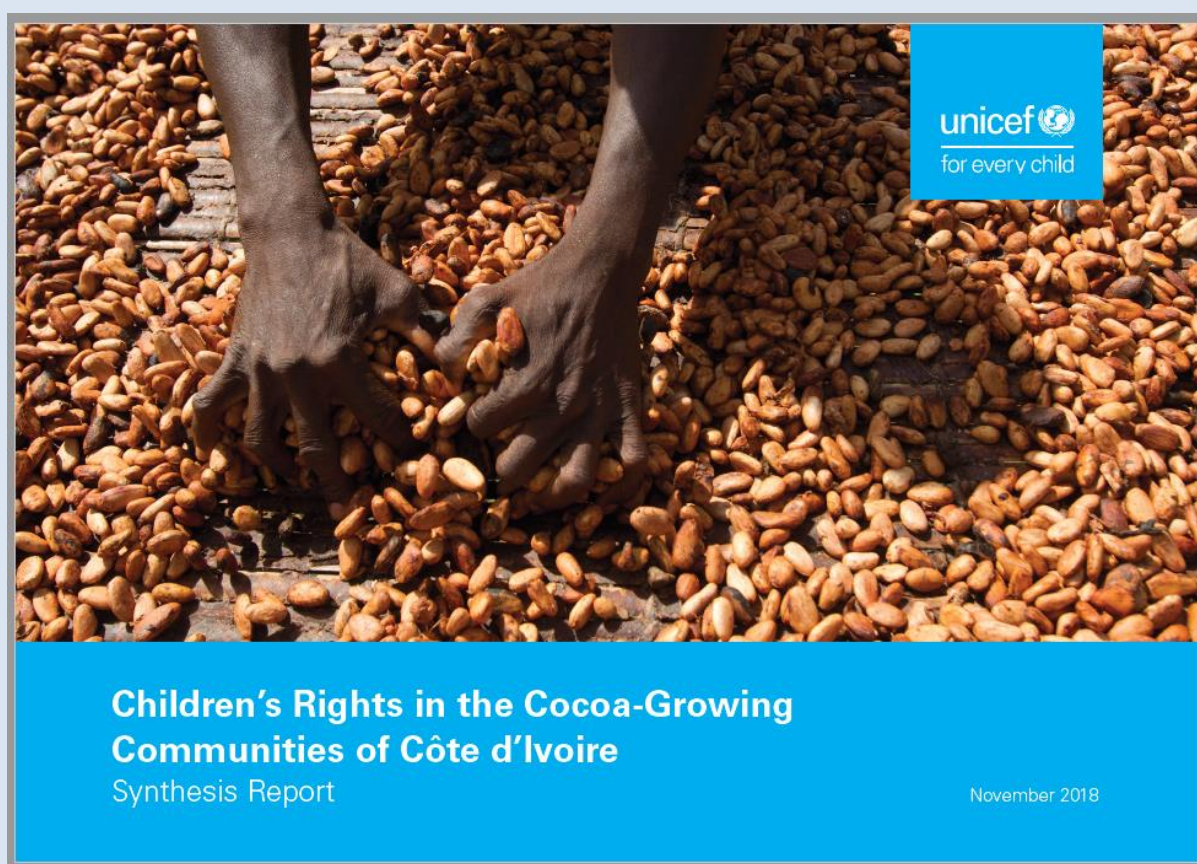
- The material capacity of the judicial service of child protection in Soubre was strengthened through the provision of computer equipment, office furniture and three motorcycles. This new service for child justice is now functional since 2017 and has started to manage cases of child victims, witnesses and those in conflict with the law. The staff were trained on the management of cases of child victims, witnesses and those in conflict with the law.



## Objective 6: Engaging the private sector on child rights, with special focus on cocoa sector

### 1. Cocoa sector engagement – knowledge development, advocacy, collaborations

In 2016 and 2017 engagement with the cocoa industry was strengthened with the process of carrying out and refining the study on “Child Rights in Cocoa Growing Regions”. The study highlights key challenges regarding child rights (protection, identity, education, health, access to water, etc.) in cocoa communities and their root causes (poverty, access to social services, etc.). Holistic approaches are encouraged as well as the need to accompany the poorer families (especially in contexts of possible agricultural transformations) with appropriate social protection measures. Among the recommended actions, the idea of implementing "collective remediation" activities at the national level implemented with a shared responsibility approach (government, development partners, industry) represents an important opportunity to address some of the most critical root causes.



The study also allowed the Country Office to significantly strengthen UNICEF's position in the cocoa-related sustainability debate by:

- Establishing a robust network of relationships with both private and public institutions as well as civil society organizations operating in the sector
- Participating and contributing to key industry events in Abidjan (ICCO council, Conseil Cafe Cacao Public Private Partnership Platform, ICI board meeting, etc.)
- Holding more than 30 bilateral meetings with the main cocoa stakeholders to consult them in the context of the study, inform their sustainability strategies and explore

collaboration opportunities. This includes the leading chocolate/cocoa companies (Mars, Ferrero, Mondelez, Olam, Tony's Chocolonley, etc.), other cocoa related international companies (Unilever, Tesco, Barilla, etc.), private platforms and associations (World Cocoa Foundation, Dutch Banking covenant parties), certifying bodies (UTZ), civil society (ICI, Voice, Save the Children, FLA, Farmstrong Foundation, etc.), international organizations (ICCO), cocoa related consultancy firms (New Foresights, FGS), governments (cabinet of the 1st lady, Belgium, EU, etc.) other UN agencies and development actors (FAO, WFP, GIZ etc.).

- Providing inputs to industry relevant publications (Cocoa Barometer) and standards (ISO/TC 34/SC 18 'Cocoa')

In 2018, UNICEF continued the work that began in 2017 and increased its advocacy efforts with the promotion of the "Child Rights in Cocoa" study through:

- (i) key international industry events (World Cocoa Conference - April 2018, Child Labour in Cocoa Coordination Group with Cote d'Ivoire/Ghana/Cocoa industry, World Cocoa Foundation learning events, ICI board meeting),
- (ii) key international institutions' events (EU workshop on child labour in cocoa – Brussels, March 2018, EU parliamentary hearing on child labour, ICCO consultative board)
- (iii) 15 bilateral meetings with the main international cocoa/chocolate companies
- (iv) bilateral meetings with national and international institutional stakeholders (USDOL, ILO, CNS, European Commission, different ministries of the Ivoirian Government)

At the same time, UNICEF started working with key stakeholders to operationalise some of the study recommendations and build industry consensus on the possibility of developing a Public Private Partnership on children's rights. This included the organization of a meeting with 40 international stakeholders (companies, governments, civil society) during the World Cocoa Conference, a joint analysis with ICI on key child labour root causes; and the preparatory work for the definition of a Public Private Partnership with the industry culminating with the high-level meeting between UNICEF's Executive director and MARS.

Throughout the program cycle, UNICEF Cote d'Ivoire has also worked to transfer the knowledge and best practices generated in the country office to the broader organisation through its active participation to the *Steering Group: Better Business for Children - Global Supply Chains* and the development of case studies and presentations for the benefit of other country offices in the region.

## **2. Broader private sector engagement for programmatic support**

Taking advantage of a resource dedicated to private sector engagement, the office also explored broader collaboration opportunities starting from programmatic priorities.

In 2017, UNICEF elaborated the basis for a global partnership with les "Jeux de la Francophonie", an international sports and arts event promoting diversity and solidarity, held every four years alternating between a developing and developed country. It was the first-time UNICEF was associated with this event with top tier positioning offering UNICEF great visibility with an estimated audience of 541 million in 80 countries.

Another priority intervention was the development of a UNICEF network of relationships. In fact, in 2017 +100 new connections were established including stakeholders from companies, chambers of commerce, platforms, civil society, other UN agencies. In June 2017, UNICEF also became a member of the coordination task force for the “Plateforme Humanitaire du Secteur Privée” (coordinating mechanism to face emergencies/crises).

Following the positive experience with the development of the study on child rights in cocoa growing communities, the office decided to start a new strategic engagement with another critical sector with a major impact on children’s rights in Cote d’Ivoire: industrial and artisanal mining. In 2018 UNICEF Cote d’Ivoire convened meetings with the main UN agencies (ILO, UNHCR, IOM) leading to the agreement on jointly running a study in collaboration with key Government partners. An initial network has been developed and a preliminary analysis completed including: (i) stakeholder mapping, (ii) literature review, (iii) identification of key impacts of mining on children’s rights.

The office also started exploring partnerships to support UNICEF’s Generation Unlimited Agenda with local media and retail companies focusing on the promotion of U-Report and youth employability.



## 5. LESSONS LEARNT

During project implementation, the project learned the following lessons:

- Strengthening the economic resilience of families has been confirmed to be a critical strategy to reduce the risk of child labour. This includes addressing extreme poverty through measures like cash transfers, but also helping families and the older children of working age to develop alternative sources of income as well as stimulating a culture of savings (through the Village Savings and Loans Associations). The majority of families used their extra cash to pay for school and food.



- Combining approaches – awareness raising on child labour; economic strengthening for vulnerable families; access to education and alternatives for young people; as well as case management for the worst cases – is essential to combat child labour. This area-based approach – tackling roots causes in one geographic area – needs to be scaled up and moved along a continuum towards truly “Child Labour Free Zones”.

© UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire/2018/Woman showing part of the equipment she purchased for her family business thanks to the economic strengthening interventions implemented by the project.

- Many children engaged in worst forms of child labour are not registered by the civil registration services. There is a link between child labour and the lack of identity. It would be therefore important to invest on birth registration as a preventive measure to reduce child labour risk.



- To increase the impact of UNICEF's interventions beyond the direct beneficiaries of the programme it is critical to engage with public and private stakeholders in order to influence national plans and industry standards/sustainability frameworks. It is with this spirit that UNICEF worked closely with the Government of Cote d'Ivoire in collaboration with other UN agencies (particularly ILO) and development actors to develop the 2018-2020 National Action Plan on Child Labour and Trafficking; the new national plan has extensively been informed by the work done in the context of this program.

© UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire/2018/Official from the civil state issuing a birth certificate

- The engagement and the advocacy work with several businesses both at national and international level enabled UNICEF to influence significantly the view of the cocoa sector on child labour and children's rights more broadly. The study on "Child Rights in Cocoa" has been an important tool to bring different stakeholders "on the same page" while encouraging a more structured reflection on the existing approaches to fight child labour and its root causes. The development of the study itself and its dissemination, represented an ideal occasion to develop UNICEF's network and influence. The physical presence in the country office of a dedicated private sector specialist appeared as a positive investment considered the relational nature of this job, and the fact that the resource has also been able to support other partnership opportunities for the office.



© UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire/2017/Frank Dejongh/woman drying cocoa in the village of Kako.



## 6. FINANCIAL REPORT

Out of the total programmable amount of **805,286.65 USD**, UNICEF Cote d'Ivoire has utilized **805,286.65 USD**.

UNICEF Cote d'Ivoire takes this opportunity to express its gratitude to the Dutch Committee for UNICEF for its continued cooperation and support to help the women and children of Cote d'Ivoire.

Activities	Amount USD
Awareness raising around child protection and child labour	107,514.46
Strengthening child protection system (enhancing mechanisms for detection, referral and child care for child victims of violence, exploitation and abuse)	395,151.77
Improving the legal protection of children and their families	52,012.72
Technical support for engaging on child rights and business principles	4,125
Programme support, including technical human resources, monitoring and evaluation, and operational costs	182,039.77
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>740,843.72</b>
Indirect Costs and administrative support	64,442.93
<b>Total</b>	<b>805,286.65</b>

## 7. OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE INVESTMENTS

The direct results for families and children, as well as the fact that interventions from this programme have been included in the new National Action Plan on child labour has been an important achievement. However, rates of child labour remain high and UNICEF will need to mobilise additional resources to support the Government with implementation of the new plan. UNICEF would be keen to support the government on:

- The extension of the economic strengthening interventions: Village Savings and Loans Associations, Income Generating Activities and Cash Transfers to all the areas of the country with a high prevalence of child labour; and a feasibility study to undertake cash transfers for farmers during the lean months of the year.
- Support the extension of child protection work in communities to create "Child Labour Free Zones".
- Support to the reform of the civil registration and vital statistics system – to ensure that every child has a birth certificate.
- Through our Education programme - support extension of access to quality early childhood development and primary education – to ensure that children attend and stay in school.

Moreover, building on the work done in the field of private sector engagement during the last 3 years, UNICEF Cote d'Ivoire is keen to continue working with cocoa companies and international institutions as well as expanding its engagement efforts with the mining sector. Activities within this stream of work would include:

- The development of guidelines on the interpretation of UN Guiding Principles for small scale agriculture
- The development of public private partnerships to accelerate investments on key child labour root causes
- Launching a multi-stakeholder study on the impact of mining (both industrial and artisanal) on children's and women's rights in Cote d'Ivoire
- Pursuing new partnerships with businesses that could support the broader UNICEF work in the country.

Several of the above listed interventions have already been included in the "Work: no child's business" proposal submitted by the alliance to fight child labour composed by UNICEF, Save the Children and the Stop Child Labour Coalition. Cote d'Ivoire has been retained among the priority countries where the program aims at maximising synergies with the other alliance members as well as with ILO, national government and most critical economic sectors (major focus on cocoa and mining).



© UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire/2018/Children in San Pedro.

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## Promoting the rights of children in cocoa producing areas in Côte d'Ivoire

**UNICEF works with farmers to improve savings capacity through Village Savings and Loan Associations.**

*Author: Hyacinthe Sigui, Child Protection Officer.*



*Sessoumandougou, December 2018 – Traore Siaka explained the benefit of the Village Savings and Loan Association.*

Traore Siaka, is a cocoa farmer. He is a member of the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA). “Every Tuesday, we gather to put together our savings. Before that, the Agence nationale d’appui au développement rural (ANADER) has trained us on the role and benefits of this association. It’s been four months since we first started. I took a loan in October to pay for my child’s tuition fees. My first child could not go to school because I did not have the money to pay for college classes”. He said.

UNICEF is working with ANADER to raise awareness amongst cacao communities about the importance of sending their children to school and learn how to manage their income effectively.

The reality of many cacao farm families and one of the root cause of child labor, is extreme poverty. The purpose of the village savings and loan associations is working on the ground with farmers to save to increase their income.

With the help of the VSLA, many parents who could not afford it before, can now put their children to school added M. Traore. More children are going to school and less are working in cocoa communities. However, there is still a lot to do.

With the support of UNICEF Netherland, hundreds of households will be able to improve their livelihoods through training on agricultural entrepreneurship and setting up Village Savings and Loan Associations. Supporting poor farming families to diversify and increase their income is the best way to ensure that children can spend more time studying and playing and less time in the fields.



*Children attending the community bridging class in the region of San Pedro in the South West of Côte d'Ivoire.*

For every child, the right to play and go to school.