



Protecting Children's Rights: Monitoring

A Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS) is a structured process that continuously monitors farms to detect risks of child labour and take corrective actions. It involves collaboration between farmers, cooperatives, NGOs, and community members. The system is proactive rather than reactive, aiming to create safe environments and protect children's rights.

In addition, a CLMS allows for assessing the effectiveness of the child labour due diligence process and the inclusion of the lessons learned to improve the system.

This quick guide provides information on:

- The key components of a CLMS
- How to set up a CLMS

“Child labour monitoring systems promote a new culture of prevention that aims at tackling the risk of child labour before it starts.”

What are the key components of a CLMS?

- A Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS) is an ongoing process combining community monitoring, workplace checks, school inspections, and internal/external audits to protect children and young workers from exploitation and hazards.
- Community-based monitoring has increasingly been promoted by NGOs as an effective approach to monitor child labour because it involves people whom the community trusts (farmers, parents, teachers, community leaders) to raise awareness, collect data, and document children's situations in farming households.
- Regular farm monitoring during field activities is essential to identify children or young persons in hazardous work and support their transition to education or skills training.
- School inspections help ensure children attend classes instead of working; teachers and community members play a key role in identifying risks and supporting solutions.
- Internal and external audits provide systematic checks on actual conditions and help verify compliance with child labour prevention measures.
- 4C recommends establishing a CLMS using the approaches mentioned above and involving all key actors in the 4C Unit (Managing Entities, Business Partners, workers, unions, parents, teachers, etc) in order to create a trusted system focused on awareness and improvement rather than fault-finding.



How to set up a CLMS?

Each child labour situation is unique, so the CLMS designed to address it must be tailored to the specific context. 4C recommends the steps below to set up a system covering different approaches.

Step 1. Appoint a responsible person	Assign a dedicated individual to oversee child labour monitoring and ensure all steps are implemented effectively.
Step 2. Establish and conduct a community awareness programme	- Set up a training programme and organise training sessions to educate farmers and their families about child labour risk and the importance of education. - Organise sessions with community members to promote awareness and involve them in monitoring efforts.
Step 3. Set up a system for data collection	- Collect demographic data on households to identify vulnerable groups. - Conduct regular farm visits and record observations. - Integrate community members in the collection of data.
Step 4. Establish reporting Mechanisms	- Provide clear, accessible channels for reporting suspected child labour, ensuring confidentiality and timely response. - Remediation: Remove children from child labour and provide access to remediation. - Establish a remediation process to ensure that when child labour cases are found, children are removed from child labour and provided with remediation (i.e., supported with education or skills programmes).
Step 5. Verify and audit children's situations in farming households	- Perform independent external audits. - Conduct random, unannounced farm inspection. This should be done by an experienced internal team.
Step 6. Report findings	- Compile all findings and define corrective actions for each to ensure continuous improvement. - Track and report CLMS performance (e.g., number of cases detected and resolved).

What should auditors consider?

During the audit:

- Confirm that a designated person has been appointed for overseeing the CLMS process. Check for written documentation specifying the role and responsibilities.
- Check if there is a clear governance structure for CLMS implementation (roles, responsibilities, escalation paths)
- Assess whether the CLMS covers all relevant supply chain tiers, including smallholder farms and subcontractors
- Confirm that regular farm visits are conducted by trained monitors
- Evaluate the tools and methods used for data collection (digital systems, GPS tagging, household surveys)
- Check if monitoring is continuous and proactive, not just during audits
- Verify that there is a documented remediation protocol for cases of child labour
- Assess whether the company provides support programmes (education, income diversification, social services) for affected families
- Review evidence of training programmes for farmers, workers, and local communities on child labour risks. Check if training materials are culturally appropriate and accessible.
- Ensure there are anonymous reporting channels for workers and community members
- Verify that the company tracks and reports CLMS performance (e.g., number of cases detected and resolved)
- Confirm that internal and external third-party audits are conducted regularly
- Assess whether the company uses audit findings to improve the CLMS and prevent recurrence