



Input for the Special Rapporteur report on trafficking in persons and gender, peace and security June 19th, 2024

This document describes ICI's input to the UN Special Rapporteur's report on gender, peace and security to be presented to the 3rd Committee of the UN General Assembly in October 2024. The following input is informed by the International Cocoa Initiative's (ICI) expertise in combating child labour and forced labour in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire on the topic of "national procedures for early identification, assistance and referral to protection services for victims or potential victims of trafficking including gender and child sensitive measures in conflict and post-conflict settings, including in context of forced displacement and forced migration".

. Côte d'Ivoire ranks first as a migration destination in West and Central Africa, the majority arriving from Mali and Burkina Faso¹. In conflict-affected regions, displaced populations frequently migrate across borders, facing heightened risks of labour exploitation and human rights abuses. Setting up national procedures in neighbouring countries, such as Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, is vital to mitigate these risks. These systems should prioritize early identification, prompt assistance, and efficient referral to protection services, ensuring comprehensive support for trafficking victims.

ICI's experience in tackling child labour and forced labour in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire has highlighted that establishing grievance mechanisms that are legitimate, accessible, predictable, equitable, transparent, sources of continuous learning, and rights-compatible (as per the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights) requires an access and presence at the community level. These mechanisms must be accessible to all, including workers, community members in remote areas, and individuals who are unable to read or write and representative. Locally-based grievance mechanisms offer tailored solutions that address the needs of different stakeholder groups within the supply chain, including disadvantaged groups such as children, women, minorities, and marginalized communities.

In ICI's pilot in Ghana, we found that 90% of grievances raised at the community level could be solved locally through traditional dispute settlement, without needing to involve state authorities. The rest had to be referred to local authorities such as labour department officers, labour inspectors and the welfare department officers. It is essential that these mechanisms are recognized by the government and integrated into local and national government structures. This recognition provides legitimacy and ensures that issues needing escalation can be referred appropriately, allowing legal measures to be applied when necessary.

¹ [IOM data on migration flows in West and Central Africa 2017-2018 https://dtm.iom.int/data-stories/migration-flows-west-central-africa](https://dtm.iom.int/data-stories/migration-flows-west-central-africa)

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