

Press release

For immediate release.

Is your Easter chocolate made ethically? Survey reveals that while steps are being taken to eliminate modern slavery from chocolate supply chains, more action is needed to tackle child labour.

All brands surveyed as part of the Chocolate Scorecard now have policies aiming to reduce and eliminate child labour – but only around half of their supply chains are currently being monitored by a programme, according to a new study.

Now in its fifth edition, the annual Chocolate Scorecard, the biggest survey of its kind, rates the sourcing policies and practices of 63 of the world's largest cocoa buyers, including traders, processors, manufacturers, and retailers who sell their own-brand chocolate products.

The Scorecard rates companies on their policies and practices across six issue areas:

- traceability and transparency
- living income
- child labour
- pesticide use
- deforestation and climate
- agroforestry

According to the Chocolate Scorecard 2024:

- 100% of companies have a policy for monitoring, reducing, or eliminating child labour but only an average of around 55% of the supply chain are being covered by a programme.
- Child labour responses are increasing in effectiveness but the road to elimination is still fraught, mainly due to a lack of scale of programmes.
- 68% of respondents have evidence that the programmes or schemes are reducing the prevalence of child labour situations – but verification is often lacking.
- 18% of respondent companies found and successfully remediated cases of forced labour and human trafficking in the past 12 months – a great increase in transparency and action.
- 70% of respondent companies have a policy to monitor, reduce or eliminate the exposure of children to pesticides in their supply chains.
- Companies are increasingly aware of their responsibility to ensure farmers get a decent income from cocoa, but still too many farmers remain in poverty. Without additional financial support, this will continue.

Coordinated by Be Slavery Free in collaboration with partners, the Chocolate Scorecard aims to promote transparency, accountability, and responsible practices within the industry.

By evaluating companies on social and environmental criteria, the Chocolate Scorecard provides valuable information for consumers to make ethical purchasing decisions and incentivises companies to improve their performance in these areas.

Andrew Wallis, CEO of Unseen, a partner NGO of Be Slavery Free, which coordinates the Chocolate Scorecard, said: “Child labour and modern slavery remain present in the cocoa industry. While companies are becoming increasingly aware of their responsibility to ensure that their supply chains are free from forced and child labour, the programmes created to address these issues need to be scaled up.

“The root causes of modern slavery, such as poverty, must be addressed to eradicate child labour in all supply chains. Consumer demand for more ethical chocolate is making a positive impact, so we urge people to continue making ethical choices based on the findings of the Chocolate Scorecard. The choices you make can help end the suffering of children across this industry.”

Ends.

Notes to editors:

Full Chocolate Scorecard available at www.chocolatescorecard.com

Images available at <https://www.chocolatescorecard.com/media/>

The Chocolate Scorecard is a collaboration between 37 NGOs and universities around the world.

Who to contact

For any queries or interviews on how businesses can tackle modern slavery and child labour in their supply chains, please contact Unseen, media@unseenuk.org; [0303 040 2888](tel:03030402888)

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