



An Assessment of Child Labor in the Cocoa sector in Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana

Child Protection Protocol

Kumasi, Ashanti Region
Ghana

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Child Protection Policy

All NORC research projects are required to adhere to local laws and regulations with respect to mandatory reporting of child abuse and child protection cases.

Specific objectives of the child protection policy include:

- Identifying, minimizing, and mitigating against potential risks to children resulting from their participation in the study.
- Preparing field teams to respond to known and/or suspected cases of child abuse, negligence, or endangerment that are uncovered during the course of field work.

Parental Consent and Child Assent

- Parent or guardian consent is **required** when interviewing children.
- If no biological parent is present, **guardianship is established by customary law**. An adult household member who is *not* recognized as the child's guardian by customary law cannot provide parental consent.
- **Verbal assent** from the child is required before proceeding with the interview. The assent script should be used, paraphrasing when appropriate.
- For assent to be “informed” the **child must be able to understand what you are asking of him/her** during the consent process.

Confidentiality and Privacy

- Children should be **interviewed alone whenever possible**, and in a **comfortable and safe location**, to minimize bias.
- You should maintain enough **distance** so that other people cannot hear, but you should always remain within visible range of at least one adult.
- A **parent/guardian has the right to sit in** the interview, provided the child is comfortable with it.
- A child has the right to request the presence of his/her parent or guardian.

Confidentiality and Privacy

With the child's permission, a parent/guardian, sibling, or other household member may be pulled in to **assist the child** during the interview (e.g., if the child can't recall information or understand the questions) with the following caveats:

- Best effort should be made to **wait until the end of the interview** to request assistance (survey programming will support this).
- You **must not reveal the child's earlier responses to the assistant**. This includes follow-up questions which reveal earlier response (e.g., asking about the number of times the child engaged in a hazardous activity).
- You should **record the presence of other persons**.

Discussing Sensitive Topics

- If you sense that the child is about to disclose anything that may require mandatory reporting, you should interject and warn him/her that you may be legally required to report such information to the Social Welfare and Community Development Department.
- Whenever appropriate, remind the child that s/he does not have to answer any questions if s/he does not want to.
- If the child becomes upset or distressed at any point during the interview, ask if s/he would like to take a break.
- Be empathetic and supportive, but do not express outrage or extreme emotion. Maintain a non-judgmental tone throughout the interview, and do not express approval or disapproval at the child's responses.

Mandatory Reporting of Child Protection Cases

The Children's Act of 1998:

Persons to report child abuse and protection cases

Any person with information on –

(a) child abuse; or

(b) a child in need of care and protection

shall report the matter to the Social Welfare and Community Development Department of a District Assembly.

Mandatory Reporting of Child Protection Cases

Meaning of Care and Protection

(1) For purposes of this Act, a child is in need of care and protection if the child –

(a) is an **orphan** or is deserted by his relatives;

(b) has been **neglected or ill-treated** by the person who has the care and custody of the child;

(c) has a parent or guardian who does not exercise proper guardianship;

(d) is **destitute**;

(e) is under the care of a **parent or guardian** who, by reason of criminal or drunken habits, is **unfit** to have the care of the child;

Mandatory Reporting of Child Protection Cases

(f) is wandering and has **no home** or settled place of abode or visible **means of subsistence**;

(g) is **begging or receiving alms**, whether or not there is any pretence of singing, playing, performing, offering anything for sale or otherwise, or is found in any street, premises or place for the purpose of begging or receiving alms;

(h) **accompanies any person when that person is begging or receiving alms**, whether or not there is any pretence of singing, playing, performing, offering anything for sale or otherwise:

(i) frequents the **company of any reputed thief or reputed prostitute**;

Mandatory Reporting of Child Protection Cases

(j) is **residing in a house** or the part of a house **used by any prostitute for the purpose of prostitution**, or is otherwise living in circumstances calculated to cause, encourage or favour the seduction or prostitution of or affect the morality of the child;

(k) is a person in relation to whom an offence has been committed or attempted under section 314 of the Criminal Code, 1960 (Act 29) on **slave dealing**;

(l) is found acting in a manner from which it is reasonable to suspect that he is, or has been, **soliciting or importuning for immoral purposes**;

(m) **is below the age of criminal responsibility under the Criminal Code, 1960 (Act 29) and is involved in an offence** other than a minor criminal matter, or

(n) is otherwise **exposed to moral or physical danger**.

Child Protection Reporting

Referral Level	Evidence	Response
1 – Mandatory Any <u>confirmed active/ongoing</u> abuse which requires mandatory reporting per the 1998 Children’s Act.	Abuse is <u>directly observed</u> by enumerator or <u>directly reported</u> by the child.	Enumerator immediately submits safety assessment to Supervisor. Supervisor files report with Social Welfare and Community Development Department of a District Assembly within 48 hours.
2 – Referral and monitoring Any <u>suspected active/ongoing</u> abuse as described in the 1998 Children’s Act.	Abuse is <u>strongly suspected</u> or <u>insinuated by the child</u> or other household member.	Enumerator immediately offers referral resources to child and submits safety assessment to Supervisor; with child’s permission, Supervisor will refer case to NGO or other social services organization for follow-up and monitoring within 72 hours.

Child Protection Reporting

Referral Level	Evidence	Response
2 – Referral and monitoring Any <u>confirmed</u> abuse as described in the 1998 Children’s Act that took place within the <u>past 12 months</u> but is <u>not ongoing</u> .	Abuse is <u>directly reported</u> by the child.	Enumerator immediately offers referral resources to child and submits safety assessment to Supervisor; with child’s permission, Supervisor will refer case to NGO or other social services organization for follow-up and monitoring within 72 hours.
3 – Referral resources only Any case that does not fall into levels 1 or 2, but enumerator believes referral services could benefit child.	None.	Enumerator immediately offers referral resources to child and submits safety assessment to Supervisor. Once Supervisor confirms referral level, no further action required.

Level 1 Referral Pathway

Definition: Any confirmed active/ongoing abuse which requires mandatory reporting per the 1998 Children's Act.

Evidence: Abuse is directly observed by enumerator or directly reported by the child.



Level 2 Referral Pathway

Definition: Any suspected active/ongoing abuse as described in the 1998 Children's Act.

Evidence: Abuse is strongly suspected or insinuated by the child or other household member.

- OR -

Definition: Any confirmed abuse as described in the 1998 Children's Act that took place within the past 12 months but is not ongoing.

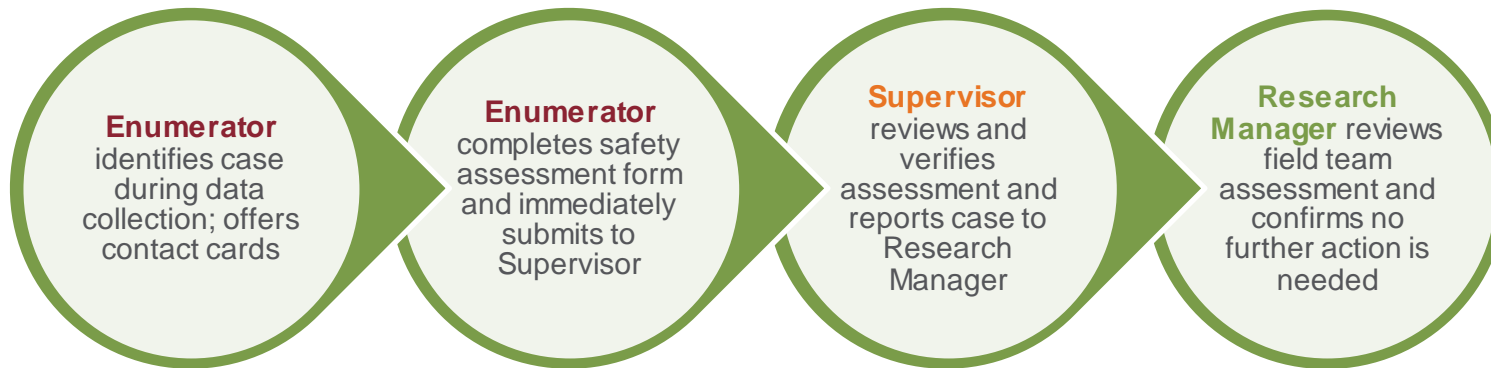
Evidence: Abuse is directly reported by the child.



Level 3 Referral Pathway

Definition: Any case that does not fall into levels 1 or 2, but enumerator believes referral services could benefit child.

Evidence: None.



Reporting of Child Protection Cases

- Data collectors should remember that they do **not** have a duty to actively unsurface cases of abuse. They only have a duty to escalate cases when they become known through the course of ordinary field work.
- Enumerators should **never** take direct action beyond providing referral cards to respondents who wish to accept them. Any case requiring follow-up should be triaged by Supervisors.
- While field teams have duty of care, they should remember that they are not trained social workers. Goal is to help child get access to professional services where needed, not to provide such services.

Thank You!



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