

## **Global Cocoa and Chocolate Industry commitment**

The global chocolate and cocoa industry believes no child should ever be harmed in the growing and harvesting of cocoa.

We are all aware of the challenge and recognise that progress to eliminate hazardous child labour conditions has not been sufficient. Too many children living in family run cocoa households are helping out on the farm in ways that are damaging to their own health and well-being – carrying loads too heavy, working with machetes, spraying pesticides, or assisting on the farm at the expense of attending school. Our work is not complete until child labour is a thing of the past, which is why we are working in partnership with others to accelerate our efforts.

An accurate assessment of incidence of trafficking is currently unclear. Most recent reports from Tulane University suggest that prevalence of trafficking is rare and elusive. We condemn trafficking in any form in the strongest possible way. Trafficking is an illegal activity, is unacceptable and should be punished to the fullest extent of the law.

The Harkin Engel Protocol has been an important catalyst for change and great strides have been achieved to identify precisely where child labour occurs in the cocoa sector.

In an important decade-long partnership between the International cocoa and chocolate industry and the countries of Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana and U.S. government, together we are making a positive difference to the lives of cocoa farming communities, across two million small farms, in some of the most remote parts of West Africa.

Conditions for cocoa farmers in the Ivory Coast have been severely impacted by political and military unrest during the past decade. We are working in partnership with the Ouattara government to bring stability, reform and focus on reducing the worst forms of child labour throughout the cocoa sector.

The Framework of Action, signed in September 2010, is a critical step forward in focusing attention on our work at the community level. The Framework provides a “roadmap to remediation” that helps guide and refine the development of programs and interventions to create a measurable reduction in the Worst Forms of Child Labour. Our mutual goal – a 70% aggregate reduction in the Worst Forms of Child Labour in the cocoa sectors of Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana - is ambitious, but achievable - with a resolve and commitment by all partners to move forward.

The Framework calls for regular public reports to be issued on progress and lessons learned. On 23 January, together with our partners, we are proud to launch the Framework's first annual report demonstrating the important progress that has been made over the past 16 months and affirming our commitment to making progress in 2012 and beyond.