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**Nestlé Taps Fair Labor Association to Map Cocoa Supply Chain,
Accelerate Progress in Eliminating Child Labor**

Cocoa, hazelnut projects prepare Nestlé to join the FLA as a Participating Company

[Nestlé](#), the largest food company in the world, has partnered with the [Fair Labor Association](#) (FLA) to assess its cocoa supply chain in West Africa and to identify whether children are working on the farms. With the cocoa harvest fast approaching, this project will launch in December as Nestlé prepares its application to join the FLA as a Participating Company. The FLA Board of Directors has agreed to expedite the application process.

Beginning in January, the FLA will send a team of independent assessors to Côte d'Ivoire to map the cocoa supply chain. With approximately 800,000 cocoa farms in the country, companies have struggled to establish where their cocoa comes from and under what conditions it was farmed. The FLA's methodology will bring consistency and transparency to the process, providing Nestlé with the information needed to eliminate instances of child labor in its supply chain. As part of the project, the FLA will publish an assessment report along with Nestlé's corrective action plan to address any labor-related issues identified during the investigation. The FLA will then track the company's progress in implementing the plan and verify remediation.

"Working with the FLA will help Nestlé and other stakeholders in West Africa to protect children in the cocoa supply chain," said FLA President and CEO Aurret van Heerden. "But eliminating child labor will take an enormous commitment from Nestlé and other companies sourcing from the region. This project is a step in the right direction, but the real test will be in whether issues uncovered in the investigation are addressed promptly and in a lasting manner."

The FLA has been active in the agricultural sector since 2004, and has helped greatly reduce the risks of child labor and other labor rights violations on farms in several countries, including India, Pakistan, Mali and Romania. The FLA developed tools through its Cotton Traceability Project to help affiliates map their cotton supply chains and to identify and rank risks. In addition, the FLA has conducted training programs on labor standards, monitoring and verification for stakeholders involved in the agriculture sector.

The FLA used its tools and methodology earlier this year during a pilot project with Nestlé, in which the FLA investigated possible labor rights violations during the hazelnut harvest in Turkey. An action plan based on the findings is being prepared by Nestlé and will be shared publicly at an international forum that is being planned in the first quarter of 2012 in Turkey. The forum will bring together companies, academics and civil society organizations – including the [Stop Child Labor Campaign](#) – to discuss solutions to child labor in the hazelnut supply chain.

"There are dozens of organizations and advocates who have been working on this issue for a long time," said van Heerden. "Eliminating child labor from supply chains will require all stakeholders to come together and share best practices, research and lessons learned. No single company or organization can do it alone. Nestlé's leadership and increased commitment is essential to bringing about long-term change in the cocoa industry."

Progress reports and findings from FLA assessments will be published at www.fairlabor.org as they become available.

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