

# Midline Study

**Terms of Reference, February 2025**

## **Livelihoods Ecosystem Advancement Programme (LEAP), Cote d'Ivoire**

**Overview:** Fairtrade Foundation is looking for a consultant to conduct a midline study on LEAP. Your role will be the delivery of a mixed-methods midline study including co-design, data collection, analysis, write-up, and presentation of results with a focus on the measurement of key metrics to generate robust evidence on which combination of interventions is driving farmers closer to reaching a living income in Cote D'Ivoire.

**Programme timeframe:** 2022 to 2027

**Midline timeline:** March 2025 to August 2025

## **Background**

The Livelihoods Ecosystem Advancement Program (LEAP) was launched in 2022 with an unambiguous "North Star" to help cocoa farmers to grow their earnings sufficiently to achieve Living Incomes. The initiative, a partnership between ECOOKIM, Fairtrade and Mars and part funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Finland (MFA), plans to reach 5,000 farmers over five years and has a focus on three priority areas:

1. Co-operative strengthening, so they can support farmers with a range of services to help them to grow more cocoa and earn higher incomes
2. Income Diversification, so both women and men farmers can make money from sources other than cocoa.
3. Access to finance, so farmers can invest in their farms and their futures.

The programme is working with members from across four cooperatives of ECOOKIM and has followed a segmentation approach whereby farmers are categorised into segments according to productivity and farm size metrics. This approach was used to ensure that activities were designed to benefit farmers across all four of these segments, and so the midline should include analysis of whether the farmers were impacted upon differently based on their segment.

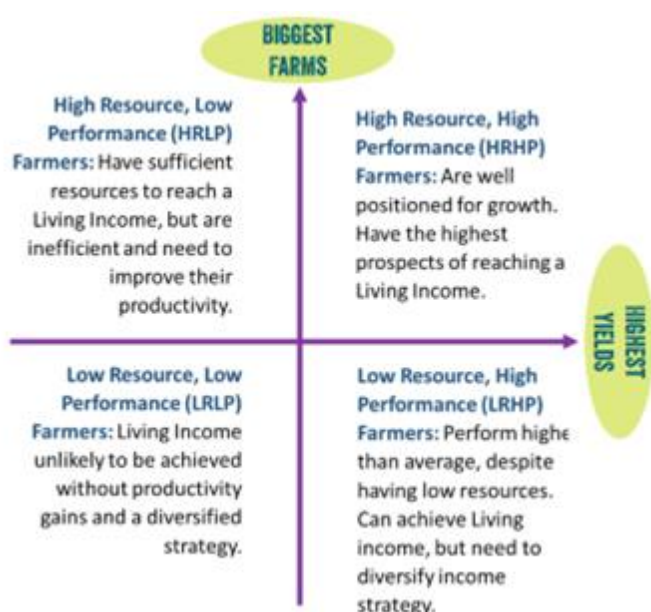


Figure 1: Segmentation criteria for cocoa farmers in LEAP

## Scope of Work

LEAP activities according to the original programme design have been implemented since 2023. Going into 2025, the programme design will be adapted, and therefore this assignment will have three objectives:

- To use the OECD / DAC evaluation criteria to assess the relevance, efficiency, coherence, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the project on targeted beneficiaries, measuring progress against the Theory of Change using the programme indicators and analyse the extent to which LEAP activities have contributed to this progress since the baseline evaluation report, and the extent to which there is evidence of contribution to the long term objectives as planned (particularly in relation to living income).
- Act as a baseline for the adapted programme, so that progress against the new Theory of Change and logframe indicators can be measured going forward.<sup>1</sup>
- Provide recommendations for the design and delivery of the remainder of the programme, based on the study's findings and lessons learned so far.

The consultants delivering the LEAP midline study will work alongside dedicated MEL staff at Fairtrade Foundation and Fairtrade Africa.

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that while the Theory of Change has been adapted, the overall goal of supporting farmers towards reaching a Living Income is unchanged.

A key deliverable is the co-design of the methodology to include, but not limited to: household panel survey, interviews and focus groups, as well as secondary analysis of existing data (see bullet points below for further detail on existing data available). Stakeholders to be included in the data collection in this assignment include farmers, cooperative staff and leadership, ECOOKIM, Mars, and the Fairtrade project team. We are keen to explore other evaluation techniques, particularly those that focus on participatory methods.

The midline consultant will be responsible for designing the data collection protocols and data analysis plan. They will coordinate the data collection in Cote d'Ivoire and conduct the data analysis, provide tables of analysis and write up a full detailed report, a slide-deck summary of findings, and should include plans for how to present findings back to project partners including ECOOKIM and farmers. The formats of all deliverables will be discussed and agreed between Fairtrade and midline consultant.

The consultant will be provided with the results of the following monitoring and evaluation activities that have already taken place, to add to the midline analysis:

- Baseline evaluation report, conducted in 2023 – including sample, data collected and tools used
- Annual household survey with focus on activity and output level indicators, conducted in early Jan 2025
- Monthly farm level data for 80 farmers, collected through Farmer Field Books since October 2024
- Qualitative insights collected through 40 community researchers in late 2024 and 2025
- Activity level monitoring data

## Learning Questions

Farmers achieving a Living Income is the overarching ambition of LEAP and evidence documenting the progress towards living income is essential. In addition, the study should look to answer a number of learning questions which will provide further insight into the achievements the programme has made, and how the programme should adapt its delivery going forwards.

The learning questions for this study will be finalised in consultation with the successful applicant, however the following questions can act as a guide for the kinds of questions we want to answer through this study

- How are farmers' incomes and livelihoods changing over time? How is LEAP contributing to that change?
- How are Small Producer Organisations (SPOs) best supported to distribute more value to and reduce risk of farming enterprises (and themselves)?
- Is the LEAP segmentation strategy relevant and effective in both the design and delivery of programming?

- What does the segmentation approach tell us about the living income journeys of cocoa farmers? Are only “high-achieving” cocoa farmers realistically able to achieve a living income?
- LEAP is designed as a market systems programme. Are changes in the wider market system detectable? Is the market systems approach of LEAP effective?
- Does a sustainable business model exist for “agripreneurs” offering labour services for cocoa farmers?
- Is it beneficial for farmers to have a lower reliance/dependence on cocoa for their income? Do cooperative members with more diverse income streams have higher incomes, and perception of their quality of life?
- Can private sector partners outside of the cocoa sector make a sustainable profit by incorporating cocoa farmers into their supply chains? While providing benefits to the cocoa farmers and their families?

## Timelines

Below is an outline of the anticipated timeline of the midline study but this will be agreed and discussed with the selected consultants.

Topic	Additional information	Projected Timelines
<b>Recruitment</b>	Midline ToR launched and interviews conducted	February 2025
<b>Contracting and start-up</b>	Contracting of selected consultancy team, and inception workshop with programme team	March 2025
<b>Co-design</b>	Co-design with Fairtrade Foundation, Fairtrade Africa, Mars and Ecookim of the survey tool and qualitative methods. Sampling strategy including counter-factual.	March/April 2025
<b>Training enumerators and data collection</b>	Data collection	April/May 2025
<b>Data cleaning and analysis</b>	Quantitative and qualitative analysis aligned to the programme indicators.	June 2025
<b>Report drafting and feedback process</b>	Detailed written report with all analysis and findings, slide-deck summary and underlying data tables submitted to Fairtrade Foundation, with at least two rounds of feedback provided and taken into account.	July 2025
<b>Finalisation and presentation of results</b>	Deliverable finalization, and presentation of results to project stakeholders including cooperatives and farmers.	July/August 2025

## Skills and Experience

We are looking for a team of consultants that can provide the services outlined in the ToR. The Fairtrade Foundation is based in London, UK and the Fairtrade Africa office leading on this programme is based in Yamoussoukro, Cote d'Ivoire. Applying companies or teams are expected to have at least 50% of the team based in Cote d'Ivoire. Collectively the applicant team should:

- Have prior experience on multi-year agricultural development, livelihoods and living income projects in Africa. Familiarity with MEL in relation to cocoa value chains is desirable.
- Experience of designing, conducting and analysing large quantitative longitudinal household surveys with a counterfactual. Capacity to independently manage and conduct a household survey in Cote d'Ivoire.
- Experience of collecting income data and the related challenges and advantages of different methods.
- Experience of evaluating the effectiveness of agricultural development programmes.
- Committed to inclusive MEL approaches and willing to challenge the way data is collected and shared in the context of development sector dynamics.
- Excellent English writing skills and ability to communicate in English and French.

## Inclusive MEL Approaches

The MEL team at Fairtrade Foundation has outlined principles towards an inclusive and anti-racist MEL approach. We have committed to our own reflection and learning on how MEL processes can be more beneficial to the people and farmers we work with. Some of principles adopted include ensuring accountability towards farmers and communities; embedding anti-racism in evaluations; ensuring equity in research teams; and methods for joint or producer-led data analysis. Applicants should be able to demonstrate their own commitment to inclusive MEL practices and how they can contribute to Fairtrade's inclusive MEL commitments.

## Data Protection

The protection of farmers' and project participants' data is non-negotiable, and we expect applicants to be aware of and compliant with relevant data protection laws in the UK (GDPR) and Cote d'Ivoire. (ARTCI).

## Proposal Budget, Process and Deadline

The total budget allowable for this assignment is EUR 60,000-70,000.

The deadline for proposals is 23rd March 2025. Applications should be sent to [nick.chadwick-williams@fairtrade.org.uk](mailto:nick.chadwick-williams@fairtrade.org.uk) with the subject: 'Proposal for LEAP Midline'. Your proposal should include the following sections:

- How the company or team of consultants meets the criteria set out under 'Skills and experience' section including related relevant consultancy experience.
- The outline of the proposed team and the different roles identified based on the skills/deliverables required, including their location and daily rates.
- Proposed approach to the mixed-methods midline.
- A commitment to availability up to August 2025.
- A financial proposal based on the activities listed in this ToR detailing the costs for activities and time of consultants.
- Statement and policies for safeguarding and data protection.
- Please include CVs (max. 3 pages per person) of all proposed team members.

For any queries, please contact Nick Chadwick-Williams, Senior MEL Manager at Fairtrade Foundation at [nick.chadwick-williams@fairtrade.org.uk](mailto:nick.chadwick-williams@fairtrade.org.uk).

## Annex 1: LEAP ToC

The LEAP Theory of Change is complex and doesn't fit on one page. A simple version can be seen below, but the full and most recent version of the LEAP ToC and will be shared with the successful consultants.

