



2023

Regional Campaign
for Prevention of
Child Labor in the
Central American
Sugar Industry



IMPLEMENTATION REPORT



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1. Introduction.

Central America is a region committed to the elimination of child labor and has achieved valuable results. For many years, the Central American sugar sector has been a fundamental part of this effort.

The implementation of multiple actions such as internal policies, protocols, and social development programs, allowed changing the reality of the sector; however, several local and international circumstances put a strong pressure on the achievements obtained in the eradication of this practice. The existence of conditions of low economic and social development, climate vulnerability, old cultural patterns, as well as the effects of migration, are some examples. In addition, it is also important to refer to those situations in which there are weak educational conditions, which increase the risks of child labor.

In view of this situation, the Central American sugar sector has considered it essential to implement training and awareness-raising activities to prevent the occurrence of child labor in the agroindustry. As part of these efforts, it has been deemed appropriate to disseminate information on the characteristics and negative effects of child labor, as well as to promote awareness of the legal frameworks that regulate this practice. Likewise, it is important to position information on the rights of children and adolescents, including their right to education, considered essential so that in the future they can have the tools that will allow them to develop a dignified life, generating the social mobility necessary to overcome poverty.

Based on the above, in 2022, the Central American sugar sector implemented for the first time a regionally coordinated effort in this area: an awareness and information campaign aimed at various stakeholders who are key to the prevention of child labor in the sector. This was how it went from local actions and messages to an innovative effort of Central American scope that achieved greater visibility and impact. The success of the 2022 campaign encouraged us to continue working under this regional approach.

In this context, this document seeks to share, in summary form, relevant information on the design and implementation of the "2023 Regional Campaign for the Prevention of Child Labor in the Central American Sugar Sector", promoted by the Central American Sugar Producers Association (AICA) and its member organizations, such as the Guatemalan Sugar Association (ASAZGUA), the Sugar Association of El Salvador, the Honduran Sugar Producers Association (APAH), the National Committee of Sugar Producers of Nicaragua (CNPA), the Sugar Cane Industrial Agricultural League of Costa Rica (LAICA) and the Sugar and Alcohol Association of Panama (AZUCALPA).

As in the 2022 campaign, the Coca-Cola Company, the Central American Integration Network for Corporate Social Responsibility (Red INTEGRARSE) and the Federation of Central American Chambers of Agriculture (FECAGRO) collaborated. It was also supported by the Child Labor Free LAC 2025 Initiative and technical support from the International Labor Organization (ILO).

It is worth mentioning that the design of the campaign is based on the work carried out by each of AICA's member; efforts that have been detailed in the document "Good Practices for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor in the Central American Sugar Sector", published in 2018 by AICA, with the support of the ILO.

2. Vision of the Central American sugar sector for children and adolescents in the region.



The Central American sugar sector envisions for the children of the region, conditions in which their rights are properly protected, allowing them to grow up healthy and strong, with an effective opportunity to study and develop in a healthy way, as well as the opportunity to play and enjoy their childhood without being forced to work.

For Central American teenagers, the sugar sector envisions the existence of conditions in which they can combine their right to education, entertainment, and rest with their first job opportunities, in adequate occupational health and safety circumstances, in compliance with the margins established by law.

3. Objectives of the campaign.

The general objective of the campaign is to prevent child labor in the Central American sugar sector through the broad dissemination of a unified message at the regional level, promoting a paradigm of respect and care for children and adolescents.

The specific objectives are as follows:

- Generate knowledge and awareness about child labor, its causes, and effects.
- To generate knowledge on legislation related to child labor.
- Generate knowledge on what adolescent labor is, as well as the provisions that regulate it.
- Raise awareness about the importance of compliance with the right to education and childcare.

4. Target audiences.

Considering the large number of actors with the opportunity to influence the care of children and adolescents, and to protect them from harmful practices such as child labor, the work was based on 3 target groups:

- GROUP 1. Consisting of a public with the capacity to have a direct and immediate impact on the prevention of child labor in the sugar sector:
 - Human resources teams of sugar mills and those in charge of contracts with independent sugarcane producers.
 - Independent sugarcane producers.
 - Field supervisors.
 - Sugar sector workers.



- GROUP 2. Consisting of groups of people with relevant levels of influence in the prevention of child labor in the sugar sector:
 - Fathers and mothers of families in communities in areas of influence of the sugar sector.
 - Teachers.
 - Other actors with impact in communities, such as churches, non-governmental organizations with projects in the zones of influence, etc.

- GROUP 3. Public in general.

5. Temporary and geographical scope.

Temporary Scope – A preparatory workshop was held in April 2023 with the participation of AICA, its member organizations, as well as the allied organizations of the campaign. On this occasion, objectives and tools to be used were validated, as well as the scope of the actions to be implemented were discussed.

The campaign's training and awareness-raising activities were implemented as of Thursday, June 8, 2023, the date on which the campaign was launched to the public in the city of San Salvador. The activities were carried out until Thursday, September 14, 2023. The campaign ended with the Closing Workshop, held on September 26, 2023, in Guatemala City.

Geographic scope – The campaign was implemented in sugarcane production areas and surrounding communities in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica.

6. Design of the message

The Regional 2023 Campaign focused on raising awareness among the different actors in society about the opportunity and responsibility of everyone in the care of children and adolescents, removing them from work activities prohibited by law, as well as ensuring the conditions for their comprehensive development.

In this second edition of the campaign, work continued with the slogan "I take care of you", through which a message of appropriation of the responsibility that adults can exercise, from different roles, in the care of children and adolescents is promoted. Examples:

Group 1	Example 1: field supervisors Example 2: Human resources managers	1. I take care that you are not working. 2. I take care that you, adolescent, perform only those work activities permitted by law.
Group 2	Example 1: Teachers Example 2: Parents / legal officers Example 3: Parents / legal officers	1. I see to it that you are educated for your future: that you attend school and complete the mandatory levels of education. 2. I see to it that you eat well and grow strong. 3. I take care that you have fun and enjoy your childhood.

Group 3 | Public in general

1. I share with the people close to me the importance of taking care of children and ensuring their education.
2. I share with people close to me the importance of rejecting child labor.

The logo of the first edition of the regional campaign was kept as the graphic image of the campaign:



7. Implementing organizations.

La “Campaña 2023 de Prevención del Trabajo Infantil en el Sector Azucarero Centroamericano” es una iniciativa impulsada por las organizaciones del sector azucarero agrupadas en la Asociación de Azucareros del Istmo Centroamericano – AICA:

- Guatemalan Sugar Association (ASAZGUA)
- the Sugar Association of El Salvador
- the Honduran Sugar Producers Association (APAH)
- the National Committee of Sugar Producers of Nicaragua (CNPA)
- the Sugar Cane Industrial Agricultural League of Costa Rica (LAICA)

They served as allied organizations of the campaign:

- Coca-Cola Company.
- Red Integración Centroamericana por la Responsabilidad Social Empresarial - INTEGRARSE.
- Federación de Cámaras del Agro de Centroamérica - FECAGRO.
- Technical support was also provided by the International Labor Organization (ILO).

8. Activities implemented.

Throughout the three months of implementation of the campaign, that is, from June to September, the following activities were developed:



A. Online training on "Due Diligence in Child Labor".

With technical support from the ILO, AICA provided the sugar sector and the general public with an online training course on "Due Diligence in Child Labor". The course consists of three modules, which address the fundamental concepts and figures on the impact of child labor, information on the relevant international conventions on the subject, as well as a guide for carrying out due diligence actions in the prevention of child labor. The total duration of the training is three and a half hours. It is available through the website created by AICA on child labor prevention: www.preveniendotrabajoinfantil.com.

During the implementation period of the 2023 campaign, 110 people registered.

B. Talks and workshops.

Talks and workshops are one of the most important means of implementing the campaign, considering the direct contact established with the participants. In these activities, updated information is shared on the problem of child labor, as well as regulations on child labor and adolescent labor. These activities also include the distribution of printed information such as brochures and flyers. During the 2023 campaign, the following were recorded:

Activity	Number of events	People reached
Group 1. Public directly related to the sector: sugar mill workers, sugarcane producers, etc.	228	5,443
Group 2. Public in areas of influence of the sector: parents in sugarcane communities; NGOs, etc.	170	7,825

C. Meetings with stakeholders related to child labor issues.

The objective was to inform government representatives involved in child labor inspection, the National Committees for the Eradication of Child Labor, as well as civil society organizations related to the issue, about the campaign, its objectives, and actions.

Activity	Number of events	People reached
Meetings with stakeholders related to child labor.	111	650

D. Home video contest.

It is considered the most innovative activity within the campaign. Its objective was to provoke the interest and involvement of the audiences covered by the campaign.

As in 2022, all those interested in participating were invited to create a homemade video, with a maximum duration of one minute, with content related to the objectives of the child labor prevention campaign.

The contest was first held at the national level in each of the countries of the region, and a national prize of US\$500.00 was awarded. Subsequently, the winning videos competed at the Central American level, winning an additional prize of US\$500.00. The videos were selected by juries made up of representatives from the campaign's partner organizations, as well as from the Central American sugar sector.

A total of 167 videos were collected during the 2023 campaign. The Nicaraguan sugar sector won the regional award. The winning videos can be viewed on YouTube, on the channel: AICA - Azucareros del Istmo Centroamericano.

Winning video from Nicaragua and Central America



Winning video from Guatemala



E. Social media.

The objective was to reiterate the message to the public about the importance of rejecting child labor and ensuring conditions of respect and care for children and teenagers.

Activity	People reached
Posts on the different social networks (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Telegram) of the national sugar associations.	577,765



F. Press media.

To give visibility to the campaign and promote the achievement of its objectives, press releases and trade publications were used, as well as the positioning of the information in different radio and press media.



9. Experiences and conclusions.

To close the campaign, a regional workshop was held in Guatemala City on September 26, with the participation of representatives of AICA member sugar associations. At this event, information was shared on the actions carried out, as well as multiple experiences and assessments of their implementation. By way of summary, the following points are detailed below:

- The importance of the annual focus of the campaign was highlighted. In the different participations, reference was made to the fact that the sugar sector has implemented multiple efforts in the fight against child labor for several years; however, in terms of training and awareness, it was emphasized that the design of the campaign, adopted with a methodology and message reiterated annually, has made it possible to achieve greater impact. It was mentioned how in communities they remembered the efforts of the previous year, which supports the consolidation of the message.
- The collective action of the associations and mills was a key factor in the success of the campaign. The actions carried out under the campaign have been able to achieve the reported scope only by virtue of the commitment of the associations and mills.
- The importance of the organization of the sugar sector, both regionally and nationally, was highlighted. One of the success factors in the implementation of the campaign has been the use of the sugar sector's trade union structures. First at the regional level, through AICA's Sustainability and Communications Groups, and then at the national level, through the organizational structures that the national associations have implemented with their mills. This includes Sustainability Committees, Communications, Human Resources, among others.

In this context, it is also important to highlight the internal communication channels in the sugar sector, such as WhatsApp groups, Telegram channels, etc., which were used to distribute information on the contents of the campaign.

- The video contest generates public enthusiasm. In the different country implementation reports, special reference was made to the video contest, in which there was extensive public participation and commitment. Many videos were received, with inspiring messages. It is important to mention that to attract more attention to the contest, the rules of participation were made clearer, emphasizing that the videos should be made with telephones, without the need for greater technology. According to the comments received, it has been surprising to see the strength of the messages and the quality of the videos.
- The importance of the graphic image and core messages was emphasized, while at the same time adaptations were made for the country. Being a regional campaign, a common methodology was adopted for all Central America, the title of the campaign "Yo te Cuido" (I take care of you), as well as the graphic image. However, to achieve greater appropriation of the campaign messages by the public, specific adaptations were made in each country. In the case of Nicaragua, posters and printed material were produced with photographs of Nicaraguan adults and children who had participated in the 2022 Video Contest.
- The message of the fight against child labor in the sugar sector was replicated by other organizations. In addition to the support of the campaign partners, the national associations also relied on other friendly organizations at the national level to replicate the message of rejection of child labor.
- It was noted that there has been significant progress in consolidating the message against child labor, although the need for further action is still identified. Based on experiences in the execution of activities within the campaign, it was possible to identify higher levels of understanding of the importance of rejecting child labor, as well as the need to ensure the education and care of minors. Nevertheless, the need to continue working on the dissemination of information on the subject was also identified.

For more information on the Central American sugar sector's efforts to prevent child labor, as well as various resources, please visit the website: www.preveniendotrabajoinfantil.com, as well as the YouTube channel: AICA - Azucareros del Istmo Centroamericano.

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