

SLE Publication Series - S233 -



SLE Publication Series –S233–

Centre for Advanced Training in Rural Development (SLE)
on behalf the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Child Labour and Children's Economic Activities in Agriculture in Ghana

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December 2008



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Child Labour and Children's Economic Activities in Agriculture in Ghana / Gabrielle Zdunek ...

– Berlin: SLE, 2008.

(Schriftenreihe des SLE; S233)

ISBN 978-3-88985-379-0

ISBN 3-936602-37-9

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Foreword

The Centre for Advanced Training in Rural Development (Seminar für Ländliche Entwicklung, SLE) at the Humboldt University in Berlin has trained young professionals in the field of German and international development cooperation for more than forty-five years.

Consulting projects conducted on behalf of German and international cooperation organisations form part of the one-year postgraduate course. In multidisciplinary teams, young professionals carry out studies on innovative future-oriented topics, and act as consultants. Including diverse local actors in the process is of great importance here. The outputs of this “applied research” are an immediate contribution to the solving of development problems in rural areas.

Throughout the years, SLE has carried out consulting projects in more than seventy countries, and regularly published the results in this series.

In 2008, SLE teams completed studies in Ghana, Tunisia, Morocco and Peru, all of which dealt with topics relevant to the most recent discussions in international cooperation.

The present six-month study was commissioned by and conducted in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

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Acknowledgements

The Centre for Advanced Training in Rural Development (SLE) project on “Child Labour and Children’s Economic Activities in Agriculture in Ghana” was implemented with the financial support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and with the assistance of many people in Ghana and Germany. We are indebted to all of them for their valuable contributions.

First and foremost, we would like to express our gratitude to all the members of the communities where our research was conducted. Without their trust and patience, this study could not have been carried out. We appreciate their support and hope that they will benefit from the conclusions it draws.

A large number of resource persons and counterparts have contributed to the design and conduct of the study. Our special thanks go to: Albertine de Lange, Bernd Seiffert, Eve Crowley and Diana Tempelman from FAO, Mary Stella Ofori from the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment, Alex Yao Sarbah from the Ministry of Fisheries, Faustinos Obrotey, Isaac Asante Koramgah and Moses Kakaw from the Departments of Social Welfare in Pru, Kwahu North and South Tongu, Samuel Kofi Addo, Ibrahim Laberan, Jack James Dawson, Patrick Kudiabor and Sylvanus Adukpo from the non-governmental organisations Volta Care, Association of People for Practical Life Education (APPLE) and International Needs Ghana and Ayih Jerryson from the University of Cape Coast as well as Abdul-Malik Alidu and Saaka Abukar Yahaya from the University of Development Studies in Tamale. We are most grateful to our counterparts who provided valuable inputs, established indispensable contacts and who translated from various languages. Finally, their kindness and caring spirit are much appreciated.

A number of representatives of national and international institutions have been of great assistance in supplying information and in discussing the overall situation on child labour in Ghana. In particular, our thanks go to members of the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment, the Ministry of Fisheries, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the Ghana Education Service, the Ghana Statistical Service, the police stations in Aflao and Yeji, the International Labour Organization, the International Organization for Migration, the General Agricultural Workers’ Union, the Ghana Employers’ Association, the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice and the Ghana National Association of Teachers.

Moreover, we are grateful to Cosmas Lambini Kombat, who was the first to provide us with an insight into life and work in Ghana. Additionally, like Andrea Kämpf and Anna Würth from the German Institute for Human Rights, he gave us valuable feedback in the preparatory phase of our study.

Last but not least, we are indebted to Iris Paulus from the SLE for her advice, professional support and critical input during the conceptual as well as the finalisation phases of the study. We also would like to express our gratitude to Carola Jacobi-Sambou, Gabriele Beckmann, Alexander Proehl and all other SLE staff for their assistance and cooperation.

Summary and Main Recommendations

Summary

Increasing concern that a large number of children are exposed to harsh or hazardous work conditions has led to global efforts to put an end to child labour in agriculture, particularly to its worst forms. Cooperation is actively being developed between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and international organisations involved in agriculture, notably the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP), and the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Association (IUF). Their aim is to bring concerns about child labour into the mainstream of agricultural policy and to promote strategies and programmes aimed at improving rural livelihoods including the promotion of decent youth employment. A Declaration of Intent on cooperation on child labour in agriculture was signed on the World Day against Child Labour in June 2007.

The research project "Child Labour and Children's Economic Activities in Agriculture in Ghana" was initiated jointly by the FAO and the Seminar for Advanced Training in Rural Development of the Humboldt University Berlin. Ghana was chosen for the study because it is documented that a high number of children work in agriculture. According to the Ghana Child Labour Survey carried out in 2001 – the first and only nationwide data collection on working children – half of the rural and about one fifth of the urban children is economically active. Nearly 60 percent of them are engaged in agriculture, forestry and fishing. Another reason for the choice of Ghana was that the government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and unions implement a range of policies for the reduction of worst forms of labour, making it possible to analyse their impact as a starting point for future strategies.

The goal of the study is to address knowledge gaps on child labour issues prevailing in the agricultural sector and to prepare recommendations on how to address them in the policies and programmes of various stakeholders: FAO and other international organisations involved in agriculture, government institutions and civil society groups. The study focuses on:

- the identification of major legislation, institutions, policies and processes affecting the economic activities of children and child labour

- case studies on children's economic contribution and on child labour in cocoa production, fishing and cattle herding, sectors in which a considerable number of children work
- the identification of initiatives and practices which have been successful in addressing issues of child labour
- the review of the available statistics relevant to child labour in agriculture and an assessment of whether and how the improvement of data availability through national data collection processes might be achieved

In general, Ghana has a comparatively progressive child labour law; enforcement, however, is still inadequate. Since the 1990s, the government has carried out various initiatives to protect children from exploitative and hazardous work. It has implemented legislative reforms, developed a range of interventions in rural areas and is now in a process of mainstreaming child labour concerns into policy approaches such as Poverty Reduction Strategies. In recent years, unions such as the General Agricultural Workers' Union and several NGOs have also devoted increased attention to the problem of child labour. In 2008, the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment drafted a National Plan of Action for the Elimination of (the worst forms of) Child Labour 2008-2015 as an overall strategy and basis for cooperation between institutions and organisations. However, it has yet to be assessed how far legislative reforms, programmes and activities have contributed to a reduction of child labour.

The case study on children's work in the cocoa sector is based on a literature review. In 2000 and 2001, the media – especially in the United Kingdom and in the United States of America – reported that a large number of trafficked children were employed in slave-like conditions on cocoa farms in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. Subsequently, several studies with quite large representative samples have been conducted on children's work in cocoa production. In all surveys carried out in Ghana it is reported that a considerable number of children participate in cocoa production and are to some extent involved in activities considered hazardous. Yet all in all, the authors maintain that most of them perform acceptable and light work. However, on the whole, the line between acceptable work and child labour might not always be clear-cut. Only in June 2008, the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment released a Hazardous Child Labour Activity Framework for the cocoa sector to clarify the definition of acceptable work and child labour. It consists of a catalogue specifying activities considered hazardous for children for the whole seasonal calendar. In addition, the number of working hours and education opportunities are considered.

Apart from cocoa production, little information on working conditions and the kind of tasks boys and girls perform in agriculture exists. For this study fishing and cattle herding have been selected because it was known from sketchy information that a large number of children work in these sectors. Similarly, as in cocoa production, child labour in fisheries has recently attracted the attention of the media; in films and articles it was maintained that a high number of children were trafficked to work in fisheries at the Volta Lake and exposed to hazardous and worst forms of labour.

The case studies in two districts at the Volta Lake and two in coastal areas show that a large number of children are involved in fishing and that they perform a wide variety of tasks. Whereas fishing is mainly the work of men and boys, it is largely women and girls who process and market the fish. Typical for the work of girls is that they combine fish processing and trade with various household chores. From the interviews undertaken and observations made it can be concluded that children in fishing are engaged under different conditions ranging from light and regular work that can be combined with school attendance to worst forms of labour. Many children work under conditions not in accordance with Ghanaian law either, because they have not reached the minimum age or because they do work such as going to sea or carrying heavy loads, which are considered hazardous and/or because their economic activities affect their school attendance. In the districts of Tolon-Kumbungu and North and South Tongu the cattle boys either worked for their families or under contracts which committed them for several years. As they herded the cattle from morning to evening none of the boys in the sample was enrolled in school. The violation of child protection laws as well as the Ghana Human Trafficking Act is particularly evident in the case of children who have a contract and work for an employer for several years; however, it is difficult to assess the number of cases in fishing or cattle herding.

In fishing as well as in cattle herding the children face a number of hazards – for example they are exposed to extreme weather conditions or can be bitten by insects or snakes. However, it is difficult to assess the actual risks involved and the number of cases in which the children get work-related injuries or sicknesses. Some of the hazards mentioned by children and parents – such as insect bites – might be less related to work than to the dangers of everyday life in rural areas. To correctly define hazards, risk assessments have to be conducted. The Hazardous Child Labour Activity Framework released by the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment for the cocoa sector could be an example for the development of definitions of hazardous work both in fishing and livestock keeping as well as in other sectors of agriculture.

Children's economic activities in agriculture are influenced by a multitude of factors on the supply as well as on the demand side. Poverty is considered a major determinant of child labour; however, manifold other factors also influence children's work such as the accessibility and quality of education and the impact of interventions.

The accessibility and quality of education and its relevance to the labour market is one factor in parents' decisions to send their children to school. Although many boys and girls combine school attendance and work, increased enrolment rates can have an effect on working hours and on the kind of work done. One element in sensitisation programmes for the reduction of child labour is the creation of an awareness of the value of education. However, as Odonkor (2007a:1) claims "rural parents should rather be seen as dissatisfied clients of the education system than as illiterates ignorant of the value of education". In this study it was confirmed that because of the low quality of education, difficulties in access and also the uncertainty of finding an adequate job after graduation, parents have developed a coping strategy by which they send some of their children to school and the others help in fishing, farming or other economic activities. Realistically, the role model quoted in interviews and focus group discussions included not only persons who were better off because of their education but also examples of Senior High School graduates who could not find a job and had been "spoiled" for the work on the farms through the expectations they had developed.

At the moment, the impact of policies and interventions for the reduction of child labour is difficult to assess because they have been implemented only recently as in the case of the ILO Time-Bound Programme, or have hardly been evaluated at all as the remediation projects in the cocoa sector (Payson Center 2008). Four of the six districts visited (Ketu South, Pru, North and South Tongu, Tolon-Kumbungu) are among the total of 20 collaborating with the Time-Bound Programme since 2006. Altogether, several hundred children and, to some extent, their families received assistance; for example, young children have been enrolled in schools and supplied with school uniforms and other items while, for older ones, training opportunities have been sought, and in some of the districts parents have been provided with skills training and financial support. However, it appears that many of the children supported under the Time-Bound Programme who are now enrolled in schools continue to participate in fishing and farming. It is difficult to assess the extent to which they work less or their general situation might have improved. Especially in North and South Tongu the activities to reduce child labour have led to controversial debate, opposition and conflicts in the communities. Some cattle owners see the efforts to withdraw boys from herding as an "attempt to crash local economy" (Afenyadu 2008). To date, no solutions have been found.

During the research phase, the team found several policies and activities on national, regional and district level that might contribute to the long-term reduction of the worst forms of child labour. Promising are efforts to mainstream child labour issues into existing policies and programmes because this enlarges capacities and helps to lay the basis for cooperation and networking between institutions and organisations. An example is the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment. For effective mainstreaming it is crucial to sensitise and train the personnel at all levels; for this reason, the development of teaching material on child labour in agriculture is seen as another case of good practice. The third example is the establishment of Child Labour Monitoring Systems at district and community level with the aim of documenting the incidence of child labour and development trends. The data and information collected can be used as a basis for immediate interventions or – when they are transferred to stakeholders at district and national level – for appropriate future actions and the improvement of current policies and programmes. Apart from approaches aiming at capacity building in institutions and organisations and/or data collection, it is relevant to give immediate support to children in, or at risk of, the worst forms of labour. One good practice example is the provision of transitional schools, because they open up new opportunities for working children. The other example is the direct action approach to withdrawing children from the worst forms of labour (in fishing and other occupations) as long as law enforcement remains inadequate.

The Ghana Child Labour Survey of 2001 is the first and only nationwide data collection on working children. While it is possible to extract some information from other Ghanaian statistics, they are fragmentary and inconsistent. As early as 2005, a Technical Working Group on Integrating Child Labour Indicators on Socio-Economic and Demographic Surveys was established to develop recommendations for the improvement of data collection. The Technical Working Group makes a number of suggestions to counter the shortcomings of existing surveys. The recommendations are in a work-in-progress stage. Yet, they have been already considered in the Ghana Cocoa Labour Survey conducted by the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment in 2007. Evidently, to effectively assess children's engagement in exploitative, hazardous or worst forms of labour in agriculture and fishing, the existing surveys would have to include many of the Working Group's recommendations, a requirement that may not be realistic. Thus, it may be necessary to undertake separate quantitative surveys on the different sectors where hazardous work by children plays a prominent role, as in fisheries and livestock keeping.

Main Recommendations

International agencies and organisations can have a considerable impact on the enforcement of internationally agreed goals, conventions and standards. The main recommendations on how FAO – in cooperation with the partners of the Declaration of Intent and ministries – can contribute most effectively to the reduction of (worst forms of) child labour in agriculture and fisheries refer to:

- the mainstreaming/integration of child labour issues into its departments, programmes and activities¹
- the increase of the knowledge base on the worldwide incidence and forms of child labour in various agricultural sectors as well as on (successful) policies and interventions for its reduction
- the support of capacity building by making available or improving training and education material on child labour issues for decision makers, agricultural extension services, farmers, children, youth and other groups

Because of its mandate FAO in particular could serve as a centre for information and knowledge on the topic of child labour in agriculture and fishing and as a forum for policy dialogue. Because of its close relationships to national ministries and departments of agriculture FAO could assist member countries reaching the internationally agreed goals; at the same time FAO could play an essential role in supporting global monitoring processes on the development of child labour. To achieve synergy effects, in general, FAO should work closely with other United Nations programmes and agencies addressing child labour and establish structures for cooperation. To intensify collaboration, regular meetings with relevant cooperation partners are proposed. Regarding activities at national, district and community level, FAO and partners should make use of, and build upon, existing programmes and structures concerned with children's rights.

Mainstreaming child labour issues

One aim of the Declaration of Intent on Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture of the ILO, FAO and other organisations involved in agriculture is to “mainstream child labour concerns into existing activities, programmes, and projects of agricultural organisations” and “into agricultural policy making” (ILO/FAO et al. 2007:4). It is

¹ For a definition of mainstreaming and examples for processes see chapter 4.1.

strongly recommended that mainstreaming processes are initiated at FAO to involve the capacities and specific expertise of different departments and programmes in the efforts to reduce child labour. As initial actions the following is proposed.

- With the aim of identifying cost- and time-effective options, FAO should commission a feasibility study on how to integrate child labour issues into the work of its different departments at the headquarters and the decentralised offices.
- The results and recommendations of the study should be presented in workshops with representatives of different departments, work units and programmes at FAO headquarters and the decentralised offices. The objectives of the workshops should be to discuss organisational aspects of processes to mainstream child labour concerns such as the creation/nomination of focal points, and to determine priority areas for future work. The experience of other organisations working on the reduction of child labour, such as ILO, should be considered. In addition, FAO's experience with the integration of other cross-cutting topics, such as women's and gender issues, into the activities of different departments and programmes should be taken into account.
- As the various FAO departments and programmes will be of different relevance to the goal of reducing child labour, in the workshops it should also be discussed how the integration/mainstreaming of the issue could contribute to achieving the respective mandates.

Furthermore, FAO should use its connection with agricultural ministries and departments to support member countries in processes for mainstreaming child labour issues into policies, programmes and projects. The following recommendations refer mainly to the Ghanaian context, but may also be applicable to other countries and regions.

- Currently, FAO is assisting the Ghanaian Ministry of Fisheries in drafting a national Fisheries Policy. Because of the importance of child labour in fisheries, it is recommended that FAO and the ministry consider a mainstreaming approach for the future policies.
- FAO should give technical support to the Ghanaian Ministry of Food and Agriculture and to the Ministry of Fisheries in its efforts to integrate child labour concerns into extension services and other activities at community, regional and national level.
- FAO and partners, in particular ILO, should give technical support to the Ghana Statistical Service and to the relevant ministries to help them implement the

proposals made both by the Technical Working Group and in this report for the integration of information on working children into Ghanaian national surveys.

- FAO should encourage its member countries to integrate child labour concerns in its Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

Extension of Knowledge Base

Through the development of knowledge and expertise on the problem of child labour and on successful interventions and policies for its reduction, FAO could be a centre for awareness-building, knowledge exchange and capacity building for other international organisations, multi- and bilateral agencies for development cooperation and for national ministries or agriculture departments.

- It is recommended that FAO technically supports government efforts to establish data bases on children's economic activities in agriculture. These efforts could be linked with the ILO International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour and to initiatives such as Understanding Children's Work by ILO, UNICEF and the World Bank. In addition, data should be made available, for example by posting it on the homepages either of FAO or of other international organisations. If this is done, institutions, ministries, NGOs and the general public will have access to the information needed for the development of policies and interventions.
- As many children are involved in the processing and marketing of agricultural products, the data collection should consider the various components of the value chain.
- Often, children work extensively by combining work in agriculture with household chores. It is therefore suggested that household activities are also included in research and data bases.

Training and Education

For effective mainstreaming of child labour concerns into the work and activities of institutions and organisations involved in agriculture it is essential to sensitise and train personnel and stakeholders at all levels. ILO/IPEC and other organisations and institutions have already developed teaching material on tackling child labour addressed to different stakeholders. Specifically, for institutions or organisations which are new to the child labour issue, such as the Ghanaian Ministry of Food and Agriculture, adequate teaching material can contribute to integrating the issue into extension services and other activities.

- It is proposed that FAO commissions a review of existing manuals and material for addressing and integrating child labour concerns into training on agricultural

issues in Ghana and other African regions. If necessary, FAO should give partners technical support in the updating and adapting of manuals and in the training of stakeholders in their use. For agricultural sectors not yet covered, FAO should provide technical assistance to ministries and other partners in the development of new training material. In Ghana, the sectors yet to be addressed include, for example, fisheries and keeping of livestock.

- FAO should support the development and implementation of curricula relevant to the rural and agricultural context for primary and secondary schools. Examples are the planned Junior Farmer Field and Life Skills Schools in Ghana as well as the already established curricula in selected schools in fishing communities in Malawi.

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Abbreviations

APPLE	Association of People for Practical Life Education
CHRAJ	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
COCOBOD	Ghana Cocoa Board
CWIQ	Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaires
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCUBE	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
FYSSO	Facts for the Youth in the Southern Sector Organisation (Ghana)
GAWU	General Agricultural Workers' Union (Ghana)
GHC	Ghana Cedi
GJA	Ghana Journalists Association
GLSS	Ghana Living Standards Survey
GP	Ghana Pesewa
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFAP	International Federation of Agricultural Producers
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IITA	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
ILO	International Labour Organization
INN-G	International Needs Ghana
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
IUF	International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Association
JHS	Junior High School
LEAP	Livelihood Empowerment against Poverty Programme

LUTRENA	Programme de Lutte Contre la Traite des Enfants a des Fins d'Exploitation de leur travail en Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MMYE	Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment in Ghana
MOFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture in Ghana
MOWAC	Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs
NCLEP	National Child Labour Elimination Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPECLC	National Programme for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in the Cocoa Sector (Ghana)
PHC	Population and Housing Census of Ghana
SARD	Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development
SCREAM	Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media
SHS	Senior High School
SLE	Centre for Advanced Training in Rural Development (Seminar für Ländliche Entwicklung)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
US	United States of America
USD	US Dollar
WACAP	West African Cocoa and Commercial Agriculture Programme to Combat Hazardous and Exploitative Child Labour

1 Introduction

Background

Worldwide, it is the agriculture sector which has by far the largest share of working children – an estimated 70 percent. About 132 million girls and boys aged between five and fourteen work in crop and livestock production, fisheries and forestry. In many cases, participating in household, farm and off-farm activities gives children an opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge they need if they are to succeed as farmers or in other occupations in the future. In addition, supporting the family business and livelihood strategy may give them self-esteem, social security and a sense of belonging to the community. However, in many other cases children work under conditions which endanger their safety and health and/or deprive them of an education. The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines this kind of work as ‘child labour’ and designs and implements policies to eliminate it. Several ILO conventions refer to a minimum employment age and especially address the ‘worst forms’ of child labour, such as hazardous and forced work or trafficking (Hagemann et al. 2006, ILO 2006).

Increasing concern that a large number of children are exposed to harsh or hazardous work conditions has led to global efforts to put an end to child labour in agriculture, particularly to its worst forms. Cooperation is actively being developed between the ILO and international organisations involved in agriculture, notably the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the International Food Policy Research Institute of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, the International Federation of Agricultural Producers, and the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers’ Association. Their aim is to bring concerns about child labour into the mainstream of agricultural policy and to promote strategies and programmes aimed at improving rural livelihoods including the promotion of decent youth employment. A Declaration of Intent on cooperation on child labour in agriculture was signed on the World Day against Child Labour in June 2007 (ILO/FAO et al. 2007, see annex).

The Research Project

The research project “Child Labour and Children’s Economic Activities in Agriculture in Ghana” was initiated jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Seminar for Advanced Training in Rural Development of the Humboldt University Berlin. Ghana was chosen for the study because it is

documented that a high number of children work in agriculture. In a Child Labour Survey in 2001, it was estimated that more than one million children in Ghana can be classified as child labourers; nearly 80 percent of them live in rural areas and the majority are involved in agriculture and fishing (Ghana Statistical Service 2003). At the same time, however, the government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and unions implement a range of policies for the reduction of the worst forms of child labour, making it possible to analyse their impact as a starting point for future strategies. Until now it has been difficult to assess trends in the incidence and development of children's economic activities and child labour in agriculture. Apart from the Child Labour Survey of 2001 there are only some very recent studies with larger representative samples of children's work in cocoa production, all of them with fairly similar results showing no clear trend (see chapter 3.1).

The goal of the study is to address knowledge gaps on child labour issues prevailing in the agricultural sector and to prepare recommendations on how to address them in the policies and programmes of various stakeholders: FAO and other international organisations involved in agriculture, government institutions and civil society groups. The study focuses on:

- the identification of major legislation, institutions, policies and processes affecting the economic activities of children and child labour
- case studies on children's economic contribution and child labour in different agricultural activities typical of the country or region
- the identification of initiatives and practices which have been successful in addressing issues of child labour
- the review of the available statistics relevant to child labour in agriculture and an assessment of whether and how the improvement of data availability through national data collection processes might be achieved

Two explorative visits to Ghana were undertaken in November 2007 and February/March 2008 with the aim of obtaining an overview of existing policies for the reduction of child labour, initiating contacts with cooperation partners, specifying the particular research topics and determining the research sites. On the basis of the information gained, it was decided to conduct case studies on children's economic activities and child labour in four sectors: inland and ocean fishing, cattle herding and cocoa production. The topics of these case studies have been chosen for the following reasons:

- A preliminary review of available literature and the expert interviews indicated that a considerable number of children work under different conditions in the above-mentioned areas. For other sectors such as the commercial production of vegetables, fruit and palm oil the participation of children was less clear.

- So far, little systematic research has been done on children's economic activities in fisheries and livestock keeping.
- Children's work in cocoa production – and to a lesser degree in inland fishing at Lake Volta – has become a political issue. Various projects and programmes are being implemented to reduce child labour, making it possible to analyse and find potentially good practices.
- Because of the export dependency of cocoa production and dwindling resources in ocean fishery due to over-fishing, children's economic activities in both sectors are influenced by international and global developments. This provides an opportunity to explore impacts of policies on the macro, meso and micro level.

We decided not to conduct our own survey on the cocoa sector because several large-scale studies had already been planned for 2007 and 2008. For instance, the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment organises annual representative surveys on children's work and child labour as the basis of a certification system with the goal of gradually covering the entire 67 cocoa districts in Ghana. Also the Payson Center for International Development and Technology plans to carry out annual harvest-season surveys (Asuming-Brempong et al. 2007, MMYE/NPECLC 2008, Payson Center 2007).

During the preparatory phase in Berlin, the following districts were finally selected as research sites:

- Ketu South and Keta (Volta Region), Kwahu North (Eastern Region) and Pru (Brong Ahafo) for the fisheries sector and
- Tolon Kumbungu and North and South Tongu in the Northern and the Volta Region for cattle herding.

Figure 1 shows the locations of the districts on the map of Ghana. The criteria for the selection of the above-mentioned research sites were:

- Either fishing or livestock keeping are one of the major economic activities in the area and a high number of children work in one of these sectors.
- For the fishing sector, different production systems (fishing at the Volta Lake, the Volta River, lagoons and the coast) should be considered so as to enable analyses of relationships between the different techniques applied and the incidence of children's work.
- To be able to analyse the impact of interventions, districts with and without programmes and projects for the reduction of child labour were chosen

Figure 1: Map of Ghana, Location of Research Sites



Methodology

In the empirical study, rapid and action-oriented assessment methods were used to reach “a reasonable compromise between statistical precision and impressionistic data gathering”. Several data-collecting strategies were used concurrently “in order to achieve an understanding of a specific social reality or situation in a particular socio-

cultural context” (ILO/UNICEF 2000: 8, 10).² Interview results from different sources were triangulated to cross-check the validity and credibility of information. The following data collection methods were used:

- expert interviews, e.g. with representatives of different ministries and government institutions, international organisations, members of district assemblies, trade unions, NGOs and traditional authorities (see the list of interview partners at the end of the report)
- focus group discussions with community members such as Child Labour Committees, teachers and associations of fishers and fish processors, sometimes comprising wealth rankings and seasonal calendars
- semi-structured interviews with children, parents, employers and teachers on their perspectives of children’s economic activities and of more or less acceptable forms of work
- observations at places where children work such as landing or processing sites and grazing grounds

As far as possible, children’s views and opinions on work situations were assessed – for example through the recalling of their activities of the previous day and biographic interviews. The selection of the working children interviewed as well as their employers, guardians or parents followed the snowball principle. Contacts were made through staff of the District Assemblies, NGOs and traditional authorities. The aim was to cover typical work situations and the work conditions of children in fishing and cattle herding.

During the three months of field research, a total of 73 experts were interviewed. 169 interviews were held with children and parents/guardians/employers and 14 focus group discussions were conducted. Table 1 gives an overview of the interviews and focus group discussions per district. In addition, seven boys and two girls withdrawn from child labour were interviewed in a shelter in Atebubu (Atebubu-Amanti District) near Pru District.

The reason why more boys than girls were interviewed is that the former account for most of the working children in fishing and cattle herding. The girls interviewed were mainly engaged in fish processing.

² For methodological concepts for research on children’s work see also ILO/UNICEF (2000), Regional Working Group on Child Labour in Asia (2002) ILO/UNICEF (2005).

Table 1: Overview of interviews and focus group discussions per district

Districts	Boys	Girls	Fathers/ guardians, male employers	Mothers/ guardians, female employers	Total	Focus group discussions
Ketu South and Keta	17	5	5	9	36	6
Pru	26	7	3	8	44	2
Kwahu North	16	7	16	14	53	3
Tolon Kumbungu	23	--	13	--	36	3
Total	82	19	37	31	169	14

Structure of the Report

The next part of the study (chapter 2) will give an overview on international and national legislation, institutions and policies affecting children's economic activities in agriculture in Ghana including poverty reduction strategies and Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education. Once the general background of the topic and of the project has been established, the third chapter covers the findings of the six case studies undertaken in the fisheries, cattle herding and cocoa production sectors. In part 4, five examples of good practices are described, which are partly derived from the studies. An overview on Ghanaian statistics and how they can better integrate the issue of child labour is the subject of chapter 5. Finally, chapter 6 presents the study's conclusions as well as the main recommendations to the FAO, to other international organisations involved in agriculture and to the relevant Ghanaian ministries.

2 Legislation, Institutions and Policies

Since the 1990s, the Ghanaian government has carried out various initiatives to protect children from exploitative and hazardous work. It has implemented legislative reforms, developed interventions for specific sectors such as cocoa production and is now in a process of mainstreaming child labour concerns into policy approaches such as Poverty Reduction Strategies. Furthermore, policies in education such as the recent reforms can have an important impact on the incidence of children's work.

2.1 Legislation

In general, Ghana has a comparatively progressive child labour law. The constitution (Republic of Ghana 1992) prohibits slavery and forced labour (section 16) and states that it is the right of any person "to work under satisfactory, safe and healthy conditions" (section 24). Section 28 guarantees children "the right to be protected from engaging in work that constitutes a threat to ... (their) health, education or development". As in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child every person under the age of 18 is defined as a child.

The government strengthened the legal protection of children by passing the Ghana Children's Act (Act 560) in 1998. This act brings together child-related laws from previous national legislation and it also includes amendments designed to meet the standards of the United Nations and of the ILO. The Children's Act prohibits exploitative child labour, defined as labour that deprives children of health, education and development. Ghana has not yet ratified the ILO Minimum Age Convention (1973, 1973a), but its national legislation complies with it. A minimum age of 13 years is set for light work, of 15 for employment and apprenticeship and of 18 years for hazardous work. The list of hazardous work includes: going to sea, mining and quarrying, carrying heavy loads, working in manufacturing industries where chemicals are produced or used and working in places such as bars, hotels and places of entertainment where children may be exposed to immoral behaviour (Parliament of the Republic of Ghana 1998).

Ghana has ratified several international conventions relevant to the rights of children and their protection from worst forms of labour, i.e. the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990 and the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour in 2000. The Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the United Nations in 1989 and recognises the right of children to be protected from economic exploitation and from work which is likely to be hazardous, which interferes

with their education or is harmful to their health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development (article 32). Several articles call on governments to take appropriate measures both to protect children from worst forms of labour such as illicit production, drug trafficking and sexual exploitation and to prevent the sale and trafficking of children (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 1989). The worst forms of child labour as defined by the ILO Convention (No. 182) of 1999 include slavery, the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage, forced labour, forced recruitment for armed conflict, prostitution, pornography, the use of children in illicit activities and in work which is likely to harm their health, safety or morals. Ratifying countries are expected to take “immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency” (ILO 1999, 1999a). Furthermore, Ghana is a party to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child of the African Union. The Charter states that “every child should be protected from all forms of economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child’s physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development” (Organization of African Unity 1999).

In 2005, the Government of Ghana passed the Human Trafficking Act (Act 694), which is also relevant to the protection of children from exploitative work. The Act includes prostitution, forced labour, slavery or practices similar to slavery and the placement of children where exploitation by another party is the motivating factor for trafficking. Trafficking is defined broadly as “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, trading or receipt of persons within and across national borders by the use of threats, force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, the abuse of power or exploitation of vulnerability, or giving or receiving payments and benefits to achieve consent”. With regard to children it is stated: “where children are trafficked, the consent of the child, parents or guardian of the child cannot be used as a defence in prosecution ...”. In accordance with the Children’s Act, any person under the age of 18 years is defined as a child (Parliament of the Republic of Ghana 2005).

Only in 2007 did the ILO adopt the Work in Fishing Convention (No. 188). Besides covering occupational and health issues, it includes aspects regarding child labour. According to the convention, the minimum age for employment on board a fishing vessel is 16 years. However, persons from the age of 15 may be allowed to work if they have completed compulsory schooling or if they are engaged in vocational training. Furthermore, they may carry out light work during school holidays. Work at night is prohibited for all persons below 18 (ILO 2007). The convention has not yet been ratified by Ghana or by any other country.

2.2 Policies for the Reduction of Child Labour

The main proponents in programmes to reduce child labour are the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports and the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs. The latter was established in 2001 by merging the National Commission on Children and the National Council on Women's Development. In 2000, the government signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), which had been initiated in 1992 with the goal of eliminating child labour by strengthening national capacities for addressing the problem. Ghana takes part in an ILO/IPEC Time-Bound Programme which seeks to link action against child labour with national development strategies, particularly poverty reduction and employment promotion. The ILO/IPEC support to the National Child Labour Elimination Programme now focuses on several strategic areas:

- law enforcement
- mobilisation of the public through awareness raising
- strengthening the apprenticeship and skills training systems
- expansion of the knowledge base by conducting studies and surveys
- support of district and community-level structures for the monitoring of child labour (ILO/IPEC 2007)

A national Steering Committee on Child Labour was established in 2000, which is coordinated by the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment and includes representatives from other ministries, the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), the Ghana Statistical Service, ILO/IPEC, the University of Ghana and NGOs. The Child Labour Unit of the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment serves as a secretariat for the steering committee.

Until now, the cocoa sector has been one of the main intervention areas under the National Child Labour Elimination Programme. The background to this priority setting is that, in 2000 and 2001, the media – especially in the United Kingdom and in the United States of America (US) – had reported that a large number of trafficked children were employed in slave-like conditions in West African cocoa production. Faced with the risk of boycotts and sanctions, representatives of the cocoa industry met with members of the ILO, trade unions, consumer organisations, NGOs and politicians to elaborate a strategy for dealing with the accusations. As a result, the Chocolate Manufacturers Association and the World Cocoa Foundation signed a voluntary agreement – the “Protocol for the growing and processing of cocoa beans and their derivative products in a manner that complies with ILO convention 182 concerning worst forms of child labour”. Witnessed by US Senator Tom Harkin and

US Representative Eliot Engel, the Act was subsequently called the Harkin-Engel Protocol. It includes a commitment to “develop and implement credible, mutually-acceptable, voluntary, industry-wide standards of public certification ... that cocoa beans and their derivative products have been grown and/or processed without any of the worst forms of child labour” (Chocolate Manufacturers Association 2001), which the industry was to implement by 2005. Until now the deadline has been extended two times. The present state is that the full implementation of a sector-wide certification system with independent verification should be completed by the end of 2010 (Payson Center 2008:15).

Between 2003 and 2006, Ghana participated in the West African Cocoa and Commercial Agriculture Programme to Combat Hazardous and Exploitative Child Labour (WACAP). WACAP was initiated with the aim of preventing and eliminating hazardous child labour in the cocoa and other agricultural sub-sectors in Ghana, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Nigeria. The project was carried out with support from ILO/IPEC and the United States Department of Labour. The Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment coordinated the activities in Ghana. The project had several components:

- awareness raising for families and communities
- capacity building for farmers, labour inspectors and workers
- pilot interventions to remove children from work and to facilitate their enrolment in education and training
- reduction of risks for children of legal working age
- pilot projects to improve the income generating capacities of families
- the development of a child labour monitoring system (ILO/IPEC 2005)

In 2006, the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment released its five-year National Programme for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in the Cocoa Sector (NPECLC), which is a component of the present Time-Bound Programme. The overall goal is to eliminate the worst forms of child labour in cocoa production by 2011 and in all other sectors by 2015. The Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment is responsible for the coordination. Cooperation partners are COCOBOD, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, UNICEF, the World Cocoa Foundation, the International Cocoa Initiative, the international cocoa industry and several civil society groups. The programme is funded by the government, the cocoa industry and multi- and bilateral donors. Building on the experience with WACAP, the following objectives were formulated:

- improvement of the knowledge base on child labour and establishment of certification and monitoring systems as called for by the Harkin-Engel Protocol

- strengthening of the legal framework and enforcement of current laws
- mobilisation of key stakeholders to collaborate in awareness-raising campaigns and other efforts to eliminate child labour
- promotion of universal basic education and the development of human capital
- capacity building at the central, regional, district and community level to address child labour and in particular the worst forms of child labour (MMYE et al. 2006)

Besides the cocoa sector, child trafficking was another relevant intervention area in recent years. Since 2002, Ghana has participated in a regional initiative supported by ILO/IPEC, Combating Trafficking in Children for Labour Exploitation in West and Central Africa (LUTRENA)³. The other countries involved are Burkina Faso, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon and Gabon. Several regional and bilateral agreements to fight child trafficking were signed (ILO/IPEC 2001, ILO 2005). With the passing of the Human Trafficking Act, the Government of Ghana increased its activities against trafficking. The Act scheduled the establishment of a Human Trafficking Management Board with representatives of the Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs and other ministries, police and security services and the Ghana Journalist Association. The Management Board is responsible for recommendations for a national action plan, and for monitoring and reporting the progress of policies and research. In addition, a fund was established for capacity building and the support of victims of trafficking, i.e. for skills training, tracing families, rehabilitation and reintegration and the establishment of shelters (Parliament of the Republic of Ghana 2005).

In recent years, unions such as the Trade Union Congress and the General Agricultural Workers' Union as well the Ghana Employers Association have also devoted increased attention to the problem of child labour. In addition, NGOs, churches and other religious organisations have several programmes to target children. The Ghana NGO Coalition on the Rights of the Child cooperates for example with the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs on issues such as HIV/AIDS, child labour, basic education and health for children.

Until now, the policies to reduce child labour have been largely sectoral and/or covered only selected districts. Recently, the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment started to develop an overall strategy as the "scale of the ... problem and its multi-sectoral nature require vigorous, broad-based and large-scale measures, within an integrated framework that enhances synergy among the relevant

³ Abbreviation of the French project title "Projet de lutte contre le trafic d'enfants à des fins d'exploitation de leur travail en Afrique de l'Ouest et centrale"

... programmes and the development of stronger partnerships among the key actors” (MMYE 2008). In 2008, the ministry drafted a National Plan of Action for the Elimination of (the worst forms of) Child Labour 2008-2015. The overall goal is to “to reduce the incidence of the worst forms of child labour to the barest minimum by 2015, while laying strong social, policy and institutional foundations for the elimination and prevention of all other forms of child labour in the longer term” (MMYE 2008). The following objectives and strategies have been formulated:

- the continuous update of laws on worst forms of child labour to ensure adequacy and to make them widely known, respected and effectively enforced
- mobilisation of society to respect and protect the rights of children
- implementation of Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education policy with priority attention to deprived communities
- access to quality post-basic education and training for children aged 15 years and above in all parts of the country, particularly in deprived communities
- availability of alternative forms of education, including transitional programmes, for out-of school children, particularly in the most deprived areas, and for children withdrawn from the worst forms of labour
- establishment of clear institutional arrangements to identify, withdraw, rehabilitate and socially integrate children engaged in unconditional worst forms of labour and to prevent others from being involved
- effective measures to prevent and eliminate hazardous child labour (including the protection of working age children of 15 and above from hazardous activities and exploitation)
- empowerment of the most vulnerable households and communities to overcome the livelihood deficits that make their children vulnerable to exploitation
- introduction of technologies and labour market reforms to reduce dependence on child labour, particularly in the most endemic sectors and activities
- capacity building for agencies at central, regional, district and community levels to effectively address child labour, with particular emphasis on worst forms of labour
- enhancement of the knowledge base on child labour to inform planning, programme design and implementation, awareness raising and advocacy activities, as well as the coordination, monitoring and evaluation of intervention (MMYE 2008)

It is planned to strengthen the capacities of the Child Labour Unit within the Ministry of Manpower Youth and Employment and also the National Steering Committee. By the end of 2009, the metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies are to have

formulated detailed action plans. It is intended, that the ministry and other agencies at the national level provide technical and logistical support especially in relation to capacity building and monitoring. The involvement of communities as well as civil society organisations, unions and employers' associations at the planning and implementation stage is seen as essential.

In the action plan there is no differentiation between planned measures in rural and urban areas. However, it is stressed that deprived communities should have priority regarding the supply of educational opportunities. This might benefit especially rural areas, where schooling and training facilities are worse than in the cities. Besides business development services, micro finance and insurance schemes, agricultural extension programmes are mentioned as relevant for the reduction of poverty. Another aspect that might be relevant for child labour in agriculture is the statement that labour-saving technologies could reduce the demand for child labour in farming and fishing. However, no examples of the areas in which this could be of importance are given.

2.3 Poverty Reduction Strategies

Poverty is considered a major determinant of child labour in Ghana. However, many other factors also influence children's work, such as tradition and cultural norms, gender relations or the accessibility and quality of education.⁴ On the assumption that poverty reduction measures alone do not necessarily bring about a decrease in the number of working children, the government of Ghana included child protection issues explicitly in its Poverty Reduction Strategies.

In general, Ghana's economic situation has improved after a period of economic decline and structural adjustment in the 1970s and 1980s. Since the beginning of the 1990s, the gross domestic product has grown more than four percent per year on average. Furthermore, the data of the last three rounds of the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS) in 1991/92, 1998/99 and 2005/06 show a continuous decline in poverty. For the assessment, the GLSS used two nutrition-based poverty lines: in 2005/06 the lower poverty line was defined at 2.884,700 old Ghana Cedi (GHC) and the upper poverty line at 3.708,900 old GHC per adult per year, about 318 and 409 US dollars (USD) in December 2005. Persons with a total expenditure under the lower line are considered to be in extreme poverty because even if they

⁴ See for example Blunch/Verner 2001, Bhalotra/Heady d.u., Adamu-Issah et al. 2007, Tabatabai 2003, Moyi d.u., ILO/IPEC 2007.

were to allocate their entire budget to food, they would not meet their minimum nutrition requirements. Individuals whose expenditure is above the upper line are assumed to be able to purchase enough food to meet their nutrition requirements and other basic needs (Ghana Statistical Service 2007:4-5).

The proportion of the population defined as poor fell from 52 percent in 1991/92 to 39 and 28 percent in 1998/99 and 2005/06 respectively.⁵ In the same period, the incidence of extreme poverty declined from 36 to 27 and 18 percent. During the 1990s, reductions in poverty were concentrated in Accra and the cocoa-producing forest areas whereas in 2005/06, poverty had fallen in all localities, except Accra. However, the Northern savannah areas still have the highest incidence of poverty and the majority of poor people live in rural areas.

According to the Ghana Statistical Service, the country experienced pro-poor growth in absolute terms when it is considered that the welfare level of many households has risen since 1991. However, in relative terms, the authors conclude that “Ghana has clearly not experienced pro-poor (growth)” because growth was accompanied by rising inequality (Ghana Statistical Service 2007:7-11, 17).

Since the mid 1990s, Ghana has developed several poverty reduction strategies. The aim of the present Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (2006 – 2009) is to achieve “the status of a middle-income economy by the year 2015 within a decentralised democratic environment” characterised by an increase in per capita income and an improvement in living standards (Republic of Ghana 2005:5). Human resource development and social protection policies aimed at empowering the vulnerable and excluded are among the strategy paper priorities. Planned policy interventions include the promotion of formal education, training and skills development, as well as improved access to health care and housing, safe water and adequate sanitation. Furthermore, it is intended to devote attention to “child protection issues including intensified special programmes to eliminate the worst forms of child labour and child trafficking, child abuse, the commercial sex exploitation of children and streetism” (Republic of Ghana 2005:54).

One example of the recognition of child protection issues in measures for the reduction of poverty is the Livelihood Empowerment against Poverty Programme (LEAP) carried out by the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment. LEAP aims to help the extreme poor and provides direct cash transfers – between 8 and 15 new

⁵ All percentages have been rounded up or down.

Ghana Cedi (GHC) per household per month, about 7 and 13 USD.⁶ In March 2008, the payments started in 21 pilot districts. The aim of the five-year programme is to extend this support gradually to 164,370 households in 138 districts by 2012. Households whose income is under the lower poverty line will qualify for LEAP provided, among other things, that all the household children of school age are enrolled and that no child has been trafficked or is engaged in any of the worst forms of labour. The integration of child labour concerns into poverty reduction strategies represents an attempt to bring the problem into the mainstream of social policies. However, it is yet too early to assess in how far programmes such as LEAP can contribute to the decrease of child labour in the long run.

2.4 Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education

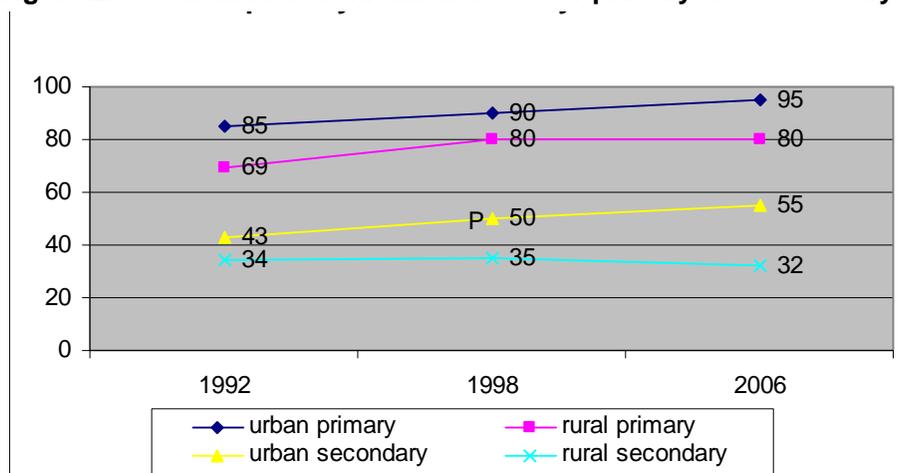
Increased enrolment rates of children in primary and secondary schools could be a relevant factor for the reduction of child labour. The right of children to Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) is guaranteed in the Ghanaian Constitution of 1992. The government's Education for All programme aims to ensure that all children have access to high quality basic education. Since the school reform of 2007, a child's basic education takes up to eleven years: two years at kindergarten, six years at primary school and three years at Junior High School (JHS). Children are supposed to start school at six. The nine years at primary and JHS are obligatory. Afterwards, the students may go on to Senior High School (SHS) for four years or start an apprenticeship. Although basic education at public kindergartens and schools (primary and JHS) is free, until recently many districts charged levies for school repairs, for instance, or fees for cultural and sporting activities. To ensure that all children including those from poor households are enrolled, the Capitation Grant was introduced in 2005. Public kindergartens, primary schools and JHS receive a small grant for each pupil to cover levies and textbooks previously paid for by parents. Now parents must buy only school uniforms and writing material (Government of Ghana 2003, 2007, Adamu-Issah et al. 2007, Create 2008).

Educational policies such as the introduction of the Capitation Grant and also school feeding programmes in some regions have contributed to an increase in enrolment and admission rates. Figures 2 and 3 show the development of net enrolment rates –

⁶ The currency Ghana Cedi was changed in 2007; formerly 10,000 GHC is now 1 GHC (in August 2008 about 0,88 USD).

the proportion of school-aged children who attend primary and secondary schools – correlated with locality and poverty status between 1992 and 2006.⁷ The number of children attending primary schools in rural and urban areas rose remarkably between 1992 and 2006. However, whereas the enrolment rates in secondary schools in the cities also increased, they fell slightly in rural areas. In general, disparities between rural and urban areas persist. The lowest enrolment rate at primary schools is in the rural savannah – corresponding roughly with the three Northern regions.

Figure 2: Urban and rural enrolment rates for primary and secondary schools



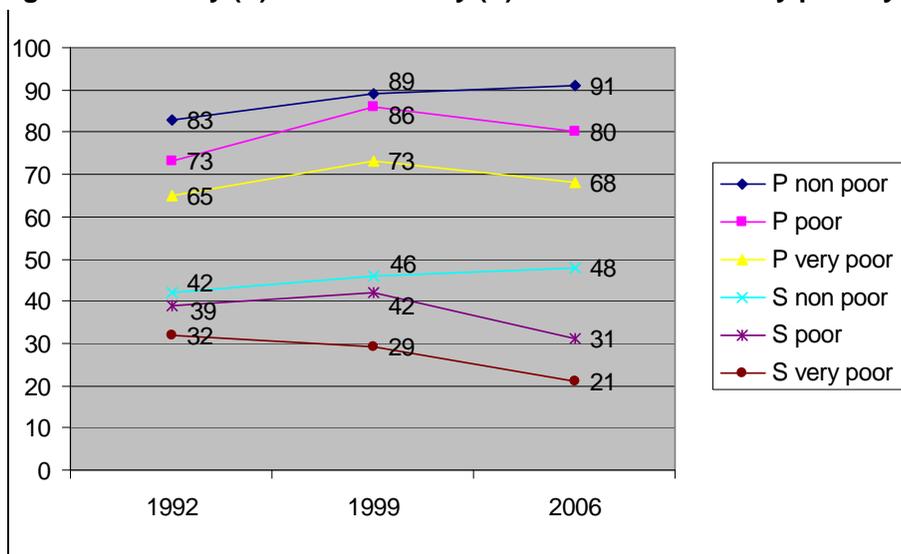
Source: Ghana Statistical Service 2007

In Figure 3 a striking correlation between school attendance and poverty level can be seen, despite recent policies such as the Capitation Grant and school feeding programmes in some districts. The enrolment rates in primary and secondary schools have only increased in the group categorised as “non poor”. For children coming from poor and very poor households, there was a partial increase in enrolment rates until 1999. However, these rates fell again between 1999 and 2006; in the case of secondary schools this fall was pronounced.

Generally, the enrolment rate for girls is below that for boys in all groups in rural and urban areas; it only reached parity in 2005/06 for primary education in urban areas (Ghana Statistical Service 2007).

⁷ All percentages have been rounded.

Figure 3: Primary (P) and secondary (S) school enrolment by poverty levels



Source: Ghana Statistical Service 2007

3 Case Studies on Children's Work in Agriculture

The Ghana Child Labour Survey carried out in 2001 with support from ILO/International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) – the first and only nationwide data collection – documented a high number of children working in agriculture. A representative sample of 9,889 households was selected; it included 17,034 children aged five to 17. According to the survey, nearly 40 percent of the children had engaged in economic activities within the twelve months preceding the interviews; 31 percent within the last seven days. Half of the rural and about one fifth of the urban children was economically active. Nearly all of them (87 percent of the boys and 92 percent of the girls) had household duties in addition. 57 percent of the children were engaged in agriculture, forestry and fishing; 21 percent worked as hawkers and street vendors, selling food, iced water and other items. Other occupations were washing cars, fetching fire wood and water, pushing trucks (large wheelbarrows) and carrying goods as porters. Most of the children worked in the family business (Ghana Statistical Service 2003: 32, 53f, 82f).



Children pushing truck (Photo-project Philip Adzavor)

77 percent of the total sample and 64 percent of the working children attended school during the time of the survey. The number of males was slightly higher than that of females. The proportion of children that had never attended school was highest for

the three Northern regions. 48 percent of all economically active children interviewed worked for a maximum of three hours a day, 52 percent for more than this. However, less than a quarter of them found that their activities adversely affected regular school attendance or studies. The main reasons parents gave why their children worked were supporting the household income (59 percent) or helping in the family business (34 percent) (Ghana Statistical Service 2003:18f, 36ff, 54, 62ff, 96f).

Although the authors of the survey conclude that only a minority of children can be regarded as child labourers, they estimate that the conditions under which more than a million work are not in keeping with Ghanaian legislation, either because the children are below the minimum age, work at night, or are engaged in activities such as going to sea, mining and quarrying, which are considered as hazardous, or because their economic activities affect their school attendance. Furthermore, they criticise the fact that the Ghana Children's Act does not specify a maximum number of hours children should be allowed to work, and propose a maximum of four hours per day for children attending school – including economic activities and household chores (Ghana Statistical Service 2003).

In recent years, several studies with quite large representative samples have been conducted on children's work in cocoa production. Apart from these research results, little information exists either on the working conditions of boys and girls or on the kind of tasks they perform in agriculture. The following chapters present the findings of the case studies on rural livelihoods and children's work in fishing, fish processing and cattle herding in six districts as well as a literature review on their contribution to cocoa production. In addition, it was possible to interview trafficked children who were working in fisheries at the Volta Lake and were staying in a shelter at the time of the research. Two further chapters provide a comparative analysis of problems of education and of intervention to reduce child labour in the districts and communities visited. Unless stated otherwise, the following information is based on the interviews undertaken with children, parents, employers, representatives of the district assemblies, traditional authorities, teachers and other community members in the various districts (see detailed list of interview partners in the introduction and at the end of the report).

3.1 Cocoa Production

The following paragraphs are based on a literature review. Several studies have been conducted both because of allegations that children work under slave-like conditions in Ghanaian cocoa production and also in the framework of the Harkin-Engel Protocol. A key component of the protocol – the voluntary commitment of the

cocoa industry supported by the Ghanaian government – is the design and implementation of a system of certification that cocoa has been grown and/or processed without any of the worst forms of child labour (Chocolate Manufacturers Association 2001). The certification process initiated under WACAP and NPECLC includes:

- data collection, representative studies on the incidence of worst forms of child labour and forced adult labour in cocoa-growing areas
- reporting and publication of the survey results
- remediation/response through policies and programmes focussed on the elimination of the worst forms of child labour and forced adult labour
- independent verification (Payson Center 2007:22, 2008:19)

Livelihoods in Cocoa Growing Regions

Cocoa, in addition to gold and timber, is Ghana's most important export product. It is cultivated in the regions of Ashanti, Brong-Ahafo, Central, Eastern, Western and Volta and mainly produced on smallholder farms. For instance GAWU (2006:30) estimated that the size of cocoa farms ranges from one acre to 230 acres. More than 60 percent of the farmers had less than ten acres, while 20 percent had ten to 30 and under 10 percent had more than 100 acres. Men own most of the cocoa farms; the cultivated areas belonging to women are usually smaller. It is estimated that about one and a half million farmers in Ghana grow cocoa. Although most of them also cultivate other crops, such as yam, cassava and vegetables, many of them are heavily dependent on the cocoa harvest for their cash income. Since the 1980s, efforts have been made to liberalise and privatise cocoa marketing; however, to the present day nearly the entire harvest is sold at fixed prices to the state owned Cocoa Board. In a normal year, January to March is the time for clearing land and planting new trees. Weeding is particularly important in the rainy season in June and July. Pesticides are applied several times a year. The main harvest is August to December. The sources for labour include family and household members, hired labour, sharecroppers and mutual labour exchange.

Children's Work

In recent years, several surveys on children's work in the Ghanaian cocoa sector with quite large representative samples have been conducted (i.e. IITA 2002, GAWU 2006). In 2006, the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment commissioned a pilot study as the basis for establishing a certification system. 590 farm owners and caretakers, 355 adult workers and 610 children were interviewed (Asuming-

Brempong et al. 2007). In 2007, a second survey was carried out in all six cocoa growing regions. 1,749 questionnaires were distributed to households, with 3,452 children and 1,391 adults being interviewed (MMYE/NPECLC 2008). To assess the progress being made towards meeting the obligations under the Harkin-Engel Protocol, the United States Department of Labour awarded a contract to the US-based Tulane University's Payson Center for International Development and Technology Transfer. The Payson Center plans to carry out annual harvest season surveys. In November/December 2007, in a representative study, 5,433 adults and 2,916 children were interviewed (Payson Center 2007, 2008:38).

In all surveys it is reported that a considerable number of children perform work in cocoa growing and are involved in activities throughout the seasonal calendar. However, on the whole, the studies did not confirm the allegations that a large number of trafficked children or children in debt bondage worked in the Ghanaian cocoa production. The findings are that the majority of the children (indigenes and migrant) live with both or one of their parents, a minority with relatives and only a small number with non-relatives. About 90 percent of them are enrolled in schools. They normally work on the farms at weekends, during holidays and after lessons. Asked about the reasons why the children worked, the majority of adults interviewed saw it as part of their socialisation or as a contribution to household upkeep. Most of the children worked on family farms and did not expect to be paid (MMYE/NPECLC 2008, Asuming-Brempong et al. 2007, Boas/Huser 2006, GAWU 2006 Payson Center 2008).

In the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment's 2007 survey it was found that 35 percent of the sample of children had participated in specific activities on cocoa farms within two weeks prior to the survey. Nearly 90 percent had performed household duties in addition (MMYE/NPECLC 2008). The Payson Center obtained similar results. Table 2 shows the number of children performing agricultural and other economic activities as well as household chores.

Table 2: Economic activities and household work performed by children (5-17 years) in cocoa growing areas

Kind of work	Number of working children (N=2,842,127)	
	Last 7 days	Last 12 months
Agriculture (incl. cocoa)	68%	82%
Cocoa farms	35%	55%
Other economic activities	22%	31%
Household work	89%	89%

Source: Payson Center 2008:44

Children in all age groups are involved in cocoa production. However, to some extent, activities vary according to age group. The older children usually participate in a broader range of tasks. In general, a fairly small proportion of children are involved in pre-planting and planting activities. A larger number are involved in farm maintenance, especially in weeding and in carrying water for spraying. All age groups take part in harvest and post-harvest activities, such as pod gathering and heaping, pod breaking and fermentation, bean scooping, and carting and drying the beans. On the whole, the number of boys participating in cocoa production is higher than that of girls. Specific activities such as land preparation, the application of chemicals, mistletoe control and plucking pods are mainly the tasks of boys (MMYE/NPECLC 2008). Table 3 shows the percentage of children in each age group working in the different steps in cocoa production.⁸

Some of the types of work in cocoa production are considered to be hazardous because of possible health risks for children. For example, land clearing and harvesting involve the use of sharp tools such as cutlasses and harvesting hooks. Bush burning could lead to the inhalation of smoke and respiratory problems or to burns. Mistletoe control involves work at considerable heights. Carrying the harvest is considered hazardous if the loads are heavy and a long distance has to be covered. About half of the sample of interviewed children for the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment's 2007 survey took part in at least one of the activities considered hazardous, 20 percent in two and nine percent in three; more boys than girls participated in these activities. Compared to the pilot study in 2006, a higher percentage of children participated in land clearing; in the rest of hazardous activities such as application of chemicals their number was smaller. It is concluded that this might be attributed to sensitisation programmes that had been carried out in all the districts surveyed. However, even if only a small minority of children were active in spraying pesticides, nearly 20 percent were present during this time or re-entered the farm shortly afterwards (MMYE/NPECLC 2008).

⁸ In this and in the following tables multiple answers were possible; the percentages have been rounded up and down.

Table 3: Child participation in cocoa-production activities in the cocoa season 2007

Cocoa activity	Age groups		
	5-12 N=519	13-14 N=218	15-17 N=276
Pre-Planting			
Land clearing	2%	10%	17%
Felling trees	1%	5%	12%
Burning	1%	4%	15%
De-stumping	2%	9%	16%
Peg cutting	1%	4%	5%
Lining / pegging	1%	5%	5%
Planting			
Holing / planting of suckers (shade plants)	24%	37%	38%
Preparation of seedlings	7%	11%	12%
Carrying seedlings	15%	21%	21%
Holing for seedling	4%	10%	12%
Planting of seedlings	10%	16%	18%
Sowing at stake	20%	33%	38%
Farm maintenance			
Weeding	24%	47%	62%
Spraying insecticide	0%	1%	4%
Application of fertilizer	4%	4%	8%
Application of fungicide and other chemicals	1%	1%	6%
Water carrying for spraying	78%	83%	84%
Sanitation / pruning	1%	5%	14%
Mistletoe control	0%	3%	13%
Harvesting			
Pod plucking	5%	12%	27%
Pod gathering / heaping	81%	82%	86%
Pod breaking / fermentation	14%	25%	44%
Bean scooping	44%	56%	60%
Post-harvest			
Fermentation of beans	3%	11%	25%
Carting fermented beans	31%	53%	75%
Drying beans	14%	24%	39%
Carting dried beans for sale	16%	28%	43%

Source: MMYE/NPECLC 2008

In June 2008, the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment released a Hazardous Child Labour Activity Framework. The catalogue specifies activities considered hazardous for children working in cocoa production for the whole seasonal calendar. Also the number of working hours and the opportunities of education are considered. The Hazardous Child Labour Activity Framework was developed with the input of experts on child labour issues as well as consultations in farming communities in cocoa growing districts. In Box 1 the activities prohibited for children below the age of 18 years are listed (MMYE 2008).

Box 1: Hazardous Child Labour Activity Framework for the cocoa sector of Ghana

- Clearing of forest and/or felling of trees
- Bush burning
- Working with agrochemicals, i.e. purchasing, transport, storage, use (mixing, loading and spraying/applying), washing of containers and spraying machine, and disposal
- Being present or working in the vicinity of a farm during pesticide spraying, or re-entering a sprayed farm within less than twelve hours after spraying
- Using machetes or long cutlasses for weeding
- Climbing and working on trees higher than three metres (nine feet) to cut mistletoe with a cutlass
- Working with a motorised mist blower, knapsack sprayer and/or chainsaw
- Harvesting overhead cocoa pods with a harvesting hook
- Breaking cocoa pods with a breaking knife
- Carrying/ heavy loads beyond the permissible carrying weight, i.e. above 30 percent of body weight for more than two miles (three kilometres)
- Working on the farm for more than three hours per day or more than 18 hours per week for children at weekends, holidays and/or children who have completed school; for children in school working more than two hours/day on a school day
- Working without adequate basic foot and body protective clothing
- Working alone on the farm in isolation (i.e. beyond visible or audible range of the nearest adult)
- Going to or returning from the farm alone or working on the farm between 6 pm and 6 am
- Absence from school during cocoa season to do farm work
- Working full time on the farm and not attending formal/non-formal school (applicable to children under 15 years)

In the pilot survey, the children were also asked to assess problems caused by their work on cocoa farms that might affect their health (Asuming-Brempong et al. (2007:94ff). Actual health complaints were mainly reported as a consequence of carrying heavy loads and of the side effects of the application of chemicals (cough, skin and eye irritations). Table 4 shows that nearly half of the respondents – especially children in the five to twelve age group – mentioned health problems. From the material presented in the study it is, however, difficult to assess how serious they were and whether they were likely to have long-lasting consequences.

Table 4: Distribution of recent health complaints by age groups (N=610)

Health complaints	5-12	13-14	15-17	Total
Head / neck pain from carrying load	129	89	77	295
Back problem from carrying load	74	62	54	190
Persistent pain after a days work	64	51	49	164
Leg pain from carrying load	52	34	34	120
Respiratory / cough from pesticide	21	23	19	63
Stomach / chest / waist pain from carrying load	20	17	25	58
Skin damage from pesticides	11	7	10	28
Skin irritation / headache from fertilizer	7	4	8	19
Eye irritation	4	4	8	16
Respiratory / cough from fertilizer	3	4	6	13
Eye irritation from fertilizer	2	0	4	6

Source: Asuming-Brempong et al. 2007:103

Despite these findings, the authors of all studies conclude that the largest part of the work done by children is acceptable and light work. In the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment's 2007 survey it is concluded that around 80 percent of the interviewed children "undertook cocoa farm work in conditions of acceptable intensity" – defined as one to three hours daily for one to five days per week or for four to six hours for one to two days per week (MMYE/NPECLC 2008). According to the surveys by Asuming-Brempong et al. (2007:90ff) and by the General Agricultural Workers Union (GAWU 2006), most farmers are selective and responsible in the engagement of children for activities on cocoa farms and try not to overburden them. It is mainly at times of labour shortages or when the cost of labour rises – especially at harvest time – that they involve children in activities that can be considered hazardous. In summary, it is estimated that only a few children are exposed to serious hazards or worst forms of labour. For these children "well-planned and organised interventions ... implemented as a matter of urgency ..." are recommended (Asuming-Brempong 2007:xviii, see also Boas/Huser 2006, GAWU 2006). The need for urgent intervention is also seen with regard to the application of chemicals. Additional recommendations are: further awareness raising on potential hazards for children working on farms and the development of technological innovations such as labour-saving techniques that could reduce the demand for children's work.

Certification and Verification

Since 2006, the first steps to meeting the obligations under the Harkin-Engel Protocol to implement “credible standards of public certification” have been taken. The different surveys give an overview on the kind of activities boys and girls perform in cocoa production and also of the hazards involved. Instead of conducting another survey, the Ghanaian government intends to decentralise the certification process by developing a child labour monitoring system in cooperation with the district assemblies in future (Payson Center 2008:23). This could be a further step in involving communities in efforts to reduce child labour and in creating awareness of the issue. The Hazardous Child Labour Activity Framework is a relevant tool for assessing which kinds of work that children perform in cocoa production is acceptable and what can be defined as (worst forms of) child labour. However, while a process of information gathering has begun, the independent verification – as part of the certification system – has just started. In 2007, the cocoa industry employed Verité, a US-based NGO to design a verification programme. Verité developed a “road map” and proposed the formation of a Verification Board with representatives from the government, industry, unions, NGOs and academic experts as well as the selection of independent contracted “verifiers”. Following the recommendations, the International Cocoa Verification Board was established in December 2007. In June 2008, it announced the selection of two organisations to serve as verification group: Fafo Institute for Applied International Studies (Norway) and Khulisa Management Services (South Africa) (Payson Center 2008:29-30).

In the meanwhile, the first verification study has been carried out; the report was published at the end of 2008. The objectives were to confirm a certification system

- which fully and accurately measures and reports on worst forms of child labour in the cocoa sector, and
- effectively addresses incidences of worst forms of child labour that are indicated by the data collection and reporting process.

The verification was designed to assess the components of the certification studies (objectives, research technique, sampling etc.). In addition, a sub-sample study was conducted to compare the results. Overall conclusions are that the “the government of Ghana has focused its early efforts on understanding the extent of the child labour problem in the cocoa sector”; however, “planning and implementation of remediation activities are in very early phases” (Fafo, AIS/Khulisa Management Services 2008:9). The sub-sample study with 400 households in 40 villages confirmed the results of the previous surveys; the recommendation to the International Verification Board was to accept the Ghana 2007 certification study (Fafo, AIS/Khulisa Management Services 2008).

3.2 Fishing

In recent years, child labour in the fisheries sector has attracted the attention of the media, civil society groups, government agencies and international organisations. Press reports and films described as scandalous in particular the fact that a high number of children were trafficked to work in fisheries at the Volta Lake. Examples were documented in which children in Yeji and surrounding villages in Pru District were exposed to hazardous and worst forms of labour. They worked for long hours and did not have the opportunity to go to school.⁹ It was stated that many of them came from coastal towns and villages; fishers paid an agreed sum for their work, which is sent monthly, quarterly or annually to their families (Brown 2005). While authors such as Iversen (2006) caution that some of the reports of hazardous and worst forms of labour in the fisheries sector have been alarmist, there has so far been little of the research needed to allow a more balanced presentation and to inform policies for addressing the issue appropriately.

To give an overview of the social situation and work conditions of children in fisheries at the Volta Lake, the research was conducted in the districts of Pru and Kwahu North. As apart from a study from Kufogbe (2005) in the Central Region there was hardly any information on the work of children in ocean and lagoon fishing the districts Ketu South and Keta at the coast were also included. The following table lists the communities visited. Altogether 78 children working in fishing, fish processing and trade and 55 parents/guardians/employers were interviewed (see detailed list of interview partners in the introduction). The aim of the study was to collect information on the working conditions of the children and on the kind of work they are involved in. The contacts were made through members of the district departments of social welfare and NGOs monitoring children withdrawn from worst forms of labour in the frame of the ILO Time-Bound Programme or other programmes. The sample might be biased in two ways. On the one hand, it is possible that only the worst cases of child labour in the communities were considered. On the other hand, there seemed to be reluctance on the part of community members to admit the presence of migrant and potentially trafficked children and thus cases of worst forms of child labour might have been excluded. Therefore, it is difficult to make quantitative estimates of the total number of children working under specific conditions or doing certain tasks.

⁹ See for instance Gbolu (2006, 2006a), Ross (2005), Butty (2007), LaFraniere (2006), Donoghue/Adu-Dankwa (2006).

Table 5: Districts and communities visited for the data collection on children's work in fisheries

Districts	Communities
Pru	Yeji, Fante-Akura, Kajai, Sikafour-Amanfem, Vutideka and the island community of Dzaiakpoi
Kwahu North	Agodeke, Bridgeano, Bruben and the island of Preda
Ketu South	Adina, Agavedzi and Blekusu
Keta	Keta town

3.2.1 Pru and Kwahu North District

Livelihoods and fishing techniques

The Volta Lake was created in the early 1960s and is one of the world's largest artificial lakes. It accounts for about 85 percent of the annual inland fish production, which provides a livelihood for about 80,000 fishers and 20,000 fish processors and traders living in villages along the shoreline. After the flooding of the lake following the construction of the Akosombo dam, migrants from the coast settled in many areas around the lake to engage in fishing. The majority of them come from the Volta, Greater Accra and Central Region and the lower Volta. Some fishers regard their communities as temporary residences; they keep regular contacts to their hometowns, where some of them have built houses (Mensah et al. 2002:11f, 111f, 39, 46). Fishing is largely the task of men and boys with only few women and girls participating.

The districts of Pru and Kwahu North (formerly Afram Plains) are situated at the northern and south-western part of the Volta Lake. Most members of the communities along the shore or on the numerous islands generate their income with fishing-related activities. In both districts, farming is an important activity to supplement incomes and also for subsistence. The main products grown are cassava, pepper, maize, groundnut, beans and vegetables such as okra, tomatoes and garden eggs. Most of the agricultural production is rain-fed and seasonal. In the villages, there are a few other opportunities for income generation, such as carpentry, hairdressing or petty trading.

Since the 1990s, a drastic decrease in the fish yield has been reported as a major problem affecting many communities at the Volta Lake. Formerly, the main fishing season was between June and October. However, fishing is now done the whole year round "to exploit every ecological niche to catch every available fishery resource" (Mensah et al. 2002:20). Depending on the different seasons, particular

fishing gear and techniques are used. The main fishing gear is gill, cast, drag and winch nets described in the following:

- The gill net hangs in the water secured, for example, around tree stumps and with weights attached. It is left in the water for up to three days. During the first two days, the fish is removed by lifting the net. Every third day, the net is taken out of the water and the parts damaged by the removal of fish removed are mended.
- The cast net is a round net, normally about four meters in diameter, with weights on the outer side. When thrown, the net opens and sinks into the water. When pulled, the net closes at the bottom with the help of the attached weights and the potential catch can be heaved into the canoe.
- The drag net/beach seine is pulled in from the shore. A person on-shore holds one end of the net while others in a canoe cast it in a circle. With the help of the weights attached, it settles on the ground. Once the canoe has returned to the shore with the other end of the net, people on both sides start pulling it.
- The winch net is similar to the drag net but larger and it is cast and pulled in from larger canoes off-shore.

Especially in the rainy season a variety of traps is put down in addition. Fishing with some of the widely used nets such as winch nets and beach seines or so-called mosquito nets with small mesh sizes is illegal. To cast the nets, boats of three different sizes are used. The small boats – for fishing in shore areas – have paddles; the larger mostly have a motor, the medium-sized ones operate with both. With the larger boats it is possible to search for better catches further afield. Given that the present daily minimum wage in Ghana is 2.25 GHC (less than 2 USD), boats and nets are considerable investments. Depending on size and kind, the prices for canoes range between 300 GHC and 2,000 GHC; an outboard motor costs around 3,500 GHC and a net between 300 GHC and 4,500 GHC. The price paid for good fishing equipment (large boats and nets, outboard motor) can therefore amount to more than 10,000 GHC (with additional accessories more than 10,000 USD).

Most fishers, especially in the smaller villages and on the islands, have only basic equipment – a small boat and one or more gill and cast nets. Only a few own more than one boat and outboard motors. A typical kind of remuneration for adult employees is a form of proceeds “sharing”. The crew members have a contract for a month or one season and are paid at the end. After the deduction of expenses for equipment such as boats and nets, fuel and food, the proceeds of the catch is divided between the net and boat owner and the crew. Employees may ask for loans during their contract period. This amount is deducted from their final share. Young people aged 16 or 17 whose physical strength and skills are comparable to those of adults sometimes work under the same conditions.

Children's Work in Fishing

In fishing activities, a wide variety of tasks is assigned to children, such as paddling, fetching water from the boat, casting and pulling the net, checking it and taking fish out, diving to free nets entangled between tree stumps, carrying the net and fish to the village and mending or adapting the net. The nets have to be replaced every few months to be effective and they are a continuous investment. Many fishers buy bundles of simple nylon gauze; weights and ropes are weaved in at the edges according to their needs. The work of adapting the nets is very tedious and it was observed that it is often assigned to young males.



Tree stumps in the Volta Lake (Photo: Gabriele Zdunek)

Observations at the lake and landing sites as well as interviews in Pru and Kwahu North indicate a correlation between the kind of equipment the fishers use and the occurrence of children's work. According to observations and interviews one or more boys are part of the crew in nearly all kinds of boats.

- The smallest boats have one to two persons as crew; at least one is likely to be a child.
- The medium-sized boats have a crew of three to four persons; at least one, more often two or three, children are part of it.
- The largest boats have a crew of six or more; typically, two children belong to it.

Children from the age of five work on the lake. However, there are certain tasks only an adult can do such as paddling the relatively heavy larger boats – necessary to adjust the nets. Also, casting and pulling the big winch net can only be done by adults or older, stronger children. Several interview partners considered young people aged between 15 and 16 years as “adults” and able to do the heavier work also. In the small boats, older boys sometimes fish alone; in larger boats a 16-year-old might fish together with one or two smaller children. Given that the number of canoes counted as actively fishing on the Volta Lake is 17,274, it can be estimated that several thousand boys are involved in this activity (Mensah et al. 2002).

How many of the boys in Pru and Kwahu North can be categorised as child labourers in terms of minimum age, access to education or number of working hours is difficult to assess. In the sample of 34 fisher boys interviewed, 15 were below the age of 13; 20 boys were enrolled in schools. The work and living conditions differed; 16 boys were living with both parents, five with their mother, while the others lived in the households of relatives, mostly uncles (5) and brothers (3). Of the total sample:

- twelve boys were living with their parents/mothers and worked with them or partly with other adults before and/or after school
- nine boys were living with their parents/mothers and worked with them or partly with other adults, but were not enrolled in schools
- six boys were living with relatives and worked with them or partly with other adults before and/or after school
- four boys were living with relatives, and worked with them or partly with other adults, but were not enrolled in schools
- two boys worked with their fathers during the holidays and stayed somewhere else with relatives during the school term to further their education
- one boy was living and working with non-relatives and was not enrolled in school

During the period of research, the boys had school holidays. Those enrolled at schools were asked to describe both their activities of the previous day and their work on a typical day during school term. During the holidays they set the nets in the afternoon, the next morning they check them and pick the fish. They get up around 5 am and return from fishing between 7:30 am and 9 am. They are on the lake for two to seven, in one case even for eleven, hours. During school term most work less;

some go fishing either in the morning or the afternoon. The number of working hours during the term ranges from one in the afternoon to altogether six before and after school. In the holidays, some of the boys have more time for leisure and play. However, others perform additional duties such as mending the nets, helping parents and relatives with farming, fish smoking and trade or doing household chores such as fetching water. Boys not attending school spend a longer time on the lake (seven boys between five and nine hours, two even more than twelve hours) and perform more additional tasks.

Boys who work for their parents and relatives are usually not paid, but their work is seen as contributing to the family's livelihood and – if they go to school – also to the cost of their education. However, five boys mentioned that their parents give them so-called chop money to buy food at school. 15 boys stated that if the fish catches are good, they might get some cash and/or fish, which they can sell. Of those, six reported that they give their earnings partly or wholly to their family, the others use it to buy food or clothes for themselves.

In Pru and in Kwahu North, several teachers and other interview partners, such as police officers in Yeji, estimated that – despite a number of awareness campaigns – the number of trafficked children is still high. As in the media reports, they described how typically contracts are made between the employer and the child's parents or caretaker. They last for between one and three years or more, with the possibility of renewal. As regards payment, the fisher sometimes agrees to pay the parents once a year for their child's work, the amount ranging between 100 and 500 GHC (about 90 to 400 USD), depending on such factors as the age of the child and how healthy and strong it is. In other cases, the boys or their parents or guardians receive an agreed sum or a cow at the end of the contract. Two of the sample of 34 boys interviewed worked under such a kind of contract – the boy living with non-relatives, and one living with an uncle.

Child Labour in Fisheries – A Cause for Alarm?

The question remains whether earlier reports on worst forms of child labour in fisheries in the media were merely “alarmist” – as Iverson (2006) claims. The case studies show that a large number of children – mainly boys – work in fishing at the Volta Lake. From the interviews carried out and the observations made it can be concluded that they are engaged under conditions ranging from light and regular work that can be combined with school attendance to forms of labour that deprive them of their education and development and are not in accordance with Ghanaian legislation. Of a total of 56 boys and girls interviewed in Pru and Kawhu North, 13 were living with persons other than their parents. This could be a sign of the labour

exploitation of migrant children. However, there is a grey zone between trafficking and the widespread practice of sending children to live with relatives as a strategy for coping with poverty within the extended family or opening up educational or occupational advances for them. From the relatively small sample of 34 boys involved in fishing no clear correlation could be found between work for parents or others and variables such as school enrolment or working hours.

3.2.2 Ketu South and Keta District

Livelihoods and fishing techniques

Ketu South and Keta are neighbouring districts in the coastal area of the Volta Region. The Keta lagoon is one of the world's largest wetlands. In both districts, the major economic activities are fishing (both in the ocean and in the lagoon), fish processing and trade, irrigated agriculture and salt production. Along the banks of the Keta lagoon, shallots and other vegetables are grown. As in other coastal regions, the dwindling marine resources – partly caused by overfishing – threaten local livelihoods. The construction of the Akosombo dam is thought to be the cause of a number of recent ecological problems in the area. A special issue is the massive coastal erosion affecting especially Keta town and the surrounding villages (Ghana Statistical Service 2005).

The main techniques in ocean fishing are beach seining, deep sea fishing with large canoes with outboard motors and shore fishing with smaller boats with paddles. Different types and sizes of nets are used. Beach seines are cast with small or medium-sized canoes some distance away from the shore. It takes around one hour until the net is laid out. Up to 70 people draw it to the shore. The crew splits into two groups and each pulls the rope at either end of the net. The two ropes cross each other in the middle so that the net closes up and becomes smaller the nearer it gets to the shore. Up to six hours are needed to pull in the net. At the end of the day, some of the boats are also pulled onto the shore. The ropes connected with the nets or boats are secured at palm trees. Each time the net or boat moves closer, the rope is readjusted at the tree. In recent times, some of the boats have been left anchored in the sea near the shore.

Considering again the daily minimum wage of 2,25 GHC (less than 2 USD), the larger canoes and nets are considerable investments. Prices given in interviews were from 7,500 to 8,000 GHC for a canoe, about 3,500 GHC for an outboard motor and from 250 to up to 2,000 GHC for nets (a total of up to 12,000 USD). Interviews in the three coastal communities in Ketu South showed that only a small number of men and very few women have their own boats or large nets and beach seines. The

majority of the fishers work for boat and net owners. In beach seining, crews comprise between 30 and 70 members. Only men and boys go to sea, a few women and girls are involved in beach seining.

The main fishing season at the ocean is between July and September, while the minor seasons in December/January and February/March last for three weeks (Mensah 2006). Boat and net owners hire the crews for about ten months between April/May and January/February. Remuneration of the crew is at the end of the period. The financial obligations of the employer seem to be a matter of continuous negotiations. During the contract time, the fishers receive food and fish daily and small sums of money to buy food. Sometimes, small amounts of cash are paid in addition, depending on the catch made. According to a fishermen's association in Ketu, the sum is approximately 2 GHC per person. For extra expenses, the crew members can borrow money which is deducted from the final payment. The interview partners gave different sums for the payment made to crew members at the end of the season – between 15 and 80 GHC – depending among other things on the amount of debt that is deducted. Sometimes, the crews are additionally remunerated with cloth. Employment for a whole season gives the fishers basic security at a low level; however, crew members can end up in debt towards the boat and net owners, in which case they will have to work for them for another season.

Lagoon fishing can be done throughout the year. However, there are different species of fish that can be caught in certain months. Smaller boats – mainly with paddles or sails – are used. According to a fisher in Keta, one boat and a net for fishing in the lagoon cost around 900 GHC (around 800 USD). Because of the smaller investments in equipment, most fishers are self-employed and have their own boats and nets. When adults work together, the proceeds are shared as in ocean fishery – mostly daily.

Children's Work in Fishing

The main areas of children's work in Ketu South and Keta are fishing, gardening, commercial agriculture and salt production. Both observation and interviews showed that a large number of children – mainly boys – participate in several of the work steps involved in beach seining. If the boats do not have an outboard motor, older boys assist in paddling. Children of all age groups – including some girls – work in the crews pulling the nets and the boats to the beach. Other occupations – in which boys and girls are involved – are carrying the nets to and from the boats, removing the fish from the nets and carrying it as headloads to processing or selling sites.

Children of all age groups are involved in fishing. The 17 fisher boys interviewed in Ketu South and Keta were between eleven and 17 years of age, nearly half of them

enrolled in school. There are some general patterns concerning the working hours of children involved in beach seining. Boys who attend school usually get up between 4 am and 6 am to go to the beach and help to cast the net for about two hours. They are back between 6 am and 8 am and prepare for school, which normally begins at 8 am and lasts until around 2:30 pm. After school, they return to the beach to work for another two or more hours, depending on the size of the catch and on how far the crew has advanced with pulling in the net. One general problem is that children who work at the beach in the morning are often late for school. When the catches are good, they might not go to school at all. Children on holiday as well as those not enrolled may be at the beach from as early as 6 am up to 6 pm in the evening, where they help with different activities.

Whereas adults are employed by boat and net owners in beach seining crews for the whole season, children mainly work for daily wages. Depending on the catch and on their age and physical strength, they receive between 20 Pesewas (GP) and, if there has been a good catch 1 GHC. In addition, they sometimes get fish at the end of the day, which they either sell or take home to eat. If the catch was bad, they may not be paid at all.

Boys also accompany the fishing crews out to the deep sea, where they help to locate the fish, cast and pull the nets. Casting the net takes about five to ten minutes, pulling it back in up to two hours. Consequently, depending on how long it takes to locate a "good catch", the boat could be back on shore after three hours or after an entire day. The boats normally leave around 6 am. If they return soon, they go out again after the fish has been brought on shore. Boys doing this type of fishing seem generally to be 15 or older. In a focus group discussion, fishers in Adina in Ketu South explained that boat owners usually prefer adults to children because pulling in the net is hard work. Statements on how many boys worked as crew members varied, the number given ranging from two to seven per boat. Some interview partners said that boys mainly work at the weekends and during holidays. Because of the long time spent on the sea, this kind of work makes regular school attendance practically impossible. The boys are mainly paid daily, although some are employed per season. In focus group interviews the daily wages were estimated to be between 50 GP and 6 GHC, depending on the catch made; however, payments above 1 GHC seem to be rare. Earnings per season were estimated to be between 10 GHC and 30 GHC; like adults, the boys receive small allowances and food and fish after each catch. Nearly half of the 17 boys interviewed in Ketu South and Keta help to support their families with all or part of the money or fish they earn; what remains of their wages is spent on food or clothes.

Lagoon fishing is mainly done in the Keta lagoon, to a lesser extent in the much smaller Toko lagoon in Ketu South. Fishers use various techniques. Common are hooks, nets and traps made of bamboo or glass bottles with bait inside. The nets are cast in shallow water or from small boats powered by paddles or sails. Boys are engaged in all these methods and it seems that they start helping from the age of five years onwards. Young boys assist their fathers or relatives, older ones work independently, sometimes with a boat belonging to the father or other relative. The fish caught is sold by the boys or their mothers or consumed in the family. Depending on the catch, they earn between 10 GP and 50 GP daily. Most boys fishing in the lagoon work before and after school, some are also assisting with beach seining. When they use boats belonging to fathers or other relatives, there may agree to share the catch with them.

Working at the Beach – a “Way of Life”?

The findings of this case study are in line with the research done by Kufuogbe (2005) on children in fishing in the Central Region, both with regard to the kind of work they do and to the remuneration they receive. Based on a quite large sample of 356 children – from randomly selected households, several schools and landing sites – he estimates that 10 to 20 percent of the children living in coastal areas are involved in fishing, especially in the main season. He concludes that being at the beach has become a “way of life“ for them, allowing them both to earn an income and to play and swim for leisure (Kufuogbe 2005).

This also seems to be true of the children working in fishing in Ketu South and Keta. Most of their fathers are fishers themselves, working in one of the crews at the beach, while their mothers are fish processors and traders. According to a list of the children in, or at risk of, worst form of labour in fishing in coastal communities in Ketu South – compiled by the NGO Volta Care only a small minority of these children were living with both parents; most of them lived with their mothers or grandmothers, and a high percentage were (half-)orphans (Volta Care, Children Beneficiary Profile 2006). It is estimated that some of the households in which the children live face severe economic constraints and many of the children have to fend for themselves to provide their basic needs. In a focus group discussion, net and boat owners stated that they are not dependent on children's work, but rather employ them because they know that they are from poor families and might otherwise have nothing to eat. Working conditions for boys in ocean fishing differ, but obviously quite a number of them work under circumstances not in accordance with Ghanaian legislation, both because as they are deprived of their education and because going to sea is generally considered as hazardous. However, new by-laws such as those in Keta,

which prohibit children under 16 from coming to the beach or the lagoon area during school hours would seem to be counterproductive as long as the children have to work to afford basic necessities.



Children playing at the beach (Photo-project Philip Adzavor)

3.2.3 Work of Women and Girls in Fish Processing and Marketing

Children are involved in the whole production chain of fishing and farming. The transport of and trade with agricultural products is one of the main areas of work for boys and girls. This was especially obvious at the huge weekly market in Yeji in Pru District. On market days – Sunday afternoon to Tuesday at noon – many of the children do not go to school because they “push trucks” (large wheelbarrows) and are involved in buying and selling.

In all research sites, the largest part of the fish landed is processed for preservation. Whereas fishing is mainly the work of men and boys, the processing and marketing of fish is mainly a task for women and girls. Only a few boys are involved. The most frequent method of preservation is smoking; some fish is also dried in the sun, salted or fried for immediate consumption. The smoked fish can be preserved up to several months and is partly sold to major cities such as Accra or Kumasi.

Especially in the villages along the Volta Lake processing is mostly small-scale. Most women interviewed combine fish processing and trade with other activities, in Pru and Kwahu North mainly with farming, in Ketu South with salt production. The women in the communities in Pru and Kwahu North have one to six ovens on their compounds. They buy fish mainly from their husbands, but partly also from other fishers at the landing sites. In Ketu South, some processors/traders work on a larger scale and employ women and girls. The system of remuneration is similar to that in fishing. The women are employed for one season (ten months) and are paid an agreed amount at the end. In the meantime, they receive food, cloth and sometimes small sums of cash. They also may borrow money from their employers which is then deducted from their final payment. The children – mostly girls – receive a daily remuneration depending on how long and how intensively they have worked.

Asked about recent changes concerning their work, women in Ketu South said that they were affected by the depletion of fish stocks. Some of the processors have even stopped smoking fish as they lacked the capital to buy it and, because of the scarcity, could not get it on credit as before. Also, women at the Volta Lake described smaller catches and higher fish prices as a recent problem. At all research sites they mentioned increased costs for basic equipment such as building an oven and the wires for the fish layers, although the price of 5 GHC to 15 GHC for the construction of a simple mud oven does not seem to be a large investment (around 4 to 12 USD). Furthermore, they referred to growing competition among processors and falling demand for fish.

At all research sites, girls assist in the processing and marketing of fish. Their work includes: waiting at the beach or landing sites, removing the fish from the nets and carrying it per headload to the village or processing site, cleaning the fish, preparing the fire, spreading the fish on the oven, turning, packaging and taking it to the markets. In Ketu South, women without the money to buy fish for processing wait with their daughters for the returning fishers and then carry headloads of fish for larger traders or processors. The girls get smaller loads and the mothers collect the pay for both. Some girls work alongside their mothers for larger-scale fish processors/traders, and in some cases pass on to them the payment they receive. Of the 21 girls interviewed, two-thirds go to school, and work before and after lessons,

either assisting their mothers in fish processing or doing household chores. They do not get paid, but are supplied with their daily needs and sometimes receive money to buy food or clothes. Most of the girls were living with their parents or relatives, two of them with non-relatives. In interviews teachers and other community members stated that quite a number of foster – potentially trafficked - children help in fish processing and trade. For migrant/trafficked girls, the contracts made are similar to those of the boys. Parents or guardians are paid at the end of the contract or at agreed intervals. The final payment may be cash, a cow, a sewing machine or the fees for an apprenticeship.



Girls carrying headloads (Photo-project Philip Adzavor)

The girls' working hours are especially difficult to assess. Their working hours can be irregular as they have to wait until the fish is brought to the landing sites before they can begin carrying and smoking. The time they spend working also depends on the quantity of fish available. Typical of girls' activities is that they often combine fish processing and trade with various household chores such as sweeping the floor, fetching water, gathering fire wood, washing the dishes and clothes, cooking and looking after smaller siblings. Due to the limited infrastructure in the villages along the

Volta Lake, tasks such as fetching water are often very time-consuming. Sometimes, girls also help their mothers with their other occupations such as petty trading and farming.

Usually girls get up early – between 4 am or 6 am – and start with household chores such as sweeping the compound. Girls attending school continue with different kinds of activities after lessons. Between school and work some of the girls have are able to play, rest or meet friends, although the time available varies. Even the girls themselves might find it difficult to assess the length of their working day, given the sheer number and irregularity of the tasks they are expected to perform. For example, one girl said that she did not do much during the day but “only some household chores” (girl in Vutideka, Pru District, interview 21.8.08).

3.2.4 Work Hazards

Children's work in fishing is subject to various hazards. In most cases it is the fear of drowning that is paramount. Most children are scared of stormy weather, heavy rain and wind. As regards deep-sea fishing, the boys are afraid of the high waves, which could either make the boat capsize or cause them to fall out. In beach seining, they are especially scared of pulling in the boat when the sea is rough because it is more likely that the rope of the boat fastened around a palm tree will loosen or even snap. If released, the rope can hit people or entangle their feet. Both have already occurred in the past, leaving people with minor but also more severe injuries such as wounds and broken legs. In the large Keta lagoon, wind and rising fog can be very dangerous. Two brothers working there pointed out that once they drifted away in a storm and ended up not knowing where they were. On the Volta Lake, clouds and wind can develop quickly and it can become difficult to return to the shore in time. Also, when on the lake children are scared of being “beaten by the rain” and of the canoe capsizing. There are several specific dangers related to each type of fishing:

- In deep sea fishing, sea sickness and other illnesses such as body pains and rheumatism were mentioned by the boys or their mothers. At the Volta Lake, children are exposed to water-borne disease such as bilharzias.
- As regards beach seining, a hazard repeatedly referred to was the sun. According to children and mothers, the long exposure to the sun can lead to fever and nausea. In addition, the hot sand can burn children's feet when they pull the net or boat without shoes.
- In lagoon fishing, broken glass bottles, sharp shells and sticks on the ground can cut children's feet. Moreover, the salt water often causes the skin on the children's palms or feet to crack and results in pain.

- In regard to fishing on the Volta Lake, the most typical hazard mentioned both by the boys and by the experts interviewed is the disentangling of nets from tree stumps underneath the water. When the boys dive they can themselves become entangled and possibly drown.

The main work hazards for girls engaged in fish processing are burns suffered while working at the oven or preparing the fire. A quarter of the girls interviewed explained that it was painful when the sharp bones of the fish they cleaned stung their fingers. In addition, several interview partners described the inhalation of smoke as dangerous.

Several interview partners mentioned recent accidents and casualties: However, as no record is kept, it is difficult to estimate how frequently such incidents occur. How great the risks they face through work are is also difficult to assess. Water-borne diseases, for example, are a hazard both at work and in everyday life when washing or bathing in the lake. In some instances, children are more at risk than adults. For example, a fisher from Fante-Akura (Pru District) pointed out that it is often difficult for children to detect the signs of a storm, for which reason they might turn back too late. Several adult interview partners showed concern for the special dangers children face and take some precautions with a view to preventing accidents. In deep-sea fishing and beach seining attempts are made to keep the children away from unsafe parts of the boats or ropes. Some fishers in Kwahu North pointed out that children dive only in shallow water. In deeper water, it was adults who dived or the net was simply pulled in by force – regardless whether it gets torn.

3.2.5 Child Labour and Trafficking

With Ghana's ratification of the Human Trafficking Act (Act 694) in December 2005, any person engaged in the trafficking of a child or adult will be sentenced to at least five years imprisonment (Parliament of the Republic of Ghana 2005:4). Despite this legislation, child trafficking still occurs in many parts of the country and also across borders. The reasons why children are trafficked are diverse. Interview partners spoke of a "perversion" of the traditional extended family system in which it is common to place children with better off family members to improve their living conditions and to offer them education or training. Today, however, an increasing number of the children sent away are exploited for work instead benefiting from the traditional family system (ILO/IPEC 2001b:vii). While some parents actively send their children away, others are approached by fishers or middlemen who offer to take care of them. Some parents then believe that their children will be better off at the

new location and maybe even go to school. Others, however, know that their children will be working.

To date, for several reasons, the Human Trafficking Act has hardly been enforced. To begin with, resources and personnel are insufficient and in some cases district officials are not even aware of the new laws. For example, one of the two police stations visited had not yet received a copy of the Human Trafficking Act, let alone have the capacity to implement it. In some districts, cases of child labour and trafficking were reported to the police or the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and subsequently followed up; in others, however, no such activities were mentioned. About five incidents of child trafficking and/or child labour are reported to CHRAJ in Keta and to the District Police Station in Aflao (Ketu South) every month. The complaints are usually lodged by the mothers or by the children themselves. One typical case of trafficking in Adina (Ketu South) is described in Box 2.

Box 2: Typical case of trafficking in Adina (Ketu South)

In August 2008, a mother lodged a complaint with the District Police Station. She complained that her husband had sent their two sons aged 13 and 17 to Abidjan in the Ivory Coast to work for a fishing company. However, prior to this incident, the mother had sent her 13-year old son to her brother in Benin because she wanted him to learn a trade at his uncle's place. The police traced the local agent who had taken the children to Abidjan and they asked him to return the two children. The children arrived back in Adina about a week after. According to the District Police Commander in Aflao, neither the mother nor the local agent saw anything wrong in sending the children away. Allegedly, the woman filed the complaint because she felt overruled by her husband on her decision of sending the 13-year old to Benin (Interviews at the District Police Station in Aflao, 11.8.08).

Various organisations have reacted to the low level of law enforcement in Ghana by tackling the problem of child trafficking themselves. Their aim is to withdraw children from the worst forms of labour in fishing and other occupations and to reintegrate them into their communities. One such NGO is the Association of People for Practical Life Education (APPLE). APPLE withdraws children from the worst forms of labour and runs a shelter in Atebubu – a town in the Atebubu-Amantin District bordering Pru. During the research phase it was possible to interview nine of 13 children who had been withdrawn from Tato in Sene District – bordering the districts of Pru and Atebubu-Amantin – and taken to the shelter. They had already been there for three

weeks and were supposed to reside there for a total of three months. The two girls and seven boys interviewed were between eleven and 17 years old.¹⁰

Personal Histories from Children Trafficked to the Sene District at the Volta Lake

The majority of children were trafficked from the Volta, Central and Ashanti Regions to Tato. In their hometowns, they had lived with their parents or grandparents. Three children had attended school; the others reportedly "did not do much". From their perspective they had been sent to Tato for several reasons. Their parents were no longer able to send them to school or generally care for them: either they believed that their children would be well cared for and attend school at the new place or they wanted their children to work. Some children explained that their parents had been approached by relatives or foreigners. Out of the nine children interviewed, five boys had been picked up and taken to Tato by their employers or middlemen; one boy was taken there by a woman. The two remaining girls and one boy had been taken there by their aunts and uncle respectively. On arrival, they lived with their employers, often called masters, or with the relatives for whom they worked.

In Tato, all of the children were engaged in fishing-related work. Whereas the boys were involved in typical fishing activities such as paddling, casting and pulling the net, the girls processed fish and were responsible for household chores. The boy living with his uncle also attended school. He described a typical working day as follows: he would get up in the early morning to go straight to school which lasted from 7 am to 1 pm. At 2 pm he would go to the lake to set traps and throw the net. He would return around 4 pm to play soccer. Arriving home around 6 pm, he would take a bath and then go to sleep. This description is in stark contrast to the daily routines of other boys, who worked with fishers they did not originally know. Their days were as follows: most of them would get up at 3 am to go to the lake. There they would work with their masters or other trafficked children. Their tasks included paddling, casting and pulling the net, setting traps as well as removing fish from nets and traps. One boy also had to dive to remove the net if it got entangled, but only in shallow water. They would return in between either to do other work, such as helping the fisher's wife in processing the fish, or to have a break. All boys stated that they only had one or two meals a day, and that the standard of the food was often poor. They would finally get back from the lake between 4 pm and 6 pm and go to bed between

¹⁰ The other four children were either unstable or too young to be interviewed, the youngest child being five years old.

7 pm and 8 pm. Two boys stated that they worked every day, except for Sunday morning when they attended church. Three of the seven boys had been beaten by their masters or thrashed with a rope. One of them was sometimes pushed into the water although he cannot swim. The two girls rose later than the boys, usually starting their work around 5 am. Both of them started with household chores such as sweeping the compound, fetching water and washing dishes before helping their aunts with fish smoking. They would clean the fish, salt and then smoke it. While one girl finished her work around 3 pm, the other said that she had to work late at night whenever a larger quantity of fish arrived and that she was beaten if she became tired. None of the children received any payments, neither cash nor in kind. However, some of them remembered that their parents had been given money.

The number of years these children had lived away from home differs greatly. Whereas one boy had been taken to Tato only a year ago, another had been sent eight years earlier. On average, they had spent about three years there. Thanks to APPLE's sensitisation campaign in the area, they were aware of that organisation's work and knew that they could register with the NGO and be rescued if they were mistreated or wanted to return home. It was in this way that the majority of the children established contact with APPLE; one of the girls was approached by APPLE staff. Asked what they would like to do after the three months at the shelter, all the children replied that they wanted to go home to live with their mother or father or both. One of the boys stated that he wanted to live with his father instead of his mother as he feared that otherwise he would be trafficked again. Most of the children wished to attend school. The 17 year-old boy, however, did not wish to do so, as he disliked the idea of being in the same class as younger students. He would like to learn how to drive because he believed that this would help him to find a good job.

In summary it can be said that most of the children interviewed were victims of trafficking as defined by ILO/IPEC as "recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation" (ILO/IPEC 2008:12). It can be assumed that many community members are aware of the legislation on trafficking and child labour through various media campaigns, such as the programmes on children's rights on a radio station broadcasting to the Pru and Sene District (Pru District Assembly 2007:2). However, as long as the law is not enforced, people will continue both to use child labour and to refrain from reporting cases to the police.

3.3 Cattle Herding in the Tolon-Kumbungu and North and South Tongu Districts

Child cattle herding is widespread throughout Ghana. However, there is hardly any information on the work conditions and social situation of cattle boys. An exception is the recent study by Dela Afenyadu (2008) "Children in Cattle Herding: A Baseline Study of the North and South Tongu Districts", which was commissioned by the NGO International Needs. The following case study describes and compares the different situations of cattle boys in the Tolon-Kumbungu District in the Northern Region and in the districts of North and South Tongu in the Volta Region. As regards Tolon-Kumbungu, the findings are the results of interviews with NGO members, district officials, 13 cattle owners/parents, 23 cattle boys and several teachers as well as three focus group discussions. The section on North and South Tongu is based on the study of Afenyadu and additional expert interviews conducted in the districts.

Livelihoods in Tolon-Kumbungu and North and South Tongu

In all three districts the keeping of cattle is a major component of people's livelihoods. In addition, farmers may keep sheep, goats and poultry. The main source of income for the rural population in Tolon-Kumbungu is agriculture (NDPC 2004). Most of the farmers produce crops for both consumption and sale. The different activities of men, women, boys and girls are closely related to the rainfall pattern, the rainy season lasting from July to September. The workload in agriculture has its peak between July and November. The main crops are groundnuts, maize, guinea corn, millet, cow pea, rice and yam. From late May to the end of July, most of the men and boys are engaged in preparing the land and planting. Women are involved in the harvest and pick shea nuts for sale. Their main tasks are usually household-related activities such as fetching water, collecting firewood and cooking. In two villages visited (Golinga, Wuba), there were dams close by, making it possible for some farmers to cultivate crops all year round on irrigated plots. These are mainly used for vegetable and commercial rice growing, but also serve as water reservoirs for the cattle. Most of the crops are harvested between August and December. Farmers thus have sufficient food and money from January to March. In the lean season, May and June, food is scarce and there are hardly any income opportunities. In this very vulnerable time for the rural population, some farmers have to sell cattle if they are short of food.

Livelihood options in North and South Tongu are mainly farming and fishing, but also charcoal burning and petty trading. Farming includes the production of food crops such as cow pea and maize mainly for subsistence and pepper and cassava as a cash crop. Here too, production is linked to the rainfall pattern. March/April to August

is the major rainy season, called "wli". The preparation of the land starts in February, planting in March or April, depending on how early the rains begin. September to December is the minor season called "kele". Both men and women are involved in farming. Whilst women in Tolon-Kumbungu do not own land, in North and South Tongu they have their own small-scale farms where they grow groundnut and cow peas. Furthermore, they are the main actors in harvesting, curing, sun-drying and marketing the pepper. They also process gari, sell cooked food, weave mats and do petty trading. Fishing is an important source of income for men in some of the communities (Afenyadu 2008).

Cattle as a Livelihood Strategy for Social Insurance and the Creation of Wealth

In all districts the unpredictability of rainfall makes farmers cling tightly to animal husbandry as a form of insurance against possible failures in crop production. This includes the keeping of cattle, goats, sheep and fowls. In Tolon-Kumbungu the number of cattle has increased about five to ten percent in the last ten years. Excluding the animals owned by migrant herdsmen, there were an estimated 48,383 animals in the district in 2007 (Ministry of Food and Agriculture Tamale 2007). The total number of cattle in North Tongu is estimated at approximately 44,000, in South Tongu at 18,000. The price for a cow lies between 300 and 400 GHC depending on the season, age, sex and general appearance of the animal (about 350 and 450 USD). The rearing of cattle has traditionally been a preserve of men but there are also some women who own cattle. Cattle are either individually- or family-owned. In Tolon-Kumbungu, the head of the household is responsible for the family's cattle. It is he who decides to sell if the need arises. Some individuals own herds of up to 100 animals, although most family herds have up to ten animals. Women who own cattle put them into the care of their husbands or brothers.

In Tolon-Kumungu cattle ownership is an important livelihood strategy, but is not generally seen as a way of generating a regular income. People see it mainly as a form of social insurance in times of food shortage, for funerals or family commitments such as marriages. One cattle owner explained: "We were told by our forefathers to have cattle to enable us buy foodstuffs if harvests were bad" (interview 19.8.08). Meat consumption in the villages is very low, and is normally limited to special occasions. Answering the question of why cattle were not sold to generate a regular income, one cattle owner illustrated the attitude in the North towards livestock keeping: "Would you take money out of your bank account if you are not in need of something?" (interview 22.8.08).

Interviews in North and South Tongu revealed that here cattle owners had larger herds than in the Northern Region. It also emerged, however, that they did not sell

their animals regularly either, as most of them have other sources of income. The herd sizes differ from about ten to over 500 animals in South Tongu and up to about 1,000 animals in North Tongu. Not all cattle owners are farmers; even some professionals in high positions have herds, and some owners live in other parts of the country and put the animals into the care of local farmers who receive compensation through a yield sharing agreement.

Children's Economic Activities

An important occupation for boys in Tolon-Kumbungu is cattle herding. From a certain age, most of them also help their fathers with farming or cultivate their own small piece of land. For girls especially, the school enrolment rates are very low. They mainly help their mothers in the household and do such work as cooking and fetching water. On market days, they engage in selling and in head portage. Migration is frequent among young people. Girls, in particular, leave for larger towns where they can earn enough to enable them to acquire basic household equipment and other goods before they get married; some also try to escape from family pressure and poverty.

In North and South Tongu, children's activities vary according to the livelihood options in the communities. They work mainly in cattle herding, fishing and fish processing, hawking, stone quarrying and sand production. In areas with large markets, also school children work on market days. Girls engage in selling and head portage whereas boys "push trucks" (quite large wheelbarrows).

Cattle Boys

Most of the cattle boys are between eight and 16 years of age. In Tolon-Kumbungu they usually work for close relatives – fathers, grandfathers or older brothers. Village elders stated in focus group discussions that boys from the age of seven are able to herd cattle, but that they are chosen on the basis of physical strength rather than age. Usually the boys work for a few years until a younger brother is strong enough to take over. They do not get paid; however, most of the boys interviewed keep the money they get from selling milk and use it to buy food and clothing. As the cows are only milked in the rainy season, this income is limited and other family members may also take a share of the milk. In all three districts the boys receive a small amount of money when a cow is sold.

In North and South Tongu only some of the cattle boys work for their parents, others for relatives and non-relatives within and outside their communities. Most of them are employed on a contract basis for three to five, usually four, years. After this time they receive a calf or a cow (Afenyadu 2008, Odonkor 2008). The contracts are mainly a

verbal three-party-agreement between parents or guardians, boys and employers. During the period of the contract, the boys are highly dependent on their employers, who take on responsibility for their food, clothing and accommodation as well as for possible medical bills. There have been cases in which cattle owners refused to release the promised calf or cow if cattle had been lost or stolen during the period of the contract. In these cases the boys finished up with no earnings at all.

In Tolon-Kumbungu as well as in North and South Tongu, cattle herding work varies with the season. In the rainy season, the cattle boys milk the cows every morning before they walk with them to the pastures. One of the main difficulties is to keep the cattle off the farms. In the dry season herding is easier because the boys do not have to guard the cattle as carefully, which leaves them time for resting, playing and wrestling. However, they have to go long distances to get water.

In the rainy season, cattle boys in Tolon-Kumbungu get up at about 6 am, follow their father to the farm to help him or to cultivate their own small plots. Then they come back to milk the cows, have breakfast and leave with the cattle at about 9 am. Between noon and 1 pm, they rest and eat food which they took with them or hunt for rodents or birds to roast them for lunch. By 2 pm to 3 pm, they start heading back to the village, where they arrive around 5 pm and have dinner. Cattle boys from Muslim families go to Arabic schools in the evenings. In the dry season, they leave earlier and go to water the animals. Sometimes, school children will herd the cattle on the Islamic festival days, so that the cattle boys can rest. In the rainy season, the cattle owners themselves or other children sometimes help to guard the cattle at the village outskirts so that the animals are prevented from destroying the farms.

The daily routines for cattle boys in North and South Tongu are similar. They also work for ten to twelve hours a day, mostly from 6-8 am in the morning to 6 pm in the evening, seven days a week. Their main tasks are to herd cattle to the field at an agreed time to graze and drink, to ensure that the animals do not destroy people's farms and that they do not get lost or stolen. In addition, the boys help with other husbandry activities such as spraying and bathing the cattle. Some also have to collect firewood for the cattle owner's wife before they can eat and leave for the field. The boys operate in teams of up to three. Most of them eat twice a day, mainly breakfast and supper. For lunch, they hunt for rodents and gather fruit or catch fish from nearby waters (Afenyadu 2008).



Cattle boys in Tolon-Kumbungu (Photo Gertraud Matthias)

New cattle boys learn the necessary tasks, such as milking the cows and keeping the animals off farms, by accompanying brothers or workmates for periods of between three months and one year. Cattle herding and schooling cannot be combined as the normal lesson time falls during their working hours. Some of the boys had attended school and dropped out when they started herding, while others had never been enrolled. In North and South Tongu, the boys sometimes continued schooling after completing their herding contract. In Tolon-Kumbungu, none of the 23 children or 13 parents interviewed believed that it would be possible for the cattle boys to go back to school when they hand over the herding work to younger brothers. Instead, most of them start or expand farming activities after working as cattle boys.

In Tolon-Kumbungu, the cattle boys, who worked for their own families, considered herding as their duty. They did not complain about the task as such, but all of the 23 boys interviewed expressed the desire for better equipment such as Wellington boots and raincoats. For some, being a cattle boy was attractive because they received a small amount of money from selling milk. They might even be able to invest in chickens and, if the chickens bred sufficiently, in a goat. A former cattle boy said: "The time I was a cattle boy I thought I was better off than my colleagues going to

school because I had some money and managed to raise some livestock. Now I see my colleagues from school are better off than me because they are educated" (interview 23.8.08). In one interview, with a group of seven boys, they all responded simultaneously: "Nobody wants to be a cattle boy" because working on a farm carries more prestige (interview 21.8.08).

Hazards and Difficulties

Cattle boys are exposed to extreme weather. During the rainy season, they have to face heavy rains, while in the dry season they burn their feet in the hot sand if they do not wear shoes. Often, they are injured by thorns in the bush and can also get bitten by snakes. This has already led to cases of death, as a member of the district assembly in North Tongu pointed out. Furthermore, the boys get stung by bees, wasps and sometimes by scorpions while out on the grazing sites. Another danger is that aggressive cows can attack them during milking. However, it is difficult to assess how often accidents happen. Furthermore, it should be noted that some of the hazards – such as insect or snake bites – affect all children and adults in rural areas, not just cattle boys. The greatest fear connected with herding mentioned by the boys interviewed was that they would be punished by farmers or cattle owners if the animals destroyed crops. All reported that they had been beaten. In North and South Tongu, the boys also feared attacks by cattle thieves (Afenyadu 2008).

Some cattle owners in Tolon-Kumbungu stated that they did not see any danger in herding cattle. However, most of the parents interviewed acknowledged that the cattle boys' work is harder than that of other children. As one interview partner said: "Cattle boys have a hard load to carry, they suffer but they are important for the family" (interview 20.8.08). Three cattle owners explained that they tried to feed the herd boys better than the other children. However, another interview partner stated that the boys going to school usually grew faster than those who herd cattle. Similarly, the Social Welfare Officer for North South Tongu observed that "sometimes cattle boys are physically not well developed" (interview 3.9.08).

Factors Contributing to Boy's Engagement in Cattle Herding

Child labour in cattle herding in Tolon-Kumbungu cannot be considered a problem of household poverty. Persons keeping up to 100 animals use their own sons to herd their cattle as well as those owning only two. Bearing in mind the value of the cattle, most owners seem to be relatively well off compared to the families without livestock. However, even though cattle can be considered as a form of wealth, people use it mainly to cope with financial difficulties, rather than to generate a regular income. Sending sons to herd the cattle is seen as a part of their tradition and culture. This

point was emphasised by one of the village elders, who said: "The world started with the boys herding cattle, cattle for children and farming for adults" (interview 19.8.08). In North and South Tongu, the situation appears to be different. The cattle boys come from different economic backgrounds, although the majority are from poor families. Yet also some better-off cattle owners use their own sons to ensure that the family wealth is well managed. They claimed that if their sons herd cattle it enables them to acquire the knowledge and skills required for proper husbandry and herd management. Underprivileged parents stated that "poverty is what has caused us to want our children to herd cattle before going to school because there is no other really rewarding economic activity in our area". 15 of the 25 young men interviewed for the study of Afenyadu (2008) who had previously herded cattle said they had done so to supplement their household's income. Both the boys and their parents hoped that earning a cow which could give birth to further cattle might be a way out of poverty.

Adult Herdsmen - an Alternative?

In a few cases, cattle are herded by an adult herdsman – mostly Fulani. Fulani pastoralists "are not only migrants but are regarded as 'strangers' and 'foreigners'" (Tonah 2002). In the communities visited they were looked upon with suspicion. They usually live outside the communities and take care of large herds. In Tolon-Kumbungu, where herds are generally smaller, they work for different owners simultaneously. The herdsmen's housing is provided by the cattle owners. Furthermore, they receive a small plot of land for farming. Their income is often limited to the proceeds of the cattle's milk which is processed to cheese and sold in the larger towns. They sometimes own cattle themselves, which can lead to misunderstandings as owners fear that herdsmen may claim calves as their own.

Various interview partners explained that, in the past, more Fulani and fewer boys were involved in herding cattle. In the communities visited in Tolon-Kumbungu, it was reported that cattle owners did not want to employ Fulani as they were far more expensive than children. The cattle owners interviewed believed that they were not trustworthy and, if not closely monitored, would sell some of the cattle. Whereas some interview partners also stated that the appearance and health of the cattle was better when kept by adult herdsmen, others complained that they were milked excessively, leaving too little milk for calves to develop fully.

Generally cattle herding is not considered a task for adults as the income it provides is not sufficient to live on. This seems to explain to a large degree the involvement of boys in this type of work. Most of people interviewed in Tolon-Kumbungu stated that local adults could not look after the cattle as their duty was to farm. In the case of the

head of the household, the importance of his presence close to the village was stressed. As one interview partner stated: "It is the responsibility of the household head to be near the compound in case something happens" (interview 21.8.08).

Conclusion

Although the daily routines of cattle boys are similar in all three districts, their working conditions and social backgrounds differ. Child cattle herding in Tolon-Kumbungu cannot be considered a problem of household poverty; rather, it is based in tradition. In North and South Tongu, it is usually economic hardship which drives boys into cattle herding, although the boys also hope to become cattle owners themselves.

The question whether cattle herding is a hazardous activity is difficult to answer, because there is no information about the number of cases in which the boys get work-related injuries or illnesses. However, as far as the Ghana Children's Act is concerned, cattle herding must be considered exploitative, since it deprives the boys of a basic education. They work long hours, partly under hard conditions and are used as cheap or even as unpaid labour. Even though it was stated in the Volta Region that it was possible for the boys go to school after fulfilling their contract, this rarely happens and, if it does, causes problems because they are much older than their peers.

Whereas in Tolon-Kumbungu the cattle boys live with their family and work for them, in North and South Tongu only about half of the boys interviewed in Afenyadu's study (2008) were living with their parents, while the others worked for relatives or non-relatives inside and outside their communities. He concludes: "Most of the elements of human trafficking can be found in the child cattle herding dealings. It involves a formalised system, of recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, placement and receipt of children within national borders, within or across communities, districts and regions". So far, programmes addressing child labour have had little success in withdrawing boys from cattle herding. Attempts at intervention in North and South Tongu encountered extreme difficulties as influential people in the districts are cattle owners themselves and tend to follow their own interests on the issue.

3.4 Education and Child Labour

The accessibility and quality of education and its relevance to the labour market is one factor in parents' decision to send their children to school. Although – as shown in the previous chapters – many boys and girls combine school attendance and work increased enrolment rates can have an effect on working hours and on the kind of work done (Sudharshan/Coulombe 1997, Odonkor 2007, Ghana Statistical Service

2003). In all districts visited, enrolment rates have risen significantly over the last few years – partly due to the governments' policies such as Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education and the Ghana School Feeding Programme, which began in late 2005 with pilot projects. Nevertheless, especially in the north, the net enrolment rates continue to be low. In Tolon-Kumbungu they rose for primary education from 47 percent to 64 percent and for Junior High Schools from 11 percent to 17 percent. Still fewer girls than boys attend schools. In areas with a Muslim population some parents prefer to send their children to Arabic schools because they fear that they might learn things not in accordance with their religion in state schools (Sudharshan/Coulombe 1997:10).

In all districts visited, similar problems concerning access to, and the quality of, education were encountered. Teachers and representatives of the Ghana Education Service complained about the lack of adequate school buildings, sanitation facilities, equipment such as furniture, and teaching materials. Many schools were not prepared for the higher number of pupils because too few extra teachers were hired while classroom facilities remained largely the same. The school feeding programmes partly created specific difficulties. Representatives of the Ghana Education Service mentioned the example of a school at which the number of students enrolled rose from 100 to 500 after the introduction of the school feeding programme, creating a considerable logistical problem.

Teachers stated that large classes make the work exhausting and frustrating. Although the government advises a maximum class size of 35 students, it was as high as 70 or even 100 in the districts visited. Additionally, teachers often have to buy their own textbooks or copy teaching material at their own expense. Another problem is the high age disparity within the classes. As a result of Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education, many of the children enrolled at primary level in recent years are only in primary 1 or 2 although they can be as old as ten or even 15.

The problems with school infrastructure and the quality of education are especially severe in remote villages and have an impact on school attendance. For example many communities at the Volta Lake do not have primary schools and parents are reluctant to enrol young children if the nearest school is too far away. For secondary education – or apprenticeship – boys and girls have to move to nearby towns, involving additional costs which some parents cannot easily afford. The quality of education is affected by the fact that trained teachers in particular are often unwilling to accept postings to remote areas. For example in Pru and Tolon-Kumbungu, only about 40 percent of the teachers at primary schools and about 66 percent of those at Junior High Schools are trained. The situation is improving only slowly as the Ghana Education Service provides teacher qualification programmes.

There is still a large gap between enrolment rates in primary and secondary schools because many children drop out. This is particularly true of girls, who leave to take care of their younger siblings or because of early marriages and teenage pregnancies. For example in Tolon-Kumbungu the number of pupils enrolled in primary school rose from 19,512 to 25,416 between 2005 and 2008, but in Junior High Schools only from 3,132 to 4,244. A general problem is that working children in particular do not attend school regularly. Children skip classes on market days, for example, and in villages and towns at the Volta Lake many boys are late for school because they go fishing in the morning. As a reaction, several teachers in Pru have already adapted the school timetable to the children's work schedule and start later, at 8:30 am instead of 7:30 am. Teachers in Tolon-Kumbungu stated that school attendance was lower in the rainy season because children had to help with farming. Children who worked were often too tired to concentrate or even slept during the lessons.

Both teachers and representatives of the district assemblies saw a strong correlation between the educational background of parents and the enrolment of children in schools. They pointed out that many of the parents of working children were illiterate and therefore did not value education. However, as Odonkor (2007a:1) claims "rural parents should rather be seen as dissatisfied clients of the education system than as illiterates ignorant of the value of education". It is striking that although about 90 percent of the children in cocoa growing areas are enrolled in schools, 54 percent cannot read or write (MMYE/NPECLC 2008). Because of the poor quality of schools, the difficulties of access and the uncertainties about finding an adequate job after graduation, parents have developed a strategy to spread the risks, which involves sending some of their children to school while others help with fishing, farming or other economic activities. The experiences and role models quoted in interviews and focus group discussions included, on the one hand, people who had found a well-paid job in larger towns and were better off because of their education. On the other hand negative examples were given of Senior High School graduates who had not found a job and had come back to the village, but were too "spoilt" for work on the farms because they had other expectations.

3.5 Intervention for the Reduction of Child Labour – the Time-Bound Programme

In four of the six districts visited, the most comprehensive efforts to reduce the worst forms of child labour was the Time-Bound Programme¹¹ carried out by the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment and ILO/IPEC. Ketu South, Pru, North and South Tongu and Tolon-Kumbungu are among the 20 districts collaborating with the programme since 2006. It is a “framework within which prevention, protection, withdrawal, rehabilitation or reintegration measures (for child labourers) could be developed and applied on a large scale in order to achieve measurable and timely ... interventions” (MMYE 2007:3). The main areas of intervention are as follows:

- institutional and organisational capacity building for addressing child labour issues
- education, vocational and skills training
- economic development and poverty reduction
- awareness raising and social mobilisation (MMYE 2007:3)

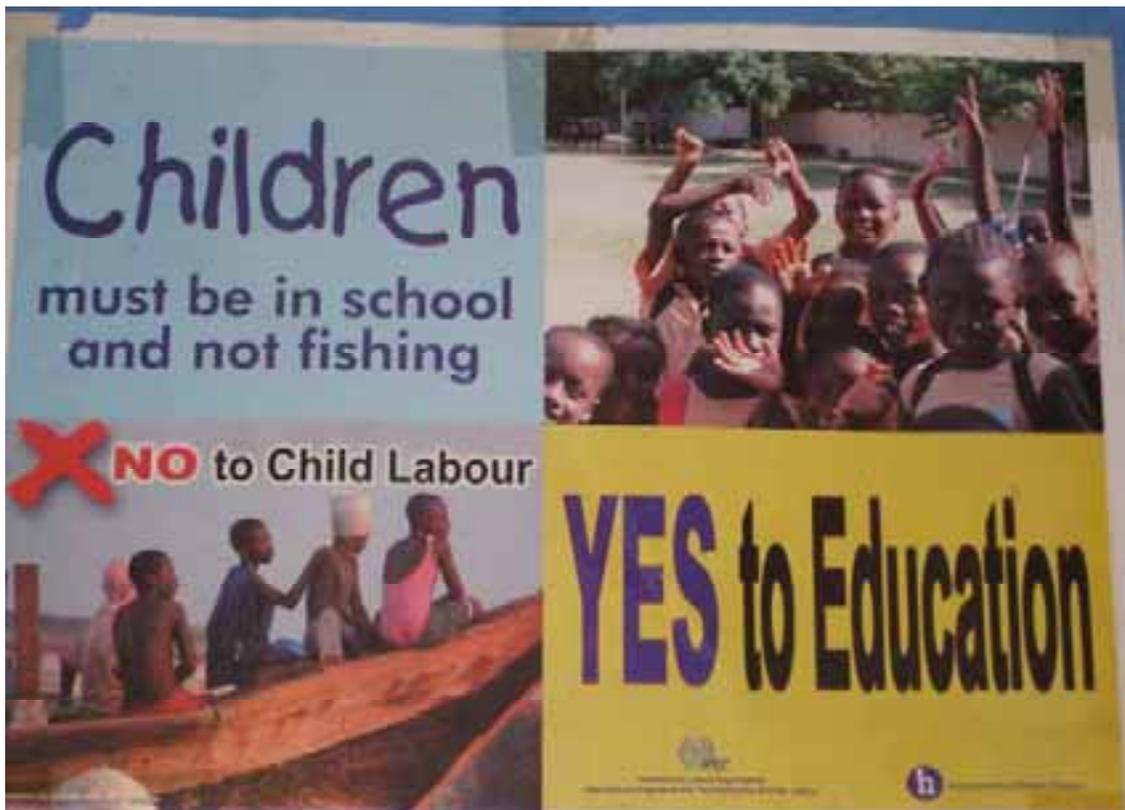
One of the aims of the programme is to develop Child Labour Monitoring Systems. The Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment has published a training manual, interviewers' guides and several questionnaires for baseline data collection and monitoring. They are designed for interviews with working children and children at risk, investigations at workplaces, schools and training institutions, interviews with children who have received support and data collection at organisations and institutions offering support to working and trafficked children (MMYE et al. 2006a). The training manual identifies eight areas in which worst forms of child labour might be found. Relevant to the agricultural sector are trafficking, head portage, fishing and commercial agriculture. The others areas are domestic service, commercial sexual exploitation, quarrying and small-scale mining and the Trokosi System¹² (MMYE 2007:3).

A first step within the Time-Bound Programme was to nominate Child Labour Committees at district and community levels. The District Child Labour Committees comprise several departments of the district administration, mostly social welfare, education and labour. The Community Child Labour Committees are made up of five or six members whose involvement is voluntary. The ILO funded their initial training,

¹¹ Further intervention encountered at district level, such as *Child Protections Teams* introduced by UNICEF, various forms of transitional schooling and the withdrawal of trafficked children from child labour, are presented in chapter 4 on good practice.

¹² Trokosi is a form of ritual servitude, which involves the giving of mostly young girls to traditional priests as a compensation for offences allegedly committed by relatives

which included information on the concept of child labour and on legislation concerning children's work as well as on tools for collecting data on child labour. Meanwhile, in all cooperating districts Community Child Labour Committees have been established in selected – usually ten – pilot communities (from a total, for example, of 237 in Tolon-Kumbungu). The main aim is to withdraw children from worst forms of labour, to remove hazards for children who are legally old enough to work and to protect children at risk of child labour (MMYE 2007:3).



Poster of ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (Photo Britt Kalla)

To get an overview of the number of working children, the committees carried out an “Administrative Census” – a register of children in, or at risk of, worst forms of labour – in their communities. They visited areas where children work and talked to parents and employers. The census includes information on the kind of work done, on children's age and gender, on their place of residence, on the occupation of their parents as well as on school attendance and work hazards. Quite a high number of children in, or at risk of, worst forms of child labour were identified: in Ketu South 500, in Pru 593, in Tolon-Kumbungu 750 and in South Tongu 267. In Ketu South and Pru, most of them were involved in fishing. For North and South Tongu both fishing and cattle herding played a major role. In Tolon-Kumbungu, cattle herding was most

prevalent. Many of the children were not attending school (Child Initial Status Form 2006, Pru District Assembly 2007:2, Administrative Census South Tongu 2006).

Once the local Child Labour Committees have identified children in, or at risk of, worst forms of labour, they then follow up each case. The district assemblies and different departments work in partnership with NGOs and in one instance with the Ghana General Agricultural Workers' Union. The ILO sponsors the activities of NGOs such as Volta Care in Ketu South, International Needs in North and South Tongu, Mission of Hope in Pru and Friends of the North in Tolon-Kumbungu. In a Child Initial Status Form provided by ILO/IPEC, further detailed information on the children is recorded. The questions relate to family background, children's work, education, health and the services planned for the advancement of the children. In recent years, several hundred children have received support in the framework of the Time-Bound Programme. Different types of assistance are offered to the children and also, to some extent, to their parents:

- young children are enrolled in schools while training opportunities are sought for older children
- needy children are supplied with school uniforms, shoes, bags, books and other items
- children receive medical services
- parents are provided with skills training and financial support aimed at enabling them to start a small-scale business

Whereas in all districts visited children received support such as free school uniforms and other materials, it was only in some districts that further measures had been taken. In Pru, 50 children had been provided with apprenticeship opportunities in such areas as tailoring, hairdressing, carpentry or mechanics. Additionally, 80 mothers/guardians in one community had been trained in soap production and provided with credit facilities to enhance their capacity for income generation (Pru District Assembly 2007:2). A morning school programme for cattle boys had been established in North and South Tongu in cooperation with the Ghana Education Service. In Tolon-Kumbungu, 250 children were to become beneficiaries of a transitional schooling system.¹³ Furthermore, projects for alternative income opportunities such as beekeeping were being planned to support the families of school children withdrawn from work.

¹³ For further information see the good practice example on transitional schooling in chapter 4.4.

The district departments, NGOs and Community Child Labour Committees which support the children try to keep track of the beneficiaries and monitor further developments, for example by visiting schools or homes and having discussions with teachers and parents. Whereas some of the committees are very active and accepted by their communities as, for instance, in Adina in Ketu South, others “fell dormant” for several reasons. In Tolon-Kumbungu, for example, intervention had been interrupted by floods in 2007. In Blekusu, in Ketu South, the activities of the Community Child Labour Committee slowed down considerably after the initial phase because its members had had higher expectations in relation to income generation measures. In the case of the island community of Dzaiakpoi at the Volta Lake (Pru District), intervention was delayed because the members of the Community Child Labour Committee had been threatened by fishers.

In North and South Tongu, in particular, the activities to reduce child labour have led to a controversial debate in the communities. The Child Labour Committees have tried to persuade cattle owners to withdraw boys from work. The Volta Region Cattle Farmers Union supports this objective up to a point and calls for cattle owners to allow the boys to go to school. Its constitution even has a paragraph on the prohibition of child labour. In South Tongu alone, the union has more than 1,000 registered members and could therefore wield influence. However, many members do not agree with the legislation against child labour. Some cattle owners stated that their business depended on the labour force of children and saw the efforts to withdraw them as an “attempt to crash local economy” (Afenyadu 2008). They argued that it was difficult to find local adults for the job. One solution might be to employ Fulani herdsmen, but many cattle owners do not trust them. As a confidence-building step, the Cattle Farmers Union proposed that members make written agreements with the herdsmen and offered to witness the contracts. In South Tongu a meeting between the union and potential adult herdsmen took place – persons from the area and Fulani. A list of 30 adults interested in herding was handed over to the cattle owners. So far, however, there has been no progress in the replacement of boys by adults as the cattle owners could not agree on a standard contract (Afenyadu 2008).

Apart from offering direct support to children and their families, the district assemblies departments, NGOs and Community Child Labour Committees organise awareness programmes including community meetings, discussions with specific groups such as fishers and cattle owners, teacher training and projects for children in schools. At the meetings, participants are given an overview of the law relating to children's work and are informed that – at a later stage – persons using child labour may be prosecuted. In addition, they are told of the importance of education for the children's future success. Some teachers and NGOs members have received training to enable

them to work with the ILO Stop Child Labour Education Pack & Resources "SCREAM".¹⁴ One aim of the awareness programmes is to integrate children's rights policies into the work routines of the district administrations. In Pru, several institutions and departments were in the process of mainstreaming child labour concerns into their regular programmes. For example:

- The Ghana Education Service conducts programmes to increase the enrolment rate at schools.
- The Health Department educates the mothers on the importance of education when they come to have their children vaccinated. It also informs them on family planning because there is assumed to be a correlation between the number of children and the incidence of child labour.
- The National Commission for Civic Education educates citizens on civic rights and responsibilities. Its mandate includes the violation of children's rights.
- The Agricultural Department offers support programmes to fishers and farmers to help them generate alternative income in areas such as grass cutters and snail breeding, mushroom growing or beekeeping, but only if their children attend school.
- The Department of Fisheries educates the fishers on the need to send children to school so that they will be able to use new technologies in the sector in the future.

In general, interview partners evaluated the Time-Bound Programme in the districts positively as it provides a basis for mapping out strategies to reduce child labour. The Administrative Census is not a representative study, although the data give an impression of the incidence of child labour. As the communities are involved in the data collection, the surveys can contribute to awareness raising and discussions on the kinds of children's work that should be regarded as hazardous or exploitative. Altogether, quite a number of children received assistance, as did their families in some cases. However, it appears that many of the children receiving support under the Time-Bound Programme, although now enrolled in schools, are still working. It is difficult to assess the extent to which their work load has been reduced or their general situation improved. In general, interview partners considered the time frame of the programme – two years with a possible extension – too short and there is concern that the district assemblies might not be able to continue the Child Labour Monitoring Systems with their own budgets and present capacities. Furthermore, ILO funding for the assistance of the children and their families is thought to be too low.

¹⁴ Available on the internet at http://learning.itcilo.org/ilo/ipec/scream/pack_en/

Representatives of the district assemblies, NGOs and Child Labour Committees made several proposals for the improvement of the Child Labour Monitoring Systems:

- The number of members of Child Labour Committees should be increased.
- Committee members and staff of the district departments should have better transport facilities because many sites where children work are difficult to access.
- At this stage, the Administrative Census should be updated continuously so as to be able to pick up on new developments.
- A permanent office for child labour concerns should be established at district level. It should carry out its own work programme, but also coordinate the activities of other departments on different aspects of child labour.

In addition, many of the interview partners stressed that efforts to eliminate or reduce child labour can only be effective in the long term if they are embedded in general development and poverty reduction strategies. Several interview partners were convinced that, in districts where fishing is a major activity, the prevention of child labour will also depend on the furtherance of sustainable fishing and farming as well as on alternative livelihood options.

4 Good Practices

During the research phase, the team did not find **the** good practice, but rather several policies and activities at national, regional and district levels, which might contribute to the long-term reduction or elimination of the worst forms of child labour. Yet, as noted in the section headed “problems to be solved” these policies and activities may still be capable of improvement. The following collection of good practices has been gathered to “stimulate thought” (Perrin 2003:37) and outlines, in particular, conceptual aspects, contributions to enlarging the knowledge base on child labour and activities with possibly synergy benefits.¹⁵ For the most part, these good practices are approaches that are already being applied by several institutions and organisations. They include:

- mainstreaming child labour concerns into existing policies and programmes
- community-based information and monitoring systems
- training material on child labour issues
- transitional education for working or withdrawn children
- withdrawal of trafficked children from labour

4.1 Mainstreaming of Child Labour Issues

Background and Problem Statement

One aim of the Declaration of Intent on Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture of the ILO, FAO and other organisations involved in agriculture is to “mainstream child labour concerns into existing activities, programmes, and projects of agricultural organisations” and “into agricultural policy making” (ILO/FAO et al. 2007:4). The concept of mainstreaming has its origin in the international women’s movement and is a strategy against the marginalisation of women’s and gender issues. The aim is to make the recognition of gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equity central to the “mainstream” of policies, research, legislation, resource allocation and to the planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects. Tabatabai adapts the United Nations Economic and Social Council’s conclusion 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming to the problem of child labour and defines mainstreaming as:

¹⁵ The following paragraphs are structured according to the template for submitting a SARD (Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development) good practice (FAO et al. 2006).

- “the process of assessing the implications for child labourers, or those at risk of becoming child labourers, of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels”,
- “a strategy for making the concerns about child labour an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic, and social spheres, so as to reduce both the supply of and demand for child labour, especially in its worst forms” and
- a process whose ultimate goal is the total elimination of child labour as soon as possible (Tabatabai 2003).

Since recently, individual government institutions and organisations in Ghana have been making efforts to mainstream child labour concerns into their work. In the following, two examples will be described: the Ministry of Manpower Youth and Employment, which has been taking account of children’s rights since 2000 and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture which has just recently established a Child Labour Desk.

Approaches Followed

The Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment has established the Child Labour Unit as one of the requirements for Ghana’s cooperation with ILO/IPEC. Its main tasks are to coordinate the Time-Bound Programme¹⁶ carried out by the Ghanaian government and the ILO, to develop policies, legislation and specific programmes, to raise awareness on child labour issues and to collaborate with different stakeholders. The unit assists other organisations and institutions with the integration of children’s rights concerns into their respective work – among them for example the Ghana Trade Union Congress, Ghana Statistical Service, Ministry of Information and National Orientation, Ghana News Agency and Interpol Ghana. In workshops and meetings information is shared and the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders are identified. In June 2008, the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment has released an eight-year National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Child Labour in Ghana as a prioritisation and networking guideline for relevant stakeholders. The ministry addressed the agricultural sector through several programmes – the West African Cocoa and Commercial Agricultural Project (until

¹⁶ For further information on the ILO *Time-Bound Programme* see chapter 3.5.

2006), the National Programme for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Cocoa and the Child Labour Monitoring Systems in rural areas.¹⁷

One example of mainstreaming and of the integration of child labour issues in structures already existing is the labour inspections by the Labour Department, which is part of the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment. Trained inspectors visit workplaces to ensure compliance with labour laws and standards. As regards agricultural production, they monitor mainly large palm oil and rubber plantations but partly also smaller farms. Labour inspections could be an important instrument for detecting child labour because officials are empowered to enter any workplace. They note irregularities and give advice and/or impose appropriate sanctions (MMYE et al. 2007:96). For the documentation of the inspections, a particular form has been developed. Already, since Ghana's ratification of the ILO Labour Inspection Convention in 1959, the age of employees was reported in the questionnaires. Since 2000, the forms have been revised and include more detailed questions for child labour monitoring, which deal, for example, with the physical well-being of children employed, the payment made to them and their school attendance. An additional requirement for every child employed is the writing of an annex containing personal details such as the child's name and place of origin/hometown. A continuous revision of the questionnaires is planned.

Since the end of 2007, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture has also operated a Child Labour Desk under the Livelihood Unit in the Directorate of Agriculture Extension Service. The extension services offer information and training for farmers and partly also for food processors and traders; the personnel at district level make regular visits to farms. So far, the Child Labour Desk has organised a workshop on child labour and its worst forms in agriculture. The aim was to acquire knowledge and to identify possible areas of activities. Representatives of ILO, FAO, UNICEF and other ministries as well as regional directors and extension officers of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture took part. In group discussions, they developed recommendations on how the Child Labour Desk could address child labour in agriculture. Finally, it was recommended that the Ministry of Food and Agriculture should draw up a strategic plan based on its objectives and mandate (Ministry of Food and Agriculture 2008:I, 24ff). Other recommendations were for example:

- trainings for staff of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture on child labour monitoring systems

¹⁷ For a description of *Child Labour Monitoring Systems* see the next chapter.

- collaboration with other agencies and organisations already involved in activities against child labour in agriculture
- awareness creation in the communities through radio programmes and posters

Innovative Elements

First of all, mainstreaming processes and the integration of child labour concerns in existing structures is cost-effective and involves staff from several units within an institution or organisation. Within these processes, ministries, labour unions and international organisations develop capacities to deal with aspects of child labour within their respective mandates. Furthermore, synergy effects can be achieved through cooperation and the exchange of experience among different stakeholders. The eight-year National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Child Labour in Ghana can be a basis for the networking of different institutions and organisations (MMYE 2008:41).

Impacts

One main impact of mainstreaming is sensitisation and knowledge and capacity building within institutions and organisations. Since its establishment in 2000, the Child Labour Unit of the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment has succeeded in integrating child labour issues into the work of other departments within the ministry, assisted organisations and institutions with the mainstreaming of child labour issues into their respective mandates and coordinated different programmes such as Child Labour Monitoring Systems in pilot districts and communities. With the integration of child labour concerns into the work of the Agriculture Extension Service of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture it is to be expected that the issue will achieve prominence at regional and district levels and might be increasingly considered in development planning.

General Success Factors

What could contribute to the success of the mainstreaming of child labour is the fact that various institutions and organisations in Ghana have taken up the issue in their agenda and also the media and civil society groups have an interest in this topic.

Problems Remaining to Be Solved

While mainstreaming approaches are cost-effective, a basic budget is required to cover, for example, the cost of staffing the Child Labour Units or Desks, and of training, workshops and networking. One problem is that in many cases the

respective institutions charged with integrating child labour concerns into their work are already under-resourced for the fulfilment of their mandates. For example, representatives from the Labour Department stated that they were short of financial funds and would need more vehicles if they are to reach an adequate number of farms to conduct labour inspections there.

4.2 Training Material on Child Labour Issues

Background and Problem Statement

For effective mainstreaming of child labour concerns into the work and activities of institutions and organisations involved in agriculture it is essential to sensitise and train personnel at all levels. The Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment and ILO/IPEC have already developed teaching material on tackling child labour addressed to different stakeholders.

Approaches Followed

The Child Labour Unit of the Ministry of Manpower and Youth Employment has brought out a manual for “Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Ghana”. It has specifically been developed for the training of trainers and is also recommended for the training of staff at ministries, NGOs and security agencies and also for those who work in trade unions and the media (MMYE 2003:4). The manual is organised in five modules: for more effective training, it has exercises at the end of each chapter. The following topics are covered:

- understanding of child labour, definitions and descriptions of forms of child labour in Ghana
- causes, effects and implications of child labour
- legal and institutional frameworks
- activities at international and national levels to tackle child labour
- methods of child labour monitoring

ILO/IPEC has published a training resource pack dealing more specifically with “the elimination of hazardous child labour in agriculture” (ILO/IPEC 2005a). The overall goal is to raise awareness about the problem of child labour, prevent and eliminate its worst forms in particular and to improve occupational and health conditions. The resource pack is designed to assist “farmer trainers to run training courses for their fellow farmers on hazardous (dangerous) child labour” (ILO/IPEC 2005a:vi). It contains three books on the following topics:

- definition of child labour in relevant ILO conventions, the scale of the problem, specific vulnerabilities of children, strategies for the elimination of child labour, trainers' guide on how to use the resource pack
- training activities, detailed handouts and worksheets including a quiz on child labour
- additional resources for trainers, risk assessment and management, specific hazards and risks to child labourers in agriculture, the work of ILO/IPEC, key texts from ILO conventions

Furthermore, ILO/IPEC brought out a manual entitled "Tackling Hazardous Child Labour in Agriculture: Guidance on Policy and Practice" (ILO/IPEC 2006b). Although written principally to assist policy-makers, it can also supply useful information for a wider audience and other stakeholders' such as employers' organisations, trade unions, occupational safety and health specialists and organisations and agencies involved in agriculture (ILO/IPEC 2006: 20). The guide contains five handbooks with the following contents:

- background information on legislation and policies concerning child labour
- an overview on the various ways children become involved in agricultural work, the causes of, and examples of, child labour, specific hazards and risks, facts and figures on child labour in agriculture
- detailed exploration of hazardous child labour in agriculture, the ILO strategy to eliminate hazardous child labour, the question what stakeholders can do
- a review of intervention undertaken so far including the work of ILO, trade unions, employers' organisations, civil society groups, international organisations involved in agriculture, government policies and programmes
- teaching material, proposals for training activities and the structure of workshops with key policy and decision makers

Besides the teaching material which directly addresses child labour concerns there have been attempts to cover the issue in manuals dealing with other special topics. The General Agricultural Workers Union (GAWU), for example, helped by adding a chapter on hazardous child labour to a manual on "Health, Safety and Environment for Agricultural Workers" edited by ILO. This additional chapter provides information on the international conventions relevant to child labour. Furthermore, there are descriptions of the hazards for children working on plantations and farms, such as the use of tools made for adults (Hurst/Kirby 2004:139ff).

Innovative Elements

The development of training material which addresses child labour and the inclusion of information on the issue in existing teaching material are essential to successful mainstreaming. As the guidebooks and resource packs address various target groups they can be used for sensitisation and capacity building at different policy levels as well as for extension services and workshops with farmers and other community members. The involvement of unions such as GAWU in the development of teaching material can contribute to the analysis of specific hazards and risks for children in different areas of agricultural production.

Impacts

The training manuals described above are clearly structured and easily understood. They thus facilitate the holding of workshops and courses on children's rights and child labour. As detailed instructions and up-to-date information are provided, the quality of training can be improved. Furthermore, through manuals and guidebooks, participatory approaches to training devised in international discourse on development can be introduced. Specifically, for institutions or organisations which are new to the child labour issue, such as the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, adequate teaching material can contribute to integrating the issue into extension services and other activities.

Problems Remaining to be Solved

Guidebooks and manuals need to be updated continuously to include changes in legislation and bye-laws and to reflect current discussion on child labour issues and approaches to its reduction. For example the guidebook used by the Child Labour Unit was published in 2003 and needs to be revised. Furthermore, some agricultural sectors, such as fishing, are not yet covered by existing training material.

4.3 Community-Based Information and Monitoring Systems

Background and Problem Statement

While there are a number of representative studies on children's economic activities and child labour in cocoa production, there is so far little information available on their work in other agricultural sectors. Recently, several organisations and institutions have started to tackle the problem in close cooperation with communities and established information and monitoring systems.

Approaches Followed

Under the ILO Time-Bound Programme¹⁸, Child Labour Committees have been established at district and community level to increase the knowledge base on children's economic activities. One aim is to establish a Child Labour Monitoring System as "a concrete and practical tool against child labour ... meant to generate information ... and documenting the trends and levels of child labour at local, regional and national levels" (ILO/IPEC 2008). The Community Child Labour Committees work on a voluntary basis; the candidates are proposed and chosen by the community. By identifying and registering working children in the framework of a so-called Administrative Census the committees have begun to make regular and systematic observations. The data and information collected can be used as a basis for immediate intervention or – when transferred to stakeholders at district and national level – for appropriate future action and the improvement of current policies and programmes (ILO/IPEC 2008).

Another concept for the development of a community-based and systematic approach to addressing children's rights is the Child Protection Initiative supported by UNICEF. The initiative aims to "bring child rights to the doorsteps of the communities using community structures and resources to advocate and create awareness on children's rights" (Apusigah 2007:15). For this reason Child Protection Teams on community level have been formed. Membership is voluntary and should comprise different stakeholders. The teams include parents and guardians, traditional authorities, male and female students and representatives of women's groups. Their role and responsibility is to act as child rights advocates. To be able to do so, the members receive training on child rights issues, data collection methods, and on approaches to the sensitisation and mobilisation of communities. Information is collected through community registers of children; the records include data on births, deaths, out-migration and returnees. The main areas covered by the initiative include education, child labour, child migration and trafficking, the abuse of foster children and early marriage (Apusigah 2007:16ff). To enable children to participate effectively, the Child Protection Teams are complemented by so called Sara-Clubs to give children "more voice, space and education on their rights". The clubs are established at schools and are "thought to sensitise students and provide them with skills to

¹⁸ Further Information on the *Time-Bound Programme* and its components can be found in chapter 3.5.

advocate and mediate on their issues and educate their peers on child rights” (Apusigah 2007:23).

The General Agricultural Workers’ Union (GAWU) is one of the largest trade unions in Ghana. It uses its local unions to approach the problem of child labour in agriculture. In addition, Community Child Labour Committees have been established to sensitise farmers and community members as well as to monitor children’s work on farms. The committees are independent, yet have a close relationship with the respective local unions. They raise child labour issues within the unions and report instances of child labour (Andrews Tagoe, interview 9.9.08).

Innovative Elements

The voluntary involvement of community members in information gathering and monitoring is a key element of the various approaches. The committees or teams contribute to the identification of children at work and to the sensitisation of parents and employers. This creates ownership and acceptance within the communities of the programmes for the reduction of child labour. Within the different programmes committee and team members receive capacity building and in turn transfer their knowledge and skills to others in the community. As stated by a GAWU representative: “The sustainability of the interventions lies in the use of the local people who have acquired skills to implement them” (Andrews Tagoe, interview 9.9.08). The innovative elements of the Child Protection Teams are the involvement of children and the holistic approach used. They address not only the problem of child labour but also other issues relevant to the protection of children. Linking Community Child Labour Committees to local unions seems to be particularly innovative because it strengthens awareness on child labour within the unions but also, given the influence of the unions, helps to make committee actions more effective.

Impacts

The collection of data, which is common to the different approaches, invites discussion on what kind of work is acceptable for children, which is more likely to bring about a change in attitudes than regulations simply imposed from above. Moreover, the collected data serves as a basis for programmes and policies against the violation of children’s rights. The establishment of Child Labour Monitoring Systems is generally combined with activities to withdraw and support children found in worst forms of labour. To some extent, poorer parents or guardians also receive assistance. With the Community Child Labour Committees and Child Protection Teams children have a first point of contact, if they are in the need of help. Several

stakeholders such as Ghanaian ministries, district assemblies, international organisations, development agencies or NGOs can utilise the information and data gathered to adapt their work to local conditions. Moreover, in order to enforce the law it is necessary to have a detailed picture of the number and kind of offences committed.

General Success Factors

The participative approach, the partnership building and the ownership that are the major components of the community-based information and monitoring systems can contribute to the success of programmes for the reduction of child labour.

Problems Remaining to be Solved

Whereas ownership and acceptance in the communities have been identified as success factors, it is also true that efforts will fail if community members reject or oppose the committees or teams. In some villages committee members were even threatened by fishers or cattle owners employing children. Another problem may arise from the fact that work on the committees is voluntary. Since committee members receive hardly any compensation, their motivation may decrease as the work is time-consuming and demanding.

4.4 Transitional Education for Working or Withdrawn Children

Background and Problem Statement

It is very difficult for children withdrawn from labour to find their way into formal education. Many have never been to school before and are enrolled in primary schools although they might be much older than their classmates. The probability of a successful graduation is not high because they are not used to attending lessons and to studying. Transitional schooling can, however, open up new opportunities for these children.

Approaches Followed

Transitional schools usually offer courses of between nine months and one year – mainly three hours daily for five days a week – for children between eight and 14 years of age. During this time functional literacy in the local language and life-skills – such as malaria prevention, sanitation, family planning and sustainable agriculture –

are taught (UNICEF 2007:5). The timetables are flexible depending on the children's working hours. Classes contain a maximum of 25 children. One example is the School for Life in Tamale, which has been supported by the Ghana Developing Communities Association and the Ghana Friendship Groups in Denmark since 1995. Others are the morning school for cattle boys which the NGO International Needs Ghana established in North and South Tongu as part of the ILO Time-Bound Programme.

In the School for Life and in most of the schools in the Time-Bound Programme, 50 percent of the pupils are girls. The curriculum is taught using modern techniques – partly by volunteer teachers. After completing transitional schooling, it is envisaged that students continue in the regular system. As they are able to start in higher classes – graduates of the School for Life, for example, begin in primary 4 – this also contributes to a more homogenous age structure in classes in state schools.

Innovative Elements

Transitional schooling contributes to the reduction of child labour in various ways. It can be considered a first step towards establishing contact with children outside their working environment and as an entry point for awareness raising and counselling. Small classes and the use of local languages and modern teaching techniques make early success possible, which in turn contributes to the willingness of the children to continue at formal schools. Transitional schooling also gives parents and employers the time to replace the workforce of children as the attendance there does not clash with working hours.

Impacts

UNICEF's impact assessment of the School for Life revealed that it provides a solid foundation for children to move from mother tongue literacy to second language acquisition. Graduates were able to learn independently and even assisted their classmates once enrolled in regular schools. Through the experience of transitional schooling they were disciplined, confident and self-motivated. 90 percent of the children enrolled graduated from the School for Life. 65 percent of them were successfully transferred into the regular education system. The Ministry of Education has estimated that at least a two to three percent increase of the gross enrolment rates in the Northern Region was due to the integration of School for Life students into the regular system (UNICEF 2007:4-5).

Problems to Be Solved

Transitional schooling needs to be embedded in other forms of intervention, such as awareness raising, sensitisation and poverty alleviation measures. The transitional schools offer a flexible time frame to react to the needs of working children. However, it is necessary to bear in mind the exhausting day most of these children have and the additional load which attendance at school involves. Certain groups of children may remain unaware of the opportunities; for example, it is still especially difficult to withdraw boys from cattle herding. The morning schools in North and South Tongu came to a halt because the lessons clashed with the boy's working hours in the dry season as they had to leave earlier to herd the cattle (Odonkor 2008). In general, the transfer of transitional schooling graduates to the regular school system might not be possible if economic or other reasons continue to force children to work. A further problem is that many of the transitional schools are not well equipped and have to rely on voluntary teachers.

4.5 Withdrawal of Trafficked Children from Labour

Background and Problem Statement

Since Ghana ratified the Human Trafficking Act (Act 694) in 2005, any person engaged in the trafficking of a child or adult will be sentenced to at least five years imprisonment (Parliament of the Republic of Ghana 2005:4). Despite this legislation, child trafficking still occurs in many parts of the country and also across borders because the resources to enforce it are lacking.

Approaches Followed

Reacting to the poor enforcement of the law, various organisations are tackling the problem of child trafficking in Ghana. Their aim is to withdraw children from the worst forms of labour (in fishing and other occupations). Examples for organisations involved in the withdrawal of children in Ghana are the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the NGO Association of People for Practical Life Education (APPLE). The following paragraphs cover the work of these two organisations; other actors, such as the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs and different NGOs, have comparable approaches.

IOM and APPLE use a similar procedure in rescuing children from labour in fishing. It is possible to identify five key phases: research and registration, rescue, rehabilitation, reunification and reintegration.

- In the research and registration phase, staff visit the various fishing villages known to be receiving communities and gather information there. This is accompanied by awareness-creation and consensus-building on child trafficking for the purpose of labour. In this phase, trafficked children are identified and registered for rescue.
- The rescue phase consists mainly of negotiations with the fishers. Only after they have voluntarily agreed to release the children, can they be withdrawn. As a next step, staff revisit the village, bring together the children released and take them to a shelter.
- The children stay for approximately three months at the shelter. During this rehabilitation phase, they are examined medically and given any necessary treatment as well as social support and education. Children also mentioned the provision of pleasant sleeping quarters and regular meals as an important component of this phase.
- The reunification phase starts once the three months at the shelter are over. Children are brought together with their parents or guardians at a ceremony which includes speeches, dancing, singing and eating. Other stakeholders may also be present.
- The reintegration phase provides support for children and their parents. Children are placed in schools or given apprenticeships – fees and school materials are paid for. Parents receive financial support, training on various issues, such as skills development and basic education on child-related matters. The monitoring of the children and their parents is part of this phase.

Innovative Elements

One innovative element is that sensitisation and withdrawal are combined with direct action. Sensitisation includes informing the sending and receiving communities, particularly parents, on the issue of child trafficking for the purpose of labour and on human and children's rights. It is particularly innovative if it includes participative forms of education for children and parents such as role plays to make different perspectives visible. Another innovative approach, in the reintegration phase, is the pursuit of anti-poverty measures such as supporting parents financially and giving them skills development. The idea is to improve their livelihood and so discourage them from sending their children away again,

Impacts

Children, their parents or guardians are the direct beneficiaries. The children are taken out of an environment destructive of their personal development. Together, IOM and APPLE have already withdrawn several hundred trafficked children from labour. Parents or guardians are supported in their livelihood strategies. Both children and parents often benefit additionally by being able to register under the National Health Insurance Scheme, which is facilitated by both organisations. APPLE and IOM monitor the development of the reintegrated children using different methods. They include visits to homes and schools and medical check-ups. The criteria of success include, for example, good school reports, graduation from school, the appropriate use of financial assistance on the part of the parents and the absence of re-trafficking.

General Success Factors

One success factor is that IOM is involved in capacity building on anti-trafficking laws for various institutions, such as the police's Anti-Human Trafficking Unit, the Ghana Immigration Service and the Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs. Moreover, IOM is also involved in investigations relating to the arrest and the prosecution of traffickers. Finally, it ensures that fishers who have voluntarily agreed to release children do not again employ them. Otherwise the organisation will call for their arrest (Peasah 2008:2, 5f). Such actions are of utmost importance if progress is to be made in enforcing the Human Trafficking Act. Another factor behind the success in rescuing and reintegrating trafficked children is that both organisations try to follow a holistic approach to the problem. They do not just withdraw children and return them to their communities but monitor the further developments.

Problems Remaining to Be Solved

One problem that undermines the activities of both organisations' is that poverty is a complex issue which cannot be solved by offering minimal financial support or training to parents. Despite the money received, parents' improved or newly established businesses may not be successful. It is not impossible that they will engage in child trafficking on a future occasion.

5 Ghanaian Statistics and Child Labour

To assess the incidence of child labour in Ghana and for the planning of policies and programmes for its reduction, quantitative data are needed. The Ghana Child Labour Survey conducted in 2001 is the first and only nationwide data collection on children's work. While it is possible to extract some information on working children from other statistics, they are fragmentary and inconsistent. As early as 2005, a Technical Working Group on Integrating Child Labour Indicators on Socio-Economic and Demographic Surveys was established to develop recommendations for the improvement of data collection. In the following paragraphs the deficiencies of some of Ghana's key socio-economic and demographic surveys are examined. Subsequently, there is a summary of the Technical Working Group's recommendations on how the data collection can be adapted to provide more information on children's work, followed by some further suggestions.

Analysis of Existing Surveys on Child Labour

The Population and Housing Census of Ghana (PHC), "the single most important source of data on the population and its characteristics in the country", has a cut-off age for the economically active population of seven years (Ghana Statistical Service 2005a:v). Some of the analytical reports that are part of the PHC, such as the Analysis of District Data and Implications for Planning – Brong Ahafo Region, categorise the age groups below 20 as follows: 7-9, 10-14 and 15-19. However, this has not been the case in all the reports, which makes it difficult to compare the various regions and districts. When studying the PHC as a whole, it is striking that children's economic activities are largely disregarded; most tables on the activity status only include the 15 and above age group. In the census, activities in agriculture activities usually are not differentiated by sectors such as fishing and livestock keeping (Ghana Statistical Service 2005a, 2005b).

Another important survey conducted by the Ghana Statistical Service is the Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire Survey Report (CWIQ). The CWIQ survey "is one of the key monitoring tools that the Government of Ghana has chosen to assess its progress in tackling poverty and vulnerability" (Ghana Statistical Service 2005d:x). Whereas children's economic activities from the age of 15 and above are covered elaborately, it is noticeable that information regarding their employment below this age is minimal. Only one table looks at the household income contributors aged ten years and older for rural and urban areas. Another table covers children's activities from the age of five by five-year age groups and gender (Ghana Statistical Service 2005d).

The last available Ghana Sample Census of Agriculture reports are from 1970 and 1984. A new census was due in 2008 but it was delayed because of the lack of funding. Children's work was not explicitly dealt with in these reports. Also, the data was not disaggregated by gender. One exception is that the 1970 report lists the percentage of the farm population by gender, age groups and regions. The age groups are as follows: below 16, 16-30 and 31-49 years (Ministry of Food and Agriculture 1972, 1986).

One overarching limitation in all of these censuses is that the age groups do not correspond to those used in Ghanaian and international law to define what work is acceptable or unacceptable for children. Consequently, as it is pointed out in one of the PHC reports "it is not possible to estimate (the incidence of) child labour from the census data" (Ghana Statistical Service 2005c:163). In summary, it is stated that "the detailed questioning involving nature of work and specific activities necessary to determine what is exploitation, hazardous and harmful or detrimental to child development is not the focus of ... information gathering" (Ghana Statistical Service 2005c:163).

The Ghana Child Labour Survey, too, explains that the existing "censuses and surveys provide very limited information on the issue of working children because they were not designed with the specific objective of assessing the nature and extent of child labour" (Ghana Statistical Service 2003:ii). The aim of the Child Labour Survey is to go "beyond the statistical count of the number of economically active children" and to seek information on children's work "that is likely to affect the health, education, moral and normal development negatively" as well as on "demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of parents" (Ghana Statistical Service 2003:6). The survey covers children aged five to 17. Children below the age of five were excluded because it was assumed that they are not capable of doing work of any significance. The survey used the age groups 5-9, 10-14, and 15-17. Surprisingly, even in this data collection they do not correspond to the groups used in Ghanaian legislation on the minimum age required for the performance of certain tasks. As regards the categorisation of different types of work, fishing, it should be stressed, was treated separately, while all other agricultural activities fell under a single category. The data on children's working hours is detailed and informative, covering the number of hours worked and distinguishing between day and night work. Where the hours of work are listed by major occupation, however, there is no sex-disaggregated data. Although gender sensibility is evident, the data are not always systematically disaggregated. For example, data at the national level are classified by gender, but not at regional level (Ghana Statistical Service 2003:9, 63, 67).

Recommendations of the Technical Working Group on Integrating Child Labour Indicators on Socio-Economic and Demographic Surveys

Since 2005, the Technical Working Group on Integrating Child Labour Indicators on Socio-Economic and Demographic Surveys has worked on recommendations for the improvement of the statistical data collection in Ghana. The group is led by the Ghana Statistical Service, in cooperation with the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment and ILO. Its members include government officials, representatives of academic and research institutions and of trade unions.¹⁹ One major objective is the improvement of the knowledge base on children's work by "mainstreaming the relevant factors and indicators into national socio-economic and demographic surveys and other data collection exercises" (Amankrah 2007:4).

The Technical Working Group makes a number of suggestions to counter the shortcomings of existing surveys. To begin with, it proposes to classify working children in the following age-groups: 5-9, 10-12, 13-14 and 15-17 (Amankrah 2007:6). This is in line with international and national law, which allows persons to do light work from the age of 13, regular work from the age of 15 and hazardous work from the age of 18. This will make it possible to assess the number of children working under conditions prohibited by law.

To be able to analyse the characteristics of children's economic activities in Ghana, the Technical Working Group additionally suggests differentiating between the following variables throughout all kinds of surveys: gender, urban/rural, ecological zones (coastal, forest, savannah) and regions (Amankrah 2007:6). To get an overview of working conditions and to assess whether the work children do is exploitative or against national legislation, it is proposed to collect the following information in addition: payment in cash and kind, working hours, night work and safety (Amankrah 2007:6). The Technical Working Group also recommends collecting data on the number of children who perform household chores in their own homes above a minimum number of hours per week, as it is assumed that this interferes with their schooling, health and general development (Amankrah 2007:7).

Moreover, the Technical Working Group has devised two criteria for assessing whether children's work should be regarded as hazardous. The first criterion relates to the list of hazardous work sectors defined in the Ghana Children's Act as shown in Box 3. The second defines hazardous activities within certain sectors as shown for

¹⁹ Other institutions and organisations represented in the *Working Group* are: *National Development Planning Commission, National Population Council, Ghana Employers' Association, Ghana National Commission on Children, Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (University of Ghana)* and UNICEF.

agriculture in Box 4 (Amankrah 2007:7-8). The Technical Working Group also contributed to the development of the more detailed Hazardous Child Labour Activity Framework for the cocoa sector (see chapter 3.1).

Box 3: List of hazardous work (Ghana Children's Act)

- going to sea/fishing
- mining and quarrying
- portage of heavy loads
- work in manufacturing industries where chemicals are produced or used
- work in places where machines are used
- work in places such as bars, hotels and places of entertainment where a child may be exposed to inappropriate behaviour

Box 4: Hazardous activities in agriculture (Technical Working Group)

- felling of trees
- burning for land preparation
- spraying of pesticides
- fertilizer application
- plucking with dangerous tools
- carrying/lifting/handling heavy weights, i.e. 30 per cent of body weight for more than two km

In addition, the Technical Working Group has developed the following set of questions and variables to assess the frequency of child trafficking, to analyse the reasons why children work and to establish the numbers who do so under exploitative and hazardous conditions (Amankrah 2007:9, 11):

- reasons why children do not stay with their parents (poverty, tradition, debt payment)
- employment status of children (regular employee, paid domestic worker, unpaid family worker)
- background of working children (education of parents/guardians, parents' income and occupation, household size)
- reasons for the employment of children (low wages, obedience)
- reasons why parents let their children work (to supplement family income, parents cannot pay for the child's education, bad quality of schools)
- children's health and working conditions (dangerous tools and equipment, work-related injury/illness)

Finally, the Technical Working Group suggests that a record be kept of the number of children, including orphans and vulnerable children, benefiting from different types of social protection intervention, such as conditional cash transfers, school feeding programmes or the National Health Insurance Scheme (Amankrah 2007:12).

John Yaw Amankrah pointed out that the recommendations are in a work-in-progress stage (interview, 24.9.08). Yet, they have been already considered in the Ghana Cocoa Labour Survey conducted by the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment in 2007 (MMYE/NPECLC 2008). The revised recommendations will also be recognised in the next Ghana Child Labour Survey. The survey had been planned for 2008. However, funding has not yet been approved. Furthermore, the Technical Working Group has suggested a total of twelve surveys, in which the recommendations should be integrated. Ten of these are surveys by the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), the others being The Centinel and a HIV AIDS Study carried out by the Ghana Aids Commission. ILO has confirmed the necessary technical support. The GSS surveys selected are:

- Population and Housing Census (PHC), due in 2010
- Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), already conducted in 2008
- Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS), due in 2012
- Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaires Survey (CWIQ), due in 2008
- Ghana Demographic and Health Survey (GDHS), data collection ongoing
- Ghana Mortality Survey (GMS), data collection ongoing
- National Industrial Census (NIC), due in 2013
- Ghana Sample Census of Agriculture, due in 2008
- Tourism Satellite Account Survey, data collection ongoing
- Labour Force Survey, due in 2008

Remarks on the Technical Working Groups' Recommendations

Despite the numerous recommendations made by the Technical Working Group, a few gaps remain. The following suggestions should be seen as complementary. They relate to the differentiation of the agriculture category, the segregation of data by district, the documentation of working hours and activities and the definition of hazardous work.

A review of the existing surveys shows that it is hardly possible to receive information on children's work either in fisheries and livestock keeping or in other activities because they are mostly subsumed under general categories such as "agriculture" or "agriculture, animal husbandry and hunting". It is thus recommended that these

general terms be broken down because there may be differences in the frequency of child labour in the various types of agricultural production and in food processing and trade, requiring different kinds of intervention. As livelihoods and the incidence of child labour within the regions differ at least for planning purposes, the data should also be disaggregated by district. Furthermore, employment statistics should include the types of work children are engaged in as well as the exact number of working hours per day. Here, the list of working hours in the Ghana Child Labour Survey could provide an example.

The categorisation of hazardous work by sector – as shown in box 3 – is believed to be too general since the activities might not necessarily be hazardous per se. Consequently, it is suggested that more comprehensive catalogues describing hazardous activities within certain sectors be used. For cocoa production, an extensive list of the types of hazardous work has already been developed (see chapter 3). The Technical Working Group has already started to consider other sectors where child labour plays a prominent role (interview with John Yaw Amankrah, 24.9.08). This could also be a pattern for the analysis of the types of work in fisheries and livestock keeping.

Evidently, to effectively assess children's engagement in exploitative, hazardous or worst forms of labour in agriculture and fishing, the existing surveys would have to include many of the Technical Working Group's recommendations, a requirement that may not be realistic. Thus, it may be necessary to undertake separate quantitative surveys on the different sectors where hazardous work by children plays a prominent role, as in fisheries and livestock keeping, in addition to the Ghana Cocoa Labour Surveys existing already.

6 Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

In general, Ghana has a comparatively progressive child labour law; enforcement, however, is still inadequate. Since the 1990s, the government has carried out various initiatives to protect children from exploitative and hazardous work. It has implemented legislative reforms, developed interventions for rural and urban areas and is now in a process of mainstreaming child labour concerns into policy approaches such as Poverty Reduction Strategies. In recent years, unions such as the General Agricultural Workers' Union and several NGOs have also devoted increased attention to the problem of child labour. Whereas until now, the policies and activities to reduce child labour have been largely sectoral or in selected districts, in 2008, the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment drafted a National Plan of Action for the Elimination of (the worst forms of) Child Labour 2008-2015 as an overall strategy and basis for cooperation between institutions and organisations. However, it has yet to be assessed how far legislative reforms, programmes and activities have contributed to a reduction of child labour.

According to the Ghana Child Labour Survey carried out in 2001 – the first and only nationwide data collection – half of rural and about one fifth of urban children are economically active. Nearly all of them have household duties in addition. Nearly 60 percent of the children are engaged in agriculture, forestry and fishing. Although the authors of the survey conclude that only a minority of the children can be regarded as child labourers, they estimate that more than one million work under conditions not in accordance with Ghanaian legislation.

In 2000 and 2001, the media – especially in the United Kingdom and in the United States of America – reported that a large number of trafficked children were employed in slave-like conditions on cocoa farms in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. Subsequently, several studies with quite large representative samples have been conducted on children's work in cocoa production. In all surveys carried out in Ghana it is reported that a considerable number of children participate in cocoa production and are to some extent involved in activities considered hazardous. Yet all in all, the authors maintain that most of them perform acceptable and light work. However, on the whole, the line between acceptable work and child labour might not always be clear-cut. In June 2008, the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment released a Hazardous Child Labour Activity Framework for the cocoa sector to clarify the definition of acceptable work and child labour. It consists of a catalogue specifying

activities considered hazardous for children for the whole seasonal calendar. In addition, the number of working hours and education opportunities are considered.

Apart from cocoa production, little information on working conditions and the kind of tasks boys and girls perform in agriculture exists. For this study fishing and cattle herding have been selected because it was known from sketchy information that a large number of children work in these sectors. Similarly, as in cocoa production, child labour in fisheries has recently attracted the attention of the media; in films and articles it was maintained that a high number of children were trafficked to work in fisheries at the Volta Lake and exposed to hazardous and worst forms of labour. In the six districts visited children worked under different conditions in fishing and cattle herding. The following main categories in relation to working and living conditions have been found:

- Children learn the occupation of their parents from an early age so as to continue the business in future or work in specific occupations such as cattle herding for reasons of tradition. With their work they contribute to the household income and/or earn some pocket money. Depending on the financial background and attitudes of the parents, the children might at the same time receive a good school education.
- Children from very poor families work alongside with their employed father or mother for low or no wages. If the children do get paid for their work, normally the parents receive the payment. Many of these children attend school irregularly or do not go to school at all.
- Children from very poor backgrounds have to provide their own food and other essentials and work self employed or for specific employers/customers. Often school attendance is irregular or the children do not go to school at all.
- Migrant or trafficked children are exploited as labourers and wholly or largely deprived of a school education. It is common that a contract – lasting for one to more than three years – is made between the employer and the child's parents or guardians. Usually the parents/guardians, but sometimes the children, receive an agreed amount of money or – as in the case of cattle herding – a calf or cow as payment. In addition, the employers are responsible for the daily needs of the boys or girls.

However, it is difficult to make estimates of the number of children in each of the categories from the sample of children, parents and employers interviewed because it might be biased in two ways. On the one hand, when the research team made contact with interview partners through members of the district departments of social welfare and NGOs monitoring children withdrawn from worst forms of labour in the frame of the ILO Time-Bound Programme or other programmes it is possible that

only the worst cases of child labour in the communities were considered. On the other hand, there seemed to be reluctance on the part of community members to admit the presence of migrant and potentially trafficked children and thus cases of worst forms of child labour might have been excluded.

However, the case studies at the Volta Lake and in coastal areas show that thousands of children are involved in fishing and that they perform a wide variety of tasks. Whereas fishing is mainly the work of men and boys, it is largely women and girls who process and market the fish. Typical for the work of girls is that they combine fish processing and trade with various household chores. From the interviews undertaken and observations made it can be concluded that children in fishing are engaged under different conditions ranging from light and regular work that can be combined with school attendance to worst forms of labour. Many children work under conditions not in accordance with Ghanaian law either, because they have not reached the minimum age or because they do work such as going to sea or carrying heavy loads, which are considered hazardous and/or because their economic activities affect their school attendance. In the districts of Tolon-Kumbungu and North and South Tongu the cattle boys either worked for their families or under contracts which committed them for several years. As they herded the cattle from morning to evening none of the boys in the sample was enrolled in school. The violation of child protection laws as well as the Ghana Human Trafficking Act is particularly evident in the case of trafficked children who have a contract and work for an employer for several years; however, it is difficult to assess the number of cases in fishing or cattle herding. As one cause for the assumed frequency of child trafficking, interview partners referred to a “perversion” of the traditional extended family system in which it is common to place children with better-off family members to improve their living conditions and to offer them education or training.

In fishing as well as in cattle herding the children face a number of hazards – for example they are exposed to extreme weather conditions or can be bitten by insects or snakes. However, it is difficult to assess the actual risks involved and the number of cases in which the children get work-related injuries or sicknesses. Some of the hazards mentioned by children and parents – such as insect bites – might be less related to work than to the dangers of everyday life in rural areas. To correctly define hazards, risk assessments have to be conducted. The Hazardous Child Labour Activity Framework released by the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment for the cocoa sector could be an example for the development of definitions of hazardous work both in fishing and livestock keeping as well as in other sectors of agriculture.

Children's economic activities in agriculture are influenced by a multitude of factors on the supply as well as on the demand side. Poverty is considered a major determinant of child labour; however, manifold other factors also influence children's work such as the accessibility and quality of education, the impact of interventions as well as livelihood options in general.

The accessibility and quality of education and its relevance to the labour market is one factor in parents' decision to send their children to school. Although many boys and girls combine school attendance and work, increased enrolment rates can have an effect on working hours and on the kind of work done. One element in sensitisation programmes for the reduction of child labour is the creation of an awareness of the value of education. However, as Odonkor (2007a:1) claims "rural parents should rather be seen as dissatisfied clients of the education system than as illiterates ignorant of the value of education". It is striking that although about 90 percent of the children in cocoa growing areas are enrolled in schools, 54 percent cannot read or write (MMYE/NPECLC 2008). Because of the low quality of education, difficulties in access and also the uncertainty of finding an adequate job after graduation, parents have developed a coping strategy by which they send some of their children to school and the others help in fishing, farming or other economic activities. Realistically, the role models quoted in interviews and focus group discussions included not only persons who were better off because of their education but also examples of Senior High School graduates who could not find a job and had been "spoiled" for the work on the farms through the expectations they had developed.

At the moment, the impact of policies and interventions for the reduction of child labour is difficult to assess because they have been implemented only recently as in the case of the ILO Time-Bound Programme or, like the remediation projects in the cocoa sector, have hardly been evaluated (Payson Center 2008, Fafo, AIS/Khulisa Management Services 2008). Four of the six districts visited (Ketu South, Pru, North and South Tongu, Tolon-Kumbungu) are among the total of 20 collaborating with the Time-Bound Programme since 2006. Altogether, several hundred children and, to some extent, their families received assistance; for example, young children have been enrolled in schools and supplied with school uniforms and other items while, for older ones, training opportunities have been sought, and in some of the districts parents have been provided with skills training and financial support intended to help them to establish a small-scale business. However, it appears that many of the children supported under the Time-Bound Programme who are now enrolled in schools continue to participate in fishing and farming. It is difficult to assess the extent to which they work less or their general situation might have improved. Especially in North and South Tongu the activities to reduce child labour have led to

controversial debate, opposition and conflicts in the communities. Some cattle owners see the efforts to withdraw boys from herding as an "attempt to crash local economy" (Afenyadu 2008). To date, no solutions have been found.

Many of the interview partners stressed that efforts to eliminate or to reduce child labour can only be effective in the long term if they are embedded in general development and poverty reduction strategies. Several interview partners were convinced that, in districts where fishing is a major activity, the prevention of child labour will also depend on the furtherance of sustainable fishing and farming as well as alternative livelihood options. However, changes in production systems or the introduction of new technologies might reduce or even increase the demand for children's work. For example, several interview partners pointed out that the number of children in fishing increased with the introduction of light synthetic nets that are easier to handle and cheaper than the previously used cotton nets. Since the 1990s, a drastic decrease in yield has been a major problem in ocean fisheries and at the Volta Lake and River. The coping strategies in the communities are manifold and different impacts on the incidence of child labour can be assumed.

- To increase yields some fishers use illegal fishing gear. At the Volta Lake, illegal nets such as winch nets, beach seines, bamboo pipes or so-called mosquito nets with small mesh sizes are widely used. In the long run, these techniques undermine the natural resource base and might also reinforce the present trend that children may be employed as cheap labour.
- One fisher at the Volta Lake was convinced that "the fish will not get finished" but he and also others pointed out that better equipment such as outboard motors are necessary to reach better fishing grounds. Several fishers and also fish processors referred to a general rise in production costs. Increasing prices for equipment can further contribute to the trend towards saving costs on adult labour and employing children.
- Some fishers also farm. However, the opportunities to start up or expand in farming as a reaction to depleting fish stocks are limited. Most of the fishers along the Volta Lake are migrants and, because they live in settler communities, have only limited land rights. In general, it can be assumed that an extension of farming might reduce child labour in fisheries, but at the same time it can create the risk of an increase in the number involved in farming.

Especially at the research sites at the Volta Lake, some programmes for alternative livelihoods were in progress. For example, the Ministry of Fisheries in Kwahu North has just started to introduce cage culture and aquaculture to increase production and incomes. At present, it is too early to assess if programmes like this can contribute to sustainable fisheries. It appeared that several of the other alternative livelihoods

proposed by different actors – such as soap production or handicrafts – were already facing competitive markets and it is questionable whether significant additional income can be gained. In general, however, programmes for alternative livelihoods and technological improvements should be accompanied by awareness building so as to avoid a potential increase in child labour.

During the research phase, the team found several policies and activities on national, regional and district level that might contribute to the long-term reduction of worst forms of child labour. Promising are efforts to mainstream child labour issues into existing policies and programmes because this enlarges capacities and helps to lay the basis for cooperation and networking between institutions and organisations. Similarly, the efforts to include information on the work of children into statistical surveys – as outlined in chapter 5 – could also be described as good practice because they can increase the data basis for planning. For effective mainstreaming it is crucial to sensitise and train the personnel at all levels; for this reason, the development of teaching material on child labour in agriculture is seen as another case of good practice. The third example is the establishment of Child Labour Monitoring Systems at district and community level with the aim of documenting the incidence of child labour and development trends. The data and information collected can be used as a basis for immediate interventions or – when they are transferred to stakeholders at district and national level – for appropriate future actions and the improvement of current policies and programmes. Apart from approaches aiming at capacity building in institutions and organisations and/or data collection, it is relevant to give immediate support to children in, or at risk of, worst forms of labour. One good practice example is the provision of transitional schools, because they open up new opportunities for working children. The other example is the direct action approach to withdrawing children from the worst forms of labour (in fishing and other occupations) as long as law enforcement remains inadequate.

6.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are directed to FAO, their partners in the Declaration of Intent, namely IFAD, IFPRI, IFAP, IUF as well as to ILO and other organisations dealing with agricultural, rural development and/or labour issues. Furthermore, specific Ghanaian ministries are addressed. Most of the recommendations refer to the Ghanaian context, but may also be applicable to other African regions.

Mainstreaming

“Mainstreaming” child labour issues is defined as a strategy to integrate them into the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes with the aim of reducing supply as well as demand.

Recommendations to FAO and Partners

- It is recommended that the FAO headquarters and decentralised offices mainstream child labour issues into their policies and programmes. To determine priority areas and to discuss possible ways, each should conduct a workshop with representatives of its different work units and programmes.
- The FAO should encourage its member countries to integrate child labour concerns in its Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.
- It is proposed that FAO commission a review of existing manuals and material for addressing and integrating child labour concerns in training on agricultural issues in Ghana and other African regions for different target groups (policy makers, extension workers etc.). If necessary, FAO should give partners technical support in updating and adapting manuals as well as in training stakeholders in their use. For sectors in agriculture not yet covered, FAO should provide technical assistance to ministries and other partners in developing new training material. In Ghana, the sectors yet to be addressed are, for example, fisheries and livestock.
- At the different research sites visited, children work with more or less the same equipment and tools as adults. Technological development may influence the reduction or expansion of child labour. Hence, FAO and partnership members should support research on technological innovations that might help to reduce the incidence of child labour.
- Currently, FAO is assisting the Ministry of Fisheries in drafting a Fisheries Policy for Ghana. Because of the importance of child labour in fisheries, it is recommended that FAO and the ministry consider a mainstreaming approach for their future policies.
- The FAO should give technical support to the Ministry of Food and Agriculture and also to the Ministry of Fisheries in its efforts to integrate child labour concerns into extension services and other activities on community, regional and national level.

Recommendations to Relevant Ministries

- It is recommended that a children’s unit or desk is established within the Ministry of Fisheries to coordinate the mainstreaming of child labour issues into its work.

Like the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the ministry should conduct a workshop with relevant stakeholders where possible activities can be discussed and planned.

- The relevant ministries should undertake efforts to mainstream child labour issues into the curricula of educational institutions at which agricultural issues are taught. This could include, for example, colleges and universities that train extension workers.
- To further raise awareness of child labour in agriculture in Ghana, existing sensitisation programmes should be extended and additional ones conducted. In addition to the utilisation of the media, this could include awareness raising in schools and at community festivals.
- It is suggested that mainstreaming processes are also supported at regional and district level. For example, a permanent unit responsible for child labour issues should be established in the districts. It should encompass its own work programme, but also coordinate the activities of other departments on different aspects of child labour.
- National budgets should include allocations that enable mainstreaming of child labour issues in the above mentioned areas.

Coordination and Cooperation

Numerous actors are involved in policies and programmes against child labour and trafficking in Ghana. To avoid competitive activities and to tackle the problem effectively, coordination and cooperation are indispensable.

Recommendations to FAO and Partners

- It is recommended that FAO make use of their partnership with ministries of agriculture in the region so as to involve them in the process of tackling child labour. Furthermore, FAO should work closely with other UN programmes and agencies addressing child labour and establish structures for cooperation. To intensify collaboration, regular meetings with relevant cooperation partners are proposed.
- Regarding activities at national, district and community level, FAO and partners should make use of, and build upon, existing programmes and structures concerned with children's rights.

Recommendation to Relevant Ministries

- All ministries should consider the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Child Labour in Ghana recently developed by the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment as a possible guideline for cooperation with relevant stakeholders and discuss how to adapt it to their specific mandate.

Extension of Knowledge Base

Although recently a few case studies on child labour in agriculture have been conducted, further research is necessary, including quantitative surveys to assess the magnitude of the problem. Additional information is needed to develop effective policies and interventions.

Recommendations to FAO and Partners

- It is recommended that FAO technically supports government efforts to establish a data base on children's economic activities in agriculture. These efforts could be linked with ILO/IPEC and to initiatives such as Understanding Children's Work by ILO, UNICEF and the World Bank. In addition, data should also be made available, for example by posting it publically by governments and on the homepages of these and other international organisations. If this is done, institutions, ministries, NGOs and the general public will have access to the information needed for the development of policies and interventions.
- As many children are involved in the processing and marketing of agricultural products, the data collection should consider the various components of the value chain.
- Often, children work extensively by combining work in agriculture with household chores. It is therefore suggested that activities in the household are also included in research and data bases.

Recommendations to Relevant Ministries

- To increase the knowledge base, Child Labour Monitoring Systems at district and community level should be supported and extended. Child Labour Committees should be provided with logistics and the Administrative Census should be conducted regularly to follow up new developments.
- In June 2008, the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment released a Hazardous Child Labour Activity Framework for the cocoa sector to clarify the definition of acceptable work and child labour. Similar frameworks should be

developed for other areas of agriculture where child labour is frequent. Priority areas should be determined with the participation of experts on child labour issues and resource persons from the districts.

Poverty and Livelihoods

Poverty is a relevant factor in the occurrence of child labour and any measures for poverty reduction might have an impact on further developments.

Recommendation to FAO and Partners

- In some projects and programmes for the reduction of child labour, alternative agricultural income opportunities for parents and guardians are provided. FAO should facilitate a workshop or a general exchange between partners on the adequacy of these income opportunities for local livelihoods and also collect information on existing good practices.

Recommendations to Relevant Ministries

- It is recommended that the school feeding programme established under FCUBE be extended. It is necessary to ensure a high quality of food in sufficient quantity. Furthermore, local produce should be used.
- Development projects and programmes in agriculture (e.g. Livestock Development Programme) should provide incentives to replace child workers by adults – for example, by granting loans to farmers who do not employ children or who send all their children to school.

Education

Although Ghana's current school enrolment rates are high compared to the early 1990s, the education system still has a number of shortcomings. Despite the introduction of the Capitation Grant and of a school feeding programme, it lacks the necessary infrastructure and equipment, while the quality of teaching is often low in remote areas. Additionally, in many cases the curriculum is not relevant to the daily life of rural children.

Recommendation to FAO

- FAO should support the development and implementation of curricula relevant to the rural and agricultural context for primary and secondary schools. Examples are the planned Junior Farmer Fields and Life Skills Schools in Ghana as well as

the already established curricula in selected schools in fishing communities in Malawi.

Recommendations to the Ministry of Education

- Adequate classrooms should be provided and transport to schools for pupils and teachers should be facilitated, e.g. through motorbikes, bicycles or boats, especially in remote areas or cut-off communities. Furthermore, the quality of education should be improved, for example, by the integration of life-skills in the curricula, such as family planning to reduce teenage pregnancy. The successful elements of the School for Life curriculum should be considered as a model for improving education in rural areas.
- Untrained teachers, particularly from within the communities, should be encouraged to obtain further qualifications, for example, by undertaking long-distance training. Furthermore, scholarships should be made available. Particularly women should be encouraged to acquire further qualifications.

Statistics

It is possible to extract some data on working children from Ghana's existing statistics. However, they are inconsistent and lack important information. To effectively assess the incidence of child labour and to obtain the necessary background information for policy planning, the country's statistical data collection should be improved.

Recommendation to FAO, its Partners and Ghana Statistical Service

- It is recommended to FAO and partners, in particular to ILO, that they give technical support to the Ghana Statistical Service and the relevant ministries to help them implement the suggestions made by the Technical Working Group and the proposals made in this report in Ghanaian national surveys as appropriate.

Legal Awareness and Law Enforcement

Ghana has passed laws and ratified international treaties on child labour and trafficking. At present, capacity building and sensitisation on the legal situation are inadequate and there is little enforcement and few prosecutions.

Recommendations to Relevant Ministries

- It is proposed that the relevant ministries and the district assemblies expand sensitisation and capacity-building measures on child labour and child trafficking-related laws.
- The relevant ministries should translate laws into local languages and also develop simple versions for children and adults.
- It is recommended that the relevant ministries in Ghana disseminate the Human Trafficking Act and subsequent laws and legislation to all law enforcement agencies at all levels: regional, district and community.
- As a reaction to the lack of law enforcement, various organisations are rescuing children from labour. While this is a good transitional practice, it should not be the only strategy. Law enforcement as well as the prosecution of offenders needs to be strengthened.

Annex

DECLARATION OF INTENT

ON COOPERATION ON CHILD LABOUR IN AGRICULTURE

between

International Labour Organization (ILO)

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP)

International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI),
representing the Consultative Group on International
Agricultural Research (CGIAR)

International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant,
Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF)

This Declaration of Intent is made between the International Labour Organization (ILO); Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP); International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), representing the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR); International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF);

(hereinafter referred to as the "Partners").

The Partners

- Note that according to ILO's 2006 Global Estimates on child labour, some 132 million children aged 5-14 years work in agriculture;
- Further note that child labour harms children's well being and hinders their education and future livelihoods;
- Recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to harm children's well-being, hinder a child's education, development or future livelihoods, noting at the same time that not all work that children under 18 years undertake in agriculture is bad for them or would qualify as work to be eliminated;
- Reaffirm that selected efforts of the partners should be aimed at the effective elimination of child labour in agriculture, giving priority to hazardous activities;
- Recognize that international agricultural agencies and organizations can play important roles in eliminating child labour in agriculture, especially hazardous work, and that these organizations represent an important conduit to the national level because of their close contacts with national ministries or departments of agriculture, agricultural extension services, farmers' organizations and cooperatives, agricultural workers' unions, agricultural producer organizations, agricultural research bodies and other organizations;
- Have discussed ways and means of cooperation and wish to establish a strategic alliance and effective working relations among them with a view to the attainment of their common and individual objectives and to avoid any duplication, and have agreed that the following modalities should govern their cooperation.

Principles of Cooperation

Cooperation under this Declaration of Intent aims to promote in particular those objectives and principles which are the subject of International Labour Conventions and Recommendations concerning child labour, especially the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and Recommendation (No. 146) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) and Recommendation (No. 190), in as far as they pertain to work in agriculture. It also aims to promote cooperation to remove the underlying causes of child labour in agriculture, the most important contributor of which is poverty.

The aim will be to:

- promote cooperation and achieve policy coherence on child labour among the Partners, and to develop policy and programme links especially at the field level;
- create awareness of and mainstream child labour concerns into existing activities, programmes, and projects of agricultural organizations and help agricultural agencies and bodies to understand how the elimination of child labour in agriculture, especially hazardous child labour, contributes to achieving organizational mandates;
- promote action and cooperation in operational activities aimed at improving rural livelihoods, creating alternative income-generating activities;
- promote action and cooperation in operational activities to ensure that children do not carry out hazardous work in agriculture;
- promote opportunities for decent youth employment in agriculture and in rural areas.

Areas of Cooperation

Subject to existing mandates, and available staff and financial resources, the Partners will cooperate, inter alia, in the following areas, according to their areas of competence:

- Collection, analysis and dissemination of data on child labour in agriculture and rural areas;
- Promotion of action for the elimination of child labour in agriculture, giving priority to children carrying out hazardous activities, with special attention to girls, children in hidden work situations, children migrating to work or migrating with their parents, and other groups of children with special vulnerabilities or needs;

- Promotion of rural strategies and programmes aimed at improving rural livelihoods, and mainstreaming child labour concerns into agricultural policy making;
- Promotion of actions to overcome the urban/rural and gender gap in education;
- Improvement of occupational safety and health in agriculture as one of the ways of eliminating hazardous child labour;
- Promotion of youth employment opportunities in agriculture and rural areas, including agricultural skills training;
- Organization and/or participation in awareness raising campaigns against child labour in agriculture;
- Support of national, regional and international meetings, seminars and fora and other activities to exchange information between participating agencies and their constituencies, institutions and countries.

Modalities of Cooperation

In order to support cooperation among them, the Partners will establish a steering group, made up of the child labour focal points for the partner organizations and others. The functions of the steering group will include:

- To share information on the work of each of the Partners and to identify, promote and set up joint activities;
- To advise on and help identify priority areas for action and collaboration;
- To annually review and evaluate activities, and to assess the achievement by the Partners of the objectives and targets of their activities and programmes relevant to child labour in agriculture;
- To identify opportunities for broadening and strengthening the Partnership.

Commencement and Operation

It is understood among the Partners that this Declaration of Intent will commence for an initial period of five years upon the signature of all the authorised representatives of the Partners. A Partner may withdraw from this Declaration by informing the other Partners in writing of its intention to do so.

The Partners shall annually review the operation of this Declaration of Intent in the light of the experience acquired to assess whether it has adequately fulfilled its objectives, and undertake future cooperation based on this review.

Nothing in this Declaration of Intent or relating thereto will be interpreted as constituting a waiver of the privileges and immunities enjoyed by any of the Partners, as the case may be. This Declaration of Intent does not replace or modify, or affect the application of, any bilateral agreement or understanding in force between any of the Partners

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