

Central American sugar producers launch a regional campaign on the prevention of Child Labor



(San José, Costa Rica, June 9th. 2022). With the beginning of the preparations for the harvesting season 2022-2023, the Central American Sugar Association (AICA) and its 6 national sugar associations, have launched the Campaign “I take care of you” (¡Yo te cuido!), with the objective of contributing to the awareness on prevention of child labor in the economic sector.

“With this simple but also powerful phrase, we are trying to show, as parents, teachers, members of the sugar sector and the communities around, that we can and we should take care of our children and teenagers,” said Mario Amador, AICA’s president.

Through workshops, conferences, coordinating meetings, contests, and multiple informative materials, the campaign aims to reach workers, sugarcane producers, and members of the communities influenced by the sugar sector from all over Central America. This effort seeks to provide information on the topic of child labor, tackling its possible causes, effects, and legal repercussions. The campaign also aims to differentiate between child labor and teenage work, so part of the focus is to promote the respect and development of both children and teenagers.

According to Juan Carlos Fernández, Executive Director of AICA, *“for several years, the Central American sugar sector has implemented in the region, multiple successful programs, and initiatives against child labor, which has made it possible to see changes in the sector. This campaign aims to advance the consolidation of accomplished results”*.

Promoting Associations

The 2022 Regional Campaign for the Prevention of Child Labor is promoted by the Central American Sugar Association (AICA) and the national sugar organizations that are members of AICA: 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). Besides this organizations, the campaign counts with the technical support of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the collaboration of the Coca-Cola Company and the Central American Integration Network for Corporate Social Responsibility (INTEGRARSE).

What is child labor?

Child labor is defined as work that deprives children and teenagers of their childhood, their potential, and dignity which affects their physical and psychological development, while also constituting a danger to their physical, mental, or moral well-being. This type of work tends to also interfere with their education (depriving the possibility to assist to classes, forcing them to abandon school quite early, or even forcing them to combine school and work consuming much of their time).

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