



The Cocoa & Forests Initiative: Collective Action to End Cocoa-Related Deforestation



The governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana and 35 leading cocoa and chocolate companies, representing 85% of global cocoa usage, joined together in the Cocoa & Forests Initiative to end deforestation and restore forest areas. Their combined actions play a crucial role in sequestering carbon stocks in West African forests and addressing climate change, in line with the Paris Climate Agreement. The Cocoa & Forests Initiative delivers on Sustainable Development Goal 13 (Climate Action) and 15 (Life on Land).

The Cocoa & Forests Initiative is a public private partnership based on frameworks for action (Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana) and action plans for the private sector (Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana) and public sector (Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana) that spell out commitments to:

- protect and restore forests,
- promote sustainable cocoa production and farmers' livelihoods,
- engage communities and boost social inclusion.

To learn more, follow #CocoaAndForests on social media, or visit CocoaAndForests.org and WorldCocoa.org.

The World Cocoa Foundation (WCF); IDH, the Sustainable Trade Initiative; and the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana drive the Cocoa & Forests Initiative. The Prince of Wales launched the Initiative in March 2017 and reviewed implementation progress in November 2018.

Deforestation of tropical rainforests is a major issue in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, which together produce nearly two-thirds of the world's supply of cocoa, the main ingredient in chocolate. Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana respectively lost 26% and 9.3% of their humid primary forest between 2002 and 2020, with a significant portion of deforestation attributable to cocoa farming expansion.

Cocoa provides crucial income to communities in rural West Africa, but farmers are too often faced with poverty. Poverty is one of the causes of deforestation. Accelerating a transition to sustainable livelihoods is essential for farmers' economic security and a healthy planet.

The first priority is the protection and restoration of forests that have been degraded. To this end, the governments and companies have pledged no further conversion of forest land for cocoa production and have committed to the phased elimination of illegal cocoa production and sourcing in protected areas.

Both countries are introducing a differentiated approach for improved management of forest reserves, based on the level of degradation of forests. In 2019, the government of Côte d'Ivoire adopted and published a new forest code which, among other things, put forth policies for the promotion of cocoa agroforestry to restore degraded land, improve forest cover, and promote sustainable livelihoods and agriculture in the classified forests and rural zones. Both governments have shared maps on forest cover and land-use, and continue to update the maps, including socio-economic data on cocoa farmers, to inform private sector investments.

To ensure effective implementation and monitoring of these commitments, companies have pledged to develop traceability from farm to the first purchase point for their own purchases of cocoa. They also work with governments to ensure an effective national framework for traceability

encompassing all traders in the supply chain and to anticipate forthcoming due diligence legislation. The companies will similarly share information with the national satellite monitoring platforms (in development) to effectively monitor progress on CFI, as well as proactively address threats of new deforestation.

The next critical priority is sustainable agricultural production and increased farmer incomes. These are essential pre-requisites for reducing pressure for agricultural encroachment into forests and strengthening the resilience of cocoa farmers to climate change.

The governments and companies are accelerating investment in long-term productivity of cocoa in order to grow “more cocoa on less land.” Key actions include provision of improved planting materials, training in good agricultural practices, soil fertility, land tenure reform, and capacity building of farmers’ organizations. Sustainable livelihoods and income diversification for cocoa farmers are being accelerated through food crop diversification, agricultural inter-cropping, and development of mixed agroforestry systems and shade-grown cocoa.

The final area of focus is strong community engagement and social inclusion, with a particular focus on women and youth. The governments and companies have committed to full and effective consultation and participation of cocoa farmers in the design and implementation of key actions, and promotion of community-based management models for forest protection and restoration. The governments have adopted social and environmental safeguards and are assessing and mitigating the social impacts and risks of any proposed land-use changes on affected communities.

General Mills 2021 Narrative

In 2017, General Mills became one of only two non-confectionary manufacturer signatories to the Cocoa and Forests Initiative (CFI) in order to address deforestation in the cocoa supply chain, to reinforce our sustainable sourcing commitment for cocoa, and to help drive progress towards our science-based greenhouse gas emissions target.

At General Mills, our business is rooted in the earth and has the power to help restore it. Threats to natural resources impact our business, the livelihoods of farmers and communities, and our ability to feed a growing population. To drive growth and increase resilience; we need to not only focus on sustaining our planet but work toward regenerating it. We believe that our commitment to the Cocoa and Forests Initiative is a strong enabler of our regenerative approach.

Côte d’Ivoire:

Through our CFI commitment to end deforestation and forest degradation in the cocoa sector in **Côte d’Ivoire**, General Mills achieved the following progress by the close of 2021, on its 2022 target commitments:

Number	Indicator	2021 Progress	2022 Target
HP-IND-02	Directly sourced cocoa traceable from farm to first point of purchase	6362	NA
CC-08	Volume of cocoa beans sourced from the direct supply chain	9,872	NA
	Traceability to Farm	64%	100%
CC-06	Farmers in Direct Supply Chain	11,912	
HP-11	Farmers trained and/or consulted on forest policy/law enforcement, forest protection, and restoration	7,695	4600
PF-IND-01	Farmers trained in Good Ag Practices (GAPs)	10,626	5600
HP-01	Cocoa plots mapped in our direct supply chain	8,272	NEW
EC-08	Individuals impacted by gender equity or empowerment programs	5,305	NEW
EC-05	Members of Village Savings and Loan Associations in the current year	3,949	700

Ghana

Through our CFI commitment to end deforestation and forest degradation in the **Ghanaian cocoa** sector, General Mills achieved the following progress by the close of 2021, on its 2022 target commitments:

Number	Indicator	2021 Progress	2022 Target
HP-IND-02	Directly sourced cocoa traceable from farm to first point of purchase	5366	NA
CC-08	Volume of cocoa beans sourced from the direct supply chain	8469	NA
	Traceability to Farm	63%	100%
CC-06	Farmers in Direct Supply Chain	13,184	NA

HP-11	Farmers trained and/or consulted on forest policy/law enforcement, forest protection, and restoration	3267	3200
PF-IND-01	Farmers trained in Good Ag Practices (GAPs)	6687	13500
HP-01	Cocoa plots mapped in our direct supply chain	22,077	NEW
EC-08	Individuals impacted by gender equity or empowerment programs	5,560	NEW
EC-05	Members of Village Savings and Loan Associations in the current year	3,425	2700

Côte d'Ivoire Detailed Narrative

Since 2018, General Mills has been working through our suppliers and partners to deliver on the core commitments set out under the CFI, in Côte d'Ivoire.

Highlights of our progress include:

Healthy Planet

- **64% traceability to farm:** one of our priorities has been to ensure we understand the origin of the cocoa used in our products to ensure our sourcing is not driving deforestation. As of December 2021, 64% of our cocoa volumes were traceable from the farm to the first purchase point in Côte d'Ivoire. Our goal is to reach 100% by 2022.
- **Farmer Livelihoods Assessment:** In 2021 we supported PUR Projet in expanding the practice of conducting farmer livelihoods assessments from Ghana to Côte D'Ivoire. These assessments focus on key livelihoods dimensions (sources of incomes, household composition, origin and education), motivations, and perceptions of the ongoing agroforestry project participants and are key to keeping the program responsive to community needs.

In October, interviews were supported by University of Daloa and carried out among 76 farmers and 29 control farmers. One of the key objectives of the study was to understand and assess the drivers of agroforestry adoption by the farming communities of the COOPADI cooperative in Côte d'Ivoire. Specifically, to determine the socio demographic and economic profile of producers, and secondly, to evaluate the motivations and perceptions of producers in adopting agroforestry as part of their future trajectory.

The study in Côte D'Ivoire found that 54% of farmers associate agroforestry with better yields, and 34% associate it with income diversification.

Prosperous Farmers

- **10,626 farmers trained in GAPs:** investment in the long-term productivity and quality of cocoa/farms in our supply base is a priority for General Mills, as this limits the need for cocoa farm expansion into protected areas. Working through our suppliers, 10,262 farmers were trained in Good Agricultural Practices, exceeding our 2020 goal of 5,600.

Empowered Communities

- **3,949, farmers participated in VSLA groups:** village savings and loan associations (VSLAs) have demonstrated themselves to be a highly successful sustainable livelihood intervention in Côte d'Ivoire, particularly for empowering women who become leaders in their household, businesses and communities. By end 2021, our sustainable sourcing programs had enabled 3,949 farmers to participate in VSLA groups representing 149 VSLA groups in 2021. Our goal for 2022 was 700 farmers.
- **Woman and youth empowerment:** through our partnership with CARE, we continued to support community capacity building on issues related to women's empowerment, food security and the fight against child labor. To date, these activities reached 5,305 farmers directly, contributing to the long-term sustainable development of cocoa-growing communities.

Ghana Detailed Narrative

Since 2018, General Mills has been working through our suppliers and partners to deliver on the core commitments set out under the CFI in Ghana.

Highlights of our progress include:

Healthy Planet

- **63% traceable to farm:** one of our priorities has been to ensure we understand the origin of the cocoa used in our products to ensure our sourcing is not driving deforestation. As of December 2020, 63% of our cocoa volumes were traceable from the farm to the first purchase point.
- **Over 500 hectares under agroforestry:** working through our suppliers, General Mills contributed to the distribution and planting of multi-purpose trees for on-farm restoration via agroforestry. Over 500 hectares of cocoa were contributing to long-term farmer livelihoods as well as improved cocoa quality and yields. In addition, over 70,000 multi-purpose trees were distributed for on-farm planting. Our goal is to achieve 2,300ha of cocoa agroforestry, by 2022.
- **3267 farmers educated on forest law enforcement and tree tenure provisions.** Our 2022 goal was to reach 3,200 farmers and we are pleased with the commitment and interest for greater awareness. We reached more farmers than anticipated as the number of farmers within the district is now higher, and we have integrated high engagement through outreach programs that cascade through farm field schools.

Prosperous Farmers

- **6,687 farmers trained in GAPs:** investment in the long-term productivity and quality of cocoa/farms in our supply base is a priority for General Mills, as this limits the need for cocoa farm expansion into protected areas. Working through our suppliers, 6,687 farmers were trained in Good Agricultural Practices in Ghana.

Community engagement and social inclusion

- **5,560 farmers in cocoa communities reached:** through our partnership with CARE, we directly impacted 5,560 farmers in the promotion of gender equity, building smallholder cocoa farmers' resilience to climate change impacts, and to strengthen the capacity of cocoa-growing communities to initiate and own their own development. These programs indirectly impacted over 25,000 cocoa farmer family members.



LOOKING FORWARD

Since 2018, signatory companies have been working to fulfill their commitments to end deforestation and restore degraded forests in the cocoa sector. In 2019, the governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana delivered on numerous commitments which have informed company planning. Companies will now be able to further develop their activities, moving from planning to implementation. As the governments continue to provide critical information (e.g. socio-economic assessments, updated land-use maps, operational decrees for implementation of the new forest code), companies will continue to ramp up their delivery of CFI activities in alignment with government priorities. This will include identifying opportunities for landscape level collective action, as well as building partnerships with global development partners to drive forest positive impact on the ground.

Looking ahead, General Mills sees several priorities for its CFI activities in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana:

- Work towards a 2022 goal of 100% traceability to farm.
- Support sectoral efforts to establish a robust and credible deforestation monitoring system as well as ensuring that 100% of our cocoa sourcing is covered by deforestation monitoring systems.
- Continue investments in community development and agroforestry programs working with our implementation partner PUR Projet – see below “Ecosystems and Livelihoods Program”.
- Continued delivery of our supplier sustainable volume program, with a focus on forest protection and restoration and improving smallholder farmer livelihoods.
- Continue the delivery of phase 3 of our “Cocoa Sustainability Initiative” program with CARE, targeting community development and women's empowerment, as well as exploring future synergies between this and our “Ecosystems and Livelihoods Program” initiative with PUR Projet.

Ecosystems and Livelihoods Program

In order to amplify our support for forest protection and restoration efforts in Côte d'Ivoire, and in partnership with agroforestry program developer, PUR Projet, we have implemented the Cocoa Ecosystems and Livelihood Program, funded for three years, beginning in January 2020 in the Kakum HIA region of Ghana and the Mont Peko region of Côte d'Ivoire.

The initiative, encompassing regenerative principles, incorporates agroforestry and land tenure support, awareness-raising activities, and the implementation of cookstoves and beehives. These activities will support farmer livelihoods and promote vital ecosystem restoration and protection.

Through this work in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, General Mills and PUR have achieved in 2021:

Community-based agroforestry in both Ghana and Ivory Coast: 26,340 trees were distributed to 287 farmers in both countries, bringing the total of trees distributed since project inception to 35,572 and the number of farmers engaged in tree planting activities to 374.

Advocacy on Highly Dense Planting Models Resulting in CCC Official Letter: The Ivorian Conseil Café Cacao (CCC) acknowledged PUR Projet's actions and methodology, our planting densities and agroforestry design, is in the best interest of cocoa farmers in an official letter.

Income Diversification Through Beekeeping: Since project inception, a total of 180 hives were distributed and constructed in Ivory Coast and Ghana.

Farmer Livelihood Assessment: In September-November 2021, a Farmer Livelihood Assessment (FLA) was conducted across 76 farmers and 29 control farmers.

Women Empowerment: The FLA conducted in Côte d'Ivoire identified particularly vulnerable community members, mainly women, who will be meaningfully engaged and integrated in upcoming project activities.

ANNEX 1: RESULTS STORIES

Adjoa Nyarkowaa's Story – March 2022



Adjoa Nyarkowaa, 41, cocoa farmer and mother of six, is from Camp, Ghana. Camp is one of the many small cocoa growing communities in the vicinity of Kakum National Park, an area impacted by deforestation. In 2021, Ms. Nyarkowaa took part in the agroforestry activities offered by the PUR Projet program. She was interested in the program in order to improve the cocoa plot she and her husband manage together. “With six kids and a husband, it’s not sufficient for all year long,” she explained.

In 2021, PUR Projet distributed over 26,000 trees to over 280 farmers like Ms. Nyarkowaa across Ghana and Côte D’Ivoire. In addition, these farmers also received training on how to plant and maintain them over time, increasing opportunity for more income. “There was no tree on my parcel before I planted the trees received with the project,” said Ms. Nyarkowaa. “I think agroforestry is useful to provide shade to the cocoa, and I hope that it will help stabilize the plot. There is also a good market for guava so it could be good money.”

Selecting low maintenance, ecologically appropriate and economically beneficial species is a hallmark of the PUR Projet program. Other markers are constant iteration and continuous learning, so that the program stays responsive to community needs. “I like the room to be innovative and change the way plans are carried out based on the situation on the ground,” states Kwame Asumadu, Ghana Project Manager. “This goes a long way to ensure simplified operations, minimized environmental leakages and promote togetherness for the adjoining and participating communities.”

Indicative of this agile approach were three community consultation workshops held in 2021. These workshops sought to bring a diverse cross section of community members in a room, articulate the program goals and to gather community feedback on their future goals, and how well project activities were addressing community needs. These consultations revealed that community members envisioned the future of cocoa as mechanized, yet with more shade, and better access to fertilizer and irrigation. Farmers want to be able to sell their cocoa for a better price.

Taking into account these opinions, the project plans to further expand into income generating activities, such as fish-farming and beekeeping. These opportunities excite farmers, who see broad application within the program to uplift themselves and their community. “Next year, I would like to receive more trees and participate in the beekeeping activity,” states Ms. Nyarkowaa. “I want to start farming palm oil, and I want to learn bread making and bakery.” She also sees a chance to change the future by paying it forward. “I want kids in the community to have better economic opportunities to decrease teenage pregnancy. I want my kids to go to school too, and if any of them wants to learn anything they like, I want to be able to support them.”

Joyce Amoako – I Am Able to Support My Family’: Increased Business Capital Through VSLAs *March 2022*

Ghanaian cocoa farmers face a multitude of challenges including: limited access to training, lack of quality inputs, credit constraints and the overall volatility of a single source of income. The Cocoa Sustainability Initiative (CSI), implemented by CARE in the Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District of Ghana’s central region, helps address these challenges from multiple different angles. CARE works with Extension Officers from Ghana’s Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) to provide trainings in good agronomic practices (GAPs) and input advice, as well as organizing Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA’s) to address credit constraints and spur entrepreneurship within the community.

Joyce Amoako, 44, is a cocoa farmer, trader and VSLA member in Asarekwaa community. She, her husband and their eight children farm five hectares of cocoa. “I sell secondhand clothes as an additional livelihood activity to my cocoa farming activity,” she says. “A key challenge to my clothing business was my inability to access loans to expand. There are no banks in the community, so I would have to pay for the high transportation cost to access a bank outside the community. Also, the interest rates on bank loans are very high.”



Wrap around services such as VSLA’s – run by and for community members - help farmers and their families avoid loan sharks and smooth their reliance on an otherwise boom and bust economic cycle. Amoako joined a VSLA in her community and strengthened her access to finance. “I took a loan of \$247 to expand my clothing business,” she says. “Now I’m able to buy and sell four bales of clothes instead of three. My profit margin has increased from an average of \$82 to \$115 at the end of sales. Now, although cocoa harvesting has not started, I am able to support my family.”

As of November 2021, the project has worked with 59 VSLAs, that mobilized total savings of 676,695 cedis (\$109,610) and disbursed 469,577 cedis (\$76,061) in loans.

Annex 2: Cote D'Ivoire Indicators

Indicator	2022 Target	# Through direct investment (Current reporting year)	# Through direct investment (Since 2018)
FOREST PROTECTION AND RESTORATION			
# of cocoa plots mapped in direct supply chain		8,272	
# of farms mapped in direct supply chain	6,400	6,967	
# of hectares in the direct supply chain with deforestation risk assessments completed	14,000	19,175	43,570
% of directly sourced cocoa traceable from the farm to the first purchase point	100%	64%	
# hectares restored in Forest Reserve / Forêts Classée		0	0
# trees registered			
# of farmers with land tenure agreements/documentation obtained via company support		0	0
# farmers informed, trained, and / or consulted on the new Forest Code, law enforcement, forest protection, and restoration	4,600	7,695	
# individuals receiving PES: New	0	0	0
# individuals receiving PES: Total Active	50	78	
# farmers applying agroforestry		93	93
# multi-purpose trees distributed for on-farm planting	115,000	80,477	154,081
# hectares cocoa agroforestry in development	2,300	0	1,904
# of trees distributed for off-farm planting	3,750	4,004	5,894
# hectares of forest area restored off-reserve / in rural zone	5	0	2
# farmers trained in CSC best practices		4,907	
# of farmers trained in Modified Taungya System (MTS)			
\$ contributed to fund			
SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND FARMERS' LIVELIHOOD			
# improved cocoa seedlings distributed to farmers			
# of farmers reached by GAP training programs	5,600	10,626	
# individuals participating in additional Income Generating Activities (IGA's)		3,462	
# of individuals in the current reporting year enrolled in a formal financial products and services with support from companies	2,600	1,879	
# of members of VSLA groups in the current year	700	3,949	
# of VSLA groups in the current year		149	183
SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY			
# of cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM)	30	0	6
# hectares under CBNRM	10	0	1,152
# of individuals participating in women's empowerment projects and activities	12	5,305	
# of individuals participating in youth focused projects and activities (15-35 years old)	12	1,356	

Annex 3: Ghana Indicators

Indicator	2022 Target	# Through direct investment (Current reporting year)	# Through direct investment (Since 2018)
FOREST PROTECTION AND RESTORATION			
# of cocoa plots mapped in direct supply chain		22,077	
# of farms mapped in direct supply chain	8,700	9,069	
# of hectares in the direct supply chain with deforestation risk assessments completed	8,500	19,814	56,234
% of directly sourced cocoa traceable from the farm to the first purchase point	100%	63%	
# hectares restored in Forest Reserve / Forêts Classée		0	0
# trees registered			
# of farmers with land tenure agreements/documentation obtained via company support	30	0	0
# farmers informed, trained, and / or consulted on the new Forest Code, law enforcement, forest protection, and restoration	3,200	3,267	
# individuals receiving PES: New	0	0	0
# individuals receiving PES: Total Active	180	0	
# farmers applying agroforestry		392	392
# multi-purpose trees distributed for on-farm planting	16,000	134,303	203,460
# hectares cocoa agroforestry in development	1,600	534	3,172
# of trees distributed for off-farm planting	600	0	2,553
# hectares of forest area restored off-reserve / in rural zone		0	0
# farmers trained in CSC best practices	5,800	1,699	
# of farmers trained in Modified Taungya System (MTS)			
\$ contributed to fund			
SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND FARMERS' LIVELIHOOD			
# improved cocoa seedlings distributed to farmers	200,000	104,635	439,241
# of farmers reached by GAP training programs	13,500	6,687	
# individuals participating in additional Income Generating Activities (IGA's)	6,500	252	
# of individuals in the current reporting year enrolled in a formal financial products and services with support from companies	3,200	1,190	
# of members of VSLA groups in the current year	2,700	3,425	
# of VSLA groups in the current year		168	238
SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY			
# of cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM)	40	1	1
# hectares under CBNRM	200	0	0
# of individuals participating in women's empowerment projects and activities	40	5,560	
# of individuals participating in youth focused projects and activities (15-35 years old)	20	373	