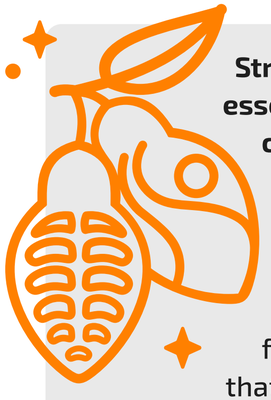
Fairtrade West Africa Cocoa Programme: strengths and impact



Strong cooperatives are essential to more sustainable cocoa livelihoods.

The Fairtrade West Africa Cocoa Programme aims to support cooperatives' development into high-functioning organisations that successfully respond to the needs of their members as well as commercial partners.

More than 270 cooperatives in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Sierra Leone participate in a tiered programme of training, coaching, advisory and technical support, and peer-to peer-learning. The programme is delivered by Fairtrade Africa, the producer network for Fairtrade certified cooperatives in the region.

Here are some highlights from the latest evaluation – check the full report for details.

Rigorous evaluation

Latest evaluation covers the period 2021-2025

86 interviews and focus groups plus validation workshops in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Sierra Leone

Conducted by Syspons GmbH

Builds on annual monitoring reports and a mid-term evaluation in 2021

"Since its inception, the programme has grown into a flexible, highly relevant, and widely appreciated platform that supports small-scale producer organisations in navigating a rapidly changing environment marked by new regulatory demands, market dynamics, and structural challenges."

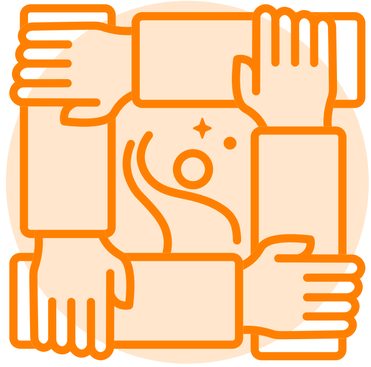
Programme evaluation report 2025

Flexible, tiered services reached more than 51,000 people in 2024

- 51,891 participants in 2024, including trainings from Fairtrade Africa as well as from farmers trained to "cascade" the learnings to their peers.
- Cooperatives are grouped and receive different training and services based on the group.
- Fairtrade Africa meets with cooperatives at the beginning of each year to review the last year and develop the coming year's plan.
- Services include:
  - Standardised workshops on core topics (including pesticide use, deforestation regulations and human rights)
  - Tailored based on needs and ad-hoc support formats
  - On-site visits, remote support, and informal advisory services

Results highlights

- Highly trusted and valued by cooperatives, and instrumental in delivering knowledge quickly and efficiently on emerging issues.
- Stronger, more democratic and participative cooperatives with better management and decision making processes that well positioned for other programmes such as:
  - living income partnerships
  - Women's School of Leadership
  - Child Labour and Forced Labour Prevention Programme



FAIRTRADE

Key results for cooperatives

Fairtrade West Africa Cocoa Programme builds stronger, more professionalised cocoa cooperatives, able to meet members' needs as well as market demands.

1

Stronger governance structures, systems and services for members

100%

of monitored cooperatives have an Internal Management System, and a business plan

2

Better management skills, including understanding of regulations

- EU DEFORESTATION REGULATION
- AFRICAN REGIONAL STANDARD
- HREDD REQUIREMENTS

3

High performing organisations able to meet member needs

Expertise to deliver programmes to members, and progress toward financial sustainability, e.g. through value addition, other income sources, and external funding

85%

of cooperatives were profitable in 2024

4

Farmers see economic, social & environmental results

- Livelihood programmes including apprenticeships, cassava, chick rearing, mushrooms, beekeeping
- Monitoring and referral systems for child labour have reduced cases and increased school enrolment
- Good Agricultural Practices have been applied, including agroforestry systems and protected waterways

5

Greater access to Fairtrade markets, with room for more

- Facilitate buyer linkages
- Support report preparation
- Trade show attendance

"With other (certification schemes) you tick boxes without ownership, but WACP is really producing a greater buy-in. It brings ownership."

Member of cooperative in Ghana

Directions for the future

- Leverage the programme structure to integrate external projects and partnerships
- Update training approaches, including enhancing training materials and exploring virtual opportunities
- Strengthen outreach and collaboration especially aiming toward building market access

Read the full 2025 evaluation for more insights about the Fairtrade West Africa Cocoa Programme.

Contact your national Fairtrade organisation to learn more about partnering with Fairtrade cooperatives.