

TERMS OF REFERENCE: EVALUATION STUDY WITH COCOA FARMERS IN COTE D'IVOIRE

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

A key commercial partner has been investing in work with cocoa farmers in Cote d'Ivoire since 2015 through Fairtrade sourcing and programmes at origin. The approach to sourcing in cocoa is based on 5 key principles:

- Long term relationships with specific cooperatives based on transactional economic traceability (provides planning stability for the cooperatives and more direct relationship with farmers for the commercial partner)
- A fair price and terms of trade that make cocoa a sustainable livelihood for farmers, where the return on cocoa production enables farmers to invest in farms and families. (Fairtrade Minimum Price, and now a living income reference price)
- Access to high-quality services that provide an affordable opportunity for farmers to invest, including technical assistance and input packages that can improve cocoa production or support other income opportunities (farm business planning services and diversification)
- Strong cooperatives that are capable business partners and can provide members access to markets and services (supported by Fairtrade premium and Fairtrade's West Africa Cocoa Program)
- Establishing a foundation of cooperative responsible sourcing in the context of child labour and deforestation

The work aims to i) increase income for cocoa farming households to progress to living incomes and ii) increase resilience of cocoa farming households to economic and climate shocks. This will be achieved through the following outcomes:

- Stable and increased income from the main crop (through price and productivity improvements)
- Increased income from alternative sources
- Improved environmental protection and restoration
- Strong and inclusive SPOs and communities, with sustained access to markets and commercial opportunities

RESEARCH AIMS AND QUESTIONS

The purpose of the assignment is to carry out qualitative data collection in Cote d'Ivoire to demonstrate progress towards a Living Income.

RESEARCH SCOPE

- **Thematic Scope:** The research will assess the impact of interventions in three key areas: stable and increased income from the main crop; improved environmental protection and restoration; and increased income from alternative sources
- **Geographical Scope:** the research is expected to cover four cooperatives in the Abengourou, Guitry and Méagui districts.
- **Chronological Scope:** The research will capture the changes in the project operational areas attributable to programme interventions in the cooperative and districts stated above in the geographical scope as a result of interventions being implemented from 2019 to 2021 (the latest phase of project interventions).

Alongside the outcomes, the guiding research questions are

1. How are cocoa farmers' incomes changing in the cooperatives?

- 1.1 What results can be seen by different interventions (productivity support, price increases, diversification, sales, yields)?
- 1.2 What combination can drive the most impact?
- 1.3 What impacts, if any, do higher prices and cost-share support have on the willingness/ability of farmers to make investments in their farms?
- 1.4 What changes are attributable to the commercial partners programme of work?

2. What changes and benefits has there been from diversification activities for cocoa farming households?

- 2.1 What changes are attributable to the project?
- 2.2 How does the experience of trained women's groups and young people vary (if at all)?

Possible targeted project questions

- 2.3 To what extent have individual farmers engaged with income diversification options?
- 2.4 Which factors most strongly determined the success of funded enterprises?
- 2.5 What are the right conditions and mix of activities to enable a net economic benefit?
- 2.6 Do women have improved confidence and roles in household decision making as a result of diversification training and support?

3. What changes are there amongst farmers and households to improve environmental protection in cocoa-growing communities?

- 3.1 What changes are attributable to the programme of work?

4. What impact does the changing external context have on expected results?

- 4.1 How does the changing demand and prices for cocoa impact farmers' willingness to invest in cocoa?
- 4.2 How do co-operative leaders respond to changing contexts and how does this affect farmer incomes?
- 4.3 What impacts, if any, occur with the changing dynamics of cooperative membership?

5. How are household income measurement programmes viewed? (For focus group discussion only)

- 5.1 What experiences do farmers and co-operatives have with survey and household income measurement work?
- 5.2 How can these approaches be improved and locally led?

METHODOLOGY

We will look to implement a qualitative study to supplement and enhance existing quantitative data sets. The consultant will develop the detailed methodology in consultation with Fairtrade Foundation, but the following should be used as a guide.

Phase 1

1. In-depth interviews with co-operative leaders
2. In-depth interviews with farmers (ideally following Qualitative Impact Assessment Protocol or other contribution analysis approaches) – *approximately 40*
3. Exploratory focus group discussion on key themes

Phase 2

1. Validation workshops
2. Focus group discussions on project activities to explore what has worked well, the benefits of the activity and what could be improved in the following areas:
 - Diversification projects and training
 - Cook stoves
 - Productivity support services and coaching
 - Shade tree provisions
 - Fairtrade economic benefits (price and Premium)
 - Household income measurement

TIMELINES

Exact timelines to be agreed upon appointment, however the below is an indicative outline

Task/deliverable	Deadline
Deadline for proposals	Friday 6 August 2021, 10am
Interviews held	Tuesday 10 August 2021
Contracting finalised	Friday 20 August 2021
Inception report	Friday 3 September 2021
Pre-testing of tools	w/b 13 September 2021
Fieldwork (Phase 1)	September – October 2021
Fieldwork (Phase 2)	October – early November 2021
Data analysis	November 2021
Final consolidated report (with feedback integration)	Early December 2021

DELIVERABLES

The following deliverables are expected from the consultant:

- a) Inception Report - the consultant shall submit an inception report detailing the methods, tools and work plan.
- b) Regular update reports during data collection
- c) A short report of initial findings for each phase of the project
- d) Project staff feedback on the draft report
- e) Validation workshop with key partners

- f) Final consolidated report and summary report
- g) 8–10 case studies of individual farmers and their experiences (the focus of case studies to be determined in inception report)
- h) Raw and cleaned data

The consultant shall submit a final report in electronic copies along with transcripts of any focus group discussions or interviews, photographs and ethical approval etc. The draft report is expected from the consultant before the final report. The report will be written in simple English language and must be comprehensive. Reference will be cited after each important fact and figure. The final report should be edited by a professional incorporating all comments and corrections if any.

NB: Exact format of the final report will be agreed during inception, but should be no more than 40 pages and include the following components:

- Executive Summary
- Introduction
- Background, context and participant profile
- Methods
- Results and discussions
- Conclusions
- Lessons learnt and recommendations (where applicable)
- Annexes (e.g Research Team structure, justification of team composition, TOR, anonymised participant details, communities visited, documents consulted, data collection instruments)

BUDGET

Budget available is £27,000-£28,000, excluding VAT. This should include all fieldwork costs and staff costs. All proposals should include a detailed budget breakdown.

QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE OF CONSULTANTS

The successful consultant (or a consultancy firm) should have the following experience.

- Team leader has a minimum of a Master's Degree in social studies or any other developmental field (economics, agriculture, international relations, development studies) or comparable professional experience
- Proven experience in conducting qualitative research (minimum 5 years experience)
- Proven experience working with participatory research methodologies
- Excellent working knowledge of English and French
- Report writing skills
- In-depth knowledge of agricultural supply chains and smallholder farmers, preferably in cocoa in West Africa.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND DEADLINE

The deadline for proposals is Friday 6 August 2021, 10am

Applications may be sent to Rachel Wadham rachel.wadham@fairtrade.org.uk with the subject: Proposal for Evaluation Study

Your proposal should be no longer than 8pp / slides and include the following sections.

- A suitability statement, including a commitment to availability for the entire assignment
- A brief statement on the proposed study methodology, including a draft work plan
- A financial proposal containing a proposed daily fee.
- Statement and policies for safeguarding
- Due diligence documentation

If you are proposing, in part or entirely, to use lean/agile technologies, please include what would be your approach for recruiting the participants (including what we could do if we were not able to provide an exhaustive list of mobile/landline contact details). If your methodology includes in-person interaction, in any way or form, please also include a section on how you will tackle the risks related to the contraction and spread of COVID-19.

Please include CVs of all team members, examples of recent work and research ethics policies.

Project ToC to be made available to the consultant following appointment.