

Cargill Cocoa & Forests Initiative progress report 2025

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, are joined together in [the Cocoa & Forests Initiative \(CFI\)](#) to help work towards ending deforestation and restoring forest areas. Their combined actions play a crucial role in protecting and restoring biodiversity, sequestering carbon stocks in West African forests, and addressing climate change. The CFI contributes to Sustainable Development Goal 13 (Climate Action) and 15 (Life on Land).

The CFI is a public-private partnership based on frameworks for action ([Côte d'Ivoire](#) and [Ghana](#)) and action plans for the private sector and public sector ([Côte d'Ivoire](#) and [Ghana](#)) that provide 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 the [CFI website](#).

The [World Cocoa Foundation \(WCF\)](#); [IDH, the Sustainable Trade Initiative](#); and the governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana drive the CFI. The Prince of Wales (now King Charles III) launched the Initiative in March 2017.

Deforestation of tropical rainforests is an 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. According to [Global Forest Watch](#), between 2002 and 2023, Côte d'Ivoire lost 28% and Ghana 13% of their humid primary forest, with a large portion of this loss attributable to cocoa farming expansion.

A comprehensive analysis is required to determine the exact contribution of cocoa production to deforestation. WCF, CFI members, and partners are working together on science-based methods to determine the share of cocoa production to overall deforestation rates with a higher level of accuracy in cocoa producing countries. Data reliability and a good knowledge of the cause and location of deforestation are essential for developing more effective mitigation measures and equipping WCF members and partners with data to meet the upcoming EUDR requirements.

Cocoa provides crucial income to communities in rural West Africa, but farmers often face poverty – making poverty one of the leading contributors to deforestation risk. Accelerating a transition to sustainable livelihoods is essential for farmers' economic security and to reduce risk of deforestation.



Cargill's Cocoa Ambition

Dear reader,

Cocoa connects farmers, communities, customers, and consumers across the global food system. It is also at the center of some of the sector's most pressing challenges. Climate change, pressure on forests and natural resources, disease, market volatility, and growing expectations for traceability and transparency are reshaping the future of cocoa.

At Cargill, we believe responding to these challenges takes long-term commitment, practical action, and strong partnership across the value chain. Our purpose is to nourish the world in a safe, responsible, and sustainable way. In cocoa, that means working across origins, supply chains, and customer relationships to help strengthen resilience and support progress that can last.

Our approach to cocoa sustainability is holistic because the challenges are deeply connected. Creating lasting benefits for cocoa farmers and their communities goes hand in hand with the long-term strength of the broader sector. Through our position at the heart of the global cocoa supply chain, we work to connect farmers, markets, and customers through innovation, evidence-based approaches, and collaboration.

Our portfolio includes initiatives that support the areas we believe matter most. It includes supporting more responsible land use through traceability, polygon mapping and monitoring, agroforestry, and efforts to grow more cocoa on less land. It includes working with farmers and farmer organizations to improve productivity and profitability through technical training, coaching, and access to services. And our work includes partnering with communities to support income diversification, expand economic opportunities for women, improve access to education, and prevent and remediate child labor.

We know this work cannot be done by any one organization alone. Progress depends on close collaboration with farmers, cooperatives, customers, governments, NGOs, and industry partners. The Cocoa & Forests Initiative is one important part of that broader effort, helping bring together public and private sector partners around a shared goal: protecting forests while supporting a more resilient and sustainable cocoa sector.

This report reflects that ongoing work. It highlights progress, lessons, and the continued effort required to address complex challenges across cocoa-growing regions. We are encouraged by what collaboration can make possible, and we remain focused on contributing to a cocoa supply chain that can support farmers and communities, protect natural resources, and meet the needs of the future.

Sincerely,

Eliza Clark, Vice President, Sustainability, Cargill Food

Kojo Amoo-Gottfried, Vice President & Managing Director, North America Cocoa & Chocolate, Cargill Food

About the Cargill Cocoa Promise

The Cargill Cocoa Promise is our sustainability program to enable farmers and their communities to achieve better incomes and livelihoods while growing cocoa more sustainably. It is implemented in Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Ghana, and Indonesia.



Cocoa & Forests Initiative – Cargill’s Progress in West Africa

Cargill joined the Cocoa & Forests Initiative (CFI) in 2018 and launched its latest action plan for the second phase of CFI in 2023. Through the CFI, we continue to work toward advancing our goal of ending deforestation in our West African cocoa supply chain, while also fostering more sustainable cocoa production and community engagement. In collaboration with our commercial and implementing partners in Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana, we are making progress together.

Notable results from our 2025 report:

- **Mapping:** 118,662 farms in our network have polygon maps
- **Deforestation:** 314,232 hectares have a Completed Deforestation Risk Assessment
- **Agroforestry:** 1,254,002 multi-purpose trees were distributed for on-farm-planting
- **Farmer Training:** 118,662 farmers received technical assistance
- **VSLAs:** 1,223 VSLA groups established in our network

Forest Protection and Restoration

Advancing more sustainable land use is a cornerstone of our cocoa sourcing activities. Reducing deforestation and forest degradation linked to cocoa production is core to our sustainability work. Actions advancing progress toward creating a deforestation-free supply chain include:

- Cocoa bean traceability through farm polygon mapping
- Deforestation monitoring using satellite data
- Supporting farmers to adopt agroforestry and conservation practices

Traceability & Polygon Mapping

Understanding where cocoa comes from and where deforestation may occur in our supply chain requires strong traceability systems. We continue to enhance our supply chain transparency through GPS polygon mapping. All registered farmers in our direct sustainable supply chain require a polygon map for all their cocoa plots. Field agents are trained on an annual basis on how to collect a polygon using a GPS application tool. Operational teams use an interactive dashboard to receive insights on regions needing specific focus.

The increasing digitization of our supply chain is achieved by physically tracing the cocoa back to individual partner farmer level and their related farms with the use of digital barcoding technology. These systems allow us to monitor the farms and farmers from which cocoa is sourced into our direct supply chain.

To strengthen traceability within our indirect supply chain, Cargill has a long-standing partnership with Meridia. This collaboration focuses on enhancing data quality verification, management, and standardization across all cocoa sourcing regions. Both our internal supplier engagement work and our partnership with Meridia will support Cargill in satisfying future EUDR requirements.

Total number of farms mapped within direct supply chain in crop year 2024/2025:

- Côte d’Ivoire: 96,268 farms
- Ghana: 22,394 farms

Total volume of cocoa sourced traceable from the farm to the first purchase point in crop year 2024/2025:

- Côte d’Ivoire: 98,458 MT
- Ghana: 11,795 MT

Deforestation Monitoring using Satellite Data

Our in-house geographic information systems (GIS) software performs automatic deforestation risk assessments every time a cocoa farm is mapped. We overlay polygon maps with publicly available geospatial forest data from Global Forest Watch (GFW) to assess our supply chain for deforestation. We also leverage the work of local land cover maps such as The Cote d'Ivoire BNETD 2020 Land Cover Map produced by the Ivorian Government. Cargill also has a global partnership with Satelligence, providing Cargill with near-real time, satellite-powered deforestation risk monitoring across its soy, palm oil, and cocoa supply chains. This enhances our monitoring capabilities for these critical supply chains in support of our work to transform our supply chain to be deforestation-free. Our partnership with Satelligence also supports Cargill in satisfying future EUDR requirements.

Deforestation numbers in crop year 2024/2025:

- Côte d'Ivoire: 273,424 hectares with Deforestation Risk Assessment Completed
- Ghana: 40,808 hectares with Deforestation Risk Assessment Completed

Agroforestry & Forest Conservation

Cargill believes agroforestry promotes healthier and more productive landscapes that can protect and preserve forests and natural ecosystems, securing more ecosystem services for people and nature. In Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, we collaborate with global and local partners such as PUR, AGROMAP, FOA S.A.R.L, and CSIR-FORIG to integrate fit-for-purpose agroforestry models into the communities where we source cocoa. Our agroforestry models range from 30 to 100 trees per hectare, providing a mix of native and naturalized tree species, including fruit and timber trees, that are tailored to local needs. These models are designed to support income diversification, biodiversity, and ecosystem services.

Farmers receive in-depth technical training to ensure they can implement and maintain these agroforestry systems. We work and learn with our partners to ensure interventions are adaptable. Using movies and focus groups, we discuss land tenure and other issues to build trust and encourage adherence to laws.

Agroforestry numbers in crop year 2024/2025:

Côte d'Ivoire:

- 994,750 multi-purpose trees distributed for on-farm planting
- 8,137 farmers applying agroforestry

Ghana:

- 259,252 multi-purpose trees distributed for on-farm planting
- 5,644 farmers applying agroforestry

Sustainable Cocoa Production and Farmers' Livelihoods

Improving farmers' livelihoods and resilience is central to the Cargill Cocoa Promise program and vital for increasing the sustainability of the cocoa sector. Cargill implements Farm Development Plans (FDPs) as a foundation of our farmer support programs. FDPs include key improvement recommendations, based on an agronomic diagnostic of each farm. The field officers performing the diagnostic are typically farmers themselves and are part of the community. The recommendations provided in FDPs support farmers in adopting Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and strengthening the productivity and profitability of their farms. They also inform our wider farmer support.

Examples of recommendations include:

- Farm Maintenance & Improvement: Planting of multi-purpose trees and cocoa seedlings.
- Good Agricultural Practices: Pruning of cocoa trees, the safe and appropriate use of inputs.
- Harvest: Use of appropriate tools and sanitary harvest techniques.



Farmers also receive technical training through:

- Farmer Field Schools, which onboard farmers into the Cargill Cocoa Promise through a series of group trainings. This onboarding introduces GAP topics such as input use, agronomic techniques, and business skills. This serves as a foundation for the more in-depth annual farm diagnostic process.
- Farmer Training Days, which take place annually and include farmers, their families, and the wider community. These broad-spectrum training courses focus on social and environmental issues like gender, child labor, conservation, and water management. In Côte d'Ivoire, Cargill partners through farmer cooperatives to implement this training, working in collaboration with partners such as ANADER, PlantInov, and Wildfin.

Number of farmers receiving technical assistance to professionalize and optimize cocoa farming practices:

- Côte d'Ivoire: 96,268 farmers
- Ghana: 22,394 farmers

Community Engagement and Social Inclusion

The CFI prioritizes supporting strong community engagement and social inclusion as a means to expand support of forest protection, with a focus on women and youth. Empowering women is one of the most effective ways to bring more financial security for family expenses. Cargill collaborates with several partners to improve the economic position of women through women-led Village Savings & Loans Associations (VSLAs). Cargill continues to partner with CARE, a partner for over 10 years in West Africa, on the PROSPER program to support resilience for rural agricultural communities – especially for women – facilitating access to markets, productive resources, and advocacy.

Number of VSLA groups in crop year 2024/2025:

- Côte d'Ivoire: 802 VSLA groups
- Ghana: 421 VSLA groups

Number of individuals participating in women's empowerment projects in 2025:

- Côte d'Ivoire: 11,401 individuals
- Ghana: 5,192 individuals

Farmer Stories

Gnanou Amadou

Farmer

CAGNAN, Cote d'Ivoire

I am a member of the CAGNAN cooperative in San-Pedro, Djapadji section, and a beneficiary of the beekeeping project. After the training, I was immediately struck by the importance of bees in our environment and by the income opportunities created through the diversification of our economic activities. This is a new and promising activity for me. It will allow me to support my children's education and cover health-related expenses when needed.

Since the beginning of the project, we have been trained in setting up and managing Kenyan hives, including smoking techniques, monitoring, and hive maintenance. We do not have a harvest yet, but we consistently follow the consultant's recommendations. We are confident that we will achieve a good yield in the first production cycle.



Akua Laadi
Farmer
Achiase, Ghana

Before, I waited for bread from another town. Now I bake my own and earn money every week. I can feed my children, pay their school fees, and I am even training two young women to bake. Baking has truly changed my life.

Akua Laadi, 34, is a mother of four from the Achiase community in Ghana. For years, she depended solely on cocoa farming for income. But cocoa is seasonal, and her earnings were irregular – often not enough to cover her family’s needs, especially school fees and supplies for her children.

In 2024, Akua joined the Baako ye VSLA and received training in bakery and soap making, choosing to pursue her interest in baking. Initially, she sold bread sourced from another town, but through hands-on sessions, she learned to bake bread, cakes, and pastries, as well as acquire skills in food safety, record-keeping, and marketing.

Akua invested approximately GHS 4,500 (roughly US\$300) to purchase a small, locally made oven. She began baking bread three times a week and selling it in her community and at the nearby market. Within months, demand grew. She reinvested her profits in supplies and expanded into pastries for schoolchildren.

Today, Akua earns enough weekly revenue to pay her children’s school fees on time, provide balanced meals, and contribute regularly to her VSLA savings. She has also accessed small loans to grow her business. Her confidence has grown, and she is now recognized in community meetings as a hardworking woman and role model.



CFI Report Table – Cote d'Ivoire

Description	Target (Current reporting year)	# Through direct investment (Current reporting year)	# On behalf of clients (Current reporting year)	# Through direct investment (Since 2023)	# Through direct investment (Since 2018)
FOREST PROTECTION AND RESTORATION					
# of farms mapped in direct supply chain: Total Active	30,000	33,671	62,597		
# of hectares in the direct supply chain with deforestation risk assessments completed	84,000	104,260	169,164		
# metric tons of directly sourced cocoa traceable from the farm to the first purchase point (target is 100%)		82%			
# hectares restored in Forest Reserve / Forêts Classée	2,000	53	0	53	53
# trees registered					
# of farmers with land tenure agreements/documentation obtained via company support	5,000	294	0	416	416
# farmers informed, trained, and / or consulted on the new Forest Code, forest policy, law enforcement, forest protection, and restoration	6,000	3,308	4,705		
# Individuals receiving incentives to protect and restore forests and / or adopt agroforestry (e.g., PES): New	1,500	655	2,655	1,925	4,896
# Individuals receiving incentives to protect and restore forests and / or adopt agroforestry (e.g., PES): Total Active	4,250	655	2,655		
# farmers applying agroforestry: New		3,424	4,713		
# farmers applying agroforestry: Total Active		3,424	4,713		
# farmers provided with technical assistance to adopt and expand agroforestry	6,000	3,308	4,705		
# multi-purpose trees distributed for on-farm planting	540,000	356,521	638,229	980,533	1,706,354
# hectares cocoa agroforestry: New	13,800	6,799	9,666	20,670	37,617
# hectares cocoa agroforestry: Total Active		6,799	9,666		
# of trees distributed for off-farm planting	0	0	0		
# hectares of forest area restored off-reserve / in rural zone	0	0	0		
# farmers provided with technical assistance to be more resilient to climate change and reduce and remove carbon emissions on farm (e.g., CSC)	30,000	76,074	68,411		
SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND FARMERS' LIVELIHOOD					
# farmers provided with technical assistance (based on plans) to professionalize & optimize cocoa farming practices	30,000	33,671	62,597		
# individuals participating in additional Income Generating Activities (IGA's)		2,339	3,786		
# individuals provided with technical assistance (based on plans) to increase income from non-cocoa sources / IGA's	1,200	3,562	14,829		
# Individuals provided with technical assistance to save money and access finance	10,000	9,685	21,204		
# of members of VSLA groups in the current year	1,900	3,362	17,115		
# of VSLA groups in the current year	90	113	689		
SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY					
# of cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM): New	29	17	84	50	111
# of cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM): Total Active		17	84		
# hectares under CBNRM	6,400	1,344	4,926	2,907	3,150
# of individuals participating in women's empowerment projects and activities	0	3,794	7,607		
# of individuals participating in youth focused projects and activities (15-35 years old)	0	300	493		

CFI Report Table – Ghana

Description	Target (Current reporting year)	# Through direct investment (Current reporting year)	# On behalf of clients (Current reporting year)	# Through direct investment (Since 2023)	# Through direct investment (Since 2018)
FOREST PROTECTION AND RESTORATION					
# of farms mapped in direct supply chain: Total Active	11,200	13,954	8,440		
# of hectares in the direct supply chain with deforestation risk assessments completed	22,968	24,049	16,759		
# metric tons of directly sourced cocoa traceable from the farm to the first purchase point (target is 100%)		100%			
# hectares restored in Forest Reserve / Forêts Classée	450	0	0		
# trees registered					
# of farmers with land tenure agreements/documentation obtained via company support	0	0	0		
# farmers informed, trained, and / or consulted on the new Forest Code, forest policy, law enforcement, forest protection, and restoration	2,500	5,057	587		
# Individuals receiving incentives to protect and restore forests and / or adopt agroforestry (e.g., PES): New	300	386	0	513	513
# Individuals receiving incentives to protect and restore forests and / or adopt agroforestry (e.g., PES): Total Active	600	386	0		
# farmers applying agroforestry: New		5,026	618		
# farmers applying agroforestry: Total Active		5,026	618		
# farmers provided with technical assistance to adopt and expand agroforestry	2,500	5,026	618		
# multi-purpose trees distributed for on-farm planting	190,000	237,052	22,200	420,540	638,568
# hectares cocoa agroforestry: New	7,250	5,975	634	11,449	21,954
# hectares cocoa agroforestry: Total Active		5,975	634		
# of trees distributed for off-farm planting	0	0	0		
# hectares of forest area restored off-reserve / in rural zone	0	0	0		
# farmers provided with technical assistance to be more resilient to climate change and reduce and remove carbon emissions on farm (e.g., CSC)	11,200	28,456	8,440		
# of farmers trained in Modified Taungya System (MTS)	450	0			
SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND FARMERS' LIVELIHOOD					
# improved cocoa seedlings distributed to farmers	240,000	542,174	435,335	925,699	1,238,645
# farmers provided with technical assistance (based on plans) to professionalize & optimize cocoa farming practices	11,200	13,954	8,440		
# individuals participating in additional Income Generating Activities (IGA's)		6,220	614		
# individuals provided with technical assistance (based on plans) to increase income from non-cocoa sources / IGA's	10,000	4,372	614		
# Individuals provided with technical assistance to save money and access finance	11,200	28,456	8,440		
# of members of VSLA groups in the current year	4,000	8,372	2,374		
# of VSLA groups in the current year	260	323	98		
SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY					
# of cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM): New	3	0	12	72	74
# of cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM): Total Active		0	12		
# hectares under CBNRM	300	0	383	2,223	2,223
# of individuals participating in women's empowerment projects and activities	0	5,192	0		
# of individuals participating in youth focused projects and activities (15-35 years old)	0	85	0		