



SECOND EVALUATION OF

THE WEST AFRICA COCOA

PROGRAMME (WACP)



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Cover picture: *Ripe Cocoa pods ready to be harvested in a cocoa farm in the Ahafo Region of Ghana on October 10, 2024.*

by Nipah Dennis. ©Nipah Dennis and Fairtrade

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ABBREVIATIONS

AGM	Annual General Meeting
ARS	African Regional Standard for Sustainable Cocoa
CCC	Conseil Café-Cacao
CMB	Cocoa Management Board
COCOBOD	Ghana Cocoa Board
EC	European Commission
ECT	Evaluation Coordination Team
EUDR	EU Deforestation Regulation
FI	Fairtrade International
FSI	Fairtrade Sourced Ingredients
FTA	Fairtrade Africa
FTA-ECAN	Fairtrade Africa-Eastern and Central Africa Network
FTA-SAN	Fairtrade Africa-Southern Africa Network
FTA-WAN	Fairtrade Africa-West Africa Network
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
HREDD	Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence
ICS	Internal Control System
IMS	Internal Management Systems
JPM	Joint Planning Meetings
LID	Living Income Differential
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
NFO	National Fairtrade Organisations
PCRs	Presidents of the Board of Directors
PMB	Produce Marketing Board
SPO	Small-scale Producer Organisations
ToC	Theory of Change
ToT	Training of Trainers
VLSA	Village Savings and Loans Association
WACP	West Africa Cocoa Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE WEST AFRICA COCOA PROGRAMME (WACP)

The West Africa Cocoa Programme (WACP) is Fairtrade's largest capacity building programme. It operates in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and since 2022, Sierra Leone. Implemented by Fairtrade Africa (FTA) in cooperation with Fairtrade International (FI), it aims to build strong and viable small-scale producer organisations (SPOs) which are able to successfully respond to the needs of their members as well as those of commercial partners. The programme works mainly through needs-based capacity building measures at the organisational level of SPOs, thus applying an

intermediary approach that is intended to ultimately translate into benefits for individual producers, their households and communities. Capacity building measures cover trainings, training of trainers (ToT), coaching, advisory and technical support, as well as peer-to-peer-learning. The programme operates in a significantly changing environment, characterised by expanding regulatory requirements (for example EUDR, HREDD, ARS-1000), inflationary pressures, and growing stakeholder expectations.

THIS EVALUATION

Fairtrade International commissioned Syspons GmbH to undertake a second evaluation of the WACP in the context of this shifting regulatory and market environment. The evaluation covered the period between 2021–2025 and aimed mainly to assess the programme's results and its operational effectiveness. It was also tasked with formulating actionable recommendations for strategic realignment in light of a broadened mandate and growing stakeholder demands.

Data was collected through 86 interviews and focus groups as well as several workshops with Fairtrade staff, and further combined with desk research, thereby using a mixed-methods and participatory methodology. A theory-driven contribution analysis was conducted to assess the plausibility of the WACP's contribution to observed changes. Key intended users include FTA, FI, NFOs, commercial partners, and Fairtrade leadership.

KEY FINDINGS

The WACP has become a cornerstone of Fairtrade's work in the cocoa sector in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Sierra Leone. Since its inception, it has grown into a flexible, highly relevant, and widely appreciated platform that supports SPOs in navigating a rapidly changing environment marked by new regulatory demands, market dynamics, and structural challenges. The WACP strengthens Fairtrade's presence and credibility in the region, functioning as a bridge between the global sustainability agenda and the realities of cocoa production at grassroots level.

This evaluation confirms that the WACP has achieved substantial results – particularly at the SPO level – and highlights its strategic potential to serve as a delivery mechanism for broader development goals in the region. At the same time, the programme faces a set of challenges that need to be addressed to ensure its long-term impact and operational sustainability.

1. Supporting the professionalisation of SPOs

The WACP's core achievement lies in enabling SPOs to strengthen their internal structures, professionalise their operations, and meet the increasing requirements of Fairtrade certification and international and regional norms. SPOs supported by the WACP have:

- Improved their governance structures and clarified internal roles and responsibilities;
- Adopted digital tools and internal systems for traceability, mapping, and monitoring;
- Established basic procedures for democratic participation, accountability, and transparency;
- Increased their awareness and preparedness in relation to new regulatory frameworks such as the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), the African Regional Standard (ARS), and Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence (HREDD).

The evaluation found that most SPOs have laid the groundwork to respond to these challenges but require further technical guidance, particularly to operationalise complex standards, such as the EUDR, or to maintain certification under dynamic regulatory conditions.

2. A recognised platform with strong local roots

The WACP is widely viewed as a trusted and well-organised programme. Its platform character is one of its strongest assets: it serves as a hub through which Fairtrade implements cocoa-related activities in West Africa. Because of its unique access to SPOs, other projects implemented through Fairtrade in the region

often build on WACP's infrastructure and networks.

This dual role – delivering targeted capacity building while also serving as an anchor for the broader Fairtrade cocoa strategy – sets the WACP apart and makes it a strategic asset within the wider Fairtrade system.

3. Bridging externally driven requirements and local needs

A key strength of the programme lies in its needs-based and bottom-up orientation. SPOs actively communicate their priorities through established mechanisms such as joint planning and review meetings with SPOs and external stakeholders, and the WACP responds flexibly through a mix of:

- Standardised training modules (for example core certification workshops),
- Tailored and ad hoc support formats,
- On-site visits and informal advisory services.

This responsiveness has enabled the programme to match externally induced requirements – such as those from commercial partners or evolving certification standards – with the realities and priorities articulated by SPOs themselves.

4. Knowledge transfer works – but doesn't fully reach the farm level

The programme has been effective in transferring knowledge to SPOs. However, cascading this knowledge to the farm level remains uneven and dependent on SPOs' internal resources. Barriers include:

- Limited financial and staff capacities within SPOs as well as high trainer turnover;
- Lack of consistent follow-up mechanisms to assess the quality, reach, and effectiveness of cascading efforts;
- Inadequate training materials in some cases, especially for low-literacy producers.

These bottlenecks hinder the full translation of training inputs into behavioural and structural changes at producer level. Cascading efforts are also shaped by SPO size, maturity, and Premium income – highlighting the need for more context-specific support models.

5. Emerging priorities: market access, business orientation and income diversification

While many SPOs have made strides in compliance and internal governance, the next frontier lies in their economic viability and market engagement. The evaluation found that:

- SPOs generally need stronger support in understanding market dynamics, negotiation, and income diversification (for example value addition through local processing of cocoa beans and other additional revenue streams);
- There is growing demand for training in marketing, business planning, and farm-level financial management;

- Income diversification, both at farm and SPO level, is seen as essential to resilience, but regulatory and capacity barriers remain. In addition, many SPOs still rely heavily on Fairtrade Premiums for key functions, with business resilience varying widely. Strengthening long-term financial planning and entrepreneurship within SPOs is increasingly important, particularly for less mature SPOs.

The WACP has made initial efforts to respond to these trends (for example through feasibility studies or pilot projects), but additional technical expertise and (a re-allocation of) financial resources will be needed to scale up such support meaningfully.

6. A strong reputation – but limited visibility beyond immediate partners

The WACP enjoys high credibility among SPOs, local staff, and technical partners. However, its impact is not sufficiently visible to actors along the broader value chain, particularly:

- National Fairtrade Organisations (NFOs),
- Commercial partners, such as traders and exporters, retailers, and brands.

This is partly due to unclear communication structures and insufficiently targeted reporting formats. There is a disconnect between the information the WACP provides and the capacity of NFOs and commercial partners to absorb this information and their information needs. NFOs are not always able to act as effective multipliers, and commercial actors have little awareness of the WACP's added value, despite relying on its outputs. Crucial stakeholders in the cocoa value chain – particularly traders/ exporters – are not yet sufficiently addressed according to their relevance.

7. Strategic stretch and the need for a renewed mandate

The WACP has outgrown its original scope. Its mandate has gradually expanded from certification support to a wide range of thematic areas and stakeholder groups. This expansion has led to:

- Overburdened implementation teams;
- Lack of prioritisation among topics and SPOs;
- Blurred lines between the WACP's scope of intervention and those of other stakeholders within and external to the Fairtrade system.

The programme now requires a clearer strategic positioning. This includes defining which types of SPOs to prioritise (for example high potential vs. vulnerable SPOs), how to stratify them, how to deal with overlapping mandates, where to focus limited resources for maximum impact and how to leverage other projects to deliver on the WACP's mandate.

8. Well-structured, efficient implementation – but room for streamlining

Operationally, the WACP is efficiently run, with a functional mix of in-person and remote support, central coordination, and decentralised implementation. Still, the team is increasingly stretched. New responsibilities and programme components

have been added, and the implementation context has become more complex. To maintain quality and responsiveness with increasing budget constraints the programme will need to rethink:

- Its focus and mandate (see 7. above);
- Reporting and administration burdens;
- The potential for additional partnerships and cost-sharing approaches.

9. External factors continue to shape the operating context

The operating context in West Africa remains challenging. Key external factors – such as market price volatility, climate change, and demographic shifts – are largely beyond the WACP's control but strongly shape its outcomes. The programme can mitigate some of these effects (for example through climate-smart practices or income diversification), but lasting solutions will require a stronger policy and sectoral collaboration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To sustain and scale its impact in a rapidly evolving environment, the programme must clarify its strategic direction, modernise its tools, and improve integration across the Fairtrade system and value chain. Therefore, to build on WACP's achievements and prepare it for the future, the evaluation recommends taking action in four key areas:

1. Renew the WACP Mandate

- Clarify the programme's core functions, target groups, and intervention logic;
- Develop a more refined theory of change to better reflect/re-assess the impact pathways;
- Align the SPO stratification model with this renewed mandate;
- Define a manageable scope and set strategic priorities in line with available resources.

2. Capitalise on the WACP's 'Unique Selling Point' as a central platform in West Africa

- Leverage the WACP's platform character more strategically to align with complementary projects;
- Clearly communicate the WACP's added value to external stakeholders – such as donors, government representatives, and traders/exporters – to attract investment, joint programming, and co-financing;
- Develop and maintain SPO commercial profiles (for example via FairInsight) to support decision-making and partnership matching;

- Explore innovative support models, such as co-financing by mature SPOs or outcome-based training approaches.

3. Refine Training Approach

- Improve cascading of knowledge to farm level through stronger ToT systems and visual materials;
- Update training delivery with more digital and context-adapted tools;
- Support mature SPOs in developing business strategies, financial planning, and market access.

4. Improve Outreach and Communication

- Enhance communication with NFOs and commercial partners through clearer messaging and tailored reporting formats;
- Increase visibility of the WACP's impact to strengthen its legitimacy and attract strategic collaboration;
- Engage more systematically with traders and exporters as relevant stakeholders in SPO selection, performance, and support – particularly in more liberalised markets such as Sierra Leone;
- Strengthen coordination with local actors, project partners, and service providers through project mapping, landscape collaboration, and joint planning to avoid duplication, increase synergies, and amplify impact.

INTRODUCTION

THE FAIRTRADE SYSTEM

Fairtrade International represents more than 25 Fairtrade organisations and two million producers. The organisation is dedicated to fostering a world in which all producers have access to secure and sustainable livelihoods, can realise their potential, and have a say in their future.

Fairtrade operates through a structured stakeholder framework that includes small-scale producer organisations (SPOs), National Fairtrade Organisations (NFOs), as well as three producer networks. These networks cover Africa and the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. They deliver services to more than 1,900 producer organisations across 68 countries. NFOs cover countries in Europe, and North America, as well as Australia and New Zealand. They license the FAIRTRADE Marks on products and promote the Fairtrade label. Additionally, Fairtrade Marketing Organisations also promote Fairtrade in several European and Asian countries. Fairtrade's overall efforts are driven by the Fairtrade Theory of Change and the 2021-2025 Global Strategy, which defines its goals and establishes a framework for initiatives.

A key aspect of Fairtrade is the establishment of Fairtrade Minimum Prices for major commodities, accompanied by a

mandatory Fairtrade Premium. SPOs, via a Premium Committee and a General Assembly, have the autonomy to decide how to invest this Premium in their businesses and communities. Fairtrade is co-owned by producers and workers. They control 50 percent of the vote at the General Assembly - the highest decision-making body within the Fairtrade system.

Fairtrade collaborates closely with governments, development agencies, businesses, research institutions, and civil society organisations to help producer organisations enhance their skills, explore new concepts, and drive progress. Financial support from the European Commission (EC), for example, has enabled Fairtrade International to reinforce its system and expand support for fair trade worldwide.

Fairtrade's global market share remains in the single digits for its three core products - coffee, cocoa, and bananas. As a result, there is substantial potential for growth in these markets. One of Fairtrade's strategic foci is to explore strategies for increasing sales for producers while enhancing their overall impact in the face of global challenges (Fairtrade, 2021).

THE WEST AFRICA COCOA PROGRAMME (WACP)

In the global cocoa market, West Africa remains a key player, accounting for more than 74 percent of global cocoa bean production. Côte d'Ivoire alone is responsible for more than 44 percent of global production (2.2 million MT in 2023), followed by Ghana (650,000MT). Sierra Leone (18,000MT) has much smaller volumes but is an important supplier of organic cocoa beans (FAO, 2025, ICCO, 2025). In 2020, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire represented 74 percent of Fairtrade certified cocoa sales. If the reference price for cocoa in Côte d'Ivoire or Ghana falls below the Fairtrade Minimum Price, the Fairtrade Standard for Cocoa requires traders to pay a price differential for Fairtrade cocoa beans. In addition, Fairtrade Living Income Reference Prices for cocoa from Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana exist since 2018 and indicate the minimum price a producer should be paid to be able to attain a living income for meeting basic needs such as nutritious food and decent housing. A reference price for Sierra Leone is also in the works (IFC & KIT, 2025). The holistic Fairtrade Living Income Strategy and Living Income Reference Prices constitute an effort to improve the profitability of cocoa for small-scale producers.

For West Africa, Fairtrade Africa (FTA) constitutes the regional network through which Fairtrade operates. Established in 2005, FTA is an independent non-profit umbrella organisation which represents all Fairtrade certified producers in Africa. The network is owned by its members who produce traditional export

commodities such as coffee, cocoa, tea, cotton, bananas, mangoes as well as non-traditional commodities, including shea butter and rooibos tea. Currently, the organisation represents over one million producers across 33 countries in Africa. The network is divided in four sub-regional networks: the Eastern and Central Africa Network (FTA-ECAN) based in Nairobi, Kenya; the West Africa Network (FTA-WAN) based in Accra, Ghana, and the Southern Africa Network (FTA-SAN) based in Cape Town, South Africa, as well as a more recent network in the Middle East and North Africa region. Overall, Fairtrade Africa alongside the two other producer networks has 50 percent ownership of the Fairtrade system (Fairtrade Africa, n.d.).

Within the Fairtrade system, the West Africa Cocoa Programme (WACP) is the largest internally funded programme and also the programme covering the highest number of SPOs. It is implemented by FTA in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and, more recently Sierra Leone, with support from Fairtrade International. Launched in 2016,¹ the WACP aims to build strong and viable SPOs which successfully respond to the needs of their members as well as those of business partners. The programme works mainly through needs-based capacity building measures at the organisational level of SPOs, thus applying an intermediary approach that is intended to ultimately translate into benefits for individual producers, their households and communities. Capacity building measures cover trainings, training of trainers

¹ While the programme was implemented in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana from the beginning, implementation in Sierra Leone only started in 2022.

(ToT), coaching, advisory and technical support, as well as peer-to-peer-learning.² Topics addressed by these interventions range from Fairtrade Standard compliance to thematic subjects such as governance, Internal Management System (IMS) financial and operational management, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), empowerment of women, and environmental issues among others. Through these interventions, the WACP supports cocoa SPOs in formalising strategic plans, improving responsiveness to the needs of members, fostering their participation in organisational processes, and addressing partner requirements proactively. Thematically, the WACP assists SPOs in identifying and managing risks related to deforestation, as well as in fulfilling human rights and environmental due diligence obligations. With its scope continuously increasing, WACP trainings reached a total of 51,891 participants in 2024.³

Through the support provided by the WACP, SPOs are empowered to establish systems, processes, and training programmes to successfully fulfill their SPO functions towards

producers and markets (see Figure 1). At the same time, SPO managers acquire the skills and capacities to successfully lead the SPOs. Finally, SPOs take concrete actions to achieve organisational improvements based on the knowledge gained (outputs). By reaching these goals, it is envisioned that SPOs will become effective, resilient business entities that are able to successfully respond to their members' needs (short-term outcome). In return, SPO members will perceive their SPO to be a democratic, transparent and participative organisation. They would also be equipped with the necessary commercial knowledge and skills to successfully operate in the cocoa sector as well as embrace the principles of economic, social, and environmental sustainability in cocoa production and community life (medium-term outcome). Ultimately, the WACP aims to contribute to the ability of SPOs to establish strong production bases as well as attractive business profiles. These elements should lead to sustained access to Fairtrade cocoa markets (impact).

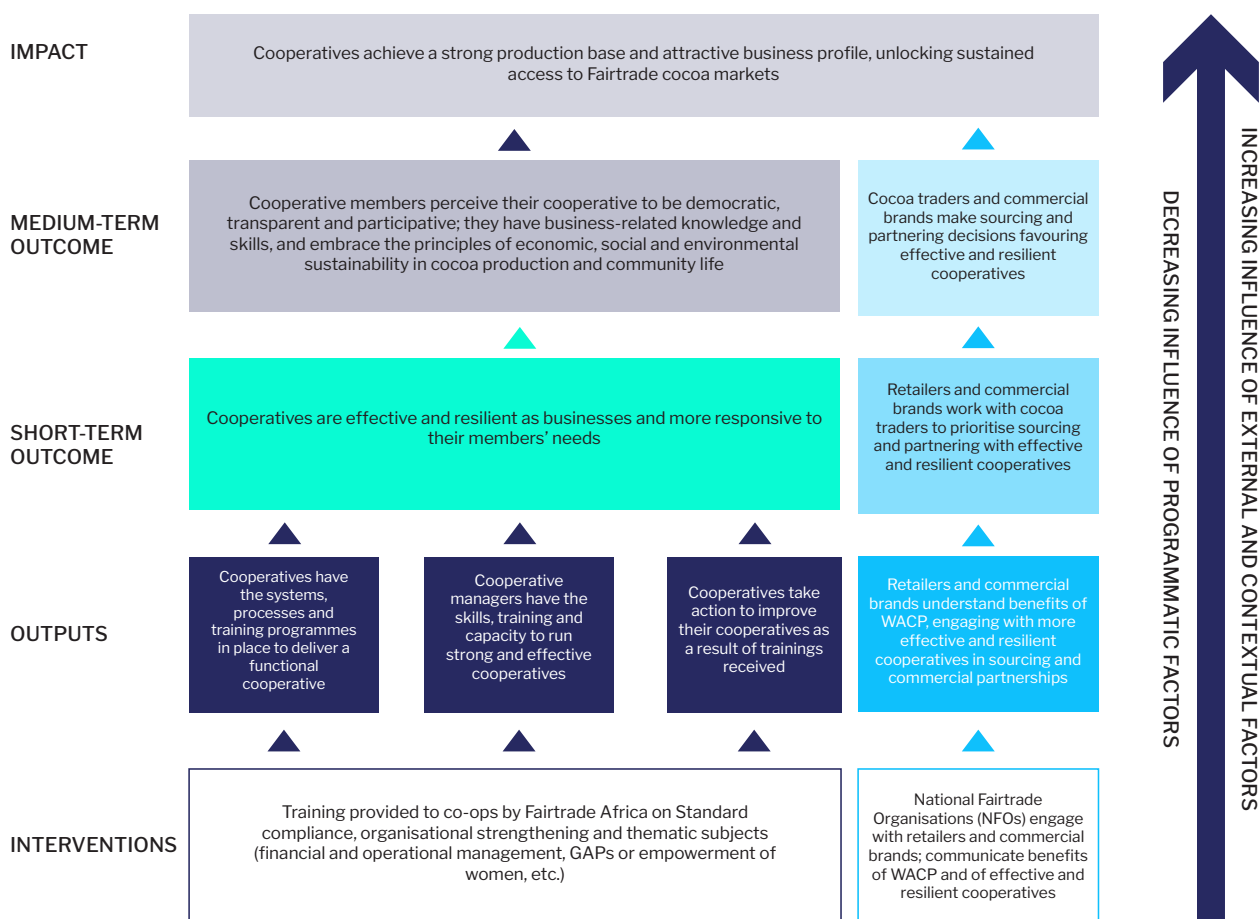


Figure 1: West Africa Cocoa Programme – Current Theory of Change

² ToT (Training of Trainers) is a structure through which hired SPO staff or selected SPO members receive training to become trainers themselves, so they can pass on knowledge and skills to other members.

³ See https://www.fairtrade.net/en/products/Fairtrade_products/cocoa.html

Besides its actions linked to SPOs, the WACP also pursues goals related to retailers and commercial brands. In this vein, NFOs engage with retailers and commercial brands to communicate the benefits of the WACP and its interventions for creating effective and resilient SPOs. The desired outcome is that through this engagement, retailers and commercial brands are motivated to engage with effective and resilient SPOs in sourcing produce and fostering commercial partnerships (output level). They should then be inclined to prioritise sourcing and partnering with those SPOs (short-term outcome) and consequently make sourcing and partnering decisions in their favour (medium-term outcome). This pathway should equally contribute to the impacts aimed for at SPO level (see Figure 1).

To structure its engagement with SPOs in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Sierra Leone, the WACP uses a stratification model that categorises SPOs into five levels (see Figure 2).

These levels determine the scope and intensity of support provided, based on assessed risk levels and identified needs or capacity gaps.

- **Post-graduate:** SPOs at this level have already benefitted from extensive WACP engagement and have demonstrated strong organisational maturity. They continue to receive strategic support, AGM facilitation, and additional services based on individual needs, which may include further thematic inputs or ad hoc coaching as required.

- **Primary:** For SPOs at the highest level of support, the WACP delivers more intensive, tailored interventions. These are informed by prior needs assessments and include focused thematic coaching, multiple follow-up sessions, and support for member-based financial structures, such as VSLAs. These SPOs are considered high priority for deeper capacity building efforts.
- **Secondary with special projects:** SPOs in this group receive the full secondary package, plus additional targeted support. This includes thematic workshops (for example governance, financial management) and follow-up coaching sessions to help implement improvements.

Secondary: These SPOs receive a standardised support package that includes the core certification workshop, strategic support and AGM facilitation. In some cases, this is complemented by one-on-one coaching to deepen understanding and apply knowledge in practice.

Outer: SPOs in the outer group benefit from a set of basic group trainings designed to help them maintain their Fairtrade certification and comply with relevant Standards, such as the Fairtrade SPO Standard and the Cocoa Standard.

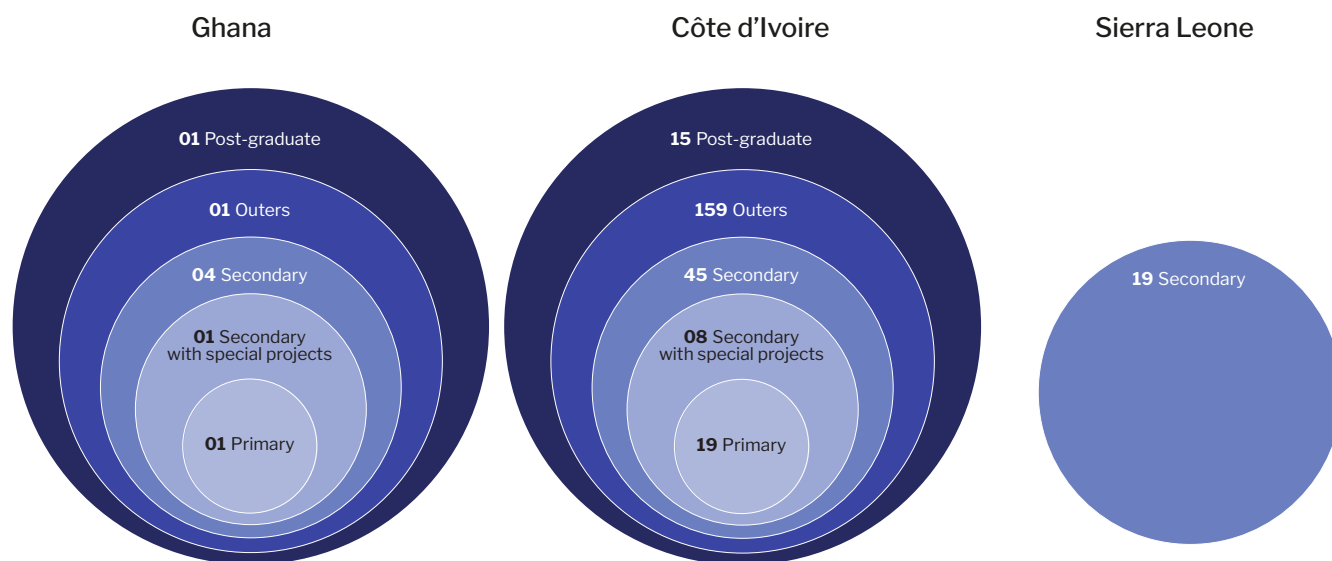


Figure 2: Overview of the WACP's Stratification Scheme

All three countries of implementation face common challenges related to global developments, such as evolving international regulatory frameworks in the cocoa sector and the impact of climate change on cocoa production. Nonetheless, the cocoa sector in each country presents distinct structural characteristics and challenges. Moreover, each country has a unique socio-economic, environmental, and regulatory system that needs to be considered (see below).



In Ghana, the WACP includes eight SPOs, some of which are part of large producer unions with sub-sections encompassing up to 100,000 members. The market is regulated by the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), with which SPOs generally maintain a constructive working relationship. Beyond the global challenges of climate change and evolving regulatory frameworks, key sectoral challenges in Ghana's cocoa sector include declining production, the impacts of illegal mining, ageing farms and limited engagement by younger producers. Furthermore, where SPOs have formed Licensed Buying Companies, access to sufficient financial resources for purchasing cocoa beans from their members is constrained. Fairtrade SPOs face additional difficulties in establishing and maintaining business relationships and accessing Fairtrade markets.



In contrast to Ghana and Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire has a much higher number of Fairtrade SPOs, estimated at around 250, including a large share of smaller SPOs, which are classified under

the outer category within the WACP stratification scheme. The market is regulated by the Conseil Café-Cacao (CCC), which operates under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture. It is tasked with regulation and market stabilisation as well as development and research. Unlike Ghana, collaboration between SPOs and the regulator is more limited. Sectoral challenges beyond global aspects include widespread plant disease (for example swollen shoot disease), ageing farms, and a shortage of younger producers. The role of Presidents of the Board of Directors (PCRs) is often a critical factor in the performance of SPOs. Similar to Ghana, Fairtrade SPOs also face barriers in business relationships and market access.



In Sierra Leone, the Fairtrade system comprises fewer SPOs (19), each with around 2,000–5,000 members. Unlike Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, the market is more liberalised, with traders and free agents playing a major role. As a result, the

regulatory authority here has a different role compared to those in the other two countries. The Produce Marketing Board (PMB) was established in 2013 to regulate and promote production, processing and marketing of agricultural products. Beyond the

global challenges, the cocoa sector in Sierra Leone faces challenges such as the dilution of (organic) bean quality from illegal imports and fertilisers, ageing trees, limited access to approved pesticides (particularly organic products), and post-harvest processing issues. For Fairtrade SPOs, access to finance, business management capacities, and a significant dependency on traders are additional concerns.

In 2025, the WACP is reaching the end of its current strategy period (2021-2025). During this period, significant changes have occurred both externally and internally. Externally, the cocoa sector has been marked by price volatility, evolving environmental conditions, and shifting regulatory frameworks. Regarding the latter, the new European Union Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence (HREDD) Regulation came into force in 2024 and will impact SPOs that hold Fairtrade certification. Although the European Commission has postponed the implementation of the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) slightly, it will still pose significant challenges for stakeholders throughout the supply chain. Producers, in particular, will be affected as it requires them to demonstrate traceability of produce and compliance with the deforestation criteria set out in the regulation. Fairtrade's proactive partnership with Satelligence helps to support and prepare SPOs for these changes. Another example is the African Regional Standard for Sustainable Cocoa (ARS-1000, or simply ARS) which the African Organisation for Standardisation has been developing since 2020 and is currently being rolled out. It contains guidelines to support environmental, social and economic sustainability in cocoa production.

Internally, the WACP first needed to respond to the numerous external developments to sustain its relevance. This had to happen while the programme itself was evolving considerably: In 2022, Sierra Leone was integrated as a third country of implementation with 19 SPOs. Additionally, the total number of SPOs covered by the programme grew from 179 in 2017 to 273 in 2024. Along with the increase in SPO numbers, emerging sustainability topics, such as HREDD, were widening the thematic scope of trainings. However, the programme's budget has not increased to the same degree and the ratio from money to outputs has been affected by inflation. This has led to an overstretched and underfunded programme.

Against this backdrop, Syspons was commissioned by Fairtrade International to carry out a second evaluation of the WACP. The main goals of the evaluation were to analyse how well the WACP has achieved the desired changes at SPO level and beyond. It also included a review of the programme design and approach, as well as its ways of working. The evaluation covered the period between 2021 and 2025 and built on the results of the first programme evaluation covering the period between 2016 and 2020.

EVALUATION DESIGN

EVALUATION APPROACH

To successfully respond to the diverse needs and knowledge interests of different stakeholders linked to the WACP, the evaluation combined a theory-led, robust design on the one hand and a flexible, participatory element on the other. The theory-led approach was based on the programme's theory of change and an analytical grid. The latter defined aspects to be analysed, evaluation questions, indicators/descriptors, as well as methods of data collection used to respond to each of the evaluation questions systematically and in a transparent manner. Through the flexible and participatory approach, the evaluation emphasised regular exchanges with key stakeholders, for example through several workshops and an iterative approach to be able to further discuss and validate preliminary findings or adapt the evaluation design as needed to maximise the usefulness of the evaluation results.

Key stakeholders/intended users of the evaluation according to the terms of reference are:

- **Fairtrade Africa** – to enhance programme implementation, including revisiting training content and delivery methods, refining the stratification strategy for SPOs, guiding the deployment of FTA staff, and identifying priority support areas.
- **Fairtrade's Global Cocoa team** – to strengthen the overall programme design and inform its future strategic direction.
- **NFOs and Fairtrade's commercial partners** – to demonstrate the impact of commercial partners' investments in the WACP and support the development of future Fairtrade sales strategies.

- **Fairtrade International's leadership** – to assess the impact of the WACP over the past four years and ensure its alignment with the new Fairtrade strategy.

The evaluation aimed for a broad involvement of all interested stakeholders to contribute to maximise the relevance and potential uptake of evaluation recommendations. - We will also be working with the Fairtrade team to jointly develop a workplan to implement key recommendations at the end of the evaluation.

Two distinct but interlinked lenses were applied to combine a summative impact assessment with a formative assessment of operational aspects. The impact lens was mainly concerned with an analysis of what the WACP has achieved between 2021 and 2025, building on the results of the previous evaluation, and focusing on the outcomes and impacts of the programme. This was done to assess how far the WACP's current implementation reality corresponds to the impact pathways aimed for (see Figure 3). The impact lens produced evidence and examples for the WACP's impact in the cocoa sector in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Sierra Leone to facilitate learning and illustrate what has been achieved and where adaptations of the intervention logic may be necessary. Additionally, an assessment of the programme's design and approach was made based on its ability to successfully respond to the needs and priorities of its target groups as well as its ability to adapt to the evolving implementation context. The findings related to these elements are included in subsequent chapters.

Figure 3: The impact lens

To measure the WACP's impacts, we applied a theory-driven approach using contribution analysis. This method focuses on assessing the extent to which observed outcomes can be attributed to the programme, rather than relying on experimental designs such as randomised control trials. Contribution analysis is particularly suited for programmes such as the WACP, where it is difficult to isolate the effects of a single intervention due to overlapping factors and existing training initiatives, but where the aim is to explore causal contribution questions (Stern, Mayne et al., 2012). Furthermore, the programme already possesses a theory of change, which can be used to track the plausibility of the desired contributions to higher level outcomes and impacts. This approach allowed us to assess the programme's contribution to key outcomes by examining how and why these outcomes occurred. Through in-country interviews and focus groups we harvested evidence on the role of the WACP in the commercial situation of the SPOs, their collaboration with commercial partners, and how prepared they are for new regulatory frameworks. By engaging directly with the FTA implementation teams and SPOs through qualitative methods, we collected insights into their experiences, practices, and perceptions of the programme's effectiveness.

The operations lens was centred on formative aspects and concerned with detailed questions related to the WACP's administration, management and steering, ways of working and efficiency (see Figure 4). Results related to these aspects are

included only in the internal report for members of the Fairtrade team. Wherever these results are relevant to give context to the impact lens, they will also be highlighted in the external version.

Figure 4: The operations lens

The aim of the organisational assessment was to deliver answers to questions concerning the inner workings of the WACP, ranging from activity implementation to Monitoring and Evaluation (MEL), administration, management and efficiency. To be able to address these questions, the participation of the stakeholders involved was key. We therefore developed a bespoke and participatory approach to yield actionable results for the stakeholders involved at different levels.

Graph: Simplified WACP stakeholder chart for operations lens



Our focus in the operations lens was threefold, prioritising the delivery of the programme:

- 1. Delivery of the programme in the three countries** by FTA and its implementation teams.
- 2. Coordination, management and administration** within the Fairtrade system.
- 3. Delivery of the programme to commercial partners**, primarily NFOs.

Steps (1) and (3) concern the ultimate delivery of the programme, whereas Step (2) shows the transmission between them, with various supporting activities, coordination and information sharing between the actors involved. Similarly, Steps (1) and (3) can be directly linked to the theory of change, whereas Step (2) is a key determinant and influencing factor for a successful implementation. The three steps fed into our contribution analysis as explaining factors that relate to the impact lens accordingly (sequential design).

EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation included an inception, a data collection and a synthesis and reporting phase. The evaluation process started in November 2024 and is expected to be completed in October 2025 (see Figure 5: Overview of the evaluation process).

Figure 5: Overview of the evaluation process

Inception phase & Inception report (Analytical Grid)	
Kick-off with the evaluation coordination team (ECT)	Nov 2024
Exploration of key data documents and data	Nov - Dec 2024
8 inception interviews with key stakeholders	Dec 2024
Stakeholder and process mapping	Dec 2024
Evaluation implementation Workshop with the coordination team	Jan 2025
Development of analytical instruments, surveys, analytical grid and guidelines	Jan 2025
Inception report of no more than 15-20 pages	Jan 2025

Presentation and discussion of the report with the ECT	Feb 2025
Data collection phase	
Secondary data analysis & contextual analysis of framework conditions	Jan - Mar 2025
8 interviews with NFOs and commercial partners	Mar - May 2025
Preparation of field visits	Jan - Mar 2025
Field visits	Mar - Apr 2025
Field visit to Côte d'Ivoire	Mar 2025
Field visit to Ghana	Mar 2025
Field visit to Sierra Leone	Mar - Apr 2025
Efficiency Analysis	Apr - May 2025
Operations Workshop	Mar 2025
Syspans internal synthesis of preliminary findings	Mar - Apr 2025
Presentation and validation of preliminary findings and recommendations	May 2025
Flexible item / Workshop Series to develop roadmap	Aug - Sep 2025
Final Synthesis & Presentation for Fairtrade (webinars)	Jun - Oct 2025
Final Report	Aug 2025

METHODS USED FOR DATA COLLECTION

The evaluation used a mixed-method approach to data collection, combining qualitative and quantitative methods (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Overview of evaluation methods

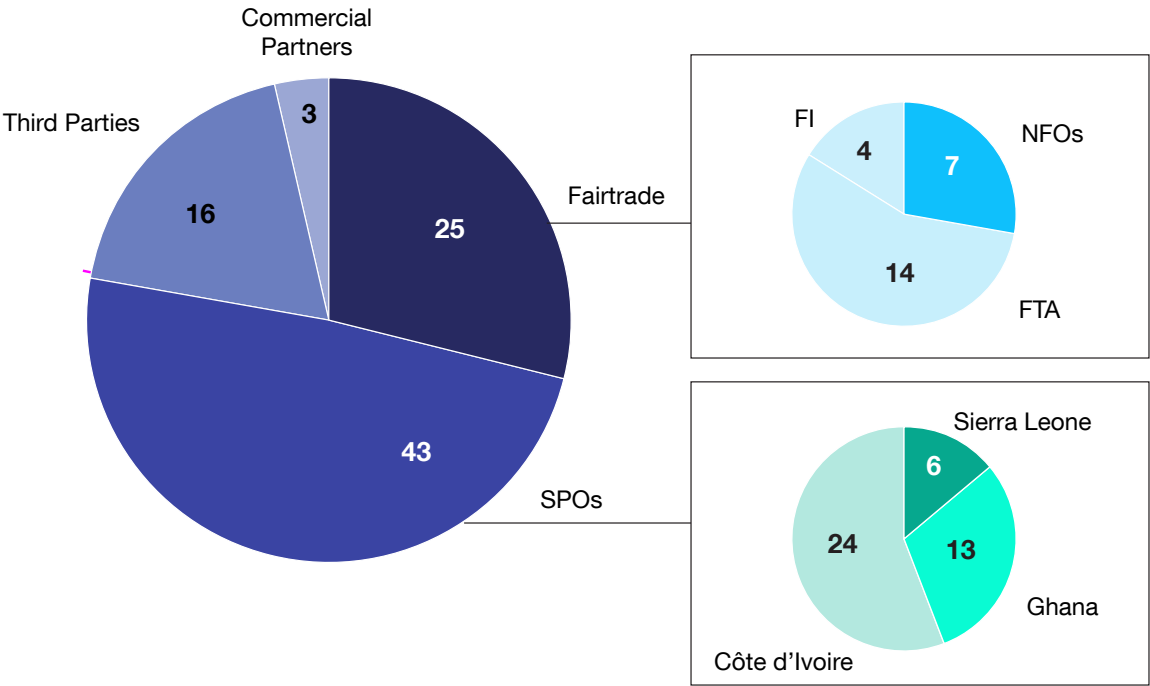


STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED IN THE EVALUATION PROCESS

Overall, 86 meetings were conducted during the evaluation process. These meetings included individual as well as group interviews with up to 10 people. In addition, staff from Fairtrade Africa and Fairtrade International also participated in various

workshops and many ad hoc exchanges. Third parties involved in the evaluation included governmental representatives, project partners, consultants, traders and exporters, among others (see Figure 7). In Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, two or three interviews were often conducted per SPO, while in Sierra Leone one interview per SPO took place.

Figure 7: Interviewed stakeholder groups







SELECTION CRITERIA FOR SPOS

To derive a methodically sound sample of SPOs to be involved in the evaluation process, clear selection criteria were developed and applied. Two conditions needed to be considered. The number of SPOs selected had to first allow for sufficient data and diversity to answer all assessment categories, particularly those related to the impact lens. Secondly, the number of SPOs had to align with available resources. As to the process for selecting the SPOs that would participate in the evaluation process, a discussion with all country teams, Fairtrade Africa and Fairtrade International took place regarding sampling as well as

the final selection. The selection of SPOs was further validated in the context of the joint planning meetings in Ghana and Sierra Leone. In Côte d'Ivoire, the selection was done earlier as the planning meeting took place too close to the field study but adaptations were made where necessary.

The following table provides an overview of the criteria applied for selecting the SPOs:

Figure 8: Overview SPO selection criteria

Organisational Characteristics	Longitudinal Relevance	Sales Relevance	Potential Further Considerations
 Region	Previous Evaluation	⊗ Sales in KG (2022-23)	Value Chain
 Stratification Level	Monitoring Sample	Percentage of Fairtrade Sales (2023)	Particularities (additional support or projects)
 Organisational Strength	Years of Certification	⊗ Premium in US-\$ (2022-23)	
 Grade	Years with WACP	Derived Selection Index	
	Derived Selection Index		

LIMITATIONS

The evaluation methodology attempted to balance impact and outcome-oriented analyses with the more operational and inward-looking lens to cover the breadth of research questions. Consequently, several limitations apply to the results produced in the evaluation which cannot be entirely mitigated by the evaluation design.

Challenge of attribution: The contribution to the desired impacts, with a myriad of other influencing factors present, is difficult to assess. Isolating the specific effects of the programme amid the broader socio-economic, environmental, and policy-related variables is challenging. While the evaluation identifies correlations, it cannot definitively claim causality. However, through our approach of SPO selection and triangulation, we have obtained a comprehensive picture of the situation and the factors that contribute to or hinder general contributions to SPOs' positioning and capacities.

No household level data collection: A conscious decision was made in the design phase not to invest resources in complex household surveys. There were other areas the evaluation needed to prioritise and cover in depth - most notably relating the way that the programme is designed and delivered. To balance this, the evaluation focused on the SPOs as the primary target group, as this allowed conclusions to be drawn in both directions. By interviewing delegates, we attempted to reach out as far as possible, but consequently did not produce a household level assessment of how the programme contributed to improved livelihoods. It is important to note that the farmer level details outlined below come from assessments at delegate and SPO management level, who in most cases are farmers themselves.

Positivity bias: As beneficiaries of training, SPOs have a natural interest in seeing the programme continue to deliver, and the evaluation team therefore faced the risk of receiving assessments that were too positive in order to secure continued funding. It is often a challenge to convey that evaluations are independent and external and that the team has no influence on any decisions made regarding the programme. This was mitigated in several ways. First, we clarified the evaluator's role and independence with the help of our local team of experts. Secondly, we asked and designed questions in a way that would also elicit more general insights beyond training needs in order to get a better, less 'tainted' picture. Lastly, we interviewed a wide range of stakeholders beyond SPOs, which also included experts and other stakeholders without a direct 'beneficiary' interest in the continuation of the programme.

Depth of data. The availability and sensitivity of some data is another limitation. For example, the financial and efficiency analysis was based on financial reports for the part of the WACP budget managed by FTA only. Other projects run, or the parts of the WACP budget managed by FI (for MEL) were not reviewed under this. Similarly, some market-sensitive information, such as sales or comparison volumes for other commodities, were not available. Lastly, it proved generally difficult to reach commercial partners. As a result, the findings related to commercial partners are based on a relatively small number of interviews. To mitigate this effect, information was, wherever possible, triangulated with the NFO and local stakeholder interviews.

KEY FINDINGS

DESIGN AND APPROACH OF THE WACP



The WACP has grown into an impactful and highly relevant platform in the West African cocoa sector. Through its needs-based, structural capacity building approach, it successfully responds to the evolving needs of SPOs in a complex and dynamic environment. The continued evolution and expanded scope of the programme are yet to be translated into a renewed programme design and communication strategy to successfully work with all stakeholders targeted by the programme.

In this chapter, we discuss the design and approach of the programme. These form the foundation for its implementation and includes its character as a platform, its responsiveness to changing framework conditions, the stratification of SPOs, training approaches, the cascading of training contents as well as engagements with commercial partners.

WACP'S PLATFORM CHARACTER

The WACP's capacity building approach based on core trainings, ad hoc support, and issue-specific engagement successfully responds to the needs and priorities of many SPOs. Besides this, the programme links different actors from across the cocoa value chain. Through these actions, the WACP has grown into the central platform through which Fairtrade operates in the West African cocoa space. At the same time, there is potential for reinforcing collaboration with business partners and other external stakeholders.

"With others (schemes) you tick boxes, without ownership but WACP is really **producing a greater buy-in, it brings ownership**"

SPO in Ghana

According to its core function, **the WACP has been instrumental in creating the framework conditions to disseminate relevant knowledge to SPOs.** WACP's approach of primarily targeting the SPO level with trainings, for example, on organisational strengthening, was supported by most SPOs and stakeholders – even though some interviewees asked for more farm-level engagement. Working with standard training elements, such as core certification workshops and tailor-made, ad hoc, and flexible support elements, the WACP successfully responds to the individual needs of different SPOs. In all three countries of implementation, Fairtrade Africa enjoys a strong reputation regarding its technical expertise among both SPOs and relevant stakeholders from the cocoa sector.

Beyond its core elements and through its unique access to SPOs and other relevant national and local stakeholders in the countries of implementation, **the WACP has grown into a platform that is "oiling the machine"** of Fairtrade cocoa in West Africa. Through capacity building and flexible support to SPOs, it keeps them in the market, assists with various challenges, addresses non-conformities and helps to prepare for audits and to resolve disputes. It connects different stakeholders and caters to other interventions both within and beyond the Fairtrade system. As an example, some SPOs established links with traders thanks to the exchanges and meetings organised by the WACP (Int_29, 42)⁴. Moreover, the WACP provides infrastructure which other projects benefit from, such as Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) trainings or the Fairtrade Women School of Leadership (WSOL)⁵. While, mostly, the WACP has been catering to other projects, there are also examples of the WACP leveraging resources from other interventions. For instance, working jointly with the Livelihood Ecosystem Advancement Project (LEAP), the WACP designed a cooperative strengthening workstream. Four cooperatives were trained under this workstream using LEAP resources.

However, **a lack of awareness by commercial partners on what WACP does and what has been achieved constitutes a missed opportunity** for establishing fruitful links at this level and better positioning of the WACP and its unique selling points.

WACP'S RESPONSIVENESS TO CHANGING FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS

Crucially, for operating successfully in a complex and dynamic environment, the WACP has demonstrated a strong capacity to adapt to changing framework conditions, with some limitations. Overall, the programme has been able to flexibly to numerous external as well as internal developments, while remaining true to the needs-based approach it puts forward with regard to SPOs.

Since 2021, a series of **external as well as internal developments have affected the operations of cocoa SPOs** in the three countries of implementation, regardless of their certification status (see 3.1 Design and Approach of the WACP Design and Approach of the WACP for further details). External sectoral challenges have included the need to comply with new regulations and standards, find ways to cope with a volatile market, develop resilience vis-à-vis the (growing) impact of climate change, pests and diseases affecting cocoa plantations (for example swollen shoot disease), overaged farms (tree age), and the limited involvement of young producers.

⁴ These references refer to the particular interview or focus group from which an assertion is drawn. See the Annex "List of Interviews" for associated table.

⁵ VSLA (Village Savings and Loans Association) is a community-based savings group that allows members to save together and access small loans. The Women's School of Leadership is an initiative that trains women in leadership, business, and negotiation skills to strengthen their role in SPOs and communities.

In this regard, the WACP has been instrumental for SPOs to obtain knowledge on emerging or increasingly central topics in the cocoa sector. For example, the WACP has played a key role in translating the ever-growing body of requirements to which SPOs must respond in order to operate successfully in the cocoa space. It has disseminated in a timely way relevant information on issues such as HREDD, child labour remediation, EUDR, and ARS. SPOs have reported a new awareness of these norms thanks to their engagement with the WACP. While the WACP makes an effort to respond to all these developments, some areas could benefit from a more rapid realignment, particularly the integration of farm rehabilitation, climate resilience strategies, youth engagement, value creation at farm and SPO level and adapting to emerging market players in the cocoa industry. Adding to these challenges, Fairtrade certified SPOs also need to meet a multitude and growing number of requirements related to Fairtrade Standards and audits to keep up to date. Overall, the SPOs interviewed felt more confident regarding their ability to meet the Standards as well as successfully participating in auditing processes.

Within a single programme, the WACP caters to a diverse range of SPOs in three different implementation contexts whose particularities need to be considered. The number of SPOs targeted by the programme, particularly in Côte d'Ivoire, has grown significantly since its launch. Sierra Leone was integrated as a third country of implementation in 2022. From the first training pilots in 2017, the number of SPOs had grown from 179 to 273 at the time of the evaluation. The evaluation team found that the WACP has successfully responded to the specific requirements of SPOs in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Sierra Leone, including on issues requiring immediate action. For example, in Ghana, the WACP is perceived as being highly instrumental in delivering relevant trainings and technical knowledge. According to interview partners, it further contributed to recovering sales following the loss of a major buyer (Int_32, 40). In Côte d'Ivoire, the WACP has also been playing a significant role. Beyond recognising it for providing practical training and disseminating knowledge to SPOs, its successful advocacy work during the suspension of Fairtrade sales has stood out (Int_59, 87).

“The question is not whether Fairtrade Africa is providing the right trainings. **More interesting is that we regularly communicate our needs and adapt the trainings schedule accordingly. this is a very useful approach**“.

SPO in Côte d'Ivoire

All these external and internal developments needed to be juggled without significant budget increases. Inflation added further financial pressure on programme implementation and stretched the resources of implementing staff. Despite these challenges, the WACP has been able to address a broad range of relevant SPO needs.

The inclusion of Sierra Leone worked well, but the transfer of approach did not adequately consider Sierra Leone's market environment. When the programme expanded to Sierra Leone, it had to be done through consultants because Fairtrade is not officially registered in the country. Two staff now work out of Kenema in the south-east of the country but without their

own office spaces. Their presence is greatly appreciated. The programme launched its activities in Sierra Leone at a time when external support for SPOs there was minimal. Several SPOs were at risk of decertification. Through targeted core trainings, the WACP helped reverse this trend, supporting SPOs to stabilise and re-engage with the Fairtrade certification processes. However, in terms of transferring the approach from Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, it became apparent during data collection that the special features of Sierra Leone's market (more liberalised, much more significant role played by traders and free agents) was inadequately considered in the programme's approach for the country. Interviews with SPOs, traders and other stakeholders showed that the strict focus on SPOs misses out on the potential of working the wider ecosystem. This includes traders, many of whom have been essential in setting up SPOs and providing capacity building, for example for organic farming. Similarly, some of the challenges SPOs face, such as free agents buying at farmgate from SPO members, disputes on terms for trader pre-financing of SPOs to buy cocoa from their members, and other aspects are being addressed through ad hoc support provided by the team, but so far the training content is not tailored to this. Traders have complained that the trainings focus too much on the role of SPOs and do not convey an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of other actors in the supply chain (Int_16).

WACP'S STRATIFICATION SCHEME

The stratification scheme was found to be useful for engaging with SPOs in an increasingly complex environment. It further helps to prioritise the support provided to SPOs within a limited budget. However, it limits the ability to meet the needs of SPOs in lower categories. Moreover, clear and transparent stratification criteria are lacking.

Many of the stakeholders interacting with the WACP considered the stratification scheme to be appropriate for categorising SPOs depending on their position. As an example, some NFOs felt that the scheme helped them obtain an overview of SPOs and their standing (Int_24, 25). However, many stakeholders also agreed that more clarity was needed regarding the selection process, the mode and frequency of contact between the programme and SPOs, and the respective support services per level.

The evaluation team found that the current scheme reinforces SPOs that are well-positioned to a greater extent rather than those with lower institutional and professional capacities, and responds to their needs to a lesser degree. As an example, outer SPOs in Côte d'Ivoire expressed the need for more thematic trainings in areas such as EUDR or HREDD in order to adhere to these new requirements. However, due to their position in the stratification scheme, there was limited leeway to implement such trainings. On the commercial side, there also seems to be a tendency among business partners to cooperate with SPOs that are already well-positioned (Int_25). This echoes the previous evaluation's finding that stratification allows for more efficient delivery and higher impact trainings through its tailor-made support. However, that meant that certain SPO training needs could not be met. Furthermore, even within one stratification group, the capacities,

qualifications and engagement of SPO staff and board differed significantly. For example, the 19 Sierra Leonean SPOs are all classed in one group but display wide variances in their capacities.

TOPICS AND METHODS OF WACP TRAININGS

The WACP covers topics of relevance, both externally induced and internally demanded. Overall, SPOs were satisfied with the thematic focus of the trainings. However, they did voice the need to further strengthen certain topics.

The programme's **ability to cover both core Standard-related trainings as well as integrating trainings on emerging issues**, such as recent requirements under the EUDR or the ARS, was positively highlighted by SPOs. Nonetheless, interviewees pointed to thematic **areas where training and support coverage could be strengthened** given the persistent challenges faced by SPOs. These included:

Market access and business success: SPOs expressed the need for an improved understanding of market mechanisms and building capacities for navigating market complexities. This would enable more proactive marketing/business engagement as well as stronger self-perception of SPOs as business entities.

Additional livelihoods and value creation: SPOs stated that they wished to diversify their sources of income and receive support in value creation to increase their resilience and enhance income. Strengthened support mainly referred to additional SPO-level income sources (for example, through local cocoa processing) but also included additional livelihood interventions, with women or young people as specific target groups.

Youth engagement: SPOs reported the need for more support to facilitate youth engagement in order to make cocoa farming more attractive for younger populations.

Farm-level financial management and record keeping: Although SPOs were aware of the WACP's target level, several SPOs expressed a need for more training in farm-level financial management and record keeping in order to complement and improve SPO-level aspects such as reporting and transparency. Furthermore, some SPOs regarded the financial management by producers as a key aspect of business success. This issue has already been addressed through the WACP and partner projects, but further training and support are still required.

SPOs were mostly satisfied with the methodological approach used to convey training contents. Nonetheless, innovation and adaptation potentials were pointed to.

Overall, SPOs positively evaluated the methods applied in trainings. As an example, they were **generally very satisfied** with the ways in which WACP **trainers** conducted the trainings. They also considered the mix of languages used well-adapted to their needs. The training method is perceived as **participatory**, promoting discussion and understanding among participants and collecting feedback at the end. They further complemented the WACP for their very timely training of new SPO staff.

As to potentials for innovation at the methodological level, a **small number of interviewees suggested that training formats could be modernised**. Integrating **more digital tools**

was one of the suggestions made, for example. Another point concerned improving the quality of the visual content presented in order to facilitate cascading of information to the producer level. Many SPOs visited by the evaluation team had posters and guidance materials at their facilities from other actors, but not from Fairtrade. Consequently, a number of SPOs mentioned they would like to receive better and more materials, brochures and particularly posters related to the trainings, especially to facilitate knowledge transfer (Int_42, 66, 67, 79, 82).

Moreover, **several SPOs expressed a desire for more frequent training**, as well as a focus on more farm-level training delivered by WACP staff. This would complement the cascading process (see below), provide variety to SPO internal training at farm level, and increase the visibility of the WACP at farm level (e.g. Int_45, 56, 65). Furthermore, a cross-cutting issue raised was an insufficient level of participation by board presidents in trainings (Int_56, 59). For certain topics, particularly those requiring institutional or strategic change, the active involvement of this stakeholder group is critical to achieving results.

WACP'S CASCADING TRAININGS APPROACH

While the trainings were positively evaluated, the current approach to cascading relevant training contents from SPO to producer level seems to leave room for improvement. The evaluation team found cascading to be a crucial feature for upscaling training results as well as for sustainably embedding the trainings in SPO structures. All SPOs interviewed actively engaged in cascading relevant knowledge, but with large variances in the approach for this.

Achieving high producer participation in cascading trainings through SPOs is dependent on several factors.

The distribution of producers in the field plays an important role. Outreach through SPOs works best when producers live close to each other and are easily reachable (Int_31, 45, 56). For more remote members, SPOs often organise transportation or travel to collect them, although participation drops during the rainy or peak farming seasons due to time constraints (Int_42). Effective strategies to improve turnout included scheduling trainings in line with producers' availabilities. Things such as avoiding taboo days (days designated by local traditional, cultural, or religious customs when community members are expected to refrain from certain activities) and holding trainings early in the morning or during less busy periods allows (female) producers to attend before heading to their farms or the market (Int_29, 42, 45). Another decisive factor as mentioned in the previous chapter is the SPOs' ability to cover ToT salaries, transportation and materials. Most SPOs reported being able to effectively cascade knowledge down to producer level if supported by the WACP or other partners with sufficient funding. Once this support funding ends, however, effective cascading depends on the resources available to the SPO, which leads to the following point.

The overall ability of SPOs to share training knowledge with their members correlates significantly with their financial standing, most notably the amount of Premium earned. Accordingly, SPOs that were not as well-positioned financially were not able to engage sufficiently in cascading efforts, which ultimately influenced impacts at the level of individual farms. So, while the WACP has established strong structures at SPO level, the effectiveness of cascading trainings to SPO members could be worked on. To facilitate cascading, SPOs stated their need for adapted and

detailed materials that can be easily transferred to farm level. Examples given of useful materials included more posters, videos or flip brochures. It was also unclear how much quality assurance is done of the trainings conducted through the ToT structure (Int_45). The evaluation team found that a structured follow-up system for monitoring feedback to enable learning with regard to cascading and keep track of how the process is working is currently lacking. In Sierra Leone, where no ToT approach is in place, some SPOs with high Fairtrade sales volumes used their Premiums to hire field officers to reach every producer every season, with one field officer responsible for 250 producers. Other SPOs struggled to do this due to a lack of resources and reached only a few or up to approximately 65 percent of their members (Int_18-20).

Tailor-made ad hoc support and assistance responded quickly and flexibly to the needs of individual SPOs.

Many SPOs mentioned that when specific challenges or urgent needs arose, they could directly contact WACP staff and receive quick, tailored support. One SPO in Ghana stated that they could “just call the FTA team on anything of (technical) interest to us” (Int_44). This ad hoc support covered a variety of issues such as clarification on new compliance requirements, technical assistance on report submission, proposal writing or data collection, putting SPOs in contact with relevant buyers or consultants, or promptly informing SPOs of any important developments in the sector (for example regarding new requirements) or supporting them with internal conflict resolution.

WACP’S ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMERCIAL PARTNERS

The needs and priorities of commercial partners were responded to on an ad hoc basis. However, unlike those of SPOs, they are not systematically assessed or communicated. This has led to an unclear and ineffective approach to communicating and engaging with these stakeholders (see 3.2).

Commercial partners said there was no clear structure for engaging with the WACP. Individual requests were communicated via NFOs to Fairtrade Africa or through Fairtrade

International. Information needs articulated by commercial partners working with SPOs in West Africa in the context of this evaluation related to very specific, operational information. For instance, providing details on programme implementation, such as an overview of training content, training locations and contact persons would help avoid duplications with initiatives led by commercial partners and instead help leverage possible synergies.

On the other hand, commercial partners face increasing regulatory scrutiny and need concrete evidence of impact resulting from Fairtrade licencing fees. In this vein, commercial partners were interested in obtaining general information to help them gain a better understanding of the programme’s value. To this end, they would like to receive tangible information related to the WACP’s broader outcomes and impact, -for example, in the form of data and impact stories related to the progress being made by SPOs.

ADAPTATION POTENTIAL

The WACP has grown into a more comprehensive programme than initially foreseen as it has gradually responded to increasing internal and external requirements. This wider scope has made it hard to prioritise the areas covered and to clearly structure stakeholder engagement. The changes made in practice are not (yet) reflected in a newly defined concept and mandate to account for the full programme scope and serve as a roadmap to maximise its impact.

At a strategic level, a clear prioritisation of areas and topics covered, as well as a defined communication strategy to fully reflect the WACP’s current identity are lacking. This limits the programme’s ability to effectively communicate what the WACP stands for, what its aims are, what it has achieved and how its various actions contribute to systemic change. At an operational level, the programme is overstretched and needs to find ways to cope with the growing demands of a diverse set of stakeholders while working with a limited budget.

OUTPUTS, OUTCOMES, AND IMPACT OF THE WACP



Through the successful delivery of its outputs, the WACP has supported notable organisational improvements at the level, including better compliance with the Fairtrade Standards, enhanced governance systems, better management capacities, a clearer definition of roles within the SPOs, and improved member services. This has contributed to favourable framework conditions for a successful production base and attractive business profiles. However, the programme’s ability to contribute to a strengthened market position of SPOs overall has been limited. Its outcomes and its contribution to positive impacts at SPO level are apparent. However, the WACP’s ability

to engage NFOs and commercial partners with a view to securing sourcing decisions favourable to building effective and resilient SPOs constitutes an impediment for the success of the programme.

Building on the assessment of the design and approach, the following analysis closely follows the theory of change logic of the programme (see Figure 1), starting with outputs before discussing higher level outcomes and impacts. Data collection did not include household-level interviews or surveys (see also 2.3 Limitations). However, SPO delegates and, to a certain extent, trainers who were interviewed, usually collect and represent the needs and concerns of farmers within their SPOs. They are also more often than not producers themselves and thus responded in this capacity.

OUTPUT 1: SPOS HAVE THE SYSTEMS, PROCESSES AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN PLACE TO DELIVER A FUNCTIONAL SPO.

The WACP has successfully supported SPOs in putting systems, processes, and trainings programmes in place to enable functional SPOs. The most tangible results relate to strengthened SPO governance structures, a key area that SPOs and local actors have consistently identified as a persistent challenge.

Management systems were greatly strengthened and formalised through trainings as well as coaching and ad hoc support provided by the WACP. This also included features to strengthen the management capacities of SPOs. In this regard, SPOs have improved or established internal governance structures and internal management systems (IMS). SPOs also reported a shift from paperwork to the use of digital tools, such as Farmforce, FairInsight or QGIS to, for example, collect data on farm profiles, productivity, or child labour risks. FairInsight was deemed to be particularly useful by SPOs. For instance, one SPO staff member shared that he now sees himself as a consultant, equipped to independently handle technical issues (Int_44). The data shows that all monitored WACP SPOs now all have an operational IMS in place. Moreover, since 2024, all participating SPOs use an approved business plan to guide their SPO decisions (FI, 2025b).

“Before, we had no system. Now we can track each farmer, their production, and their training attendance. It’s an **evolution of traceability** and now **we manage our own data.**”

SPO in Côte d'Ivoire

The trainings have contributed to better financial management of SPOs. This has increased membership trust and access to third party funding, with some limitations. Financial management training was cited as a significant form of support, enabling SPOs to administer funds more transparently and deliver donor-supported projects more effectively. For instance, their ability to write proposals and raise additional funds was strengthened. This facilitated access to grants for various development projects, including those focused on child labour prevention and additional livelihood support. The role of the WACP has been especially important in building the internal capacity of SPOs to effectively manage these programmes. This is largely attributed to the capacity development provided by the WACP, particularly in the area of financial management and was particularly notable in Ghana. For example, initiatives such as 100WEEKS⁶ – supported by other organisations and commercial partners – provided direct financial assistance to SPO members (Int_46, 47). In contrast, SPOs in Sierra Leone often encountered challenges with financial

and business management, mostly in relation to using their funds strategically and making long-term decisions to reduce dependence on traders (Int_17, 19, 20). With support for Sierra Leonean SPOs starting more recently and mostly focusing on core certification support, these differences can be explained from the programme’s perspective. There are also different market dynamics in the country. Given the large sums that SPOs are handling, professional financial and business management is a key requisite for unlocking better access to finance and increasing trust amongst members (Int_21). Essentials for operations and service infrastructure, such as SPO staff, offices, or IT systems (for example computers), were most often procured using Fairtrade Premium funds.

Improved processes were also observed, particularly relating to clear definitions and understanding of the various roles within SPOs. This has been a significant help in preventing conflicts arising from role ambiguity. Formal roles, such as trainers graduating from the WACP ToTs, internal inspectors, and sustainability focal points, have been established within the SPOs and trainings have been conducted to establish understanding of the relevant roles within the SPOs. As an example, trainings on job descriptions for board members have helped clarify roles and strengthen leadership accountability. Increased awareness of the separation between board members and the management team was mentioned in many interviews. Additionally, SPOs noted that they received effective support in managing internal conflicts through ad hoc mediation and coaching provided by the WACP (e.g. Int_47, 50, 61).

“Only through the support of WACP, we were able to **resolve our conflict** and continue to the work”.

SPO in Ghana

In order to translate the training programmes to SPO level, the WACP provided support for establishing ToT structures. The extent to which these structures are fully operational depend on the resources of individual SPOs. Monitoring data shows that, in 2024, the following were the most commonly provided trainings by SPOs to their members: 42 percent on Internal Control Systems (ICS) (particularly child labour and child protection), 22 percent on Good Agricultural Practices (particularly environmental management), and 16 percent on Fairtrade Standards dealing with trade issues (including trading contracts, traceability, product sourcing and use of the FAIRTRADE Mark) (FI, 2025b)⁷. The way SPOs assess the training needs of their membership and follow up their trainings seemed to vary considerably. Some SPOs recorded training attendance, documenting who participated, in which topic, and when. This data was used to ensure coverage across sections and to identify who still needed to be reached. One SPO described using data from follow-up visits and attendance sheets to prioritise future trainings, or to identify which zones needed additional technical support. In one case, the internal

⁶ The 100WEEKS' Cash+ programme aims to end extreme poverty of women within 100 weeks through weekly cash transfers, trainings, and savings groups. See <https://100weeks.org/how-it-works>

⁷ These priorities are consistent for all intervention countries, but with slightly different weights: Fairtrade Standards make up 11 percent of trainings in Côte d'Ivoire, and 16 percent and 21 percent in Sierra Leone and Ghana respectively. GAP are most frequently delivered in Ghana with 29 percent of trainings focusing on the topic, whereas it is 17 percent in Côte d'Ivoire and 21 percent in Sierra Leone. In contrast, ICS is particularly pronounced as a topic in Côte d'Ivoire at 49 percent, compared to 42 percent in Sierra Leone and 36 percent in Ghana.

inspection team or focal points tracked which producers applied what they had learned, for example, following trainings on pruning, child labour, or pesticide use. If the application rate was low, additional sensitisation or re-training was organised (Int_44).

“We have a **register** showing all the trainings and which producer attended. It helps us **monitor gaps**.”

SPO in Côte d'Ivoire

“We go back to see if farmers have implemented what we taught. If they haven't, **we go over it again**”

SPO in Côte d'Ivoire

OUTPUT 2: SPO MANAGERS HAVE THE SKILLS, TRAINING AND CAPACITY TO RUN STRONG AND EFFECTIVE SPOS.

Through the participation in WACP trainings, SPO managers improved their knowledge and ability to comply with relevant Fairtrade Standards as well as their capacities for financial management, democratic governance and internal conflict resolution, with limitations. While the self-reported knowledge at SPO management level was high overall, it varied between SPOs. Monitoring data also indicates that further capacity building at management level is necessary.

The extent to which SPOs have the necessary knowledge and skills to take relevant actions seemed to differ between the three countries of implementation according to monitoring data with a more positive outlook in Ghana versus Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone. In Ghana, the self-assessment on knowledge and skills gained across all thematic areas, and particularly in governance, gender, child labour and Fairtrade principles, has been consistently high since 2018. In Côte d'Ivoire, while a steady improvement took place between 2018 to 2022, it has plateaued since then. Most scores remained stable, but showed no further improvement, while knowledge and skills on Fairtrade principles and combatting gender discrimination are lower than in 2022. Finally, in Sierra Leone, there were strong initial knowledge assessments in 2023 that were followed by a notable decline across most categories in 2024 (FI, 2025b)⁸. The qualitative accounts gathered in the evaluation highlight that these differences might not only be country-specific but particularly influenced by individual SPOs' framework conditions and resources.

As elaborated under Output 1, improvements regarding financial management, democratic governance and internal conflict resolution were observed. Likewise, the ability to comply with Standards and more recent requirements (for example EUDR or ARS) has also improved. However, challenges remain, for example, regarding data collection through geomapping.

In relation to Fairtrade Standards, SPOs reported being better able to comply. This was reflected in higher audit success rates and higher confidence during auditing. Due to improved data management and knowledge obtained through trainings, most SPOs felt more at ease and better prepared for meeting the Standards. Several interviewees reported fewer non-compliances as a result of WACP actions (Int_29, 30, 62). One SPO illustrated this by explaining that they “feel less nervous about audits” (Int_66). However, some SPOs voiced the need for ongoing support regarding new Standards. While knowledge has been successfully transferred to SPOs, financial constraints constitute a limiting factor when it comes to consistently complying with the Standards.

“(This) made preparing for audits **much easier and more reliable**”

SPO in Côte d'Ivoire

While SPOs generally understood and felt prepared for adhering to EUDR requirements, most SPOs cited the need for more technical trainings before the regulation comes into effect. Geomapping and collecting good quality data emerged as a major challenge. Many SPOs in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire cited difficulties with geodata collection, farm mapping, and creating accurate farm polygons. The process is also expensive and resource intensive due to the cost of the high-quality GPS tools required to meet system standards. In some cases, SPOs had to redo geodata collection because the initial data did not match platform requirements. In Ghana, accessing farm data through COCOBOD was also described as difficult and bureaucratic. One SPO stated that the WACP did not provide sufficient support in this area, particularly with uploading data or providing technical guidance (Int_82). However, some SPOs reported that processes have already improved since the first data collection. Nevertheless, some SPOs expressed a need for more human resources, training, and technical expertise from the WACP. In addition, SPOs noted that producer engagement varied, especially among producers in zones far from forest boundaries, who often questioned the purpose of geomapping and the additional workload involved.

Overall, the ability of SPOs to meet EUDR requirements largely depended on their financial resources and level of external support – particularly from the WACP or other partners – and their own capacity to manage complex, costly data collection processes. The situation in Sierra Leone differed slightly. While some SPOs reported similar issues with polygons (for example they only had waypoints), or lack of funding, a number of the SPOs interviewed had completed the mapping exercise successfully and without major issues. Some received financial support to carry out these exercises from traders. The evaluation team could not confirm suspicions voiced by some actors in Sierra Leone that a trader's financial support for EUDR mapping meant that the data is then retained by the trader only, thus binding the SPO's EUDR compliance to a single trader relationship. However, Fairtrade Cocoa Standard requirement 3.4.6 mandates that traders share geolocation data with SPOs. This is a good example of disagreements and misunderstandings regarding EUDR and the role of various actors.

⁸ It needs to be highlighted that fluctuations in the data might also be influenced by the selection of sampled as well as staff turnover within the SPOs. In the following, we have therefore included the evaluation's qualitative assessments in particular to triangulate this data.

In the context of HREDD, SPOs reported a marked improvement in their ability to identify and respond to child labour risks, primarily due to training received through the WACP, partner support (through the International Cocoa Initiative, for example), and the establishment of monitoring systems, committees and focal points. They also reported better awareness related to gender equality and had taken actions in this regard.

SPOs reported being aware of the relevant actions they need to take to make improvements on gender equality. Most SPOs had already acted to some extent, for example, by engaging in female-oriented projects or enhancing female representation within the SPOs themselves.

Projects included additional livelihood programmes and VSLAs. With regard to enhancing female representation, SPOs reported that more women are working in key SPO roles, such as as treasurers or board members (Int_46, 74, 82, 84). However, it remains unclear whether these changes have significantly influenced gender imbalances.

SPOs have mixed opinions regarding their preparedness to comply with the African Regional Standard. Some SPOs, especially those who had participated in a pilot phase, reported confidence in their ability to comply with the ARS. However, most were in favour of more technical training through the WACP. Though a majority of ARS requirements are in line with Fairtrade Standard criteria, there are open questions on the implementation, such as formats and systems required for certification.

As evident from both the monitoring and aforementioned examples, SPO management does not yet feel sufficiently prepared to address all their SPO's most important training needs without support from the WACP. Thus, further capacity building is necessary to enable SPOs to take actions in selected thematic areas, such as new regulatory standards and gender equality.

OUTPUT 3: SPOS TAKE ACTION TO IMPROVE THEIR SPOS AS A RESULT OF TRAININGS RECEIVED.

Overall, satisfaction rates with the quality of WACP trainings have been extraordinarily high according to the quantitative data collected during the programme's lifetime. Apart from a few outliers in Côte d'Ivoire in 2024, monitoring and qualitative data has consistently shown unanimous praise for the trainings (FI, 2025b).⁹ As outlined under Output 1 and Output 2, monitoring findings from the evaluation support the high approval rates, but also highlight areas in need of improvement in terms of modernisation, digitalisation, frequency, and depth of certain topics. Qualitative data mainly showed that SPOs wished for more frequent and more farm-level training as well as more follow up, but generally confirmed the overall very positive view of the trainings.

Following WACP capacity building measures, SPOs

have taken actions at different levels to improve their organisations. However, the ability of SPOs to take action effectively and continuously depends on further capacity building by the WACP as well as the resources available to individual SPOs. As an example, qualitative data showed that SPOs with a better financial standing (often achieved through earning high Premiums from large volume share of sales on Fairtrade terms) were able to engage in more training efforts of their own through the ToT. Some SPOs have hired professional staff and field officers whose salaries are covered by Fairtrade Premiums, whereas others recruited from among their members. Using professional staff allowed SPOs to handle complex work and relationships with external and commercial partners. However, many SPOs still depend on Fairtrade Premiums to pay their staff and thus risk losing them if Fairtrade sales decrease. Up until 2023, all SPOs concluded that the WACP's support was directly responsible for improving their SPOs (Global Impact Team, 2025).

SHORT-TERM OUTCOME: SPOS ARE EFFECTIVE AND RESILIENT AS BUSINESS AND MORE RESPONSEIVE TO MEMBER NEEDS.

Although SPOs generally improved their internal governance structures through WACP support, their effectiveness and resilience as businesses and their responsiveness to member needs varied, depending on factors such as their level of maturity, their resources and position in the cocoa sector.

There are differences between SPOs concerning their ability to act as effective and resilient businesses. Some SPOs were observed to be proactive, adopting a 'business mindset' and aiming for financial and skill-related independence from external stakeholders. Others were observed to be more passive recipients of support from the WACP. This varying strategic approach influenced how resources were used (for example, proactive proposal writing or generating additional revenue), thereby influencing their future prospects of becoming more independent or diversified business entities. This is consistent with reports from well-established and successful SPOs (Int_29, 65), particularly with regard to the question of when they were ready to graduate from the WACP and run their SPOs and services with minimal or no support.

As to the necessary preconditions for becoming an effective and resilient SPO, mature SPOs reported that they should be "strategically clear, operationally strong, and financially self-sustaining". This included having a well-defined mission and long-term vision, developed collectively through a strong General Assembly. Effective internal governance structures needed to be in place to ensure transparency, accountability, and democratic decision making. Professionalism at all levels was also essential. Staff needed to be selected based on competence, not personal relationships, and be capable of translating SPO strategies into effective programmes. At this stage, the SPO became, as one SPO phrased it: "investor-ready". It no longer relied on external actors to manage its affairs and was able to generate and manage its own income, including through value addition,

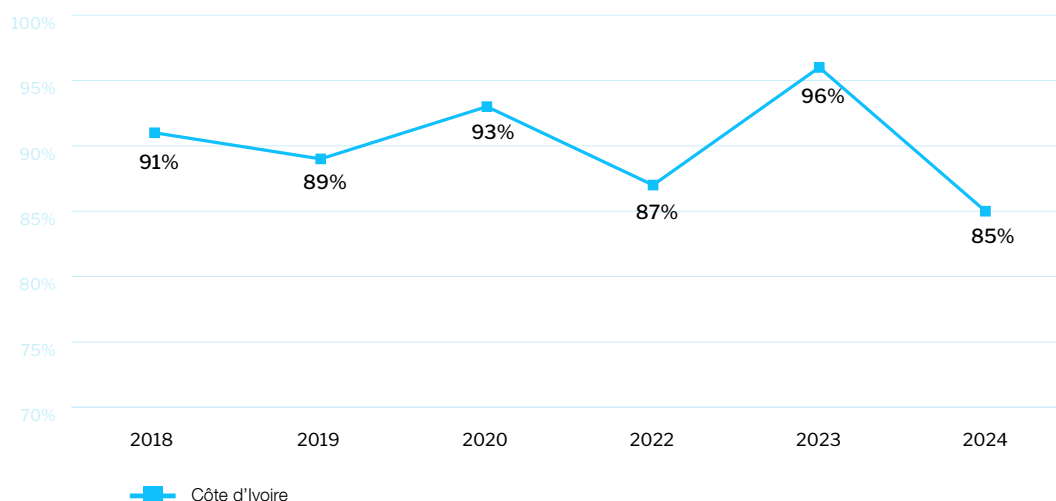
⁹ High scores to that extent raise concerns of a social desirability bias. A more nuanced scale and/or qualitative elements might yield a more realistic depiction in future data collection.

other business ventures and external funding that supports SPO activities. Key areas of focus – such as productivity, environmental management, child and youth empowerment, community development, education, and income diversification – were tackled with clear strategies and measurable results. Most importantly, producers experienced real, tangible benefits on the

ground, reinforcing the SPO's relevance and sustainability.

Overall, the majority of WACP SPOs in Côte d'Ivoire made a profit in the last calendar year. This is reflected in the monitoring data, according to which at least 85 percent of SPOs surveyed have been profitable in recent years (see Figure 9).¹⁰

Figure 9: Percentage of SPOs that made a profit in the last calendar year



Income diversification and alternative livelihoods play an increasingly important role in fostering SPOs resilience in a context of volatile markets and potential climate shocks.

Many SPOs are recognising the need to reduce reliance on Premiums and external donors by developing additional income sources. While the SPOs in Ghana were the most advanced in establishing additional income sources, SPOs in Côte d'Ivoire were likewise very aware of the need for doing this. Value addition, such as establishing processing factories, has been identified as a promising opportunity. For instance, one SPO interviewed had initiated a feasibility study in collaboration with an external consultant recommended by the WACP. SPOs were, thus, exploring the development of new cocoa-based products and south-to-south trade to diversify income streams. However, regulatory challenges remain a barrier. In Ghana in particular, there are restrictions on buying back cocoa from the Ghanaian regulator (COCOBOD). Other SPOs have established or planned to establish other alternative income sources, including organic fertiliser manufacturing or an SPO-run guest house. The WACP's role was mainly seen as providing useful contacts (for example, consultants), technical expertise, as well as supporting more favourable regulatory conditions. As the issues of value addition and income diversification at SPO level are currently evolving, there is much potential to intensify this support.

SPOs responded to the most pressing needs of their members.

In 2024, across all three implementation countries, almost all the surveyed SPOs took concrete action to improve productivity and quality at membership level, to strengthen the participation of young people and women in SPO governance and/or membership, and to promote environmental protection.¹¹ However, despite its recognised importance, fewer SPOs offered

support for income diversification. While all SPOs in Ghana addressed this area, only 65 percent in Côte d'Ivoire and 50 percent in Sierra Leone did so (FI, 2025b). These monitoring findings are reinforced by the findings outlined in Chapter 3 that suggest additional livelihoods and value creation are topics that need more attention in the future. While SPOs in Ghana were involved in such activities, those in Côte d'Ivoire were consistently in favour of them but reported fewer related activities. These efforts demonstrate that while SPOs actively responded to a broad range of member priorities, they also raise the question of how such priorities are identified and translated into action.

Overall, observed improvements concerning democratic and participative processes during data collection indicated that members were able to voice their needs in fora such as the AGM (see below).

Moreover, many SPOs reported that farm services for their members had improved thanks to WACP-supported organisational professionalisation. These services included technical advice but also farm services, for example, pruning, weeding, or spraying. Most delegates and trainers interviewed expressed satisfaction with these services, even though some producers were initially sceptical until they saw the results for themselves. For older producers, in particular, support with these labour-intensive tasks was very helpful. Compared to SPOs without such services, these features appeared to offer producers a clear advantage, as they were delivered at the right time – even when producers were unable to pay in full. The cost was partially covered by the SPOs, with producers given the flexibility to repay when they had greater financial liquidity.

¹⁰ Due to concerns about data reliability outlined in Chapter 2.3, data for the other implementation countries has not been used for this report.

¹¹ The only exception is that 4 percent of the SPOs surveyed in Côte d'Ivoire did not offer services on cross-cutting issues such as women or youth in cooperative governance and/or membership.

However, there was no systematic needs assessment or regular diagnostic process, except for Premium-related needs assessments and development plans, to specifically match SPO member needs with the member services provided by the SPO. Trainings and services offered were often driven by certification demands, which generally, but not necessarily, matched producers' needs. In several interviews, SPOs described using delegate systems or section-level meetings to collect information on member needs (e.g. Int_31, 60). Delegates gathered feedback from producers in their areas and brought it to the board or management during meetings or assemblies. These insights were often used to inform training priorities or Premium use decisions. SPOs were generally able to address ad hoc and urgent needs through its farm trainers and mechanisms, such as a toll-free hotline service centre.

MEDIUM-TERM OUTCOME 1: SPOS MEMBERS PERCEIVE THEIR SPO IS DEMOCRATIC, TRANSPARENT AND PARTICIPATIVE.

Strengthened governance systems, member services, and management capacities translated into tangible results in terms of a democratic, transparent and participative approach towards members.

The evaluation team found strengthened mechanisms for taking decisions in a collective, democratic and transparent manner. Diverse actors across SPOs, including member delegates, stated that they broadly perceived their organisations to be democratic, transparent, and participative. They further confirmed that this perception has been significantly reinforced through targeted support from the WACP.

The WACP's training interventions in governance, financial management, and leadership strengthened internal processes and boosted members' confidence in how decisions were made and communicated. In the main, SPO

delegates said they trusted SPO decision making processes to be legitimate and democratic. For example, SPOs reported that the quality of their AGMs had improved ways that reduced non-conformities, improved the organisation and democratic decision making and led to the recruitment of a more diverse group of people to the board (Int_ 61, 65).

"The WACP has really helped the farmers to **understand how a cooperative works**, that is very different to other schemes"

SPO in Côte d'Ivoire

Most notably, SPO members stated that through stronger member involvement at section or community level, as well as through the AGMs and annual planning, the decision-making processes on Premium use had become more democratic. To highlight this, according to the monitoring report, 72 percent of SPO members in Côte d'Ivoire and 92 percent in Ghana in 2023 said they were actively engaged in how their Premium was used (FTA & FI, 2024). Premium use generally corresponded to that of other Fairtrade commodities, such as coffee (FI, n.d.), and focused in equal part on business development and staffing, financial benefits and production (see Figure 10 for examples of Premium investments). One SPO member from Ghana explained how their SPO practiced participatory governance, with delegates elected from various societies, and the chairperson of the delegates serving on the board, ensuring member representation (Int_46).

"Our member have seen that they can **take part in the decision-making of the cooperative** - they like being part of a democratic organisation and it **strengthens their relationship with the cooperative**"

SPO in Ghana

Figure 10: Examples of Premium investments based on AGM decisions in Sierra Leone

Top left: Community health centre built by a SPO, Nongowa Chiefdom; top right and bottom left: Cocoa nursery centre for Kombioma community; bottom middle: Motorcycles for SPO field officers; bottom right: Cocoa storage for Peje West Chiefdom cocoa farmers.



The up- and downstream communication and information flow regarding important SPO developments, from member to board level, seemed to have improved, although with certain drawbacks.

Delegates and producer trainers played a liaison role between management and members, helping to explain financial and operational decisions. However, a delegate in Ghana still reported (Int_42) the existence of bottlenecks, for example, a lack of willingness or ability among certain board members to share information with members and delegates in a timely manner. Large numbers of producers and the remote location of some farms and communities were another barrier to smooth information flows and effective participation mechanisms. Nevertheless, SPO members reported that improved transparency and democratic processes, including the AGM, delegation and society structures, had resulted in stronger involvement and a feeling of belonging in the SPOs by individual producers. This is also reflected in the monitoring data. Almost all surveyed households reported feeling that their SPO understood their priorities and acted in their best interests. Equally, a majority felt that different opinions could be raised and were respected in their SPO's discussions. In Côte d'Ivoire specifically, there seemed to be room for improvement when it came to keeping members informed about SPO decisions. A total of 32 percent did not feel adequately informed. This is consistent with the qualitative data, which revealed a higher number of complaints about democratic processes and structures than in Ghana. This was particularly evident with regard to the president of the board's role as a gatekeeper of centralised structures and the potential for limited information flow (Int_56 ,59).

MEDIUM TERM OUTCOME 2: SPOS MEMBERS HAVE BUSINESS-RELATED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Relevant business-related knowledge has been transmitted and skills have been improved at the level of SPO members, but bottlenecks regarding business-related planning and management at farm level remain.

Member trainings on relevant business-related topics were conducted and led to enhanced financial management skills at farm level. Members also became more aware of the SPO's business identity. Several SPO

leaders explained that producers had been trained on financial literacy topics at farm and SPO level, including Premium budgeting, understanding pricing differentials, and transparent use of Premiums at the AGM. One SPO member from Côte d'Ivoire described how members now understand how to match farm-level expenditures with expected income (Int_65). Another SPO member from Ghana explained "that its members now really understand farming as a business" (Int_42). While some members understand the rationale behind SPO-level Premium allocations and diversification efforts, others still expect a higher percentage of tangible outputs (such as inputs or individual payouts) and are less involved in SPO-level financial planning processes.

In Ghana, trainings on Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) have been highlighted as particularly useful, with several strong examples of successful implementation also emerging from Côte d'Ivoire. For instance, one SPO member from Ghana reported that each village organised groups of 20 people who contributed weekly to a collective fund (Int_47). Once a sufficient amount was accumulated, members could access loans with interest rates between 5–7 percent. This system has helped resolve financial hardships, especially during the low income cocoa off-season, enabling families to cover essential costs, such as school fees, without relying on high interest bank loans. In Côte d'Ivoire, such schemes have also contributed to the formation of women-led loan associations, strengthening financial inclusion at community level. However, while some SPO members shared very positive experiences with VSLAs, others were more cautious, noting that trust issues among members have limited the effectiveness of these initiatives. When the training concludes, the SPOs are responsible for the uptake of the VSLA approach (Int_57). Whether it becomes institutionalised and continues remains to be seen.

"We talk to the farmers about the **importance of planning their income**, especially during the off-season. Some understand, but it's **not everyone**"

SPO in Côte d'Ivoire

Even though producers' financial management skills have improved, they will still need ongoing capacity building due to the persistent bottleneck of low literacy and education rates.

Figure 11: Key Empowerment Story

Empowering Young Women Through Leadership and Inclusion

One of the outcomes following the engagement with SPOs is the inspiring journey of a young female member of the Offinso Fine Flavor SPO. Her story illustrates how targeted capacity building and inclusive platforms can empower emerging leaders within traditionally male-dominated sectors such as cocoa farming. After participating in the Fairtrade Women's School of Leadership – which is designed to enhance the confidence, skills, and leadership capacity of women in cocoa communities – she drew upon its lessons, deepening her understanding of leadership and gender inclusion but also equipping her with the tools to challenge existing norms within her community.

MEDIUM-TERM OUTCOME 3: SPOS MEMBERS EMBRACE PRINCIPLES OF ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IN COCOA PRODUCTION AND COMMUNITY LIFE.

Though enhanced skills and a stronger identification of SPO members with economic, environmental and social sustainability principles was visible, the engagement of SPO members was higher in areas with tangible benefits.

This was the case with Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), where SPO members could reap the benefits from the techniques applied. To a certain extent, this also held true for child labour prevention, especially when SPO members saw outcomes such as increased school enrolment.

At the economic level, trainings on GAPs, and to a lesser extent additional livelihoods, led to noticeable farm-level improvements, according to many SPOs. GAPs applied included pruning, effective spraying or agroforestry systems. According to some interviewees, especially producer delegates and SPO trainers, producers learned from each other by using successful producers as a good example (Int_31, 56). Additional livelihood programmes included apprenticeships, cassava farming, chick rearing, mushroom growing or beekeeping. The producers said that these programmes are most effective if they take the reality of the producer(s) in question into account. This involves making the most of existing assets and skills (for example, additional income sources), rather than trying to convince producers to start something completely new. Additional livelihood programmes also provided a valuable opportunity to stimulate young people's interest in cocoa farming.

With regard to social aspects, the most notable improvements related to the prevention of child labour. SPO members stated that their staff had become more professional in this area by improving their knowledge and tailoring their approach to producers and potential cases more effectively. Establishing an initial understanding by producers of the issue was challenging – particularly due to fear of punishment. Most SPO members noted that producers are now more open and confident to engage as they understand that the approach is supportive, not punitive. Producers have learned to distinguish between forms of child involvement and harmful child labour, and more are willing to participate in remediation programmes. Referral systems and community-based monitoring have been set up, contributing to a decline in observed child labour cases and a rise in school enrolment. One SPO trainer highlighted that child labour risks are now mostly linked to new members joining the SPO, and that such cases have become rare (Int_37, 43, 72, 73).

The **child labour risk has “reduced** compared to other neighbouring cocoa communities outside the WACP“

SPO in Côte d'Ivoire

On two occasions in Ghana, SPO members reported that through HREDD-related work and support from the WACP, conflicts and tensions between farm owners and caretakers have been resolved (Int_31, 45). This resulted in improved harmony and farm productivity and was attributed to the WACP by the farming community. This is a good example of how tangible programme outcomes motivate SPO members to further engage in trainings and to learn from each other.

As to environmental aspects, SPOs reported that GAPs are being applied more visibly in the field. For instance, better on-farm environmental protection can be seen in a number of ways, including physical buffer zones to prevent chemical contamination of waterways, the clearing of rubbish from farms, and increased use of agroforestry systems.

IMPACT: SPOS ACHIEVE A STRONG PRODUCTION BASE AND ATTRACTIVE BUSINESS PROFILE, UNLOCKING SUSTAINED ACCESS TO FAIRTRADE COCOA MARKETS.

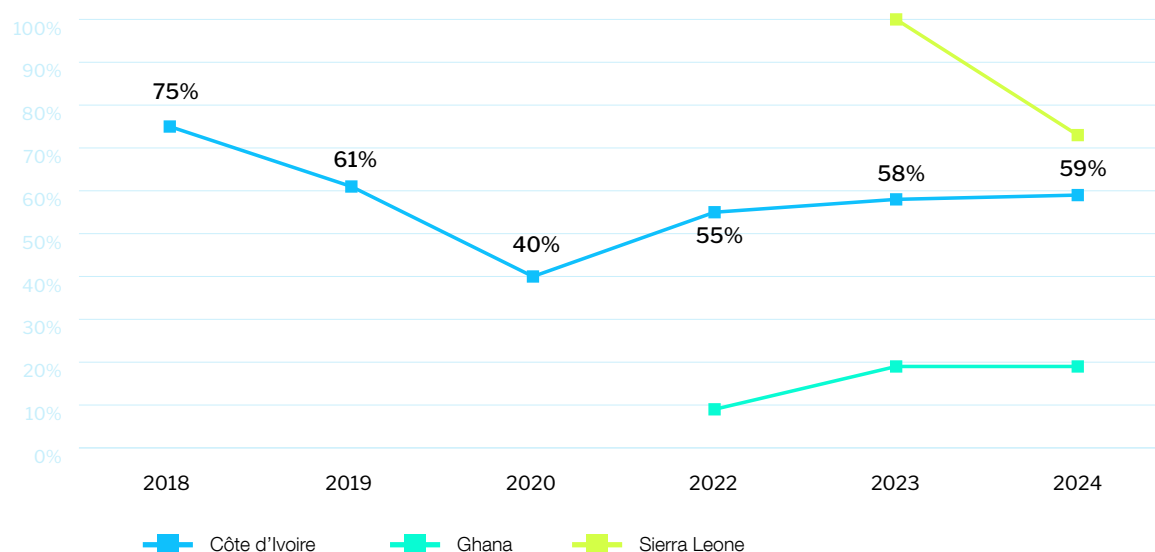
The WACP has mostly delivered on the capacities it set out to build up and has plausibly contributed to both a stronger production base as well as attractive business profiles, but it cannot bridge the final mile and deliver sustained market access alone. While more systemic responses and stronger coordination with commercial stakeholders may positively affect the WACP's potential and ability to contribute to achieving this impact, the operating environment remains complex and volatile.

It is reasonable to assume that through their improved governance systems, traceability and ability to better comply with relevant Standards, the programme has contributed to creating more attractive business profiles for its SPO clients. Despite dissatisfaction with the current level of Fairtrade sales, many SPOs acknowledged that their access to Fairtrade markets is largely due to WACP support. Fairtrade's role was appreciated not only for facilitating buyer linkages, but also for helping SPOs meet buyer expectations, prepare reports, and present themselves more professionally during trade conventions and commercial engagements. Even SPOs with low Fairtrade sales percentages saw strong positive impacts on the their SPOs as illustrated in this report.

Sales data show a significant rise of average per capita production and sales, while qualitative data collected highlight that producers are worried about the difficult environment they operate in. For Côte d'Ivoire, the total volume of production sold on Fairtrade terms tripled from 2022 to 2023 while for Ghana it almost quadrupled (FI, 2025a).¹² This did not, however, significantly alter the share sold on Fairtrade terms which has remained relatively constant in Côte d'Ivoire, increased but remained fairly low in Ghana, and even decreased for Sierra Leone (see Figure 12). It should also be noted that almost the entire increase in Ghana is consolidated in one SPO, whereas the rest had to grapple with decreasing numbers (FI, 2025a). So, despite rises in productivity and sales, this positive trend did not directly translate into a proportionally growing number of sales on Fairtrade terms across all SPOs. This indicates challenges with regard to market access and highlights the differences between SPOs.

¹² It is to be noted that the final sales volumes for 2024 have not yet been reported.

Figure 12: Percentage of cocoa sold on Fairtrade terms from 2018 to 2024 in West Africa



These diverging realities are reflected in the evaluation's qualitative data. While some SPOs reported improved productivity at farm level, negative sentiments were also noted, particularly in Ghana. For example, climate change, crop diseases, and ageing farms were seen as factors that counteracted the positive effects of WACP support, such as improved yields and farm management through GAP trainings, resulting in stagnating or even declining yields. As a result, climate-smart activities and additional livelihood activities were viewed as increasingly vital for producers.

Improved and sustained market access remains the biggest challenge for many SPOs. SPO market insertion differed and most SPOs were not satisfied with their current market access. Many SPOs are Fairtrade certified but still struggled to sell their cocoa on Fairtrade terms, resulting in sales volumes that remained below capacity. According to 2024 sales data, Ghanaian SPOs only sold 18 percent of their cocoa on Fairtrade terms; Côte d'Ivoirian SPOs sold 59 percent, and in Sierra Leone the figure was 75 percent. While the latter suggests the highest ratio, it also constitutes a significant decrease compared to the 100 percent Fairtrade sales achieved in the initial year of the programme (FI, 2025a). Other SPOs had high Fairtrade sales but reported that they would like to diversify their buyers in order to minimise risk (Int_29, 46, 65). In Côte d'Ivoire, obtaining a letter of intent covering planned sales was a major difficulty, and SPOs also reported that buyers sometimes expressed interest but ultimately did not purchase. SPOs said they lacked both information on market dynamics and the skills to engage proactively with buyers and chocolate companies. They said they needed support to help them reach more buyers and a better understanding of how to present their SPO and cocoa product to the market. And they said they needed the WACP to share more knowledge about existing and potential business partners. Many SPOs reported needing more capacity building on topics such as marketing, outreach, negotiation skills, using social media or creating staff profiles to accomplish related tasks. Nevertheless, since Fairtrade was often perceived to be the most attractive certification scheme, it can be assumed that, irrespective of their sales percentage, SPOs consistently

seek to increase their Fairtrade sales as a means to further professionalise their SPOs.

OUTPUT: RETAILERS AND COMMERCIAL BRANDS UNDERSTAND BENEFITS OF WACP, ENGAGING WITH MORE EFFECTIVE AND RESILIENT SPOS IN SOURCING AND COMMERCIAL PARTNERSHIPS.

Despite the programme's manifold impacts, NFOs do not systematically engage with retailers and commercial partners to communicate the benefits of the WACP. The effectiveness and resilience of SPOs was not a topic of conversation between NFOs and their commercial clients. Even though the WACP was recognised by NFOs for strengthening SPOs through organisational capacity building, programme-specific information was rarely communicated to commercial partners.

In consequence, commercial partners were mostly unaware of the characteristics, actions and results of the WACP. NFOs said they communicate with retailers and commercial brands on the Fairtrade system in a broader sense, promote client-specific projects, or discuss very specific issues, such as requests for field visits, rather than on the WACP as a key part of Fairtrade's actions in West Africa.

Most NFOs indicated that the programme-related information currently provided did not fit their needs and capacities in terms of scope and content. NFOs considered the quarterly activity reports to be too lengthy and frequent, and said their capacity to absorb the information was limited (Int_22-25). Thus, NFOs themselves only processed part of the information they received on the WACP. Consequently, they were not fully aware of the benefits of the programme and often not report on concrete programme results. Content-wise, there was

a wish for illustrative information, focused on the programme's broader results at SPO level and beyond (Int_9, 10, 22-25). NFOs proposed more concise, attractive and easily digestible information which they could send to commercial partners to inform them about the WACP. Proposals to improve the WACP's communication strategy also included scrapping the quarterly reports and focusing instead on short, impactful communication formats, such as content for newsletters or social media posts (Int_9, 23-25). NFO and commercial partners highlighted testimonial-style content in particular (stories, quotes, images, and videos), since they can be easily shared and integrated into social media formats used both by NFOs and commercial partners (Int_9, 23, 28, 86). While the annual monitoring report does provide many individual accounts, interviews with NFOs suggest that even the annual monitoring report is not read or digested in its totality. The corresponding webinars were highlighted as the most informative source for understanding the WACP (ibid.).

Due to the lack of specific communication between NFOs and retailers/commercial partners related to the WACP, these stakeholders were mostly unaware of the programme's results and benefits. Many interview partners said they considered the WACP to be a foundational element in building the capacity of SPOs in the region (Int_9, 10, 23-25), but for some that only became evident after a field visit (Int_9, 23). Their (rare) engagement with SPOs was mostly facilitated through different mechanisms (see below).

MEDIUM-TERM OUTCOME: COCOA TRADERS AND COMMERCIAL BRANDS MAKE SOURCING AND PARTNERING DECISIONS FAVORING EFFECTIVE AND RESILIENT SPOS.



SHORT-TERM OUTCOME: RETAILERS AND COMMERCIAL BRANDS WORK WITH COCOA TRADERS TO PRIORITIZE SOURCING AND PARTNERING WITH EFFECTIVE AND RESILIENT SPOS.

Retailers and commercial partners rarely directly with SPOs and were mostly unaware of their specificities. SPOs' effectiveness and resilience were not discussed with traders. Commercial aspects such as bean quality took precedence. The impact pathway put forward by the WACP assumes that brands and retailers make purchasing and partnering decisions with SPOs based on SPO characteristics and/or directly engage with or choose SPOs.

In reality, it seemed to be more common that manufacturers or exporters/traders either proposed specific SPOs to source from or returned to long-standing existing sourcing partnerships. Interviews underscored that brands and retailers usually mandated traders or exporters to source cocoa based on those relationships or on cocoa characteristics such as quality, flavour,

origin or low/heavy metal contamination, etc., rather than on SPO-related criteria (Int_22, 25-27).

As a result, the evaluation could not find evidence of sourcing or partnering decisions systematically favouring SPOs considered to be effective or resilient in WACP/Fairtrade terms. Sourcing through a mass balance approach was found to further obscure transparent SPO, buyer and retailer relations. Nonetheless, there is a strong correlation between resilience and market success because SPOs who can sell good volumes on Fairtrade terms are generally more resilient as they are able to reinvest their Premiums into their operations. Though the impact hypothesis on capacitated SPOs being more sought after could not generally be confirmed, there is some evidence that SPO characteristics are a decisive factor for certain traders or (particularly large) commercial partners that source directly.

In Sierra Leone, with its more open market and direct purchasing, traders had in the past provided significant capacity building, certification support, EUDR support and pre-financing to selected SPOs. Consequently these SPOs were much better capacitated than those SPOs not directly "nurtured" by traders. Some of these SPOs were even set up by traders from groups of farmers the trader had previously sourced from (Int_14-16, 18). In other cases, there were requests by commercial partners to FTA, channelled through NFOs to help select SPOs to cooperate with based on FTA's knowledge (Int_24). In these cases, SPOs would establish relationships with new commercial partners based on FTA's knowledge of the SPOs' effectiveness and resilience. Another example is from an SPO in Sierra Leone, which found that the only way to get new buyers was to go to the Fairtrade Africa Convention in Côte d'Ivoire (Int_20).

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS ARE CRITICAL AND OFTEN LIMIT THE WACP'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE LARGER IMPACTS THE PROGRAMME AIMS FOR.

The ability of the WACP to contribute to the outcomes and impacts it aims for is influenced strongly by the broad range of external factors affecting the cocoa sector, which are expected to increase in intensity to at least some degree. These included structural factors, such as changing dynamics in the global cocoa market (for example, price fluctuation or sourcing strategies of traders and exporters), climate change, crop diseases, illegal mining, deep-rooted gender dynamics, demographic shifts and labour shortages, political instability, as well as an evolving and growing body of regulations forming a complex system of compliance requirements. All of these larger trends heavily influence the situation of cocoa producers and are largely outside the WACP's control, although the programme does try to prepare SPOs for successfully tackling related challenges (see Design and Approach section for further details). These external factors are expected to increase in intensity and are often cited by SPOs and other stakeholders as major challenges when asked about the future outlook. While these topics may exceed the WACP's scope of action, they nonetheless influence the effectiveness of training measures.

“Gender is still an issue, since the system in Ghana is so skewed towards man but **we have established gender units in all societies.**”

SPO in Ghana

Looking inwards, the SPOs’ internal structure and agency also influence the programme’s success.

The resources available to each SPO – often depending on their volume of Fairtrade sales – strongly affect their capacity to reach all members, hire professional staff, remunerate trainers (ToTs), and implement training or processes consistently. Nevertheless, while it may not be possible to reach every producer, positive results and examples from individual producers can still have a wide impact. This is because producers tend to adopt new methods once they observe clear benefits. The history and organisational structure of SPOs, such as whether they adopted a centralised management structure right from the start (for example, as observed in Côte d’Ivoire; Int_59), also plays a

key role. In some cases, presidents of the board can act as a bottleneck for improved democratic processes by centralising information flow and control. Moreover, some presidents of the board in Côte d’Ivoire reportedly did not participate in important WACP trainings, further limiting the uptake of new structures and processes (Int_56, 57, 59). Although the WACP encourages SPOs to take ownership of approaches such as VSLAs, financial and structural limitations can restrict their uptake.

At programme level, technical, organisational and financial factors also influence the extent to which the WACP is able to successfully contribute to the larger impacts it aims for.

The evaluation team found that, overall, a high quality of implementation positively contributed to programme results. This manifests in characteristics related to the experienced and highly motivated team of Fairtrade Africa, its strong interlinkages with Fairtrade International and an efficient use of the resources available for programme implementation. SPOs confirmed this positive perception of the programme’s ways of working. For them, the accessibility and responsiveness of the WACP team in particular, including informal communication channels (for example, WhatsApp), the technical quality of support, and the flexibility to respond to newly emerging topics stood out.

CONCLUSIONS



The West Africa Cocoa Programme is an impactful platform for the West African cocoa sector. Its needs-based capacity building approach effectively strengthens SPOs at organisational level and has led to

tangible improvements in management systems, Standards compliance and emerging sustainability topics. It has proven itself to be adaptable to a complex and changing environment and is instrumental in transferring knowledge to SPOs across the region. Nevertheless, the situation of individual SPOs is determined by a variety of factors. This results in significant differences in capacity between SPOs in the three countries of operation.

Through its needs-based capacity building approach, the WACP has significantly contributed to strengthened SPO structures and systems. Tangible improvements in governance, internal management, and service delivery have laid the foundations for more functional and professional SPOs. Overall, the change pathways depicted in the current theory of change relating to SPOs can mostly be verified. Most notably, the WACP has effectively supported the professionalisation of SPO governance and management structures, a key area that SPOs and local actors have consistently identified as a challenge. Thanks to its capacity building measures, most targeted SPOs now have systems and processes in place that include democratic procedures, clear roles and responsibilities, as well as digital tools. These enable SPOs to be more business oriented, resilient, transparent, democratic and responsive to their members' needs as well as to developments in the wider cocoa sector.

The needs-based approach and services, such as trainings and ad hoc guidance, ensure that relevant knowledge is transferred effectively to SPOs. Well-functioning channels have been established for SPOs to communicate their needs and priorities to WACP staff. As a core feature of the programme, the trainings have generally addressed the right topics and used the right methodology. Standard trainings have been successfully combined with flexible support to adequately respond to the needs of different SPOs. Consequentially, successful knowledge transfer and related impact was visible in most areas, most notably with regard to SPO governance structures and operational infrastructure. SPO members have also been engaging increasingly with sustainability principles. Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) were being increasingly applied, leading to increased farm productivity and environmental improvements. Moreover, lower child labour risks and advancements in gender equality were also visible.

The programme has increasingly incorporated new sectoral and regulatory developments. It has adapted to COVID-19 and expanded operations to Sierra Leone. Regarding new requirements, such as EUDR, ARS, and HREDD, SPOs were generally well informed and felt well supported by the WACP. Nevertheless, continuous (technical) support and capacity building to deepen knowledge is desired and needed as the implementation of these new requirements is still unfolding. Geomapping was especially challenging for SPOs due to its technical

requirements and non-compatibility with existing data platforms. The range of topics with persistent capacity building needs is high, ranging from climate resilience, farm rehabilitation and tree rejuvenation to youth engagement, income diversification, additional revenue streams and value creation as well as effective market engagement.

The extent to which results were achieved varied significantly between SPOs, individual training participants and countries. The individual preconditions for a successful uptake of knowledge, the volumes sold on Fairtrade terms and country-specific factors were important determinants for SPOs' ability to absorb knowledge and implement changes. The programme was addressing the right topics to level the playing field between SPOs. The stratification model was a useful tool for structuring the cooperation with SPOs in a complex environment but limited the inclusion of lower-tier SPOs. Without clearer criteria and better communication, the model risks reinforcing inequalities between SPOs and constraining outreach to less-capacitated SPOs. The intervention in three countries with different framework conditions requires tailored country approaches to ensure all relevant context conditions are considered.

These differences became even more pronounced when it came to cascading knowledge down to farm level effectively. SPO resources limited the uptake and cascading of trainings towards their members. Cascading of knowledge to producers was thus inconsistent and strongly dependent on the resources available to the different SPOs. SPOs with a higher volume of sales hired field agents using Premium funds to facilitate cascading but this option was not available to financially weaker organisations. In addition, low literacy rates and limited farm-level planning constrained cascading progress. While trainings on financial literacy and VSLA were appreciated, a lack of foundational financial skills among many SPO members continued to limit the effectiveness of these efforts.

Although the WACP is plausibly contributing to a stronger production base by making SPOs more "market ready" and professional, sustained Fairtrade market access remains a critical barrier and requires more systemic commercial engagement and coordination. Generally, it has been difficult for the WACP to link commercial partners to specific SPOs via NFOs and SPOs are still not sure what exactly drives sourcing and partnering decisions. A large part of the professionalisation of SPOs hinges on Fairtrade market access and corresponding Premium payments, which are invested in professional staff, field officers, production improvements and community benefits. However, with or without continued market access, achieving lasting programme impacts ultimately relies on the ability of SPOs to mobilise and manage sufficient internal resources to (1) sustainably apply the required knowledge and new systems (for example, governance processes, geomapping, additional staffing) at SPO level, and (2) effectively cascade relevant knowledge down to farm level. With heavily fluctuating Fairtrade sales volumes and without continuous training efforts (at least for weaker SPOs), previously gained knowledge may fade or fail to translate into lasting change.



The West Africa Cocoa Programme today faces a set of strategic and operational challenges that must be navigated to ensure its long-term success and continued relevance. This requires making strategic choices about which impacts to aim for, enhancing internal coordination, and refining its value proposition for external stakeholders. The evaluation team believes that the WACP is well positioned to do this. It has a strong foundation, a committed team, well-established structures, efficient operations, a great reputation in West Africa and it is part of the most globally recognised ethical label (GlobeScan, 2025).

A key strategic challenge lies in the programme's lack of a clear and marketable focus. The WACP operates as a broad capacity-building platform, but without a distinctive thematic or sectoral focus. Accordingly, it has struggled to clearly define its value proposition for key stakeholders, particularly NFOs and, through them, commercial partners. At the heart of the challenge is the tension between an increasingly broad mandate and limited resources. While the WACP has made substantial progress in supporting SPOs and contributing to their success, the breadth and complexity of topics covered in the three countries risks slowly diluting the programme. With efforts spread too widely, the strategic focus for implementation has become unclear. The mechanisms linking SPOs to commercial partners via the wider Fairtrade network is also marked by communication difficulties. A clear impact narrative that makes its unique contributions to the cocoa sector tangible and compelling (marketing), highlighting its platform character, unique grassroots access and reputation is lacking.

While the current ToC offers a valuable framework to communicate the overarching vision and rationale of the WACP, its level of abstraction limits its practical use for strategic and operational decision making and steering. Moreover, it does not sufficiently reflect key stakeholders and dynamics. As a result, it does not fully depict WACP's implementation reality.

On the SPO side, the WACP's theory of change does not sufficiently reflect the diversity of the organisations involved or the distinct levels of support they may require. SPOs differ substantially in terms of maturity, governance capacity, financial and human resources, and market orientation. These differences influence the pathways through which change occurs, as well as the timeframe and intensity of support needed. At present, the ToC does not distinguish between these distinct trajectories. As a result, it offers limited guidance for prioritising support or assessing results across SPOs with varying profiles. In addition, the implicit goal of working with those SPOs that have the highest relevance for certain commercial partners is not made explicit. Introducing more differentiated change pathways (for example, in the form of nested ToCs by stratification level) could strengthen the ToC's relevance for management in planning or prioritisation for instance.

With regard to market access, the impact pathway linking SPO strengthening to sustained Fairtrade sales appears overly linear and does not fully account for external dynamics. Here, for NFOs and commercial partners, the intervention logic as depicted did not correlate with the evidence collected. With sourcing and partnering decisions not being systematically connected to SPO characteristics and NFOs not actively promoting this link, the causal connection between programme support and market outcomes, particularly for lower-tier SPOs, is weakened. The current ToC does not sufficiently reflect this complexity or clarify under which conditions sustained market access is a likely result.

A critical omission in the current ToC is the absence of traders and exporters, who play a key role in shaping sourcing decisions and determining market opportunities for SPOs. Without integrating their perspectives, incentives, and decision-making logic, the ToC cannot adequately capture the systemic conditions that affect market-related outcomes.

Overall, a more differentiated articulation of change pathways that take into account SPO heterogeneity, external market dynamics, and the role of key stakeholders would strengthen the ToC's function as a strategic tool and its alignment with implementation realities. Recommendations to revise the ToC are presented in the following chapter.

For a renewed focus, the programme's collaborative and platform-based character is a powerful asset as it enables it to leverage external projects and partnerships. So far, the strategic use of this asset has been limited. From impact investors, donors, traders in Sierra Leone and government partners, there was a high level of interest in partnerships, joint funding proposals and other collaborations. Similarly, there is potential for mature SPOs to participate in cost sharing and take on the role of a business partner who takes strategic decisions, for example, as a purchaser of WACP trainings rather than a beneficiary. Access to finance proved to be a major gap for SPOs. There is potential to identify financing partners who can provide credit to or invest in them.

Though the relevance of the WACP in strengthening SPOs is widely acknowledged by NFOs, a structured communication and engagement mechanism for commercial partners on the WACP is lacking and they have little to no knowledge of the WACP's benefits and results. Our evaluation highlights a clear need for improved engagement strategies. Specifically, there was a demand for more targeted information on the WACP and to facilitate communication on the WACP from NFOs to commercial partners. Interview partners said they needed more attractive and quick-to-read formats that included elements such as impact stories. At the same time, a clear communication structure with entry points for communication between NFOs and the WACP is missing, leading to an approach to communication that is unclear and mostly based on individual, ad hoc communication initiatives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions presented, the evaluation team identified four key areas of action to future-proof the West Africa Cocoa Programme. These recommendations address both strategic and operational challenges and aim to enhance the programme's relevance, effectiveness, coherence, and resilience going forward. They are:

- 1. Renewing the WACP mandate and intervention logic** to clarify its support logic, prioritisation, and resource allocation in line with SPO needs and programme capacities.
- 2. Capitalising on the platform's unique selling points** by positioning the WACP as a trusted

delivery structure for additional (international) projects.

- 3. Updating training approaches** to strengthen cascading to producers and tailor support to the needs of mature vs. vulnerable SPOs.
- 4. Adapt outreach and collaboration mechanisms** to streamline communication and strengthen strategic partnerships.

We also recommend additional points on efficiency and streamlining of reporting (5.).

RENEW WACP MANDATE

The WACP has grown in scope and complexity but its mandate has not evolved accordingly. To ensure strategic coherence and operational efficiency, **we recommend defining a renewed mandate and intervention logic that clarifies who gets what kind of support and why.** This is particularly urgent in light of budget constraints and the need to prioritise support in a transparent and justifiable manner. A renewed mandate and intervention logic should provide essential guidance for stratification, selection, and service provision, and improve alignment between programme intentions and delivery. To this end we recommend:

- Drafting a clear, written mandate framework that defines the WACP's main functions (for example, certification support, organisational development, advocacy, capacity building).
- Developing a more refined theory of change to better reflect the impact pathways associated with different types of support and diverse SPOs to clearly illustrate the programme's intervention logic in a differentiated manner. This could be done, for example, by developing separate nested ToCs for different stratification levels, levels of maturity with regard to market access or other parameters that will be developed to prioritise WACP support.
- Re-assessing the commercial partner impact pathway by considering 1) NFOs acting more so as marketing and fundraising bodies towards commercial partners rather than advocacy organisations for effective and resilient SPOs; 2) commercial partners not systematically making purchasing and partnering decisions based on SPO characteristics, and 3) the role of traders/exporters who act as gatekeepers to market access but are not yet systematically addressed as stakeholders. This could be done by either deciding these are factors outside of the scope of influence of the current programme design or re-directing efforts within the programme to address these gaps. To give an example: NFOs could be sensitised to better understand and advance

the WACP narrative in order to be able to actively promote effective and resilient SPOs to their commercial partners. They could work more closely with (local) traders and exporters to advocate for the same narrative, or they could strengthen SPOs' business skills to enable them to be more proactive in the market place (where regulatory frameworks allow).

Last, but not least, the new ToC should be linked to the overarching cocoa intervention logic that is currently being developed by:

- Linking the stratification model directly to the renewed mandate to ensure consistency in resource allocation.
- Defining and communicating clear criteria for SPO stratification, selection, and service intensity.
- Making a strategic distinction between a "market-readiness" approach (focusing resources on SPOs with strong potential, increasingly in a partnership model) and a "solidarity" approach (prioritising those most in need of foundational support). A solidarity approach, based on the "leave no one behind" principle, could potentially be cross-financed by following the current market-readiness approach with partners and mature SPOs. This would mean the two approaches are not necessarily mutually exclusive but could be combined to serve both types of SPOs. As mentioned above, this would, however, require distinct impact pathways and corresponding actions. A foundation for collaboration in either case should be the SPO's willingness and commitment to adapt their structures and processes.

SPOs deserve clarity on what they can expect, and Fairtrade needs a structure to allocate limited resources effectively. Clarifying the underlying support philosophy will be essential to

avoid inconsistent expectations and to enhance programme legitimacy. The Global Cocoa Team is best placed to coordinate the mandate revision, but Fairtrade Africa's active involvement is crucial to ground the process in field realities and the heterogeneity of SPO contexts. In line with the WACP's current division of labour, a joint development is therefore crucial to its success. A first draft of the renewed mandate should be available in time to inform the current revision of Fairtrade's Global Cocoa Strategy and align both processes.

This would help ensure that the programme maintains a focused and strategic approach moving forward, especially given projected budget constraints. Furthermore, given that the WACP provides infrastructure for other projects as well, their logic of intervention should be anchored or tested against the ToC in some way to ensure alignment with Fairtrade's values and WACP's goals.

CAPITALISE ON WACP'S USP AS A CENTRAL PLATFORM IN WEST AFRICA

The WACP's greatest strength is its hard to replicate value as a trusted platform. This should be actively communicated and leveraged to attract investment and partnerships. As the results have shown, SPO capacity building is not in itself an attractive impact story, and the programme struggles to convey its relevance and impacts. Partners and donors most often seek direct access to target groups, established relationships, tested approaches and reputable partners for their projects. In our view, the WACP possesses all these features and could capitalise on them to increase impacts and visibility and secure co-funding for future programming. In this way, WACP infrastructure could be used more strategically to expand the programme's reach with minimal additional cost, or to cross-finance activities supported by Fairtrade. From impact investors, to donors, traders in Sierra Leone or government partners, there is a high level of interest in partnerships, joint funding proposals and other collaborations. Similarly, at least in the mid-term, there is support for the idea of including mature SPOs in cost-sharing and moving them from being a beneficiary to a business partner that makes strategic decisions, for example, on purchasing trainings from WACP. The programme could also explore innovative support mechanisms, such as outcome-based support (the training is only free if certain verifiable outcomes are achieved afterwards). As access to finance for SPOs is a major gap, it might be prudent to seek out financing partners who could provide credit or invest in SPOs or groups of SPOs, with Fairtrade serving as technical assistance provider, which would reduce the risks for credit institutions.¹³

To achieve this, we recommend:

- Focusing on **commercial profile development**, which is currently ongoing through FairInsight. Next to the data from SPOs, the WACP team should use the profiles to (1) document activities done for the SPO; (2) give a qualitative assessment of their condition and commitment to improve, and list additional needs (for example: "This SPO has received trainings A, B, C. Their management staff is competent and proactive, but they require more assistance on HREDD."). This would allow quick access to qualitative and quantitative information in one place and improve decision making. In the long term, and for the wider Fairtrade system, this could culminate in a comprehensive customer relationship management system (CRM), which could be used to document interactions, contracts, emails and more.
- Freeing up **staff resources to address the efforts needed for partnerships and adapted marketing, potentially beyond the programme**. Partnerships come with their own challenges, such as adapted reporting, differing impact priorities, coordination efforts, and more. However, funds for development globally are shrinking and the overlap between public, private, or philanthropic engagements are becoming bigger as partnerships are increasingly pursued to maintain a presence and leverage impacts.

REFINE TRAINING APPROACH

While trainings and support provided to SPOs under WACP have generally proven effective, two areas could be strengthened to further enhance impact: (1) targeted improvements in technical capacity building and follow-up on key topics, and (2) support for SPOs to cascade knowledge more systematically and sustainably to their members. Although the current training structure is well-received, many SPOs struggle to pass on knowledge consistently to their members. This is partly due to dependencies on Premium payout levels and varying internal capacities. A more structured and effective cascading approach is therefore recommended – focusing on improved trainer retention, targeted materials, and the systematic sharing of lessons learned across

SPOs. We recommend exploring the following measures:

- **Improve trainer retention:** Introduce a minimum salary or additional premium for trainers. This could be further explored through amendments or the introduction of standards. For example, the Living Wage could be introduced in SPOs.
- **Be more mindful about knowledge transfer:** Along with capacitating individuals through trainings, there needs to be greater focus on support materials and content that facilitate easier transfer of knowledge. Some information must be shared with the wider management, whereas other

¹³ There are already some initiatives aimed at smallholders or SPOs, such as the IDH Farmfit Fund (<https://www.idhsustainabletrade.com/farmfit-fund/>) or the European Investment Bank (through intermediaries) (<https://www.eib.org/en/publications/interactive/the-eib-outside-the-eu-2017/access-to-credit-for-cocoa-growers/>)

information is relevant for cascading to producers. To reduce the dependency on individuals, the materials and approach could be reviewed with knowledge transfer in mind. For example, key take aways from trainings could be delivered as posters or summaries that the participants can take back to their SPO.

More concretely, the following elements are of relevance for this:

- **Enhance training materials in both quality and accessibility**, for example, through flipcharts, posters, or videos in French, English, and local languages. Simple visual tools, such as illustrated posters on EUDR requirements displayed in SPOs or community spaces, could significantly support cascading efforts. Training materials should also be adapted to the needs of specific target groups, particularly adult learners with low literacy levels, by using more graphics and clear visuals. Improved material availability could also raise awareness of Fairtrade among producers, communities, and local stakeholders – an aspect repeatedly mentioned by interviewees.
- **Conduct a needs assessment** on training materials to better systematise development and distribution. To manage resource constraints, the WACP could support SPOs in producing their own materials and facilitate peer learning. Several SPOs have already created training materials that could serve as good practice examples.
- **Systematise and share lessons learned on cascading** by compiling successful strategies (for example, effective timing, methods to reach women and remote producers, engaging formats). This could involve hiring an external consultant to synthesise findings and develop a learning resource for SPOs and trainers.
- **Engage relevant stakeholders**, especially SPO trainers, more closely in training design to improve relevance and outreach to SPO members.
- **Explore virtual training opportunities and fit**: There are limits in terms of internet access and bandwidth, but given the high cost of transportation and reaching participants, and to improve training content uptake, the use of virtual formats sessions for training follow-ups or refresher modules, could help maintain a high level of support while reducing logistical costs. This could also be a way of formalising or more officially recognising all the implicit and ad hoc support that the team is already giving via Whatsapp chats and calls.
- **Explore the potential for joint trainings**: In Sierra Leone, there are additional actors present that have a specific role to play in the fair trade process. This presents an opportunity

to bring stakeholders together and provide general inputs on roles and responsibilities within the Fairtrade system, if so required.

While the programme's needs-based approach has generally worked well, certain training areas would benefit from expanded or continued attention. **We recommend prioritising:**

- **Continuous technical trainings on emerging requirements and updates**, including ARS, EUDR, and HREDD.
- **Market access and business success**: Support SPOs in understanding market mechanisms and building business competencies. Trainings should cover marketing, outreach, negotiation, social media use, and the development of relevant staff profiles. Where possible, SPOs should also be provided with overviews of relevant market actors to enable them to be more proactive. Working more systematically with mature SPOs on market access and business development could help them navigate market complexities more confidently and strengthen their perception of themselves as independent economic entities. In doing so, Fairtrade could increasingly deal with them as partners rather than beneficiaries.
- **Farm-level financial management and record keeping**: Closely related to the previous point, improving financial literacy and documentation at farm level is essential to enhance economic resilience and support SPO-level transparency and reporting.
- **Additional livelihoods and value addition**: To support SPOs in diversifying their and their members' sources of income, engaging in value addition (for example, local manufacturing) and increasing their resilience, the WACP could: (1) build more internal expertise on value addition and alternative livelihoods to provide ongoing, tailored support based on SPOs' assets and contexts, and (2) advocate for more favourable regulatory conditions for SPOs engaging in value addition. Implementing these efforts at scale may require additional budget allocations or – in light of budget constraint – re-allocation within the programme.
- **Youth engagement**: Youth inclusion should become a more cross-cutting priority across WACP activities in order to increase youth engagement and contribute towards making cocoa farming more attractive for younger people. This could be particularly successful when linking youth engagement to income diversification.

Notably, not all services need to be delivered by the WACP. Instead, where useful, it could establish links between SPOs and relevant partners, donors, or facilitate cost-sharing. Systematising this approach is in line with our recommendation for a renewed mandate and related prioritisation.

STRENGTHEN OUTREACH AND BROADEN COLLABORATION

While Fairtrade's brand visibility in West Africa and internationally is generally strong, as is the reputation of the WACP, there is considerable potential to expand this outreach to a broader range of stakeholders, both within and beyond the Fairtrade system. To achieve lasting impact beyond SPO level and to further strengthen the long-term market viability of Fairtrade cocoa, it is essential to engage other relevant actors more systematically and deliberately. This includes a more clearly structured collaboration with NFOs, as well as developing strategies to successfully communicate with commercial partners, such as traders and exporters, about the WACP. Proactively engaging traders, exporters and other commercial partners as stakeholders would ensure that their role in the selection and success of SPOs is better reflected in the WACP's approach.

To better position the WACP within the cocoa sector, improved communication mechanisms with NFOs and commercial partners should be established to facilitate a stronger and more structured engagement with these stakeholders.

Recommended measures could include:

- Creating a clear communication structure, for example, in form of a single point of contact or a "Fairtrade West Africa Cocoa Desk" to streamline communications and ensure consistent messaging. This scheme should also facilitate the sharing of specific information, for example, to identify synergies in interventions targeting the same SPOs by the WACP and commercial partners.
- Developing a systematic approach to address, inform and cooperate with NFOs and commercial partners. This could include adapting current reporting formats: prioritising annual instead of quarterly reporting and enriching the annual compilation with shorter, more attractive, easily digestible formats for communicating on the programme throughout the year, focusing on outcomes and impacts.
- Actively showcasing the WACP's achievements and ambitions at events such as the annual partner day to strengthen relationships and raise awareness among key stakeholders, encouraging the active participation of WACP staff in sharing impact stories, etc.
- Inviting (more) commercial partners on a more regular basis to events such as the JPMs and generally thinking about a more uniform approach to field visits, for example, organising collective field visits as opposed to visits for individual partners so WACP staff resources are not overstretched.

Additionally, stronger emphasis on coordination with local stakeholders, such as other service providers or regulatory bodies operating in the same landscapes or regions, could help enhance the WACP's effectiveness and avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts. As the WACP already engages actively and mainly successfully with relevant stakeholders and partners, these efforts could be systemised and strengthened.

In this regard, measures could include:

- Mapping existing projects and identifying partners with overlapping objectives to open up opportunities for more complementary and aligned activities, particularly in areas such as follow-up and technical training.
- Developing a systemic approach for relevant local actors (for example, as part of the NFOs and commercial partners' outreach approach) could help tap into a wider range of resources and capacities. There appears to be considerable interest among local stakeholders in closer collaboration on shared objectives, for example, with regulatory bodies and other service providers. Such collaborations could boost the WACP's impact, strengthen advocacy, for example, on the implementation modalities of the ARS, or increase farm-level follow-ups.
- Further streamlining workplans with relevant stakeholders to build synergies and maximise the impact of shared resources and expertise in the field and their support to SPOs.
- Sharing information and updates on its successes with local actors on a more regular basis.
- Engaging more actively in landscape collaboration platforms on relevant topics such as deforestation or child protection. This could be a practical way to implement some of the above measures.
- Inviting locally-known actors to Fairtrade-organised stakeholder meetings, fairs or conferences to further strengthen networks, foster dialogue, and build greater alignment across complementary efforts.

These efforts, such as more active participation in landscape platforms, could help to reduce duplication of efforts, improve coordination and maximise impact, ideally leading to greater efficiency. Additionally, they could address some of the visibility issues that the WACP faces. However, it needs to be noted that many of these efforts involve high upfront costs that could greatly limit cost efficiency gains.

LEVERS FOR STREAMLINING OF MONITORING, REPORTING AND ADMINISTRATION

A prerequisite for pursuing these complex changes and partnerships is the improvement of internal efficiency through the streamlining of reporting, administrative and communication processes. A more agile and digital-first approach to monitoring, reporting, and resource allocation could reduce the burden on staff and enable them to focus more on high-impact activities, such as direct support for SPOs, partnerships, and market linkages. Information on SPOs could be collected more systematically through FairInsight. Independently from the marketing approach chosen, a shift away from generic reports to more targeted and dynamic content internally and externally would be helpful.

Administration and reporting

We recommend critically reviewing the scope and depth of thematic reporting across all levels. In many cases, reports – ranging from training documentation to monthly, quarterly, or annual reports – were not used by the intended target groups to an extent that would justify the resources invested. A structured assessment should clarify who needs which information, for what purpose, and at what point in time. Based on this, reporting formats and content could be better aligned with actual information needs. Ideally, the result would be **leaner, more user-friendly, and increasingly digitalised formats**. Given the limited time and capacities of the team, a full overhaul may not be feasible. However, a targeted review focused on the most pressing challenges – as identified by staff – could yield significant efficiency gains.

Financial approval procedures

Financial approval procedures should be revisited. Current formats and approval steps appear to prioritise accountability over administrative efficiency. This often results in heavy workloads for country teams, particularly team leaders, and leads to lengthy procedures that hinder flexible planning and sometimes necessitate informal workarounds. A practical way forward could be to hold a joint workshop with FTA programme, administrative, and finance staff to identify simplification options, reduce redundancy in forms, and explore ways to better balance transparency requirements with operational flexibility.

Monitoring

To streamline the monitoring system, we recommend refining both the focus and structure of data collection and reporting. Currently, the data produced, while beneficial for programme learning, is often overwhelming for stakeholders who lack the capacity to absorb and act upon it.

To improve both the use-value and uptake of monitoring results, we suggest:

- Shifting the focus of data collection to a more **utility-oriented approach by reassessing the data needs of specific stakeholders**. This goes hand in hand with

refocusing and prioritising data collected. As of now, only reported data undergoes the full validation process, leaving the rest prone to either misinterpretation or non-usage. So, this requires reassessing which data is routinely collected but remains unused or lacks a defined purpose, in order to streamline efforts and focus on decision-relevant information. For upcoming data collection efforts, it should therefore be reevaluated which data is a) needed for external accountability, b) necessary to provide context to the data provided, as well as c) serves important functions upon which operational steering decisions can be made. This could involve reducing the number of survey questions and integrating more qualitative data, such as testimonials and sales data, which are more useful for external stakeholders.

- **Improving the coordination between activity/output monitoring led by Fairtrade Africa and outcome/impact monitoring led by Fairtrade International** by a) alleviating reporting burdens (particularly for field missions and the monthly activity reporting) and b) ensuring easier utilisation of the rich data collected to facilitate learning. Timely availability and integration of results data into programme reflection cycles should be ensured, closing the feedback loop between data collection and programme steering.
- Moving away from a general, overarching report: to ensure any new formats are adequate, it is advisable to define the goal of the report for each target group as well to derive the format based on the needs of said group. These could be **shorter, stakeholder-specific reports or dashboards**, which have proven to be more effective and are better received by stakeholders. For NFOs, they could, for example, also be slide collections to pick and choose from for their own communication formats.

In addition, to improve methodological reliability and validity, we suggest:

- **Rethinking the focus of quantitative data collection**, particularly in Ghana and Sierra Leone, where small sample sizes lead to unreliable averages influenced by outliers. A more comprehensive approach, either through full population surveys (“Vollerhebung”), panel-level data or a more qualitative methodology, would improve data accuracy.
- Adopting **non-binary scales** for measuring training satisfaction, which would provide a more nuanced picture and reduce social desirability bias in responses.
- **Disaggregating data at country level** is necessary to account for different implementation realities, ensuring that stakeholders receive more tailored and relevant insights. However, aggregated results at programme level are equally needed (and more easily digestible). Here, aggregation could be weighted by country to reflect the varying numbers of SPOs.

ANNEX

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LIST OF INTERVIEWS

NUMBER	PHASE	GROUP	TYPE	INTERVIEW TYPE
1	Inception	Fairtrade	FI	Group Interview
2	Inception	Fairtrade	FI	Group Interview
3	Inception	Fairtrade	FTA	Interview
4	Inception	Fairtrade	FI	Interview
5	Inception	Fairtrade	FTA	Interview
6	Inception	Fairtrade	FTA	Interview
7	Inception	Fairtrade	FTA	Interview
8	Inception	Fairtrade	FTA	Interview
9	Inception	Fairtrade	NFO	Interview
10	Inception	Fairtrade	NFO	Interview
11	Inception	Fairtrade	FI/FTA	Group Interview
12	Data Collection	Fairtrade	FTA	Group Interview
13	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Sierra Leone	Focus Group
14	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Sierra Leone	Focus Group
15	Data Collection	Third parties	Trader	Interview
16	Data Collection	Third parties	Trader	Group Interview
17	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Sierra Leone	Focus Group
18	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Sierra Leone	Focus Group
19	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Sierra Leone	Focus Group
20	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Sierra Leone	Focus Group
21	Data Collection	Third parties	Government	Group Interview
22	Data Collection	Fairtrade	NFO	Interview
23	Data Collection	Fairtrade	NFO	Interview
24	Data Collection	Fairtrade	NFO	Interview
25	Data Collection	Fairtrade	NFO	Group Interview
26	Data Collection	Third parties	Commercial partners	Interview

NUMBER	PHASE	GROUP	TYPE	INTERVIEW TYPE
27	Data Collection	Third parties	Commercial partners	Interview
28	Data Collection	Fairtrade	NFO	Group Interview
29	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Ghana	Interview
30	Data Collection	Fairtrade	FTA	Interview
31	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Ghana	Focus Group
32	Data Collection	Fairtrade	FTA	Interview
33	Data Collection	Third parties	Fairtrade Network	Interview
34	Data Collection	Third parties	Government	Interview
35	Data Collection	Fairtrade	FTA	Interview
36	Data Collection	Third parties	Government	Interview
37	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Interview
38	Data Collection	Third parties	Government	Interview
39	Data Collection	Third parties	Commercial partners	Interview
40	Data Collection	Fairtrade	FTA	Interview
41	Data Collection	Fairtrade	FTA	Interview
42	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Ghana	Focus Group
43	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Ghana	Focus Group
44	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Ghana	Focus Group
45	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Ghana	Focus Group
46	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Ghana	Focus Group
47	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Ghana	Focus Group
48	Data Collection	Fairtrade	FTA	Interview
49	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Ghana	Interview
50	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Ghana	Focus Group
51	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Ghana	Focus Group
52	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Ghana	Interview
53	Data Collection	Third parties	Independent Expert	Interview
54	Data Collection	Third parties	NGO Partners	Interview
55	Data Collection	Third parties	NGO Partners	Interview
56	Data Collection	Fairtrade	FTA	Focus group
57	Data Collection	Fairtrade	FTA	Group Interview
58	Data Collection	Third parties	Government	Focus group

NUMBER	PHASE	GROUP	TYPE	INTERVIEW TYPE
59	Data Collection	Third parties	Fairtrade Network	Interview
60	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
61	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
62	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
63	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
64	Data Collection	Third parties	Trader	Focus group
65	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Interview
66	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
67	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
68	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
69	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
70	Data Collection	Third parties	Fairtrade Network	Interview
71	Data Collection	Third parties	Fairtrade Network	Interview
72	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
73	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
74	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
75	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
76	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
77	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
78	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
79	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
80	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
81	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
82	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
83	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
84	Data Collection	SPOs	SPO Côte d'Ivoire	Focus group
85	Data Collection	Fairtrade	FTA	Interview
86	Data Collection	Third parties	Commercial partners	Interview
87	Data Collection	Fairtrade	FTA	Interview

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