

## **STATEMENT for ICVB Website with VERIFIER REPORT**

The International Cocoa Verification Board (ICVB) convened in New York City from December 1<sup>st</sup> through December 5<sup>th</sup>. During the meeting, the ICVB reviewed the highly anticipated results of the first independent verification of the government surveys of the regions producing more than 50% of the cocoa in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana.

The independent verifiers, who were selected and contracted by the ICVB, are FAFO AIS (Norway) and Khulisa Management Services (South Africa), in partnership with in-country research organizations, HEDGE (Ghana) and Research International (CDI). The verifiers were tasked to evaluate the accuracy of government surveys regarding the scope and nature of the worst forms of child and forced adult labor in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. Their report can be downloaded [here](#).

The reports provided comments as to the strengths found in the surveys, and made recommendations for improvements in both countries' surveys.

The ICVB notes the following points:

- The verifiers outlined the high level of cooperation from both governments during the verification process
- The sub-sample surveys conducted by the verifiers in both countries reaffirms many of the earlier findings of both countries
- In most cases, the weaknesses found in data capture and analysis can be corrected by additional statistical analysis (and would not require additional data collection in the field at this stage)
- As relates to child trafficking and Forced Adult Labour, while differences between countries exist, the verifiers stressed the need for strengthening and improving survey instruments and methodologies that appropriately address these concerns. The sub-sample survey, although limited in its scope, confirmed the results of the larger country surveys with respect to the reported incidence of child trafficking and Forced Adult Labor.

The ICVB welcomes the verifiers' recommendation to accept both countries' reports<sup>1</sup>. The ICVB will provide more detailed comments on the full reports in the coming weeks.

The report will now be translated into French to allow commentary from all interested stakeholders. Additional background information on the ICVB, the Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana certification studies and verification process can be found on the ICVB website at [www.cocoaverification.net](http://www.cocoaverification.net). This site also contains a third party feedback mechanism to assist the board in gathering comments from global stakeholders. The board strongly encourages all interested parties to participate in this process.

The independent verifiers will be issuing their recommendations on future certification and verification activities in January. The results from this verification exercise will be used to strengthen future data collection activities and, more broadly, future private and public sector interventions aimed at eliminating the worst forms of child labor and forced adult labor in both countries. To that end, ICVB members and the independent verifiers will be among the experts who will discuss their findings at Verite's third Consultative Meeting in Accra, Ghana, on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009. Invited panelists at this meeting include: Dr. Bill Bertrand (Tulane University), Dr. Anne Hatloy (Fafo), Dr. Helene

---

<sup>1</sup> *The verifiers recommended acceptance of the Côte d'Ivoire report with conditions. The conditions relate to the statistical analysis of data covering estimates of children working in cocoa production and the sample weighting of the overall estimates for reporting their results.*

Aiello (Khulisa), Mme. Amouan Assouan Acquah (Vice-Présidente – Comité de Gestion) and Mr. Tony Fofie, Deputy Executive Director (Ghana Cocobod and ICVB member), among others, to discuss all three surveys (Governments, Tulane and Independent verifiers) and reach broad agreement on future strategies to ensure that all efforts are coordinated and that they result in real progress on the ground.

The ICVB Board observed that this report marks a turning point in the effort to address WFCL and FAL. It is time to increase the focus of stakeholder efforts on addressing the many causes of worst forms of child labor and forced adult labor.

The ICVB congratulates Khulisa and FAFO and their in-country partners on the thoroughness and timeliness of their efforts.