

CHILD LABOUR PRESENTATION REPORT ON 5TH OCTOBER, 2016 AT FORUM C213

Presentation and documentary on “child labour and control in cocoa production in Ghana was organised with the support of Boerengroep and facilitated by Alex Adu-Gyamfi, student of Development and Rural Innovation and an intern of Stichting Boerengroep (Peasant Foundation). *“Child labour has been an international concern because it damages, spoils and destroys the future of children. Children are the hope and future of a nation.”* The main aim of the programme was to raise awareness of child labour and perception of it in order to mentor our children in agriculture in order to sustain their interest in when they grow up. The focus was also on how child labour hampers the child’s future regarding education and health, but also how to make agriculture attractive again for the younger generations that are migrating to the urban centers to seek for non-existing jobs. Nowadays the youth are losing interest in agriculture and following illegal mining causing much destruction to the farm lands which is a treat to food security and sovereignty. After the short presentation and two documentaries the floor was open for discussion among the audience. The debate was hot regarding child labour of the ‘golden’ crop which contributes more than any other in the agricultural sector in Ghana employed a lot of the rural populates. There were numerous contestations about the definition of International Labour Organisation (ILO) in the sense that it needed to be reviewed and contextualized to the local. What is considered labour in the West, probably in southern rural communities was simply survival.

Audience were inclined into the second position because as put it, the ‘dignification’ of people is something that is constructed and understood in different ways, more locally maybe in this case rather than imposed, therefore, the Achilles’ ankle of this ILO definition and the phobia around child labour. The programme were patronised by 34 participants from various countries (Ghana, Nigeria, Canada, Netherlands, Peru, Italy, and a few more) with different educational background which made the discussions very unique and interesting.

In conclusion participants agreed that child labour exist in cocoa production and other industries but we should be cautious about the way we perceive it so that we can mentor our children in agriculture in order to take over in the future. Besides the child education and health should be taken serious as far as we are mentoring the children. They should take part in application of pesticides and carry heavy loads.

Alex Adu-Gyamfi