

Subject

Geography and social studies

Duration

Approx. 3 lessons

Age group

13-17-year-old students

Who produces your chocolate bar?

Are you sure you are not indirectly supporting child labour and child slavery when eating chocolate? Often the answer would be no. The good news is that we can change it – if we want to.

When you have finished the course:

- you will have watched a documentary about child labour and child slavery in the West African cocoa production and the role of the chocolate industry,
- you will know why child labour is widely used on cocoa farms, and
- you will have played a dilemma game on how to end child labour on cocoa farms.

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For the teacher

The teaching material 'Who makes your chocolate bar?' consists of a number of activities related to the 2022 documentary 'The Chocolate War'. The documentary is about a human rights lawyer's fight to bring the chocolate industry to justice on behalf of six former cocoa child slaves in Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa.

Course structure

The course starts with two activities intended to activate the students' preliminary understanding of child labour and chocolate production.

In preparation of the first activity, you may ask the students to bring their favourite chocolate to school, bringing the subject closer to the students' lives. After having watched selected scenes from the documentary, the students are asked to play a dilemma game containing different scenarios on how to end child labour, which offer a better understanding of the different players: a poor family in Mali, a Ghanaian cocoa farmer under pressure, the multinational chocolate industry, and the individual consumer.

All activities are intended for group work.

To watch selected scenes from The Chocolate War, click on this link:

<https://www.thechocolatewarfilm.com/>

The material themes cover three of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals:



No poverty



Decent work and economic growth



Responsible consumption and production

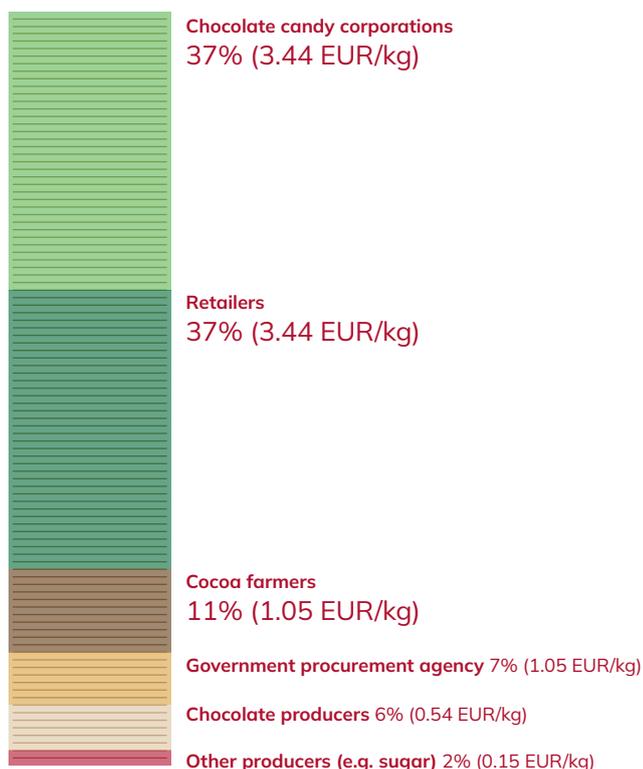
Duration: 3 lessons

You can see five selected scenes from The Chocolate War for free on the homepage of the documentary. We recommend using a lesson for the introductory exercises and, and a double lesson to play the dilemma game and show the videos as an introduction to the dilemmas. You can also buy a screening of the documentary at Amazon, iTunes or Google Play.

The documentary is directed by Miki Mistrati and produced by made in copenhagen. The teaching material is developed by Koncentrat and made in copenhagen. The initiative is supported by OpEn – The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs' awareness and engagement pool.

1 kilo dark chocolate value distribution (9.32 EUR/kg)

(For the exercise: Who makes what?)



Source: Comparative study on the distribution of value in European chocolate chains, 2020, BASIC, FAO

Is your favourite chocolate bar illegal child labour-free?

Can you be sure you are not indirectly supporting illegal child labour when eating chocolate? Often the answer would be no. Most of the world's cocoa – the key ingredient in chocolate – is cultivated in two West African countries: Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana.

In these countries, illegal child labour is widespread on cocoa farms. A comprehensive study conducted in 2020 concludes that almost 50% of children in cocoa farming districts are forced to trade their schoolbooks and education for sharp machetes and hard work in the cocoa fields.

Some of the children are even exposed to the worst form of child labour: slavery (read more about illegal child labour in the fact box).



Facts: What is illegal child labour?

Children (persons under the age of 18) may help on, for example, their family's cocoa farm in their spare time. But children cannot do work that deprives them of their access to schooling and their physical or mental dignity. That is illegal. Children cannot remove weeds with sharp machetes, perform poisonous weed control, carry heavy bags of cocoa beans, or work so much that they cannot go to school.

A comprehensive survey from 2020 on illegal child labour in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire estimates that there are 1.56

Exercise:

Examine your favourite chocolate

Does the company behind your favourite chocolate guarantee that illegal child labour has not been used in the cocoa production? And can the company assure you that no child slaves have been used?

Slave Free Chocolate is an organisation attempting to make it clear to consumers which chocolate producers make a special effort to ensure that the cocoa for their chocolate was not produced with slave labour.

1. **Find out** which company produces your favourite chocolate.
2. **See** if you can find the company behind your favourite chocolate on Slave Free Chocolate's list of ethical chocolate companies that produce slave-free chocolate.
3. **If you cannot find the company behind** your favourite chocolate on the list, then look for a policy on illegal child labour on the company's website. Is it possible to find information that guarantees that the cocoa in the chocolate was produced without the use of child labour or child slaves?
4. **Discuss in class** why you think it is so difficult to find out whether illegal child labour or child slavery was used to produce your favourite chocolates.

million children working in those two countries, and almost all of them are carrying out hazardous work. The worst form of child labour is slavery. For every thousand children working illegally on cocoa farms in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, it is estimated that between one or two of them are enslaved.

Sources: ILO (the UN's International Labour Organization), NORC report 2020 (University of Chicago), and Global Slavery Index

Chocolate economy crash course

How much does the cocoa farmer make when you buy a piece of chocolate? We can find out by looking at the chocolate value chain.

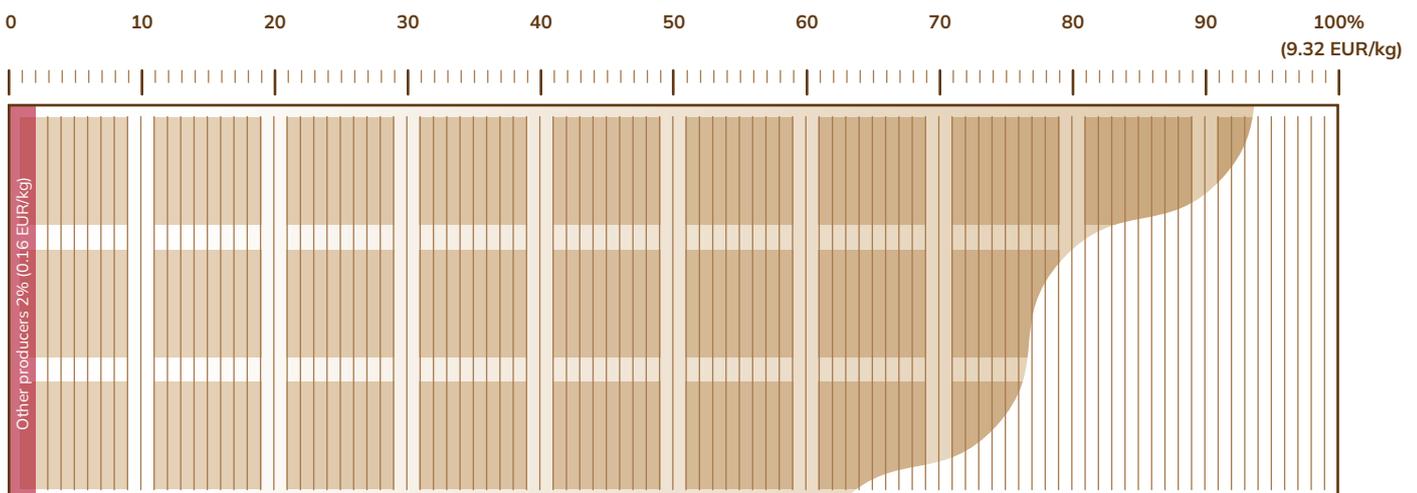
What is the chocolate value chain?

A value chain describes all the value-adding steps that go into the production of a product. In short, the chocolate value chain consists of the following steps:

- **The cocoa farmer:** The cocoa farmer cultivates the cocoa, ferments and dries the cocoa beans, and sells his harvest to a purchaser, typically a government procurement agency.
- **Government procurement agency:** The procurement agency collects all the cocoa, stores it, taxes it and sells it to international chocolate producers.
- **Chocolate producers:** Most of the world's cocoa is bought by a handful of giant corporations. They buy the unprocessed beans, processing them into different chocolate products such as cocoa powder and cocoa butter, which they sell to candy manufacturers.
- **The candy manufacturers:** A handful of giant candy manufacturers produce most of the world's chocolate candy. These are companies such as Mars, Nestlé and Ferrero. They make the chocolate into candy, wrap it, and sell it to the supermarkets (retailers).
- **Retailers:** Supermarkets, newsagents, etc. sell the chocolate candy to consumers.
- **Other producers (2%):** E.g. sugar.

Exercise: Who makes what?

Divide the chocolate bar according to how much you think each player makes off one kilo of dark chocolate.



Recap

- Compare your chocolate value chains in class.
- Your teacher knows the correct value chain distribution. How close did you come to the correct distribution?
- Talk about why the cocoa farmer's portion of the value chain is so relatively low.
- Watch the explainer video on the chocolate value chain together.



Watch the documentary 'The Chocolate War'

For 15 years, Terry Collingsworth, an American human rights lawyer, has worked hard to prosecute the food industry for using illegal child labour, child slavery, and trafficking at cocoa plantations in Côte d'Ivoire. Now the case is going to be reviewed by the Supreme Court of the United States.

When watching the documentary or selected scenes from the documentary, please note what you learn about child labour and child slavery in cocoa farming.

Click on this link to find selected scenes from the documentary.



What would you do if ... Dilemma game about what we can do to end child labour

Poverty is the primary cause of child labour. That is why the efforts have been aimed at fighting poverty. However, the efforts of the chocolate industry and local governments have often fallen short of the extent of the problem. A 2020 report from the University of Chicago shows that the extent of hazardous illegal child labour has not diminished. The report estimates that 1.56 million children are used as child labour in the cocoa industry in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana today. However, the use of child labour has not increased either, which is partly due to the current focus on improving the conditions, the report emphasises.

But who can actually end illegal child labour?

That is what you will be talking about now. You will be presented with four dilemmas where you will take on the role of:

1) poor family, 2) cocoa farmer, 3) candy manufacturer, and 4) consumer.



A poor family

A poor family is starving. Should they sell their sons to the cocoa industry?

Imagine that you are the parent of five children aged 2 to 14 in a small village in Mali in West Africa. You and your partner are living in a house with only one room without electricity or access to water, and you also have a grandmother and a grandfather living with you.

You never went to school, and the survival of your family depends on the harvest of maize, wheat, and peanuts at your small farm. However, this year's harvest has failed due to an extremely long drought, and you only have half the food you need to survive the winter.



Photo: Niels Ahlmann Olesen/Ritzau
Scanpix
A village in Mali.

The family's dilemma: Should they sell their sons to the cocoa industry?

You are considering your options of survival. Your neighbour – an adult man – is offering to marry your 14-year-old daughter. This would leave you with one less mouth to feed. You refuse considering how young your daughter is.

Instead, you take your sons of 11 and 13 years to the nearest town where you meet a man who offers you 50 dollars per child to send them to work on a cocoa farm in the neighbouring country, Côte d'Ivoire. The man says that the children will get free food and lodging as well as a modest pay for working on the farm. The family is now left with a choice between taking the money and losing their sons to an uncertain future or keeping their sons and risking that more members of the family might starve.

Exercise: What would you do?

- Discuss the family's situation.
- What are their options?
- Discuss what you would do if you were in the parents' shoes.
- You can also choose a third option for the parents if you can think of one.



The candy manufacturer

The candy manufacturer's moral responsibility. What would be the best approach?

Imagine that you are responsible for buying cocoa powder and cocoa butter from one of the world's largest and wealthiest candy manufacturers. The cocoa in the chocolate comes from Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, but you do not know how much of it is produced using child labour.

You have decided to find out, and you also have a goal to end child labour in the cocoa industry within the next ten years. But you do not agree on how to achieve that goal. The board of your company has asked you to make a recommendation.



Photo: Unsplash
Cocoa is the key ingredient in chocolate.

The candy manufacturer's dilemma: What would be the best approach?

Being one of the biggest players in the chocolate market, you contribute to deciding how much the cocoa farmers are paid for their cocoa. You are therefore considering whether you should triple the price you pay the cocoa farmers. It would benefit the cocoa farmers directly, but it would also make your chocolate candy more expensive. You also know that cocoa farmers would generally be able to optimise their current cocoa production. So you could also help by providing education, new crops, and a monetary bonus for farmers whose children attend school. The downside to this approach is that it would reach far fewer cocoa farmers as it is difficult to implement in practice and will take longer to produce results.

Exercise: Which approach would you recommend?

- Discuss how well-positioned the candy manufacturer is to end child labour in the cocoa industry.
- Discuss what each of you would recommend the board of the candy manufacturer to do. Explain your reasoning.
- Discuss the possible consequences of each recommendation for the cocoa farmers and the candy manufacturer, respectively.



The cocoa farmer

The cocoa farmer's financial struggles. Could cheap child labour be the solution?

42-year-old Nana Nyanteng Ahenkan knows what it is to be a child labourer. He grew up on his family's cocoa farm in Ghana where his father forced him to carry heavy bags and harvest cocoa beans using very sharp machetes.

Many years later, Nana Nyanteng Ahenkan inherited the farm, and he swore that he would run the farm without the use of child labour. He has become a role model for other cocoa farmers in the area by producing cocoa without using child labour. Instead, he has established a cooperative in which the neighbouring cocoa farmers help each other make the work more efficient.

But Nana's story is a rare one, and the low price of cocoa forces many farmers in Ghana to use cheap child labour to make a living.



Photo: Private photo
Ghanaian cocoa farmer Nana Nyanteng Ahenkan used to be a child labourer himself. As an adult he has dedicated his life to ending the exploitation of children at cocoa farms, which is still extremely widespread.

The cocoa farmer's dilemma: Should the children be sent to work in the plantation?

The average cocoa farmer only makes maybe a thousand dollars a year on his cocoa, and he cannot afford to hire staff, even if he needs help. Therefore, the farmer's dilemma is:

- Should he take his two sons out of school so that they can help on the farm? The children will miss school and risk getting injured. On the other hand, all crops will be harvested.
- Or should he take out a loan from the bank, so he can afford to invest in livestock and other crops on his farm, making him less dependent on cocoa in the long run? However, if he fails to pay his debt on time, he will risk losing his farm to the bank.

Exercise: What would you do?

- Discuss the cocoa farmer's options to avoid the use of child labour?
- Discuss what each of you would do if you were in the cocoa farmer's shoes. What would the consequences of the different choices be?



The consumer

The informed consumer. Should we boycott chocolate?

On average, every person in the world eats 900 grams of chocolate a year. With a few exceptions, it is almost impossible to know if the cocoa used in your favourite chocolate is produced with or without child labour. Not even Fairtrade chocolate is guaranteed to be illegal child labour-free.

The EU is working on making it illegal to sell products in the EU that are produced using forced labour, including child slaves. But today, there is no legislation preventing candy manufacturers from selling chocolate containing cocoa that may have been produced using illegal child labour.



Photo Flynn Edwards/Unsplash
How should consumers react to the cocoa in chocolate being produced using illegal child labour?

The consumer's dilemma: Should we boycott chocolate?

You love chocolate, but you hate the idea that its key ingredient – cocoa – often comes from cocoa farms that use child labour. So you want to do something. - But what can you do? Should you do some research and only buy chocolate that is guaranteed illegal child labour-free? Should you put pressure on the candy manufacturers and supermarkets by starting a boycott? Or something else entirely?

Exercise: What would you do?

- Discuss how you feel about your favourite chocolate potentially being produced using illegal child labour.
- Discuss how you as consumers can make the biggest difference in ending the use of illegal child labour in the cocoa industry.
- Discuss the consumers' responsibility in ending the use of illegal child labour in the cocoa industry. Do you as consumers even have a responsibility?