

Terms of Reference

Guidance on Child Rights for Palm Oil Companies

BACKGROUND

Children are affected by the palm oil industry in many different ways – as dependents of workers, members of oil palm growing communities and sometimes workers themselves. While child labour remains a critical concern, there are many other ways in which the lives of children are affected in the palm oil sector. For example, lack of maternity protection, childcare and breastfeeding support, poor health and nutrition levels, and limited access to basic services in remote areas affect millions of workers and their families engaged in palm oil cultivation.

In November 2018, RSPO adopted a revised certification standard for the production of sustainable palm oil ('Principles & Criteria'). The new standard contains a number of important improvements regarding the protection of children. Among other requirements, the new P&C mandate RSPO members to adopt a formal child protection policy, implement monitoring processes and train staff to ensure children in plantations are safe from harm and any form of exploitation. The P&C also contain stricter requirements for the handling of pesticides to prevent harm they may cause to workers, communities and children.

PURPOSE

Building on these new requirements, the RSPO Secretariat is seeking to develop practical guidance for companies to improve business policy and practice for children, working parents and surrounding communities. The guidelines will serve to support companies in all stages of the palm oil supply chain to integrate child rights protections more effectively into their business activities. The guidance will also include material to inform capacity-building activities for auditors, certification providers and other monitoring bodies. While the thematic focus will be on relevant provisions in the P&C, it will address all potential and actual direct and indirect impacts on children's rights – in line with the [Children's Rights and Business Principles](#).

The guidance will be global in nature, with a focus on palm oil producing countries where RSPO has a footprint. The guidance will also address the role of international palm oil buyers to further the integration of child rights into palm oil sourcing practices. It will build on [previous research](#) and activities, including RSPO's [pilot engagement with palm oil companies in Indonesia](#) to develop models of best practice.

While the guidance will focus on efforts to prevent and minimize negative consequences for children, it will also highlight opportunities for palm oil companies along the supply chain to support children's rights. In so doing, it will build on existing guidance and toolkits for business to respect and safeguard the rights of children affected in their activities and supply chains (e.g. [Child Safeguarding Toolkit for Business](#)).

MAIN TASKS

In line with the above, and under the guidance of RSPO, the selected contractor will be responsible for:

- 1) Synthesizing existing research, evidence and data on the diverse ways in which children are affected in the palm oil sector, both positively and negatively
- 2) Identifying promising company practices to address and improve impact on children’s rights
 - a. Through desk research and engagement of key stakeholders, identify good practice examples on child rights, including outcomes of the RSPO pilot programme to address child rights in Indonesia,
 - b. Company examples should showcase both existing shortcomings and promising practices that could be replicated throughout the sector
- 3) Developing guidance for companies along the palm oil supply chain to identify and prevent adverse children’s rights impacts
 - a. Based on identified impact areas and good practice models, develop guidance report for companies to improve business policy and practice for children
 - b. The thematic scope will be determined by the impact analysis (step 1) and relevant provisions of the revised P&C, in consultation with key stakeholders
 - c. Select companies and key stakeholders should be engaged and consulted in the development of the guidance
 - d. Guidance should be based on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, supporting companies to reduce negative impact and improve positive outcomes for children by integrating children’s rights into human rights due diligence
- 4) Developing support material (e.g. training packages) to inform training and capacity-building activities with auditors, certification and other monitoring bodies

DELIVERABLES

Deliverables	Timeline
Research brief synthesizing impact on children incl. related root causes	30 days
Briefing note highlighting promising company practices and innovative approaches to address negative impact on child rights	30 days
Guidance for business on how to improve business policy and practice to identifying and prevent negative impact on children in palm oil	90 days
Material to inform capacity-building activities with auditors, certification providers and other monitoring bodies	30 days

ESTIMATED DURATION OF THE CONTRACT

The selected consultancy is expected to start in March 2019, with the final outputs to be completed by September 2019 (6 months). The specific schedule of activities will be agreed between the selected consultancy and RSPO.

Interested applicants are requested to submit their expression of interest to Kamini Visvanathan at kamini.v@rspo.org by 4th of April 2019.