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## **Ghana Advances Work on Cocoa Farming Labour Practices with Release of 2008 Certification Report**

### **Report Highlights Important Issues; Will Guide Future Efforts**

### **Based on Survey Covering 60% of Ghana's Cocoa Production**

**ACCRA, GHANA (June 27, 2008)** – The release of a 2008 cocoa farming “Certification” report by the government of Ghana is a significant, positive development in the effort to address labour issues and improve the quality of life on cocoa farms in West Africa.

“The government of Ghana continues to demonstrate its commitment to reporting on cocoa farming labour practices with complete candor and transparency,” said Bill Guyton, President of the World Cocoa Foundation. “This report also represents an important milestone – the scaling up of a data collection effort that now covers a region producing 60 percent of the country’s cocoa production.”

“Ghana’s achievement is an important first: never before has there been a successful attempt to collect information on labour practices for a commodity produced on hundreds of thousands of small, remote farms,” Guyton continued.

Certification for cocoa farming labour practices was established as part of the “Protocol,” an agreement developed with the leadership of U.S. Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), U.S. Senator Herb Kohl (D-WI) and U.S. Representative Eliot Engel (D-NY), which committed the worldwide chocolate/cocoa industry to ensure that cocoa is farmed without the worst forms of child labour and forced adult labour. Certification is a transparent and credible process that reports on the incidence of the worst forms of child labour and forced adult labour in a country’s cocoa sector, and on progress in reducing their incidence.

The certification process involves four steps that work together to improve labour practices:

- Data collection at the community and farm level that provides a statistically representative view of child and adult labour practices;
- Transparent, publicly available reporting on the findings from data collection activities, and on what needs to be done to address the issues raised in the report;
- Remediation – a range of programs to address issues identified in the data collection process and that improve the well-being of children;
- Independent verification of the certification process.

The Ghana report is based on in-depth research conducted in late 2007 on cocoa farms in 15 administrative districts in Ghana, including interviews with more than 3,400 children. Together, the districts and farm communities surveyed are representative of 60 percent of the country’s yearly cocoa output.

In addition to extensive data on labour practices, the 2008 certification report gives detailed information on the Ghana National Program for the Elimination of Child Labour in Cocoa and on remediation activities that have been undertaken in response to the 2006 / 2007 pilot labour survey (released in April 2007). These activities represent a major undertaking by the government of Ghana to address labour practices in the communities and farms that make up the cocoa sector.

The release of the 2008 certification report is part of an ongoing effort by the government of Ghana to ensure cocoa is grown responsibly, without the worst forms of child labour and forced adult labour. This multi-year, multi-agency effort is driving change in a range of different areas, including primary education, enforcement of labour laws and community health issues.

“The report highlights both positive developments on cocoa farms, and areas of concern,” said Larry Graham, President of the National Confectioners Association. “Almost all of the children surveyed are living with a parent or relative, attending school, and helping out on the family farm. However, we must continue working with cocoa farming communities to ensure that helping out on the family farm does not involve hazardous tasks, or take place at the expense of education.”

In addition to data collection, reporting and remediation/response programs, the cocoa farming certification process includes rigorous, independent verification. The International Cocoa Verification Board (ICVB), which is composed of one representative from each of the governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, two representatives from industry and five representatives from civil society, is responsible for the governance of verification, but not for its actual execution (which will be carried out by organizations appointed by the ICVB).

In line with their mandate, the ICVB recently selected two expert organizations, FAFO AIS from Norway and Khulisa Management Services from South Africa, to undertake verification of the certification data collection process in both Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, including visits to cocoa farms in the areas covered by the previously completed data collection and certification reports. The verifiers will issue an interim report to the ICVB by July, 2008, with a final report expected by the end of the year.

All information relating to the ICVB's work can be found at [www.cocoaverification.net](http://www.cocoaverification.net). The site includes an interactive tool that allows stakeholders to submit feedback to the Board.

“The Ghana report illustrates what cocoa farming certification is about – identifying important challenges and then driving efforts to address them,” added John Rowsome, President of the Confectionery Manufacturers Association of Canada (CMAC). “We will continue to work with the government of Ghana, civil society, and farming communities to address these and other issues affecting the lives of children and families on cocoa farms.”

The chocolate/cocoa industry works with West African governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), experts, and other stakeholders to ensure cocoa is grown responsibly, without the worst forms of child labour and forced adult labour. These efforts are part of a broader commitment to the economic and social development of cocoa farming communities, and to environmental stewardship.

Industry efforts to make a better life for children on cocoa farms and to support cocoa farming communities overall, focus on four key areas:

- Ensuring that cocoa is grown responsibly, and that children are neither harmed nor denied schooling in the process of helping out on the family farm;
- Improving the long term sustainability of cocoa growing and the economic return from cocoa for smallholder farmers growing this important crop;
- Strengthening farming communities by addressing such needs as access to quality education and training;
- Supporting efforts to protect and enhance the environment in which cocoa farmers grow their crops.

The International Cocoa Initiative (ICI) is a unique initiative combating the worst forms of child labour and forced adult labour on cocoa farms. Established in Geneva in 2002, the ICI is supported by individual chocolate and cocoa industry members. ICI efforts are led by a board composed of industry and civil society representatives.

In Ghana, the ICI is working in 119 farming communities, implementing community-based programs to change labour practices and supporting social protection for victims of exploitation. At the national level, the ICI works to ensure effective and appropriate policies are in place, and supports capacity-building among local partners and institutions. In 2007, the ICI also organized 23 training sessions in Ghana to sensitize government, local authorities, NGOs and the media on labour issues.

The World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) also plays an important role in improving the quality of life on cocoa farms in West Africa. Established in 2000, the WCF supports and manages multiple programs that help farmers earn more for their cocoa crop; address important social issues like access to education, and encourage the use of safe, responsible labour practices.

The Ghana report was released by the government of Ghana's Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment. The research was conducted by University of Ghana. To access the full Ghana report, visit [www.cocobod.gh](http://www.cocobod.gh).

Information on the activities of the International Cocoa Initiative can be found at [www.cocoainitiative.org](http://www.cocoainitiative.org)

Additional information on industry-supported efforts to support the social and economic development of cocoa farming communities can be found at the World Cocoa Foundation Web site, [www.worldcocoa.org](http://www.worldcocoa.org).

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