

Building Resilient Community Ecosystems in the Fight Against Child Labour

DOING
WELL BY
DOING
GOOD



planting
naturals



Goldtree



Unlocking Social Impact Through Strategic NGO-Business Collaboration



Funded by:
Fund against Child Labour (FBK) programme



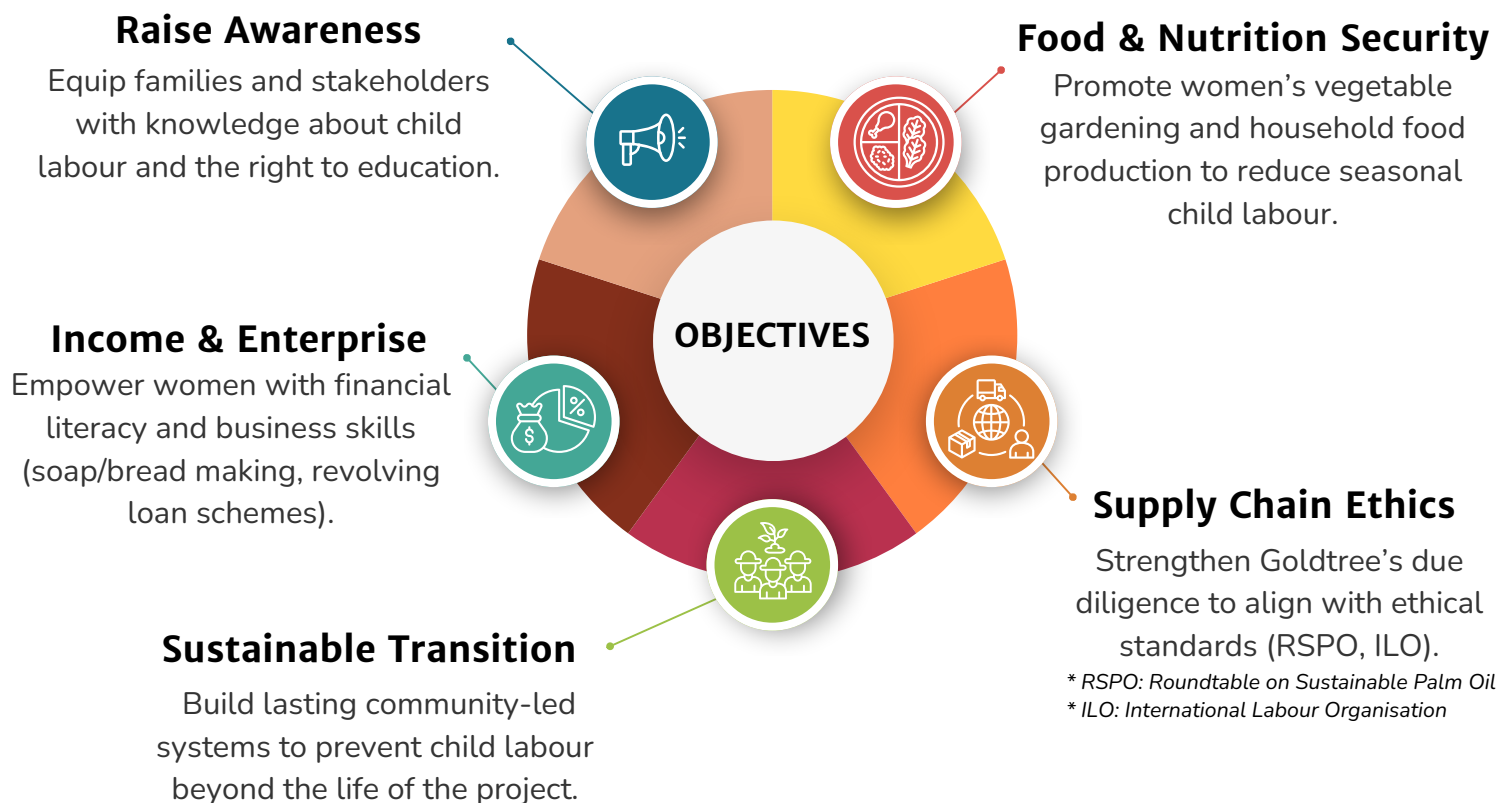
Netherlands Enterprise Agency

May 2025

The Project

Jan 2022 – March 2025

Overall Goal: To reduce child labour in the palm oil sector by addressing its root causes and building sustainable, resilient livelihoods in farming communities.



Key Partners: Planting Naturals; APT Action On Poverty; Goldtree Ltd., MAPCO

Budget: 562,472€

Reach: 1,331 farming families (~11,000 people)

40 communities, Jawei & Njaluahun Chiefdoms, Kailahun District, Sierra Leone

WHAT MAKES THIS MODEL DIFFERENT

LASTING CAPACITY,
with trained child rights volunteers, adult labour groups, functional literacy, and inclusive financial systems that strengthen household resilience.

COMMUNITY-LED GOVERNANCE,
through by-laws, Community Based Organisations (CBOs) child welfare committees, and local leadership that take ownership of enforcement and awareness.

STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BUYERS AND COMMUNITIES,
built on fairness, transparency, and participation, encouraging loyalty and better business outcomes.

PROJECT-INTEGRATED SUSTAINABILITY,
where companies align their policies, training, and systems to support ongoing prevention beyond donor support.

REAL SHARED VALUE,
as communities gain safer livelihoods and autonomy, while businesses benefit from trust, quality, and long-term supply chain stability.

DOING WELL BY DOING GOOD
MAY 2025

The Impact

Social Change Through Business Leadership



Ending Child Labour, Building Safer Workforces

- Child labour fell from 98.9% to 5%.
- Heavy load carrying (20%+ of body weight): Down from 85% of children to 1.6%.
- Child labour gangs were completely eliminated and replaced by 55 trained adult groups, ensuring safe, ethical labour practices.
- Community by-laws now prohibit child labour and are actively enforced by local leaders.

Improved Access to Education

- School absenteeism dropped from 73% to 18% (only 3% regular absences).
- Over 95% of children attend school regularly (98% in SHF children).

** SHF: SmallHolder Farmers*

- A community-led approach — by-laws, child welfare committees, volunteers, and sensitisation — drives school attendance.
- 100% schools manage attendance records.



Women's Empowerment & Income Generation

- 2,944 women joined 52 garden groups and launched backyard farms with support from 52 community seedbanks.
- 3000+ women trained in climate-smart agriculture
- 80 women apprentices reported a 5x income increase since Year 1.

"I used to take my children to the plot during school days because I thought this was more important than education. Now I am focused on ensuring that my children succeed in their education."

The Impact

Social Change Through Business Leadership

Community Capacity and Cultural Transformation

- 100% of SHF clearly understand the dangers of child labour (CL), or what constitutes child labour
- 100% SHF identify harmful practices like heavy lifting, sharp tools, and excessive work hours as CL.
- 900 trained in adult literacy; 100% apply skills
- Local chiefs and 40 CBOs actively enforce child protection laws, lead awareness, and support community development.



Livelihood Development & Economic Resilience

- 1,605 adults trained in business and financial literacy (63% women)
- 15,250 loans issued through VSLAs during the project — with a 100% repayment rate
** Village Savings and Loan Association*
- Financial literacy reduced grievances and strengthened household decision-making
- Smallholder income nearly doubled—from 870 Le to 1,216 Le/month
- Increased income directly contributed to reducing reliance on child labour



Wider Social Benefits

- Food insecurity dropped from 97% to <2% in SHF households.
- Health & safety risks to children fell significantly:
- Only 2.5% of children reported any farmed-related injury/sickness in the last year (vs. 73% at baseline).



“There is more food available in the community resulting from improved agricultural practices, children’s health has also improved. Families are happier and there are fewer incidents and sicknesses resulting from malnutrition”

Business Value

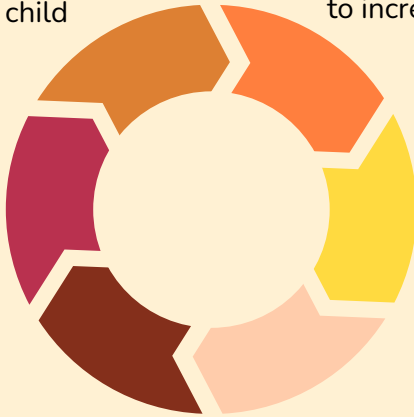
How the Model Creates Impact

TACKLE POVERTY AT THE ROOT

Livelihood training, functional literacy, and access to small loans reduce the financial pressure that leads families to rely on child labour.

ENABLE CHOICE THROUGH INCLUSIVE FINANCE

Loan systems helped farmers avoid debt traps, allowing them to choose when and where to sell—on their terms.



BUILD TRUST AND TRANSPARENCY

Training on pricing and weighing tools helped farmers feel confident in buyer fairness—leading to increased volumes sold to ethical buyers.

IMPROVE AUDIT READINESS AND YIELDS

Consistent engagement, proper labour groups, and farmer training led to smoother audits, better data, and higher fruit quality.

FOSTER SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY

With child rights volunteers, adult labour gangs, community by-laws, and ICS officers in place, responsibility is shared across the supply chain.

** ICS: Internal Control System*

TURN SUSTAINABILITY INTO A SHARED ASSET

Climate-smart practices protect natural resources and align with RSPO/Fairtrade goals, strengthening supply chain resilience.

What Business Gain



**STABLE, SKILLED, AND SAFER
WORKFORCE, REPLACING
CHILD LABOUR WITH TRAINED
ADULT GROUPS**



**STRONGER SUPPLIER AND
COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS,
BUILT ON TRUST,
TRANSPARENCY, AND SHARED
RESPONSIBILITY**



**HIGHER VOLUMES AND
QUALITY, AS FARMERS APPLY
BEST PRACTICE, STAY LOYAL
AND ARE NOT DIVERTED
ELSEWHERE THROUGH DEBT**



**SIMPLER AUDIT AND
COMPLIANCE PROCESSES,
THANKS TO TRACEABILITY,
TRAINING, AND SHARED
MONITORING**



**REDUCED REPUTATIONAL AND
REGULATORY RISK, ALIGNED
WITH INTERNATIONAL
STANDARDS AND
FRAMEWORKS (RSPO, CSDDD)**



**STRONGER ESG
PERFORMANCE, EMBEDDED
INTO EVERYDAY OPERATIONS
AND STRATEGY**

** CSDDD: corporate sustainability due
diligence directive*



You can be part of a proven model that protects children, empowers communities, and builds ethical, resilient supply chains. Whether you want to strengthen sourcing, fund solutions, or support community-led change, your partnership can help scale this impact where it's needed most.

Thank you for supporting our work to protect children and build ethical supply chains and resilient communities

Contact

APT Action On Poverty
111 Gloucester Road, Bristol, BS7 8AT
01386 861294

www.aptuk.org.uk 

info@aptuk.org.uk 

[@actiononpoverty](https://www.facebook.com/actiononpoverty) 

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