

# Children's work in West Africa – what can be done?



# Different children in different work

Diamonds

Returnees

Street children

Migration

Cocoa



# Projects

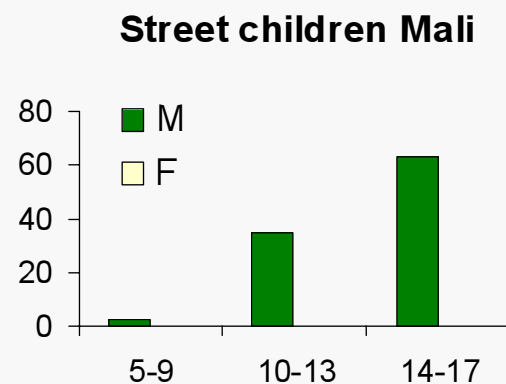
- **Achievements and setbacks in the fight against child labour**  
Lise Bjerkan and Christophe Gironde
- **Travel to uncertainty – a study of child relocation in Burkina Faso, Ghana and Mali**  
Kari Hauge Riisøen, Lise Bjerkan and Anne Hatløy
- **Identification of street children – characteristics of street children in Bamako and Accra**  
Anne Hatløy and Anne Huser
- **Living in a material world – children and youth in alluvial diamond mining in Kono District, Sierra Leone**  
Morten Bøås and Anne Hatløy
- **Child labour and cocoa production in West Africa – the case of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana**  
Morten Bøås and Anne Huser
- **After the 'storm' – economic activities among returning youths, the case of Voinjama**  
Morten Bøås and Anne Hatløy

# Why these cases?

- Children facing different vulnerabilities
  - Agricultural activities among newly returnees in an immediate post-war situation (Liberia)
  - Cash crop farming (Cocoa, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire)
  - Natural resource extractions in a country in transition from war to peace (diamonds in Sierra Leone)
  - Child relocation and migration (Mali, Ghana and Burkina Faso)
  - Most vulnerable children in poor, but stable societies (street children in Bamako and Accra)
- Methodological considerations
  - Testing new and established methods for rare and elusive populations

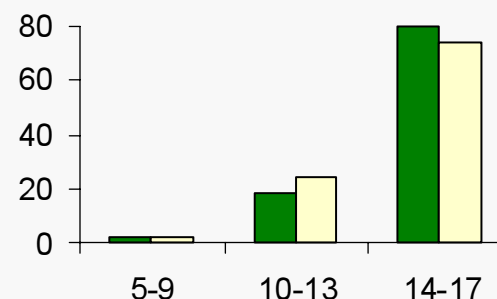
# Who are the children?

July 2004,  
209 boys +  
8 girls

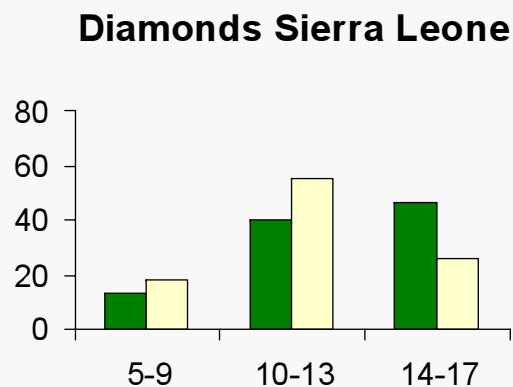


**Street children Ghana**

October 2004,  
338 boys +  
989 girls

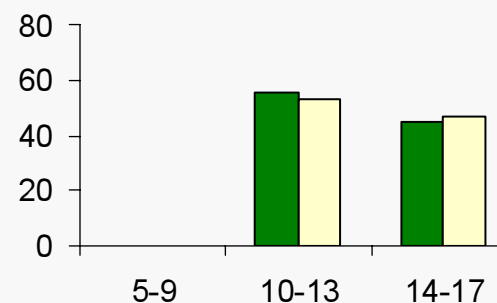


April 2005,  
450 boys +  
168 girls



**Post war Liberia**

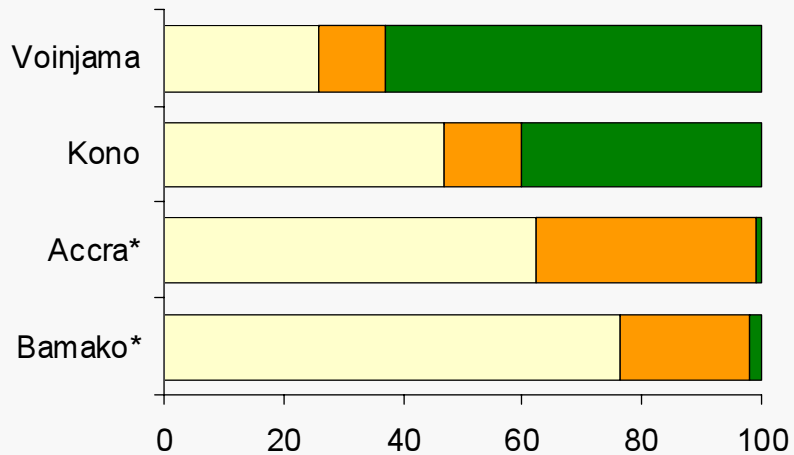
November 2005,  
209 boys +  
270 girls



# Their education

## School attendance

□ Never attended □ Former enrolled ■ Currently enrolled

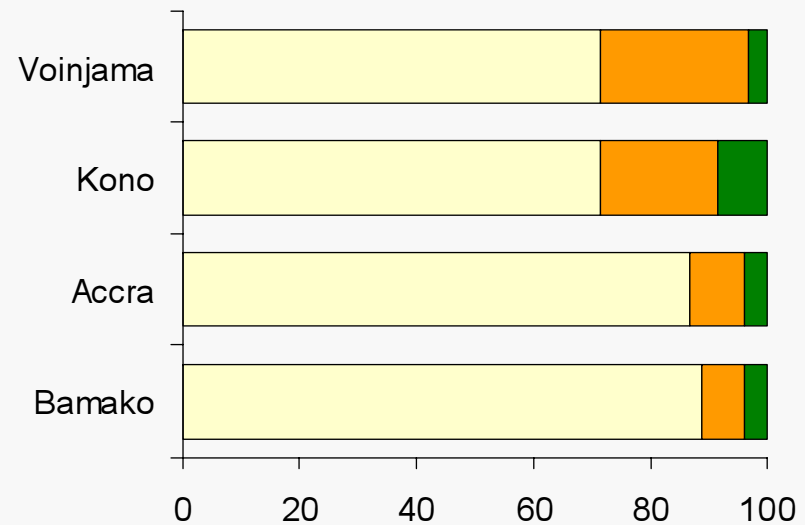


\*Additional 50 % in Mali have been in Koranic school

\*Additional 8 % in Ghana have been to Koranic school

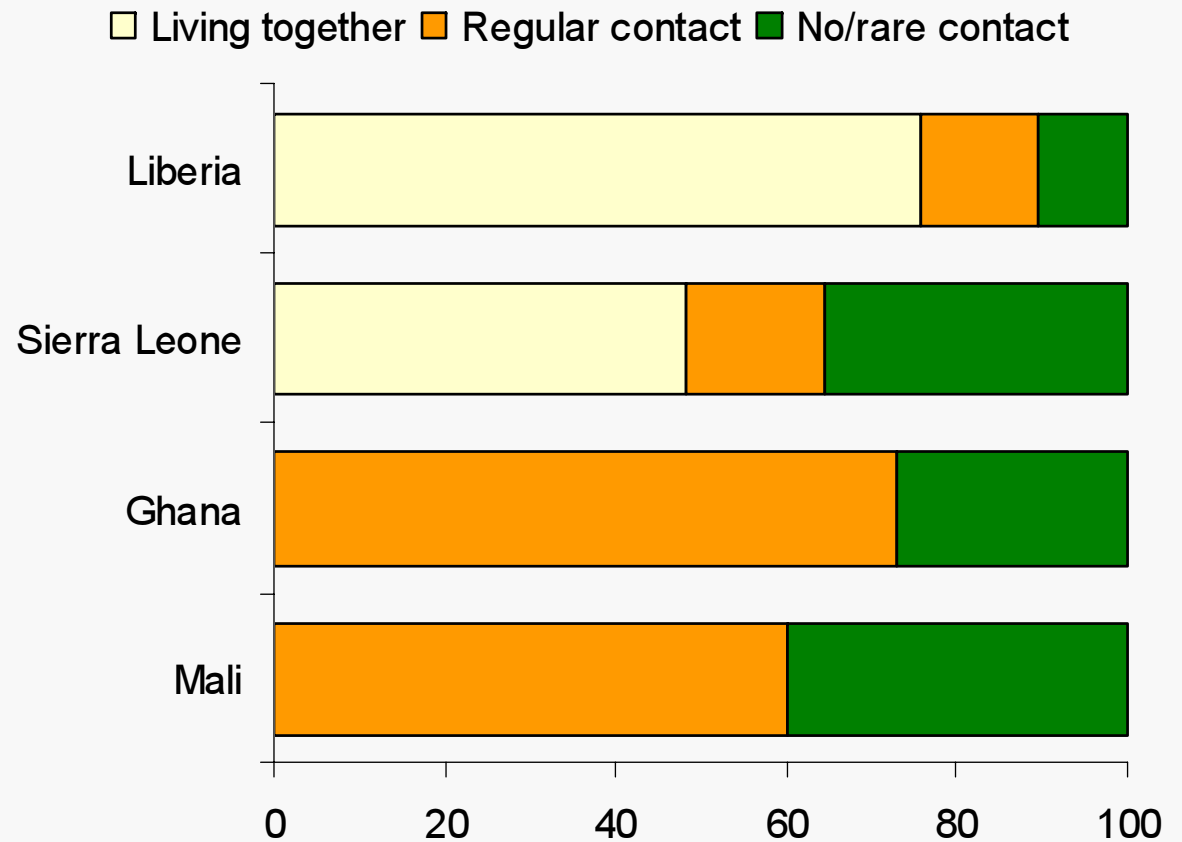
## Ability to read

□ No □ With difficulty ■ Easily



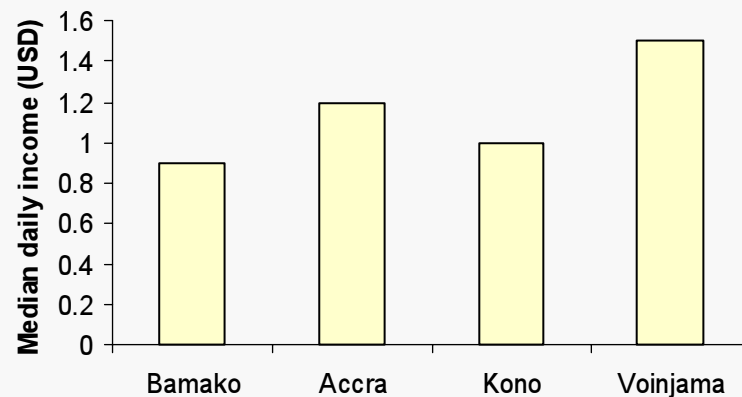
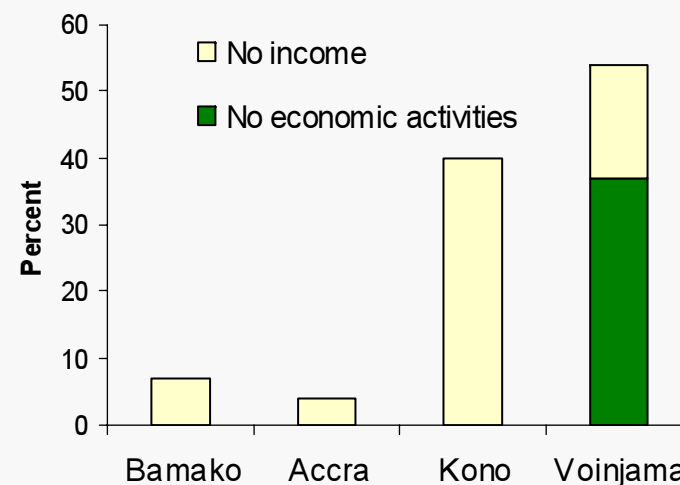
# Contact with parents

- Most of the street children have regular contact with their parents



# What are they obtaining?

- Nearly all the street children have income
- The median daily income for those earning money is 0.9-1.5 USD/day in all the four cases



# Exploitation

- Children work, but most helps out on family farms and businesses
  - Most work every day, but most intense in peak periods
  - For the foreseeable future this will continue
- In accordance with ILO convention 182, we suggest a focus on exploitation and worst forms of child labour
  - Street children
  - Children working for a salary outside of the family structure
  - Children working with pesticides and other chemicals
  - Children working with welding and other hazardous mechanical work

# Combating exploitation

- **Street children: Do not send them home**
  - Give them protection and education
- **Trafficked children:**
  - Closed borders is not the answer, but the issue of migrating children should be discussed at the regional level. Support ECOWAS in this endeavor.
- **Hazardous work**
  - Subsidising pesticides appliance

# What kind of education systems is needed?

- **Make basic education available for all**
  - Formal and informal school fees must be eradicated
  - Redesign school year in accordance to local seasonal calendars
- **Incentives for sending children to school**
  - **Compensation for loss of manpower to families**
    - Local marketing structures
  - **Improved quality and locally embedded curriculum**
    - As a minimum children must learn to read and write
    - Include main local activities in school curriculum

# Organising the informal sector

- Unionising small scale mining
  - Working conditions and increased knowledge about the minerals
- Organising street children
  - Using existing street children networks for shelter and protection