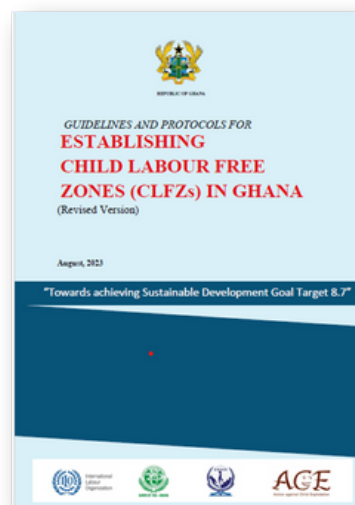


Child Labour Free Zone - Ghana



Strengthening Systems, Empowering Communities,
Sustaining Futures.

The Government of Ghana is promoting the Child Labour Free Zone (CLFZ) as a national framework aligned with the Ghana Accelerated Action Plan Against Child Labour 2023–2027 (GAAPACL)¹ and aimed at achieving Sustainable Development Goal Target 8.7 that ends all forms of child labour by 2025.



Download here:
Child Labour Free Zone (CLFZ)
Guidelines and Protocols ²

The CLFZ strengthens national and local efforts to uphold the the provisions of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana on the fundamental rights of children to be protected from work that harms their health, education, or development, and contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly the targets under Goals 8, 5, 16, and 10.

By integrating awareness-raising, child protection, referral, remediation, and education initiatives, the CLFZ guidelines and protocols provide a standardized set of criteria that enable government institutions, communities, companies, development partners, and civil society organizations (CSOs) to work together to build a comprehensive system that protects children.

1 https://www.cocoinitiative.org/sites/default/files/resources/Ghana_Accelerated_Action_Plan_Against_Child_Labour.pdf
2 <https://www.glmis.gov.gh/Kb/DocumentContentRender/94>



Why CLFZ? – An Area-Based Approach

Background and Challenges

Over the years, the government, companies, development partners, international organizations, and NGOs have implemented numerous project-based initiatives. However, these efforts have often been concentrated in particular sectors, supply chains, or specific issue areas. While they have produced positive results at the local level and limited geographical areas, they have not yet achieved scalable impact that addresses the structural causes of child labour.

In Ghana, child labour occurs across multiple sectors, including agriculture, mining, and fisheries. The issue is complex – driven by factors such as limited access to education, poverty, and entrenched social norms – making it difficult for stakeholders to sustain change through isolated initiatives alone.

To address these challenges, the Government of Ghana has introduced the CLFZ concept – an institutional framework designed to eliminate child labour through a comprehensive, area-based approach.

Integrating lessons from various sectors and stakeholders

The CLFZ framework builds on lessons from sector-specific initiatives – such as those in cocoa, mining, and fisheries – led by the private sector, trade unions, CSOs, and international partners. It transforms fragmented, project-level experiences into a coordinated national framework that delivers sustainable and scalable impact.

Key Features of the CLFZ

The overall goal of the CLFZ is to promote the strengthening of systems and structures at the local government and community levels for the elimination of all forms of child labour and development of children in any geographical area.

Government-led initiative

The framework is driven by the Ministry of Labour, Jobs and Employment (MLJE) under government leadership, and is aligned with GAAPACL and its operational structure.

Integrated approach

It brings together awareness-raising, child labour monitoring, referral and case management related to child protection, as well as remediation and education initiatives, within a specific geographical area under a locally embedded system.

Standardized criteria

The CLFZ Guidelines and Protocols define a standardized set of conditions required to achieve CLFZs. All government institutions and partner organizations are expected to follow these guidelines to ensure effective and coordinated implementation.

Cross-sectoral scope

The CLFZ targets entire communities, covering agriculture, mining, fishing, and other sectors. It aims to prevent and eliminate child labour across all sectors, without being limited to any specific industry or supply chain.



How CLFZ Works

Institutional Structure

A CLFZ is defined as a geographical area (Town, Zonal, or Area Council) where the necessary conditions, functional structures, support systems, and child development facilities are in place to eliminate all forms of child labour and ensure the full development of children and the realization of their potential to become responsible adults.

The local government is expected to play a leading role in establishing and operationalizing the defined structures, and in supporting communities within its jurisdiction to achieve the required community-level conditions.

National government institutions and all partners are also expected to play a role in pooling resources and expertise to avoid duplication and enhance efficiency.

CLFZ Conditions

The CLFZ Guidelines outline 25 sub-indicators under eight main indicators, including Main Indicator G (Incidence of Child Labour), which aims to reduce the incidence of child labour to less than 10% of all children.

District Level

District by-laws on child protection are enacted in line with the relevant national laws.

Child protection is integrated into district development plans and budgets.

Functional service delivery by key local government agencies responsible for child protection, education, and other related areas.

Effective coordination and collaboration among local government institutions.

Community Level

Community regulations on child protection are enacted in line with national laws and district by-laws.

Community-led child labour monitoring is conducted, linking identified cases with appropriate services.

Schools ensure adequate teachers, learning materials, and a conducive learning environment to maximize enrolment and attendance.

Vulnerable children and families are linked to appropriate social welfare and protection services.

Assessment Process

To declare CLFZ, the state of the CLFZ conditions at both local government and community levels are assessed by following the phased evaluation process.

1. Pre-assessment:

Districts and zones (comprising multiple communities) conduct self-assessments to verify the readiness to be assessed (80% of the required criteria needs to be met).

2. Main Assessment:

A government assessment team carries out field evaluations to measure compliance with the guidelines. Results are graded as A, B, C, or "Towards CLFZ".

3. Declaration:

The assessment report is submitted to the National Steering Committee on Child Labour (NSCCL) for approval. A zone graded between A and C are declared as CLFZ.

4. Post-declaration Review:

- Internal review: Conducted annually by districts through self-assessment and reporting at least once a year.
- External review: Conducted every three years by the government assessment team, updating the grading based on progress.

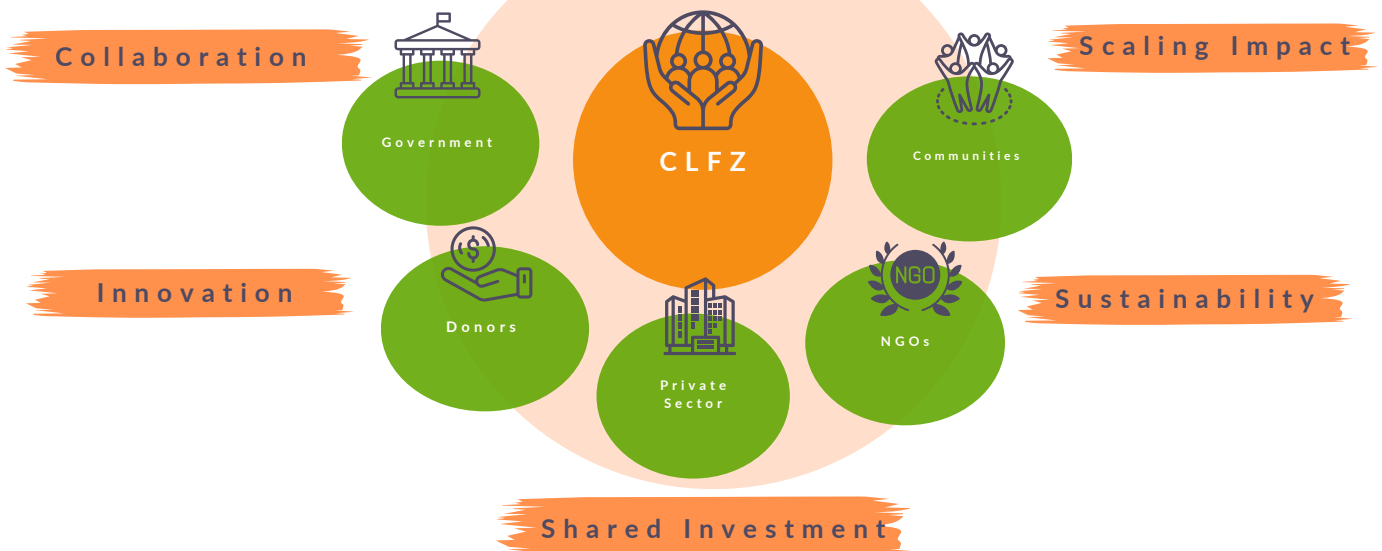


Join Us

Scaling Up Collaboration and Co-Financing for CLFZs

Vision of the CLFZ

Nationwide expansion of the CLFZs is a pathway toward a child labour-free Ghana. Accelerated collaboration and innovative financing are key to achieving greater impact.



Progress So Far

To establish model CLFZs, four pilot districts were selected and provided institutional support by the government to bring together local governments, schools, community groups, companies, and CSOs to work collaboratively to strengthen the local structure to ensure education, child protection, referral, and remediation. The government's operational structure for conducting CLFZ assessment has been developed towards the first declaration of the CLFZ in the country.

The government of Ghana closely collaborate with the international partners such as the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI), and the World Bank Group to achieve tangible results. JICA's "Project for Mainstreaming Child Protection through Child Labour Free Zones in Ghana" directly provide assistance for establishing the model CLFZs since 2024.



Four pilot districts:
1) Atwima Mponua, 2) Bibiani Anhwiaso Bekwai, 3) Assin South, 4) Upper Denkyira East

Call to Action and Collaboration

The Government of Ghana invites all partners to work together toward realizing the CLFZs – a first-of-its-kind institutional model in Africa and the world. Partners can contribute through policy dialogue, financing, and joint implementation to scale up the CLFZ nationwide.

Join us in creating a child labour-free future in Ghana!

For inquiries: ghana_cacao_cl@icnet.co.jp / childlabourunit@labourdepartment.gov.gh

