



About Cocoa Life

Everyone says that cocoa is a men's crop—that men do all of the work and get all of the income. But it turns out, that's not true. According to recent work in Cote d'Ivoire, CARE found that women are involved at every stage in the game—but men, companies, and governments don't usually know that. So how do we get key players to value women if they don't even know they're there?

The Cocoa Life program was launched in 2012 and aims to empower 200,000 cocoa farmers and reach 1 million community members in six key cocoa growing origins: Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Indonesia, India, the Dominican Republic, and Brazil. The program links cocoa farming with community development through a holistic, community-based approach to sustainability.

OBJECTIVES

Cocoa Life has five focus areas: farming, community, youth, livelihoods, and environment, with women's empowerment and child labor as cross-cutting themes. Women's empowerment is the cornerstone of the Cocoa Life program. Three domains of change that the project focused on were to:

- **Build agency:** Building confidence, self-esteem, knowledge, skills, and capabilities
- **Change relations:** Influencing and transforming power relations between intimate partners and within households and social networks, including through group membership and activism, citizen and market negotiations.
- **Transform structures:** Challenging and transforming discriminatory societal norms, customs, exclusionary practices and laws, policies, procedures and services.

IMPACT

Higher yields: Women who own land saw a 100-400% increase in their cocoa production. Even women who don't own land saw a 66-100% increase.

More women involved in decisions: Now, women are 30-50% of participants in community governance, since the company decided to institute a quota for women to ensure their participation.

Cocoa Life

Program Name:

Cocoa Life

Program Country:

Côte d'Ivoire

Timeframe:

January 2015 – December 2020

Budget:

US\$ 5.08 million

Donors:

Mondelez International

Beneficiaries:

55,761 Direct

Beneficiaries include Cocoa Farmers, Women, and the Community.



©CocoaLife



©CocoaLife

How do you make a company and community value the invisible?

*"We had to plead with community chiefs to allow **women** to speak in public during Cohort I. In some communities both Christian and Muslim women were [only] allowed to speak in public while kneeling. We have to work constantly with traditional leaders to convince them that women have rights. Now they listen to us."*

-Cocoa Life Member

"If I see a man beating his wife, I will confront that man and ask him to find another way to solve the problem. Failing that, I do not hesitate to report him to the Human Rights Commission [CHRAJ] or Social Welfare Department."

-Janet Asiamah, Vice President of Goaso cocoa farmers' Cooperative Union

"When they [women] have money at hand there is a reduction of domestic disputes."

-Women in Côte d'Ivoire

"To create change in a community its members need to get involved."

-Cyrille N'Guessan, Cocoa farmer and members and treasurer of the Gnandi Community Development Committee (A committee supported by the Cocoa Life program)

IMPACT (continued)

Government buy-in for gender equality: The government of Cote d'Ivoire committed to including gender in its' national development plan from 2016-2020.

Women have more control over money: Women report a greater control in their earnings, and \$95-136 savings as part of their participation in VSLAs. Why? Because Cocoa Life gave women their own bank passbooks—so they could record their own income

STRATEGY

Engage the government with evidence: Cocoa Life documented policies and laws relating to women's economic empowerment to give themselves a base for advocacy. Then, the project worked with government extension agents and policy makers to ensure that there is more support for women in the cocoa value chain, and for women farmers generally.

Build women leaders: Mondelez agreed to a quota of women in participatory processes to guarantee that women got a seat at the table. The project also worked to create women's extension workers so that there were role-models women farmers could access to learn more.

Partner with the private sector: Mondelez commissioned CARE to look at women's role in the cocoa value chain so that they could determine where their strengths and weaknesses were. They are using that information to build programs that source cocoa and empower women.

FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Engage men more effectively: Women's workloads and childcare burdens are still high. The report recommends working with couples to change norms and make sure that women get the support they need.

Look at pay gaps: Even though companies and the government are now more aware of women in the process, there are still gaps in salary between men and women.

Focus on social norms: Norms are still holding women back—from low mobility to the belief that they have no right to be involved in politics. This is an area to change to see real progress.

CARE USA Food and Nutrition Security Team

www.care.org/food

151 Ellis St

Atlanta, GA 30303

fnsrh@care.org

CARE Côte d'Ivoire

05 B.P. 3141

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

www.care.org/country/cote-divore

