

“In a Nutshell:” Efficacy of Balsu’s Child Protection Program

Executive Summary

As an FLA member company, Balsu undergoes annual [independent external assessments](#) each year to measure and report progress based on [Fair Labor Association \(FLA\) Standards](#). As part of its commitment to improving conditions for workers in their supply chain, Balsu has been operating a farm-level labor monitoring program, “In a Nutshell,” since 2014 in Türkiye. Balsu also participates in a remediation-focused FLA project, “[Harvesting the Future](#),” which aims to improve working conditions across various agricultural commodities.

During the 2021 hazelnuts harvest, FLA’s evaluation of Balsu’s social compliance program included a focused assessment on Balsu’s [labor monitoring and remediation program](#) — implemented jointly with the Genç Hayat Foundation (GHF) — that focuses on child labor with the following objectives:

- Preventing child labor by monitoring children whose families work in Balsu’s hazelnut supply chain and facilitating the children’s access to school.
- Raising awareness at the local and national level and inspiring the development of a sustainable model to combat child labor that may be adopted by local authorities and other companies.

FLA’s focused assessment aims to measure progress, identify gaps, and provide recommendations for improvement. During this assessment, two independent researchers interviewed 30 workers, 15 children, 14 field officers, six field coordinators, four teachers, three producers, two labor contractors, and four staff from the GHF project management team in Düzce, Sakarya, Samsun, and Ordu during the peak harvest season in August and September of 2021.

Key Findings

- **Monitoring identified several working children:** In 2021, GHF visited 1,606 families and identified 3,349 children (younger than 18 years old) in four provinces in the Western and Eastern Black Sea regions. Among the population of children, approximately 46% stated that they work on hazelnut farms and thus fall within the definition of child labor.¹ Balsu has been implementing its social compliance program

¹ The Turkish Ministry of Labor and Social Security has prepared the second National Plan Against Child Labor in accordance with the ILO Convention 182 in 2017. According to the plan, the worst forms of child labor in Türkiye are “working on the street,” “working in small- and medium-scale enterprises doing heavy and dangerous tasks,” and “paid seasonal and migrant work in agriculture, outside family enterprises” (Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik

in the Western Black Sea region since 2014 and has recently extended the program to the Eastern Black Sea region.

- **Mobile workshops helped reach remote locations and provided access to more children:** With the help of mobile workshops, GHF reached children in the most remote locations, including the challenging Eastern Black Sea region. Furthermore, families were more easily persuaded when implementing this model as they prefer workshops held in camps and residential areas instead of a school building or a government office that is difficult for them to access. Accessing and persuading large numbers of children and families was important for Balsu as their program is relatively new in the region.
- **Attending mobile workshops does not imply that children have stopped working in the hazelnut gardens:** It is difficult to convince families to stop children from working in the field and attending mobile workshops does not imply children have stopped working. Almost all families stated that children older than 15 would harvest hazelnuts. Persuading families to let their children attend the workshop was comparatively easier for the younger children (11-12 years).
- **It is difficult to determine if child labor has been reduced:** Project activities provided safe spaces for children to be children, play and interact with their peers. The assessment found anecdotal evidence of improvements in children's willingness to attend school and families' willingness to participate in the project. However, further work is required to measure tangible effects like a reduction in child labor cases. 2021 can be considered a pilot year for the model and gaps were noticed in establishing a system to document the success and challenges of the project and measure impact.

Balsu's response to this assessment is included at the end of the report.

Bakanlığı, 2017). Accordingly, children below 18 years old cannot be employed in mobile and temporary agricultural work, except for family work.

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1. Introduction

In 2021, FLA conducted a focused assessment of Balsu's Child Protection Program between August 23 and September 4. Children of seasonal migrant agricultural workers, their families, labor contractors, and producers were interviewed through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions.

Balsu and the Genç Hayat Foundation (GHF) began collaborating in 2014 to address and prevent child labor. In 2021, their joint project, "In a Nutshell," aimed to remove child labor in hazelnut production, specifically in the provinces of Düzce, Ordu, Sakarya, and Samsun.

The main objective of the program is to monitor child labor, facilitate access to education, provide them with age-appropriate education, create safe spaces to support children in the harvest communities and reduce the risk of child labor, enhance children's emotional, physical, psychological, and social well-being, and increase children's desire to attend school as it is assumed to be a significant factor in their attendance.

A sub-objective was to raise local and national awareness and inspire the development of a sustainable model to combat child labor. The project aimed to reach 2,600 children in 2021, and an additional 500 children of seasonal migrant workers in their hometowns of Mardin and Diyarbakır in winter. GHF observed that children of seasonal migrant workers are at extreme risk of child labor due to lack of access to education.

This focused assessment analyzed the various components of the project, identified strengths and challenges, and assessed how the project is perceived by stakeholders (commodity intermediaries and traders, suppliers, farmers, and most importantly, the migrant worker households).

Two independent assessors collected data from 78 people in 13 villages, four provinces and seven districts, where the project was implemented (Table 1). During the field research, 30 workers, 15 children, 14 field officers, six field coordinators, four teachers, two labor contractors, and three producers were interviewed as well as four members of the GHF project management team. The information was supplemented by data from the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system of GHF. The research focused on:

- 1) Assessing organizational and logistical effectiveness;
- 2) Evaluating field-level implementation and effects on the target community and ability to fulfill project objectives; and
- 3) Screening of GHF's M&E system.²

² Photos and quantitative data are taken from GHF records.

Table 1: Assessment locations

Province	District	Village
Samsun	Salıpazarı	Yavaşbey
Ordu	İkizce	Kurtluca
		Kurtköy
		Beyceli
		Düzpelit
		Karlıtepe
	Fatsa	Perşembe
		Eski Ordu Yolu 1.-9 Worker camps
Sakarya	Karapürçek	Küçükkarapürçek
	Hendek	Kazımiye
Düzce	Gümüşova	Yıldıztepe
	Gölyaka	Bekiroğlu

Balsu and GHF have been implementing summer schools as part of their child protection program since 2014. However, as the COVID-19 pandemic restricted indoor schooling, Balsu and GHF operated mobile workshops close to workers' accommodations in open-air settings. This assessment evaluated the effectiveness of mobile workshops in reaching project goals. The field research took place during harvest, so the findings do not cover the impact of activities planned for the winter.

2. Balsu's child labor mitigation efforts

Child labor continues to be a problem in Türkiye's agriculture sector, especially among seasonal migrant workers that form most of the agriculture labor force. Türkiye produces about 70% of the world's hazelnuts. Hazelnut harvest is labor-intensive, and producers employ large numbers of seasonal migrant workers. Studies by FLA and other institutions indicate that child labor in the hazelnut harvest is undertaken mainly by seasonal migrant workers from the eastern and southeastern provinces of Türkiye.

Before the harvest, Balsu analyzed the number of workers and their geographical distribution in its supply chain, which helped prioritize the villages with more migrant workers and a higher risk of child labor. The goal was to map the movements of seasonal migrant workers and agricultural intermediaries, which is considered a key path to removing child labor. Based on this data, GHF planned their child protection activities. In 2021, the Balsu Sustainability team:

- Trained 966 producers in four locations on topics such as good agricultural practices, occupational health and safety, good social practices — topics such as provisions on workers' daily wages, hours of work, improved accommodation conditions for workers, and sanitation and environment and adaptation.
- Trained 1,701 workers in their housing accommodations in Sakarya and Düzce. After these training sessions, Balsu distributed personal protective equipment and hygiene kits to workers.
- Maintained close contact with workers and labor contractors. These efforts focused on informing the unregistered labor contractors about their responsibilities and duties for workers and getting formally registered. As a result, 19 labor contractors applied for licenses.

3. Findings

a. Mobile workshops

Mobile workshops consisted of three consecutive modules delivered to children by teachers and social services specialists:

- 1) Hygiene and enhancing well-being;
- 2) Innovative thinking; and
- 3) Various activities.

The training materials were developed with several developmental stages in mind: ages 6 to 8, ages 9 to 13, and ages 14 to 18. In addition, the field workshop application booklet designed for workshop coordinators was updated based on the needs of each age group. This booklet also includes suggestions to improve the content's implementation. According to GHF's M&E system, 1,631 workshops were conducted, and 2,774 children attended at least one workshop. A

The hygiene and well-being module includes two workshops. The first teaches the basics of personal care, housekeeping, and food preparation. The second teaches various physical, cognitive, and meditative exercises to help children regulate their nervous system while under stress. During this workshop, children get to know each other through games and develop group rules for harmony. A complimentary hygiene package is provided to children who attend the first workshop. This module is a prerequisite to registering children, encouraging further attendance, and setting the rules for upcoming workshops.

The innovative thinking module encourages children to think out of the box, question the status quo and use their imagination, and empathize. The materials are prepared with the help of a clinical psychologist. Asking questions is critical for intellectual development and the general welfare of society, and children are encouraged to consider questions they had never thought of before, which allows them to dream and break free from their current situation. It is designed to increase children's curiosity about themselves, their surroundings, and the universe so that they can cultivate self-awareness, self-confidence, a sense of worthiness, and capability. Its goal is to increase children's motivation to return to school after COVID-19 restrictions were lifted. It comprised of two workshops: "I am Discovering Myself: The World Inside Me" and "My Universe."

Various activities for children. The third module is a collection of seven workshops, each dedicated to a children's activity that helps develop psychosocial and cognitive abilities through games and activities, such as stories, origami, drama, designing musical instruments, games, and writing letters to the future workshops to support the academic curriculum.

total of 8,377 children were counted in all the workshops. Teachers and field staff were trained before the project kick-off and were provided with a guide that covered the workshop purpose and methods. GHF distributed food, hygiene, and stationery kits to children who attended the workshops.

The GHF field team had Kurdish and Arabic speakers as well as former child laborers. This facilitated the implementation of the project, established trust with the families, and had a positive impact on reaching the children.

b. Project Team

The GHF team consisted of 42 teachers, 32 field officers, 11 field coordinators and one project coordinator.

The **field coordinators** are responsible for:

- 1) **Correspondence with local authorities.** Their responsibilities include getting approval for the project locations and collecting data on workers' identities and the locations of worker camps. Field coordinators accompanied by field officers meet with local authorities and occasionally by the project coordinator when a problem occurs.
- 2) **Information and material flow between GHF and field workers and workers' families.** Data collection during family registration, workshop registration, and daily attendance and storing in the M&E database are the primary duties in this area. Field coordinators further determine and arrange the supply of necessary aid, hygiene and stationery kits and materials and tools used during the workshops, such as foldable stools and floor mats. They organize daily lunch for the children attending the workshops.
- 3) **Leading a group of three or four field officers.** They monitor field workers' well-being and provide guidance or motivation and organize the upcoming day's workshop schedule based on the data by the field officers and make sure the teachers are present at the right location and time. Field coordinators report problems to the project coordinator.

Field officers are mainly social workers and assist the field coordinators.

- 1) They conduct family visits, obtain families' approval for their children to attend the workshops, help families complete the family registration forms, set up the safe space for the workshops, completing the workshop registration forms with children, and organize and track the workshops and children's attendance. Field officers keep track of the primary data entered into the system and in notebooks to avoid double counts or negligence.
- 2) Field officers deliver and track the aid, hygiene, and stationery packages and track them to ensure all registered families receive the aid package and all children who attended the first workshop get the hygiene and stationery kits. They stay connected with families and record if there is a risk of drop-out or if the children need to change the location of registration for an exam or for school next semester. They also follow up on the families' needs and contact the local authorities in case their assistance is required.

Teachers led the workshops as elaborated in the guidance document provided by GHF. They also occasionally fill out the workshop registration forms with children and always record attendance during workshops.

Three five-day orientation training workshops are provided to field coordinators, managers, and teachers. GHF team and expert trainers use methods to convey information about effective communication with seasonal migrant agricultural worker families and children, training on field workshops acquisition, material use and application steps, the transfer of M&E methods and tools, and the self-care workshop.

Per interviews with field staff, they significantly benefited from these training sessions. The training helped them establish a common ground, agree on the program details, and act in harmony. The sessions also covered topics relating to psychological first aid, non-violent communication, and field simulation to help them respond to the challenges. Field staff work long hours, and the fast-paced program requires constant contact with worker communities for different purposes such as family persuasion, logistics and conducting training. These sessions aimed to prepare them to work in high pressure environments.

The training also included instructions on collecting data and entering it into the SurveyCTO application (the software used to collect and evaluate data). Interviews with the field team indicated that they were pleased to be part of this project.

While most workshops focused on the children of seasonal migratory workers, occasionally the workshops were held in mixed groups with farmers' and workers' children. Ninety-five children from local farming communities joined mobile workshops.

c. Preparations

The field team started project preparations in June 2021. Before the harvest, they explored Balsu's supply chain in the Western and Eastern Black Sea regions to determine the project locations based on a risk assessment. Balsu's Social Sustainability Team conducted the risk assessment working with the head of the villages, farmers, and labor contractors to map the expected number of workers in the villages. This analysis helped identify villages with high number of workers and children. Balsu kept GHF informed about the locations and shared contacts of the head of villages and labor contractors throughout the harvest. GHF's team established contacts with the local administrations, village leaders, and others to obtain necessary permissions.

Interviewed field staff indicated that they did not encounter resistance from the community and local authorities supported the project. Some village heads helped in building relationships with workers' families and producers.

d. Implementation



Implementation has three main stages:

1- Completing Family Registration:
The field team introduces the project to the families and seek parents' consent for their children to join the workshops.

At this stage, the field team refrains from stating that this is a child labor mitigation project. They underline that mobile workshop aims to strengthen the children's ties to school. In this sense, the project takes a gradual approach to

first gain the trust of families and to remove children from the field and in later stages include the family in educational activities.

The family registration form is completed either directly with the software or on paper.

- 2- **Finding a Safe Space and Setting the Date:** Field coordinators and managers set a safe space in the accommodation areas and agree on a date to conduct the workshops. The safe space is usually a clean, quiet place near the workers' accommodation, where the team places signal tapes to keep others at a distance. On rainy days or when there is no safe place, workshops are held in families' tents.
- 3- **Conducting Workshops:** The teachers arrive on the agreed day to conduct workshops. The team usually spends three to five days in the same place depending on the availability of the children and then moves to other areas in the region.

Overall, three factors contributed to building trust with the community:

- 1- Establishing the first contact through labor contractors;
- 2- Having Kurdish-speaking field coordinators to facilitate communication; and
- 3- Underlining that the objective of the program is to strengthen children's ties with the school.

e. Observed challenges

FLA identified some challenges in accessing the target community and project implementation. For example, at a camp in Düzpelit, Ordu, the labor contractor and farmer limited GHF team's access to the camp. They could enter the camp only for one day and conduct one workshop. The researchers advise GHF and Balsu to discuss possible reasons, develop strategies to overcome challenges, and implement these strategies to ensure more effective implementation and security of the GHF team.

Another challenge was the attitudes of some local communities and village governors about seasonal migratory workers, who faced prejudice based on ethnic diversities. They were mistrustful of a program that focused on this specific community and assumed ulterior motives. A possible solution is to raise awareness among village leaders and farmers to reduce prejudices and discriminatory attitudes against seasonal migrant workers and invite them to be part of the efforts.

Balsu has been implementing its social compliance program in the Western Black Sea region since 2014. There, the local authorities and producers are accustomed to such activities, company involvement, and CSO engagement. Balsu recently extended the scope of the program to cover the Eastern Black Sea region, where similar results have yet to be achieved.

Figure 1: A snapshot from family registration form - SurveyCTO application

Field	Question	Answer
form_baslangic	<p>Fındık Bahane 2021 Aile Kayıt Formuna Hoş Geldiniz.</p> <p>Sizden bu form boyunca "Görüşmecı Bilgileri", "Hane Kodu Bilgileri", "İletişim Bilgileri", "Demografik Bilgiler" ve "Çocuk Bilgileri" olmak üzere toplam beş (5) ana başlık altında bulunan soruları yanıtlanmanız beklenmektedir. Formda bir sonraki sayfaya geçmek için bilgisayarda "Next" tuşuna tıklayabilir, telefon/tablette ekranı kaydırabilirsiniz. Önceki sayfalara dönmek için de "Previous" tuşuna tıklamanız ya da</p> <p>telefon/tablette ekranı soldan sağa sürükleyerek kaydırmanız gerekmektedir. Form boyunca takip etmeniz gereken diğer talimatlar da size açıklanacaktır. Forma başlamak için "Next" tuşuna tıklayabilir ya da telefon/tablette ekranı kaydırabilirsiniz.</p> <p>Kolaylıklar dileriz.</p>	
Görüşmecı Bilgileri		
g_ad_soyad (required)	Görüşmecinin Adı ve Soyadı:	
gorusmecı_gorev (required)	Görüşmecinin görevi nedir?	<input type="checkbox"/> Saha <input type="checkbox"/> koordinatörü <input type="checkbox"/> Saha sorumlusu <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> Öğretmen <input type="checkbox"/> ğr
g_tarih (required)	Görüşmenin gerçekleştiği tarihi giriniz.	
	Görüşmenin gerçekleştiği il ve ilçe	
	Görüşmenin gerçekleştiği il ve ilçeyi yazınız. Örn: Sakarya/Hendek	

f. Implementation and impact on workers and children

GHF visited 1606 families: 586 in Sakarya, 454 in Düzce, and 566 in the Ordu-Samsun region. In total, 3,349 children (under 18 years old) were identified; of those, 1,547 (46.2%) stated working on the hazelnut farms and are considered child workers according to Turkish law.³

Table 2: Number of families registered, and children identified per location

Province	District	Registered Families	Identified Children
DÜZCE	Cumayeri	35	71
	Çilimli	25	43
	Gölyaka	136	210
	Gümüşova	166	298
	Merkez	10	17
	Yığılca	82	157

³ Türkiye recognizes the use of child labor in seasonal agriculture as one of the three worst forms of child labor.

Subtotal		454	796
ORDU SAMSUN	Ordu/Fatsa-Gölköy-Gürgentepe-Perşembe	199	438
	Ordu/İkizce	131	355
	Samsun	236	678
Subtotal		566	1471
SAKARYA	Akyazı-Karapürçek	197	341
	Ferizli	129	239
	Hendek	176	319
	Kocaali	57	118
	Serdivan	27	65
Subtotal		586	763
TOTAL		1,606	3,349

The following figure demonstrates the number of workshops in which children participated: 2,774 children attended one workshop, 2,664 attended two, and 1,185 children attended three workshops.

Figure 2: Number of workshops in which children participated

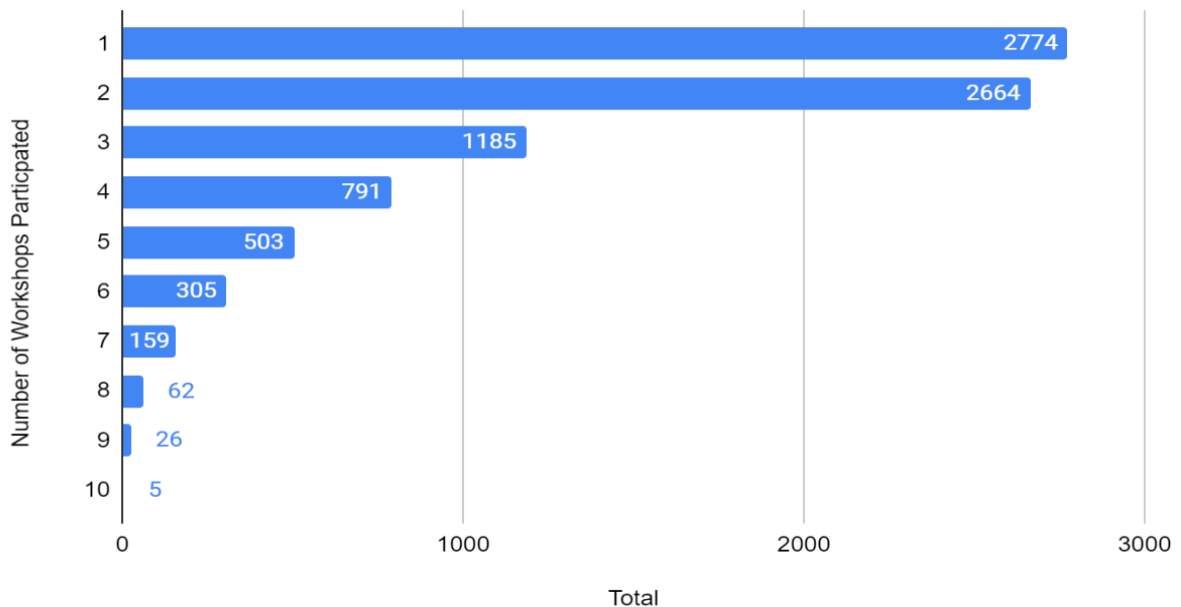


Table 3 shows that 1,547 children worked at hazelnut gardens and attended mobile workshops. Children who attended the mobile workshops had not necessarily stopped working in the gardens or vice versa. GHF did not conduct an impact evaluation after the workshops that would allow such a conclusion. Some field staff testified that some of the

children who attended the workshop stopped working at the gardens, there is no follow-up monitoring and evaluation system to verify the claims.

The qualitative findings through in-depth interviews with the families signal several challenges. Almost all families stated that children older than 15 would work to harvest hazelnuts. Persuading families to let their children attend the workshop was comparatively easier for the younger children (11 and 12 years). FLA assessors noted that it is rather difficult to persuade families to stop children from working in the field and attending the mobile workshops does not always mean that children have stopped working in the hazelnut’s gardens.

GHF used a family registration form to identify the worker families that will be in the hazelnut region after the start of the school year. They used this data to inform the families on how to register their children to the school in the areas they work so that they would not miss the opportunity to attend formal education during seasonal migratory work. Eight-hundred and forty-three families stated that they would stay in the region even after the start of the school year.

FLA found that the children older than 15 attended the mobile workshops mainly when there was no work at the garden. GHF field coordinators further mentioned that they could not find children they registered through the family registration process when they came back to conduct the workshop because the children were usually at the gardens.

To solve this challenge, they started informing the families beforehand and arranging the workshops according to the presence of the children at the camps. In addition, they gave their contact numbers to the labor contractors and the families so that families could call them when the children were at the camp. The flexibility of the field staff in changing strategy and adopting the target community's conditions to reach more children contributed to the wide-scale implementation of the project.

GHF staff visited the same campsite and held workshops for three to five days, depending on the children’s availability during the entire season. They spent the evenings during these days to register more families to be able to conduct more workshops. GHF team noted that they were occasionally successful in persuading the family to leave their children at the campsite some days.

Table 3: Demographics of children

Field Name	Age Group	Sex		TOTAL	Working		TOTAL
		Female	Male		Female	Male	
DÜZCE	3-5	2	4	6	0	0	0
	6-9	65	63	128	3	6	9
	10-13	113	90	203	73	54	127
	14-17	149	122	271	145	117	262
Subtotal		329	279	608	221	177	398
ORDU SAMSUN	3-5	17	22	39	0	0	0
	6-9	188	182	370	7	18	25
	10-13	202	245	447	139	178	317
	14-17	150	133	283	148	125	273

	Subtotal	557	582	1,139	294	321	615
SAKARYA	3-5	8	2	10	0	0	0
	6-9	144	176	320	4	5	9
	10-13	174	163	332	105	91	196
	14-17	171	163	334	168	161	329
	Subtotal	497	504	1,001	277	257	534
TOTAL		1,383	1,365	2,748	792	755	1,547

FLA assessors observed that most of the children older than 12 worked in the garden as also observed by several other studies in the Black Sea Region.⁴ The data collected on children was specifically sex-segregated to explore possible stereotypes and inequalities. Assessors did not observe any significant difference. Families and labor contractors stated that they migrate per season to northern Türkiye to earn money. Their main objective is to earn as much money as possible with the help of all family members, meaning they are reluctant to allow their children to quit working and attend workshops. For example, on one rainy day, four sisters joined a workshop due to no work at the garden. The girls' father said he would not allow his daughters to attend the workshop if there is work at the garden. He calculated the daily earnings of four girls (130 TRY each) and said, "I cannot leave more than 500 TRY." This position is true for most families.



Women and children at the campsite.



Children participate in a mobile workshop.

Assessment findings signal that the elimination and prevention of child labor should be a long-term goal. 2021 was the first year of scale and the objective of the project is to change the workers' mindset, raise awareness of the importance of schooling and the impact can be assessed in the following years. FLA recommends that Balsu and GHF develop appropriate M&E tools and key performance indicators to be able to assess the effectiveness of the project in this regard. Despite this, FLA assessors in the interviews observed that the project supports the emotional, psychosocial, and physical well-being of the children affected by seasonal migratory

labor.

An experienced teacher noted that children who joined the workshops were happy. Living in difficult conditions, not having the chance to attend school regularly, and working on farms make the children feel worthless according to their evaluation. The project makes them feel

⁴ For more information on worker demographics, please refer to Fair Labor Association (2017) Hazelnut workers in Turkey: Demographic Profiling, Düzce, Ordu, and Sakarya.

cared for and worthy again. Teachers and social workers talk to these children and listen to their problems, and the children feel heard and empowered. The stationery kits, backpacks, and hygiene kits contribute to this feeling. Teachers stated that even small activities such as drawing, and painting can be beneficial for motor skills development. These exercises support children's eagerness to continue education and lead to the social development and socialization process.

The GHF team helps with the practical problems regarding children's education when the families ask for help and guidance, such as changing the location of the pre-registered examination or helping with high school placements.

a. Workshop content and kits

In terms of designing age-appropriate content for the modules, teachers informed the FLA team that, before the workshop, they divide the children into subgroups according to their age. For example, if three children are in the 6-to-10 age group and five children are in the 13-to-17 age group, the GHF team decides to conduct two separate workshops to provide more accessible content. According to them the hygiene and wellbeing module is appropriate for most children but can be boring for older children. Therefore, additional topics were covered for the 14-to-18 age group, such as developmental aspects of adolescence. A female workshop coordinator was assigned to a girls-only workshop for 13-to-18-year-olds regarding menstruation information, hygiene, and care.

The content of the hygiene module could feel unrealistic on some campsites, especially when the families do not have access to clean water to brush their teeth or wash the bedcovers every week. In such cases, the workshop content was explained with a practical approach and teachers and field staff followed up with students. The hygiene module was adapted to the camp conditions and daily life conditions outside of the camp. After attending the health and hygiene training session, each child received a hygiene kit, including a toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, mask, and cologne. The kits' usage was demonstrated.

Assessors observed that teachers with formal pedagogical training could employ various strategies to make the content accessible for the children. They are more experienced in managing the children, keeping their attention, and maintaining discipline.

The stationery and hygiene kits were especially attractive to children and increased their willingness to attend school. The stationery kit was composed of a backpack, pens and pencils, notebooks, rulers, and other necessary materials. Children younger than five were not given the stationery kits because they were outside the scope of the project. In the future, GHF intends to distribute a kit that includes preschool content. Some children used the hygiene kit to brush their teeth and proudly showed them to the GHF team the next day. These incidents show that the workshops were effective in bringing about small behavior changes.



A volunteer leads a mobile workshop session.

In worker camps where there were migrant workers facing the worst economic conditions, such as Fatsa and Perşembe, the families were persuaded through the distribution of food packages.

In conclusion, the project activities were efficient in fostering short-term well-being among younger children and the ones who attended the workshops despite the structural limits of poverty, migration, and deprivation of basic services.

g. GHF's M&E system



FLA assessors assessed GHF's data recording and monitoring system. The main objective was to avoid the double counting of the same child in different workshops. The second objective was to assess the feasibility of the registration forms.

GHF's team recorded national identification numbers of the children identified during family registrations and used this database to check if the same children are registered

more than once to prevent double-counting.

The field team noted problems completing the workshop registration form; the children were bored in the process and the duration of the workshop was affected. Most of the information asked in the workshop registration form was already asked in the family registration form.

Overall, the registration process effectively identified child workers in Balsu's supply chain. The data gathered through family and workshop registration forms can be used to establish a child removal and referral system database because it records the farmer, location, and labor contractor.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Due to COVID-19, Balsu and GHF implemented a mobile workshop model as a small pilot in 2020 and scaled it in the summer of 2021. The content was made more fun and interesting for the children with the inclusion of games, and the formal curriculum was lightened. This strategy proved productive as it enabled GHF to reach more children in remote locations experiencing more challenging conditions.

The project enabled GHF and Balsu to reach a wide number of beneficiaries and identify the prevalence and number of child laborers. It allowed for working directly with the families and agricultural intermediaries at scale. Worker families appreciated mobile workshops being held in camps and residential areas instead of an out-of-sight school building. Having Kurdish and Arabic-speaking field members to facilitate the implementation of the project proved to be a highly effective strategy. Children and families welcomed the strategy and the cooperation between the team members.

Overall, there were clear indicators that the project enhanced the children's emotional, physical, psychological, and social well-being, and for the younger age group, it served as encouragement for them to attend school. Furthermore, the M&E component supported Balsu's supply chain mapping. However, this baseline assessment was not able to determine

the project's impact on the elimination of child labor in Balsu's supply chain during the 2021 harvest.

Currently, Balsu and GHF do not have a system to assess the impact of the project in combatting child labor. The main recommendation of this report is to establish such a system to be able to assess the success and challenges to meet the project objectives. Development of key performance indicators would be the first step for Balsu and GHF to establish this system and to improve project activities, develop a road map to address challenges raised in this report.

In addition to the establishment of an assessment system, it is also recommended to:

- Extend Balsu's due diligence program, training, and awareness-raising activities to all GHF project locations, especially in the Eastern Black Sea region as a new region under Balsu's supply chain. Awareness-raising of child labor among families and other stakeholders is a significant step in child labor mitigation and this move would support the project objectives.
- Work with teachers with formal pedagogical training to deliver content since they are better qualified, have more experience managing the children, keeping their attention, and maintaining discipline.
- Keep having social services specialists in the field team since it was beneficial in multiple areas. Their expertise is needed, especially in accessing the community, registering families, coordinating the field activities, and providing guidance on available social services.
- Re-evaluate the workshop content according to the needs and feedback from the workers, children, and the GHF field team. Now that the GHF has records on the age distribution of the children, workshop content can be revised accordingly, and new content can be introduced based on this year's findings.
- Make minor adaptations in the registration forms, like decreasing the number of signatures expected from parents on the family registration form and shortening the workshop registration form.
- Revise the content of hygiene and stationery kits according to the needs of the children and according to the feedback of the field team. The kits can be distributed more widely – not only to the children who attended the workshops, but also to others (possibly families).
- Hire additional staff for the kits' logistics and delivery. Currently, field coordinators and responsible staff members must carry this task alongside their more critical duty of field preparation and family registration.

5. Balsu's Response to the Assessment

a. Challenges

While the COVID-19 pandemic has created various difficulties and damages in many countries of the world, families of seasonal migrant agricultural workers in Türkiye have also been deeply affected by the increasing poverty and deprivation. This situation has pushed the children of these families to a much more limited point in their access to education. The distance education model used in informal education in the 2020-2021 period has made it even more difficult for these children to access education.

Another critical issue is the changing climate conditions. Heavy rain in some regions has reduced the harvest period and made hazelnut farmers concerned about the amount and quality of the product. The impact of the pandemic and changing climate on the world's hazelnut supply have recently been reflected in the international press. At the same time, the shift in the hazelnut harvest season due to the weather has also affected the time and duration of seasonal migrant agricultural workers' stays in the hazelnut region and their children's participation in school education. Also, the number of seasonal migrant agricultural worker families traveling for the hazelnut harvest has decreased since 2020 due to the infrastructure problems when seasonal agricultural workers come to the hazelnut growing regions, and the inability to establish the desired business relationship between farmers, workers, and labor contractors and the physical and physiological effects of the pandemic.

b. Balsu's general approach

In line with Balsu's principles of social responsibility, Balsu will continue to develop local communities and grow sustainably in collaboration with related Ministries, local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), universities, development agencies, unions, farmers, labor contractors, workers, children of seasonal agricultural workers both in hazelnut-producing and immigrant cities and customers to tackle the most pressing issues that became even worse concerning the labor conditions and human rights abuses in the hazelnut production in Türkiye.

Balsu will strengthen the project's traceability aspect by considering the due diligence system created to prevent child labor and taking measures to guarantee that ethical measures and decent working conditions are implemented in the hazelnuts supply chain. Balsu will extend the due diligence system throughout their supply chain.

c. Main activities and promise

Balsu plans to undertake the activities below:

- Strengthening child labor monitoring and remediation systems.
- Training for supply chain actors.
- Mapping and simulation activities.
- Continuous traceability efforts.
- Support OHS efforts and distribution of personal protective equipment.
- Labor contractor support program.
- Support for registered employment.
- Active grievance channel.
- Reaching out to labor contractors, workers, families, teachers, women workers, and children more effectively in immigrant cities.
- Developing stronger ties with local authorities in cities of origin.

Balsu is keen to extend its program activities beyond harvest time and work with the supply chain actors throughout the year. Together with hazelnut farmers and traders, heads of the chambers of associations, the municipality, village leaders, local NGOs, representatives of the local Directorate of Agriculture offices, and teachers from the hazelnut-producing cities of Ordu, Samsun, Zonguldak, Düzce and Sakarya, Balsu will visit the selected cities of origin, Mardin and Diyarbakır in Spring 2022.⁵ Through this visit, Balsu aims to:

- Create an opportunity for farmers to step into workers' shoes by witnessing their realities in their homes, and
- Transform farmers into social compliance partners of Balsu in the field of tackling child labor in the hazelnut supply chain and improve working and living conditions of seasonal agricultural workers.

In cooperation with GHF, Balsu will also undertake other activities in these cities in winter and spring 2022 to support and boost the impact of their 2022 harvest efforts. These activities will include:

- Following up on worker families' children – specifically their school attendance – during the academic year in their cities of origin
- Conducting workshops for teachers on the elimination of child labor and inclusive education principles;
- Conducting need assessments of women from working families and delivering training on areas of need; and
- Delivering training to labor contractors.

⁵ Mardin and Diyarbakır were selected based on the mapping study conducted with labor contractors, workers, and children in 2021 in the harvest cities of Sakarya and Düzce. It was observed that members of the workforce were mainly from Mardin and Diyarbakır.