

# Slavery in the chocolate factories

Business, Human Resources



SLAVERY IN THE CHOCOLATE INDUSTRY Much of the chocolate we take may come from the child slave labour because many children in Ivory Coast spend their time in hacking cocoa from cocoa trees and splitting cocoa pods. A big number of them end up with injuries and they risk their health by application of dangerous chemicals and carrying heavy loads in the scorching sun. Some of the children assist their families in cocoa planting but the worst kind of slavery emerges where children trafficked from neighbouring countries forcefully work in these cocoa farms. Managers at these Chocolate industries should come up with policies that can end child slavery in the firms. Most of the labourers in the chocolate industries live and work in very poor conditions and they often get sick. As a result, the younger workers have to look after them by finding their own food on the farms since the income they get from the sales of cocoa is not enough to employ an adult worker. BBC/Panorama (2010) shows that employers in those farms did not allow the labourers to leave and failure to adhere to the set rules the workers received severe punishments. On the other hand, the employers recruited slave children from extremely poor families from other countries with the promise that they would receive good wages to support their families (Raghavan and Chatterjee, 2001). The prosperity of the economy of Ivory Coast compared to its neighbouring countries attracted children from those countries in search of livelihood. As a manager in the cocoa industry, the person should take an initiative to address the problems that the labourers of the company face. Sarah (2013) proposes that the labourers should get their earning according to the level of employment and should follow all labour rights to enhance a good working environment. The

management should ensure that all the labourers have good settlements and introduction of incentives to the labourers would boost the productivity of them if the managers consider this aspect. The companies should not allow they minors and immigrants to do work in their firms, they can achieve this by scrutinizing the credentials of every worker, and this can greatly assist to reduce child slavery and child trafficking from the neighbouring countries. When such instances occur, the companies' managements should make a follow up and collaborate with the government of Ivory Coast to end child slavery and child trafficking. Additionally, since the majority of the companies complement their raw materials from small-scale farmers to meet target production they need to revise their prices stop exploitation of these farmers. Many cocoa farmers earn very little income from the sale of their cocoa beans to the local brokers and the processing industries. The poor pay results from the poor international prices of cocoa mainly due to its low quality. The income from the cocoa farm is not enough to cater for all the basic needs in the family and in case older members of the family is sick children in that family have to work on the cocoa farm since they cannot afford to pay a labourer. Child labour is not acceptable in the contemporary world and to overcome this problem in the cocoa industry, managers need to reform on the payments of cocoa to the farmers (Kevin and Ron, 2011). The managers should eliminate the intermediaries who exploit the farmers and after which they should transfer the income earned by the intermediaries to the farmers. Moreover, the company should train the farmers to practice cocoa farming using the current technologies to enhance the productivity and quality of their products that may make the product to attract higher

prices in the market. According to Sarah (2013), the managers should provide the farmers with proper farming equipments at subsidized prices to enable them to carry out good farming practices since many of them could not afford them. Another area of focus is the value addition of cocoa in the chocolate industries in order to fetch higher prices in the market for the benefit of the farmers. When the managers utilize these strategies, they will benefit the farmers by enabling them to earn higher income that can assist them to manage their families and could help reduce the problem of child labour. Kevin (2008) argues that the managers can also establish community projects in the neighbourhood of the farmers such as health centres and learning institutions to assist them to access health and education. With these kinds of projects, child labour can significantly reduce in the chocolate industries. In conclusion, child labour has been a major problem in the chocolate industries for years because of severe poverty experienced in this region that produces cocoa. The major cause of abject poverty is poor payments and lack of proper farming strategies. The managers at the chocolate firms should be very instrumental in helping the local government to eradicate child slavery. Bibliography BBC/Panorama. 2010, Tracing the bitter truth of chocolate and child labour. Available from: . Kevin, Bales. 2008, Ending Slavery: How We Free Today's Slaves. California: University of California Press. Kevin, Bales and Ron, Soodalter. 2011, The Slave Next Door: Human Trafficking and Slavery in America Today. California: University of California Press. Raghavan, S. and Chatterjee, S. 2001, A Taste of Slavery. Knight Ridder Newspapers. Available from: . Sarah, Neary. 2013, Why the

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