

# Sugar Producers of Central America launch 2023 Campaign for the Prevention of Child Labor



(San Salvador, June 8, 2023). The Central American Sugar Association (AICA) and the regional sugar associations that comprise it have launched, for the second consecutive year, the campaign "I take care of you!" aimed at raising awareness about the importance of preventing child labor in the sector.

*"In 2022, we decided to coordinate the efforts of the Central American sugar sector to prevent child labor. The result was extremely successful! The visibility and reach of our actions were much greater, which is why in 2023 we are excited to continue working regionally to prevent this practice",* said Mario Amador, President of AICA.

The campaign will include workshops, talks, contests, and informational materials, with the aim of reaching workers in the sector, sugarcane producers, as well as members of the communities in the areas influenced by the sugar industry throughout Central America. The objective is to educate and raise awareness about what child labor is, its causes and effects, the legal consequences it entails, as well as the conditions under which adolescent work is allowed, promoting a paradigm based on respect and care for children and adolescents.

Juan Carlos Fernández, Executive Director of AICA, highlighted: *"In this second edition of the campaign, in addition to the technical support of the ILO, we also have UNESCO's involvement. With their participation, we aim to emphasize the role that access to and the full exercise of the right to education plays, which provides children with opportunities to develop the necessary skills to lead a dignified life, find decent work, and actively contribute to the progress and well-being of their communities".*

## Promoting Associations.

The 2023 Child Labor Prevention Campaign is promoted by the Central American Sugar Association (AICA) and its member organizations, including the Guatemalan Sugar Association (ASAZGUA), the Salvadoran Sugar Association, the Association of Sugar Producers of Honduras (APAH), the National Committee of Sugar Producers of Nicaragua (CNPA), the Agricultural Industrial League of Sugar Cane of Costa Rica (LAICA), and the Association of Sugars and Alcohols of Panama (AZUCALPA). It has the technical support of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as well as the collaboration of The Coca-Cola Company, the Central American Integration Network for Corporate Social Responsibility (Red INTEGRARSE), and the Federation of Agro Chambers of Central America (FECAGRO).

## What is child labor?

Child labor is defined as any work that deprives children of their childhood, potential, and dignity. It is harmful to the physical and psychological development of underage individuals and interferes with their education (by denying them the opportunity to attend school, forcing them to drop out prematurely, or requiring them to combine study with heavy and time-consuming work).

In the region, child labor is prohibited for all individuals under the age of 14 or 15, depending on the respective legislation of each country. "Hazardous Child Labor" is prohibited for all individuals under the age of 18, as it affects their physical, mental, or moral well-being and/or interferes with their education. The countries in the region have ratified ILO Conventions 138 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor, demonstrating their commitment to the prevention and eradication of this scourge.

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Asociación de Azucareros del Istmo Centroamericano – AICA.

Contact: Mrs. Habibi Quiñonez. Email: [hquinonez@aicagroup.com](mailto:hquinonez@aicagroup.com).

5ª Avenida, 5-55, Zona 14, Europlaza, Torre 3, Nivel 18, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala. Teléfono: +502 2215-2441.