



Roadmap for Child-friendly Coffee Plantations in Mt. Elgon, Uganda

(2023-2026)

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

1. **UCDA** - Uganda Coffee Development Authority
2. **CSOs** - Civil Society Organisations
3. **CRO** - Child Restoration Outreach.
4. **UWESO** - Uganda Women's Effort to Save Orphans
5. **DCDO** - District community development officer
6. **ILO** - International Labour Organisation
7. **FAO** - Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
8. **UNICEF** - United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
9. **IFAD** - International Fund for Agricultural Development
10. **INGOs** - International Non-Government Organisations

INTRODUCTION

Of many challenges pertaining to sustainability in the coffee sector in Uganda and among other coffee-producing countries is the issue of child labour. Coffee in Uganda has been listed as a product made by child labour in the USDOL's list of goods made by child labour and forced labour (2021). Especially in the harvest season, it is very common for children to skip school as they pick coffee beans to be sold in the market. The more they pick, the more the family can earn. However, the small size of the land, combined with poor land productivity and the capacity of smallholder farmers does not result in adequate income.

Global March Against Child Labour (GMACL) and its implementing partners in Uganda -ANPPCAN and NOTU, committed to addressing child labour in the coffee sector of Uganda, particularly in the Mt. Elgon region with a 3-year project *“Addressing Child Labour in Agricultural Supply Chains, Global to Local”* (2020-2023). Throughout the project period, coffee companies and cooperatives from Mt. Elgon along with other key stakeholders including CSOs, District Community Development Department, Uganda Coffee Development Authority and the media were engaged in identifying and addressing the root causes of child labour in the coffee sector. The engagement led to knowledge sharing and capacity building of the companies and stakeholders on good practices, mainly the area-based approach to address child labour using tools such as the Child Labour Monitoring System and generating referrals for remediation.

On 15th October 2021, a symposium was held in Mbale attended by 24 people that included CSOs, Private coffee companies, coffee cooperatives, Uganda Coffee Development Authority and Local government departments of production and community development. Key resolutions were made where each stakeholder shared their resolve and commitments to address child labour in their capacity. Additionally, the companies were mobilised to follow up on their commitments and a concluding working group meeting was held in Mbale on April 20th, 2023, to garner inputs on roles and responsibilities for designing a roadmap towards creating child-friendly coffee plantations in Mt. Elgon region.

OVERVIEW OF COMPANIES, COOPERATIVES AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED IN DRAFTING THE ROADMAP:

Uganda Coffee Development Authority

-Maliro Mike

Coffee Companies and Cooperatives

- Nangoli Martin (Kikobero Coffee)
- Wasibi Roger (Mt. Elgon Coffee and Honey)
- F.G Sinyoli (Mbale Importers)
- Kasali Deo (Kyagalanyi Coffee)
- Nakalagwa Pharma (Mt. Elgon Agroforestry)

CSOs

- Nabitiri Paul (CRP)
- Wambi Musa Aaron (UWESO)

Local Government

- Dr Okelo Denis - Odongo (District Production Officer)
- Mutoni Meresi (DCDO Mbale)
- Tsekooko Moses (DCDO Manafua)

Media

- David Wandika (NTV)
- Moses Nampala (New Vision)

Overview of Roadmap Signatories and their Commitments

COFFEE COMPANIES AND COOPERATIVES

ENTITY	COMMITMENT
-Kikobero Coffee	1. Clearly differentiate the incidents of hazardous child labour, from light work to fully plan its prevention, monitoring and remediation aligned with good practices emerging from the project “Addressing Child Labour in Agricultural Supply Chains, Global to Local”
-Mbale Importers and Exporters Ltd	2. Consolidate collective efforts with other like-minded coffee companies, cooperatives, local government and CSOs to declare their respective plantations, stores and processing factories child labour-free
-Kyagalanyi Coffee Ltd.	3. Cleaning their supply chain of child labour by working with farmer groups and middlemen and conducting 100% internal inspection in households in their respective areas
-Coffee a cup	4. Utilising part of their profits, to support some victims of child labour within their supply chains and catchment areas (voluntary)
	5. Receive referrals of the victim of child labour needing support to return to school while referring those others to partners for other specialised services by strengthening monitoring systems at the plantation level with support from farmers groups, women and youth groups and project officers of the designated area
	6. Designate an officer (focal person) to conduct anti-child labour outreach support services in their supply chain
	7. Build capacity, increase awareness on international due diligence legislations, and mechanisms and conduct due diligence to identify, prevent, and mitigate child labour and its root causes
	8. Build dialogue/reduce gaps between buyers, traders and farmers for more visibility and traceability of coffee
	9. Cooperate, guide, and share resources (voluntary) in ongoing and/or upcoming interventions focused on addressing child labour in the coffee sector with an emphasis on tackling the economic root causes of child labour
-Gumutindo Coffee Cooperative	1. Identify cases of child labour in their plantations and farmers’ households and ensure their farmers do not use child labour directly or indirectly
-Mt. Elgon Coffee and Honey Cooperative	2. Raise awareness on the issue among member farmers and together find the relevant solutions to address identified cases

**-Mt Elgon Agroforestry
Communities Cooperative
Enterprise Ltd (MEACCE)**

3. Collaborate in relevant interventions in assisting farmers to build their capacity and income in agriculture, and alternative livelihood, especially in a non-coffee season where low income is prominent

4. Increase their understanding of child labour identification and how hazardous work differs from light work and promote the same in the communities

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

ENTITY

COMMITMENT

-Local Government

1. Monitoring, quality assurance and support supervision and remediation for cases identified in and around coffee plantations with a focus on hotspots such as Manafwa

-Labour Department

2. Strengthening inter-district information on child labour data

3. Advocating for integrating the anti-child labour activities within department work plans and budgets

4. Providing technical support and a good working environment to private coffee companies and CSOs in anti-child labour activities

**-District Community
Development Officer**

1. Giving platform during budget conferences on issues of the School Feeding Program SFP and Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS)

2. The District Community Development Department and specifically the child labour section with support from CSO and Coffee private companies will step up the inspection of the coffee farms, factories, and other suspected to ensure that children are not employed.

-CSOs

1. Mobilise Bungokho and Manafua sub-counties and support school feeding programmes as well as being part of those communities in stopping child labour efforts in the coffee supply chain

-Uganda Women's Efforts to Save Orphan Children (UWESO)

2. Refer cases of child protection to Probation Officers and Labour Officers and specifically work with / support labour officers to conduct labour inspections in Bungokho and Manafua at the workplace

-Child Restoration Organisation (CRO)

3. Continuous sensitisation among the masses especially in the coffee growing areas on the dangers and impacts of child labour in the short and long run

-Uganda Coffee Development Authority

1. Ensure promotion, production and marketing of quality coffee and enforce compliance with coffee laws and policies

2. Child labour concerns to be integrated into the UCDA work plan

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE ROADMAP

While different commitments have emerged from the above-mentioned stakeholders over a span of three years, the way ahead needs to be clearly directed, planned and implemented. To achieve the overlapping commitments, it is recommended that a common goal and objective is shared and targeted through collective action.

The monitoring of the Roadmap is an integral part of the process as well, which is proposed to be led by a technical working group consisting of coffee companies, cooperatives, farmer organisations, local government and CSOs. Upon arriving at the consensus, the agreed-upon indicators will be used to have quarterly working group meetings and annual review meetings for a larger consultation, impact assessment and information sharing. Once the measures proposed in the Roadmap have been harmonized through a consultative process, it is expected they will be incorporated into national policies and strategies aimed at preventing and eliminating child labour and protecting its victims – and will therefore be mainstreamed.

OBJECTIVE: CREATING FUTURE-PROOF CHILD-FRIENDLY UGANDAN COFFEE

Steps towards a child labour-free coffee

YEAR 1

- Stakeholder mapping and engagement with relevant groups and organisations such as coffee farmer groups, cooperatives, and Agriculture Cluster Development Project among others
- Building capacity and awareness of companies on human rights due diligence and child labour monitoring system
- Creating a stakeholder group including farmers and farmers' organisations and cooperatives
- Creating awareness about child labour, identifying and defining the hazardous forms of child labour in coffee production with farming communities, including children
- Building capacity on referral mechanism

YEAR 2

- Organising biannual stakeholder meetings
- Building the capacity of the farmers to increase income by raising quality and alternative livelihoods
- Including more stakeholders such as the middlemen
- Introducing referral pathways to address child labour cases and follow-up with CSOs and government
- Including child labour policies in respective work plans of companies, CSOs and local government

YEAR 3

- Developing a monitoring mechanism for child labour-free plantations
- Implement this monitoring mechanism on different plantations
- Reporting on child labour-free plantations
- Improving due diligence processes

INTEGRATING GOOD PRACTICES TO ADDRESS THE ECONOMIC ROOT CAUSES OF CHILD LABOUR

Global March and ANPPCAN Uganda chapter together with technical experts in agriculture intends to target the hotspots of child labour in coffee growing areas, especially in Manafwa-Bududa districts. The efforts will focus on implementing innovative solutions to address the root causes of child labour such as food insecurity, poor farm income and farming practices.

SEEDS FOR EDUCATION

The primary goal of Seeds for Education is to provide affordable and sustainable solutions to the lack of school feeding programmes to reduce child labour and promote education by providing food security. Sufficient food grown on surplus school land or a farmer's land has proven to reduce dependence on child's income and increase the chances of returning them to school. In the last 3 years, "Seeds for Education" has impacted more than 800 children in over 19 schools in Mt. Elgon's coffee-growing region- a hotspot for child labour.

Selected schools in Mt. Elgon's targeted coffee plantations will be equipped with the required capacity and tools to grow food on their school's surplus land. The schools will receive technical inputs on small-scale farming of produce such as maize, beans and seasonal vegetables. Additionally, the schools will be supported in building and/or improving school kitchens for meals to be cooked. Additionally, the companies and local governments can voluntarily share the resources and help expand and strengthen the impact of the intervention.

Addressing economic vulnerability among smallholder farming communities:

Poor agricultural income and lack of alternative livelihood options are the key driving factors of child labour. The technical capacity of coffee farmers focusing on better yields, better quality produce, and diversification of income will be the focus in the coming years. Additionally, the farmers will also receive knowledge-building sessions on means to have improved access to the market (domestic and international), financial and non-financial platforms, and farmers' groups with a special focus on women farmers and farm workers.

Collaborating with other pre-existing interventions in the coffee sector:

Currently, Uganda has several sustainability-oriented projects supported by international donors to improve the coffee sector quality issues in the country. Increasingly, the attention is expanding to integrate the issue of child labour. Going forward, the roadmap implementation can meet its maximum impact by exploring synergies and collectively acting with other existing programmes in the coffee sector with a focus on - improving the quality of coffee by building the capacity of smallholder farmers; addressing climate change-related impacts on the coffee sector especially its negative impacts on smallholder farmers' income and; improving access to finance especially for women.

Connecting the local with global:

For global recognition of efforts and the impact of good practices at the local level, advocacy with international stakeholders, from lobbying towards donors for farmers to European coffee industry actors is crucial. The strength of the roadmap lies in working towards and highlighting the Mt. Elgon model of child labour-free coffee led by local coffee companies, cooperatives, governments, community leaders, schools and CSOs.

Platforms such as Alliance 8.7 platform are key to sharing emerging good practices on child labour based on project and advocacy outcomes in order to build the gap between local interventions and global advocacy. Our efforts will include using the learnings from working with smallholder farmers to improve their capacity and income to advocate on a global level to address the economic root causes of child labour. Additionally, the results of school feeding programmes and income development will be used for advocating for the adoption of such good practices in policies and programmes through the Alliance 8.7 platform but also other international forum. Furthermore, we will advocate for the inclusion of farmers's voices within the different stakeholder initiatives.

The following (potential) international stakeholders would be key to the successful implementation of the roadmap:

1. The alliance 8.7 and the different pathfinder countries, and donor countries
2. The private sector in producing countries and buying countries
3. UN agencies like FAO, ILO, UNICEF and IFAD
4. NGOs, Trade unions.

SUSTAINABILITY: THE SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY WILL FOCUS ON:

- Capacity building of vulnerable households to adopt resilient and diverse forms of livelihood, linking them with relevant input and out-market actors to continue their livelihood activities
- Including women (farmers) will provide more stability to the income and therefore sustainability
- Through group formation, organizing the vulnerable households under aggregation/collection centers, establishing linkage with market actors the project will build a network for the targeted participants which they can leverage to expand their livelihood activities and gain collective bargaining power
- The key for success and sustainability of this initiative will be the government as the primary duty bearer and integrating this initiative with broader government-running programs like the Parish Development Model (PDM).

Global March Against Child
Labour Koningskade 30, 2596 AA
The Hague,
The Netherlands

 /GlobalMarch

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