



ACi Statement on Child Labor

ACi operates in all sectors of the value chain – production, processing, marketing and enabling environment. Key to the achievement of project objectives is the establishment of a sustainable processing industry in Africa’s cashew growing countries to ensure the added value is captured locally. The ACi is introducing farmer trainings on harvest and post harvest production techniques for the forthcoming season, hence stimulating increased emphasis on the quality of raw nuts, in terms of improved outturn ratios, increased yields and reduced processing costs. The initiative also invests in establishing and advancing market linkages along the value chain. As an overall improvement of framework conditions for investment and business activities in the economic sector of African cashews, ACi works on the governmental level to influence policy making positively.

An internal assessment done by the ACi implementing partners shows: **the risk of child¹ labour in the ACi supported cashew processing factories is equal to zero.** All processing firms obey to national labour laws, which are not supporting any form of child labour.



©Laxman Dhakal

Farmer children in Nsawkaw, Brong Ahafo Region, Ghana

However, there is a **risk of child labor in the production of Raw Cashew Nuts (RCN)**. ACi does not stand for a rigorous absence of children in the cashew plantations but rather tolerates the traditional and harmless support, children provide on their families’ farms during harvesting seasons. ACi does however not support any exploitative use of children in farming activities. Careful observation is therefore needed. ACi calls on its entire partner team to tackle all existing risks. The ACA quality and sustainability seal supports processors in improving quality and food safety of their products, as well as documenting their compliance with social responsibility requirements, such as the absence of child labour in cashew factories.

ACi accepts and contributes to the implementation of following ILO conventions:

1. Convention C 182 on “Worst Forms of Child Labour” which forbids “work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to **harm the health, safety or morals of children.**”
2. Convention C 138 on “Minimum Age” which defines “the minimum age [...] shall **not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling** and, in any case, **shall not be less than 15 years.**”
3. Convention C10 on “Minimum Age (Agriculture)” which forbids “children under the age of fourteen years [...] to be employed or work in any [...] agricultural undertaking [...] save outside the hours fixed for school attendance. If they are employed outside the hours of school attendance, the employment shall not be such as to prejudice their attendance at school.” “**Light agricultural work** and in particular [...] **light work connected with harvest**” is allowed but “shall not reduce the total annual period of school attendance to less than eight months.”

¹ The term “child” shall apply in the following to all persons under the age of 18 (ILO C 182, Article 2), all project activities where the risk of child labour is known shall take account of the special situation of girls (ILO C 182, Article 7,2. (e)).



In its advice, the ACi strictly follows the international conventions on child labour of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the *Generic Fairtrade Standard for Small Producer Organizations* of FAIRTRADE INTERNATIONAL.



Cyclist at Tain, Brong Ahafo Region, Ghana

The Generic Fairtrade Standard for Small Producer Organizations of FAIRTRADE INTERNATIONAL is elaborating more details for farmers and their organizations on the basis of the ILO conventions.

So far, ACi included child labour issues in farmer trainings for the establishment of formal Farmer Based Organizations (FBO), who want to achieve certification. In the case that ACi project staff members observe that these groups draw on child labour as defined above in any of the fields, they intervene with the particular farmers and tackle the issue in their organizations.

Certified FBOs for specialty markets have to face very strict de-certification measures, once child labour is detected.

ACi is entirely supporting and implementing the standard's section of the Generic Fairtrade Standard for Small Producer Organizations of FAIRTRADE INTERNATIONAL on child labour.

2

http://www.fairtrade.net/fileadmin/user_upload/content/2009/standards/documents/generic-standards/2011-06-08_SPO_EN_final.pdf

The Generic Fairtrade Standard for Small Producer Organizations of FAIRTRADE INTERNATIONAL on child labour (current version: 01.05.2011)² requests amongst other points:

The attendance of school has to be given first priority in all circumstances.

"If there are no schools available in the area where children live, all effort should be given to work with national authorities and/or other relevant partners to build schools for children or provide safe transportation so children can attend the nearest schools. If children who migrate temporarily with their working families to areas where no schools are available, temporary schooling alternatives could be sought and provided so children can attend school and receive a quality education."

"[...] children below 15 years of age **are allowed help [...] on [...] farms under strict conditions:** [... it has to be made] sure that they **only work after school or during holidays**, the **work** they do is **appropriate for their age**, they do **not work long hours** and/or **under dangerous or exploitative conditions** and their **parents supervise and guide them.**"



Baby on mother's back sucking on cashew kernel.

Contact

Rita Weidinger (ACi Executive Director)

e rita.weidinger@giz.de

p +233 302 77 41 62

<http://aci.africancashewalliance.com>