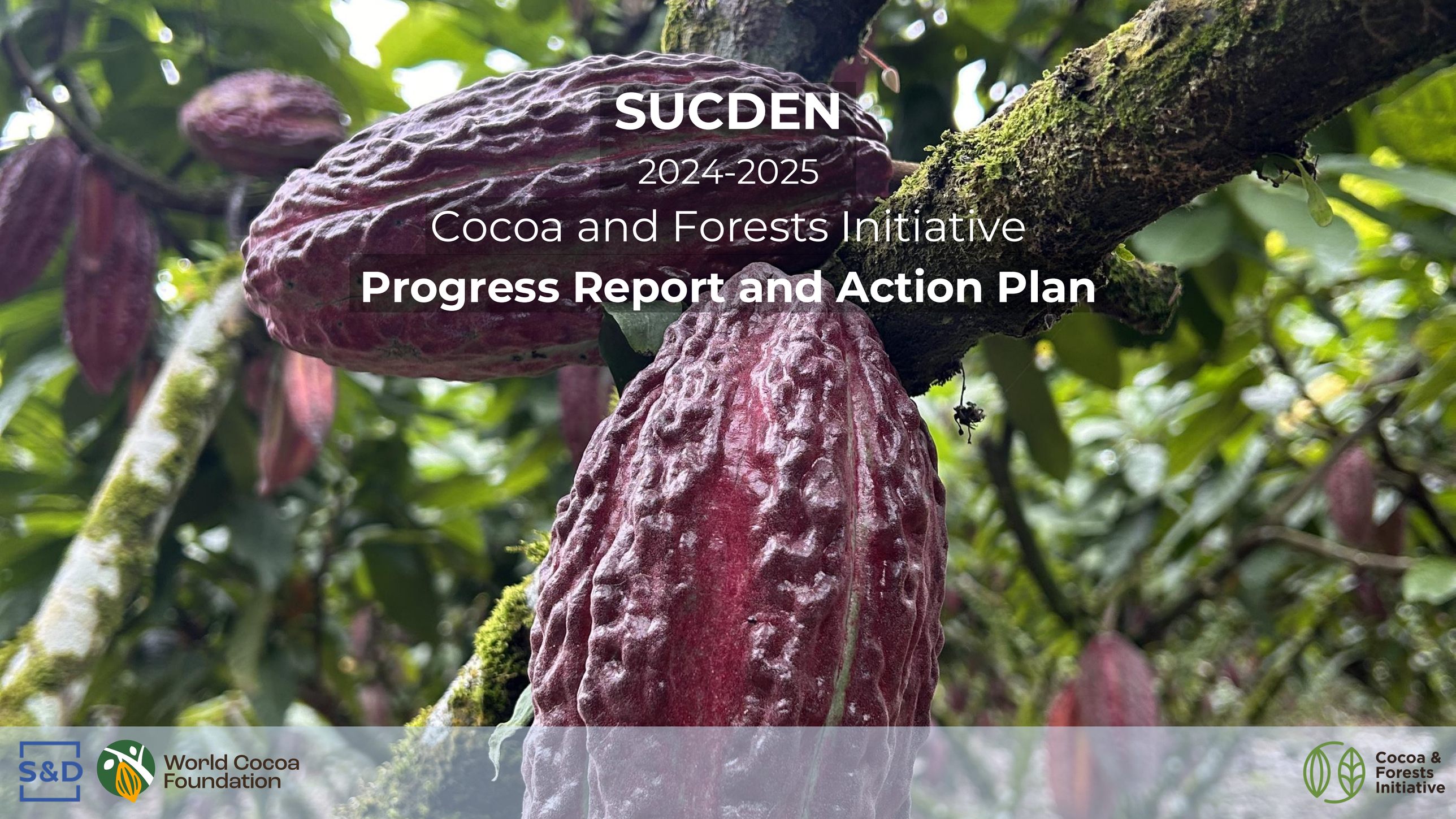

SUCDEN

2024-2025

Cocoa and Forests Initiative

Progress Report and Action Plan

S&D

World Cocoa Foundation

Cocoa & Forests Initiative

Cocoa & Forests Initiative:

Collective Action to End Cocoa-Related Deforestation

The governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana and 35 leading cocoa and chocolate companies, representing 85% of global cocoa usage, joined together in the **Cocoa & Forests Initiative** to help end deforestation and restore forest areas. Their combined actions play a crucial role in protecting and restoring biodiversity, sequestering carbon stocks in West African forests, and addressing climate change in line with the Paris Climate Agreement. The Cocoa & Forests Initiative contributes to Sustainable Development Goal 13 (Climate Action) and 15 (Life on Land).

The Cocoa & Forests Initiative is a public private partnership based on frameworks for action (Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana) and action plans for the private sector (Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana) and public sector (Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana) that spell out commitments to:

- protect and restore forests,
- promote sustainable cocoa production and farmers' livelihoods,
- engage communities and boost social inclusion

Deforestation of tropical rainforests is a major issue in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, which together produce nearly two-thirds of the world's supply of cocoa, the main ingredient in chocolate. According to Global Forest Watch, between 2002 and 2023, Côte d'Ivoire lost 28% and Ghana 13% of their humid primary forest, with a large portion of this loss attributable to cocoa farming expansion.

Cocoa provides crucial income to communities in rural West Africa, but farmers are too often faced with poverty. Poverty is one of the causes of deforestation. Accelerating a transition to sustainable livelihoods is essential for farmers' economic security and a healthy planet

To learn more, follow #CocoaAndForests on social media, or visit **Cocoa & Forests Initiative**.

Multi-stakeholder collaboration is essential to advancing climate action, including forest protection, deforestation prevention and mitigation, emissions reduction, and support for cocoa farmers and communities. The Cocoa and Forests Initiative serves as a key mechanism for companies like Sucden to contribute to these outcomes.

Throughout the 2024-2025 cocoa crop season, Sucden sustained its commitments under the three key pillars of the Cocoa and Forests Initiative:

Within the '**Protect and Restore Forests**' pillar, Sucden:

- Expanded **polygon mapping** cocoa farms to better monitor for deforestation risk
- Supported the establishment of **community nurseries**
- Increased seedling distribution for **agroforestry** development
- Grew off-farm **restoration** efforts

Within the '**Promote Sustainable Cocoa Production and Farmers' Livelihoods**' pillar, Sucden:

- Reached a greater number of farmers through **Good Agricultural Practices** training than in previous seasons
- Built on lessons learned and further developed direct farmer **coaching** efforts
- Expanded the **Climate Smart Agriculture training** to include regenerative agriculture techniques

Within the '**Engage Communities and Boost Social Inclusion**' pillar, Sucden:

- Extended the reach of **Village Savings and Loans Associations** to support more women
- Increased participation in **Income Generating Activities**
- Trained a greater number of women on **business practices and financial literacy** than in previous seasons

Forest Protection and Restoration

Farm Mapping and Deforestation Risk Assessment

In our commitment to provide trustworthy cocoa to our clients, we maintain rigorous traceability practices, tracking all cocoa from the farm to the final client. In 2025, we expanded our efforts, supporting the mapping and verification of a total of **59,943 farmers** in Côte d'Ivoire. Sucden also continued deforestation risk assessments by verifying polygon quality and ensuring no overlap or proximity with protected areas. In total, we assessed **161,543 hectares** during the 24/25 season. With this information, Sucden is able to reduce the risk of encroachment of farms into primary forests and High Carbon Stock and High Conservation Value areas, contributing to the prevention of illegal deforestation and to the protection of biodiversity.

Off-Farm Restoration

In the final year of our Climate and Restoration Project, Sucden celebrated key achievements made over the course of four years. Under the guidance of Sucden's Forest Protection Officer, our implementation partner spearheaded agroforestry and restoration projects in five regions. For the restoration component of the project, **168,585 seedlings** were planted off-farm, with a survival rate of 93%. Planting efforts from 2022 through 2025 have contributed to an estimated **14,811 metric tons of CO_2** removed from the atmosphere over the project lifespan.

The restoration initiative also encompassed a community development facet. Sucden disburses Payment for Environmental Services (PES) based on tree survival, with a portion allocated to the community. These funds are utilized to finance gender-sensitive forest restoration and protection initiatives, including the establishment of tree nurseries managed by women's groups and distribution schemes for clean cookstoves. Income generating activities were also funded by PES, including supporting the cultivation of additional crops such as cassava and maize.

Agroforestry

In our ongoing commitment to sustainable development, Sucden continues to make significant strides in promoting agroforestry and reforestation initiatives in Cote d'Ivoire. In partnership with our local expert implementer, Sucden has contributed to the establishment of **6,380 new hectares** of agroforestry this year. In total, we distributed over **259,078 multipurpose trees** to support **8,435 farmers** in applying agroforestry. After farmers received their seedlings, one of our agroforestry partners provided on-farm planting assistance to train farmers on best practice. Under the Climate and Restoration Project, seedlings planted for agroforestry demonstrated a 93% survival rate.

Forest Protection and Restoration Story

Yacouba Sawadogo is a 30-year-old cocoa producer from the Amakiro area in Cote d'Ivoire. He farms on an 8-hectare plot on behalf of the COOPAGNIPI cooperative.

In 2025, Yacouba enrolled in the Climate Project run by Sucden and the cooperative to receive agricultural advice and shade trees, which he hoped would help the long-term productivity of his farm and make it more resilient to the effects of climate change.

Yacouda mentioned that he has brothers and friends who have been part of the project since last year. They, along with the cooperative, encouraged him to participate because of the agricultural knowledge they gained and the shade trees they received for free. The first-hand achievements of his peers motivated Yacouba to participate.

"As soon as I joined the project, the FOA agents explained to me that the project will allow me to have access to **technical support to better manage my field**, to **plant shade trees for free** in my field, and to benefit from **sustainability premiums** related to the **implementation of good agricultural and environmental practices.**"

During the month of June 2025, agents from our expert partner, Foncier-Foresterie-Agriculture (FOA) agents brought 35 trees directly to Yacouba's farm. They helped him position the trees according to a density of 35 trees per hectare, dig the holes, and plant the trees.

"I really appreciated this approach because it allowed me to receive the trees without difficulty and also learn how to practice agroforestry. **I plan to take good care of the trees to ensure their survival."**

Yacouba Sawadogo on his farm

The FOA agents will come back to monitor their progress and give Yacouba advice on their integrated management.

"I would like to thank Sucden and the COOPAGNIPI cooperative for providing the means for FOA to teach us good agricultural techniques and help us practice agroforestry."

Sustainable Production and Farmers Livelihoods

Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) Training and Farmer's Coaching
Sucden's farmer training program is robust and multifaceted. Working hand in hand with local partners, we conducted Farmer Field School (FFS) as group sessions, reaching **29,225 farmers** this year. GAP training aims to improve farm productivity per hectare and to advocate for environmentally sustainable farming techniques. Our training sessions covered a diverse range of topics essential for sustainable cocoa farming. Additionally, training sessions encompassed educating farmers on the ramifications of climate change on cocoa production. 12,820 farmers received training specifically on enhancing climate resilience and reducing emissions on their farms, an 8% increase from last year.

Integrated pest management and agrochemical training are integral parts of our training sessions. These approaches can lead to better insect, cocoa disease, and weed management while reducing pesticide usage. Through collaborative efforts between farmers and coaches, tailored actions for improvement are identified, culminating in the creation and execution of personalized, long-term farm improvement plans.

Under FFS, farmers also received tailored individual coaching through farm development plans. Coaching focused on farm diagnostics and adoption observations at the plot level, which aimed to provide tailored support to improve farm production.

In addition to FFS, we collaborate closely with selected farmers who express interest in enhancing their farms and crafting farm rehabilitation plans. This effort is facilitated through Adoption Observation work conducted by trained farmer coaches, who use specialized software to track 21 key farm indicators regularly. These observations showcase progress to the farmers, aiding in farm care and productivity enhancement.

Social Inclusion and Community Engagement

Yacouba Sawadogo and his family; see Yacouba's story on page 5

Women's Empowerment and Income Generating Activities

In 2025, our dedication to empowering women in cocoa-growing communities in Côte d'Ivoire continued through collaborative efforts with experts to devise and execute projects aimed at bolstering women's financial and entrepreneurial capabilities. These projects facilitate the development and expansion of income-generating activities (IGAs) among women.

Furthermore, these IGAs are interconnected with Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs), enabling women to reinvest in their enterprises. VSLAs, self-managed groups pooling savings, provide members with access to loans for various purposes such as starting businesses or covering educational expenses. Through our initiatives and investments in women's empowerment, we facilitated the establishment of **102 VSLAs** with **2,928 new members**. These VSLAs catalyzed the launch of new income-generating activities, benefiting 1,780 individuals by diversifying their sources of income, 88% of which were women.

In addition to VSLAs and IGAs, 2,928 individuals participated in women's empowerment programs and activities.

Forest Protection and Restoration

Farm Mapping and Deforestation Risk Assessment
As part of our efforts to provide trustworthy cocoa to our clients, we continued to polygon map cocoa farmers in our direct supply chain from the farm level to the client, with a total of **52,726 cocoa plots mapped** in 2025. To ensure quality, we verify the accuracy of farm polygons twice.

Sucden compares these plots to maps of Protected Areas to assess deforestation risk by ensuring no overlaps with or encroachment on these protected areas. Sucden assessed **38,037 hectares** in 2025 for deforestation risk by analyzing the plot boundaries with Protected Areas and by assessing changes in forest layers. With this information, Sucden is better able to reduce the risk of encroachment of farms into primary forests and High Carbon Stock and High Conservation Value areas, helping prevent illegal deforestation and protect biodiversity.

"When farmers see the map and hear their farm size in hectares, they are often surprised. They finally know exactly what they own and manage.

Mapping helps farmers clearly see the limits of their farms. It shows where cocoa farming must not expand, especially near forest reserves."

- Daniel Anaba

Daniel Anaba is a Field Coordinator overseeing and monitoring farm mapping activities carried out by our partners across cocoa-growing communities in different regions in Ghana. While our partners are on the ground mapping farms with GPS devices, Daniel regularly visits communities during mapping exercises reviewing boundaries, checking data accuracy, and engaging farmers to confirm that what is captured truly reflects their farms.

For many farmers, this is the first time they clearly understand the exact size and boundaries of their farms. What used to be estimated by footsteps or landmarks is now visible and precise. This clarity builds confidence. Farmers better understand where farming should continue and where it must stop.

This work is essential for responsible cocoa sourcing. Once farms are accurately mapped and verified, the cocoa beans purchased can be traced back to a known and approved farm location. Linking cocoa beans to specific farmers and locations reduces risks related to illegal expansion, forest encroachment, and unverified sourcing. It means we know where the cocoa comes from, and we can confirm it is not linked to deforestation. Traceability strengthens accountability across the entire supply chain.


Daniel Anaba

Sustainable Production and Farmers Livelihoods

Seedling distribution

Agroforestry

We continued to facilitate the distribution of multi-purpose tree seedlings to participating farmers for on-farm planting. These seedlings not only offer shade for other plants but also represent a potential additional income stream, depending on the specific tree species involved. Sucden facilitated the distribution of **330,000 multi-purpose tree seedlings** in 2025 to establish **17,189 hectares** of cocoa agroforestry.

A total of **10,517 farmers** were beneficiaries of this initiative, receiving six species of shade trees, encompassing varieties of timber and fruit trees. These farmers have been provided with the technical assistance needed to adopt and expand agroforestry in their fields.

GAP Training and Farmer's Coaching

In 2025, our collaborations with Cocoa Abraboba (CAA), Kuapa Kokoo (KKFU), Fludor, Federated Commodities, and Adikanfo were expanded to provide comprehensive training on GAP to **39,279 program farmers**, a 42% increase from 2024.

Training aims to improve farm productivity per hectare and to advocate for environmentally sustainable farming techniques. Our training sessions, facilitated through FFS, covered a diverse range of topics essential for sustainable cocoa farming. Farmers also received personalized coaching services, focusing on farm diagnostics and adoption observations at the plot level, which aimed to provide tailored support to improve farm production.

Training sessions were also provided to teach farmers about the ramifications of climate change on cocoa production. **23,645 farmers** received training on specifically enhancing climate resilience and reducing emissions on their farms, a 70% increase from 2024.

Strategic partnerships with local partners were instrumental in ensuring access to high-quality farm inputs and tools, further enhancing farmer productivity and incomes. Through our partners, Sucden facilitated the successful distribution of a total of **885,000 cocoa seedlings** in Ghana, nearly twice the amount distributed in 2024.

Sustainable Production and Farmer Livelihoods Story

Kwame Danso is a 62 year old cocoa farmer from Agona in Ghana's Ashanti Region. He has farmed cocoa for more than fifteen years on a 3.6 hectare plot, but a few years ago he began to worry about environmental changes and their impact on his farm. The sun had become too hot, the rain was unpredictable, and his cocoa trees were producing fewer pods. Every season, he harvested less. Some young cocoa trees dried up before they could grow.

When the agroforestry project was first introduced in his community, he was hesitant. He believed that clearing trees made cocoa grow better. With guidance from field officers, he planted shade trees and fruit trees such as banana, avocado, and timber species across my farm. Kwame learned how to space them properly and how trees could improve soil, provide shade, and attract birds that help control pests.

"I used to think trees were competing with my cocoa. I did not know they could protect it… After some time, I saw the change. The soil stayed moist longer, the cocoa leaves looked healthier, and the pods became fuller."

The trees now shield his farm from strong winds and extreme heat. During dry periods, Kwame says that his cocoa seedlings survive better, and he spends less money replacing dead seedlings. The fruit trees also provide him and his family with food and extra income.

Kwame says that the agroforestry activities have also changed how he sees the forest around his community. When he walks through his farm, he feels proud of the contributions he has made: birds have returned, the air feels cooler, and his children are eager to continue farming.

"Before, we thought cutting trees meant progress. Now I understand that keeping trees means protecting our future…This farm is no longer just cocoa. It is a living system. It is hope for my children."

Kwame Danso on his farm

"There was a time my cocoa farm looked bare and tired. Today, it is full of life again."

Social Inclusion and Community Engagement

Women's Empowerment and Income Generating Activities

Our focus on women's empowerment and community support continued in 2025. Building upon previous efforts, training on IGAs conducted through KKFU highlighted the challenge of limited access to finances needed to launch new ventures. To address this, our four-year VSLA initiatives with Solidaridad continued, establishing 26 VSLAs across cocoa-growing communities. These community-based finance mechanisms facilitated access to funds for purchasing farm inputs or initiating IGAs, supporting **475 members** in Ghana. 60% of IGA participants were female, giving them opportunities to gain empowerment and new income sources. Overall, **785 women** were able to take part in various women's empowerment projects and activities. Additionally, **144 young adults** and children participated in youth focused projects and activities, targeted to individuals between 15-35 years old.

ANNEX 1. Côte d'Ivoire Progress Report Tracking Table 2024-2025

Description	Target (24-25)	# Through direct investment (24-25)	# On behalf of clients (24-25)	# Through direct investment (Since 2023)	# Through direct investment (Since 2018)
FOREST PROTECTION AND RESTORATION					
# of farms mapped in direct supply chain: Total Active	1,750	3,572	55,393		
# of hectares in the direct supply chain with deforestation risk assessments completed	0	11,725	149,818		
# metric tons of directly sourced cocoa traceable from the farm to the first purchase point (target is 100%)		3,525	34,374		
# hectares restored in Forest Reserve / Forêts Classée	0	0	0	24	24
# trees registered	0	0	0		15,000
# of farmers with land tenure agreements/documentation obtained via company support	0	0	0		1,200
# farmers informed, trained, and / or consulted on the new Forest Code, forest policy, law enforcement, forest protection, and restoration	450	2,446	26,779		
# Individuals receiving incentives to protect and restore forests and / or adopt agroforestry (e.g., PES): New	450	930	1,128	3,365	4,681
# Individuals receiving incentives to protect and restore forests and / or adopt agroforestry (e.g., PES): Total Active	450	800	5,341		
# farmers applying agroforestry: New		1,027	3,363		
# farmers applying agroforestry: Total Active		1,314	7,121		
# farmers provided with technical assistance to adopt and expand agroforestry	950	934	11,886		
# multi-purpose trees distributed for on-farm planting	23,000	43,616	215,462	266,338	449,079
# hectares cocoa agroforestry: New	950	1,455	4,925	7,876	11,877
# hectares cocoa agroforestry: Total Active		1,743	8,896		
# of trees distributed for off-farm planting	0	0	0	82,987	118,213
# hectares of forest area restored off-reserve / in rural zone	0	0	0	99	150
# farmers provided with technical assistance to be more resilient to climate change and reduce and remove carbon emissions on farm (e.g., CSC)	10	934	11,886		
# of farmers trained in Modified Taungya System (MTS)					
$ contributed to fund		0	0		
SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND FARMERS' LIVELIHOOD					
# improved cocoa seedlings distributed to farmers					
# farmers provided with technical assistance (based on plans) to professionalize & optimize cocoa farming practices	10	2,446	26,779		
# individuals participating in additional Income Generating Activities (IGA's)		40	633		
# individuals provided with technical assistance (based on plans) to increase income from non-cocoa sources / IGA's	240	95	1,678		
# Individuals provided with technical assistance to save money and access finance	600	95	2,833		
# of members of VSLA groups in the current year	600	95	2,833		
# of VSLA groups in the current year	20	3	99		
SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY					
# of cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM): New	0	0	0	7	9
# of cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM): Total Active		0	0		
# hectares under CBNRM	0	0	0	123	174
# of individuals participating in women's empowerment projects and activities	450	95	2,833		
# of individuals participating in youth focused projects and activities (15-35 years old)	150	21	86		

ANNEX 1. Ghana Progress Report Tracking Table 2024-2025

Description	Target (24-25)	# Through direct investment (24-25)	# On behalf of clients (24-25)	# Through direct investment (Since 2023)	# Through direct investment (Since 2018)
FOREST PROTECTION AND RESTORATION					
# of farms mapped in direct supply chain: Total Active	6,266	2,859	49,867		
# of hectares in the direct supply chain with deforestation risk assessments completed	13,723	3,924	34,112		
# metric tons of directly sourced cocoa traceable from the farm to the first purchase point (target is 100%)		1,800	27,405		
# hectares restored in Forest Reserve / Forêts Classée	0	0	0		
# trees registered	0	0	0		
# of farmers with land tenure agreements/documentation obtained via company support	0	0	0		
# farmers informed, trained, and / or consulted on the new Forest Code, forest policy, law enforcement, forest protection, and restoration	0	2,859	32,174		
# Individuals receiving incentives to protect and restore forests and / or adopt agroforestry (e.g., PES): New	0	0	0		
# Individuals receiving incentives to protect and restore forests and / or adopt agroforestry (e.g., PES): Total Active	0	0	0		
# farmers applying agroforestry: New		150	9,336		
# farmers applying agroforestry: Total Active		418	10,099		
# farmers provided with technical assistance to adopt and expand agroforestry	270	150	9,336		
# multi-purpose trees distributed for on-farm planting	9,500	3,000	327,000	11,684	21,684
# hectares cocoa agroforestry: New	270	150	15,839	518	518
# hectares cocoa agroforestry: Total Active		418	16,771		
# of trees distributed for off-farm planting	0	0	0		
# hectares of forest area restored off-reserve / in rural zone	0	0	0		
# farmers provided with technical assistance to be more resilient to climate change and reduce and remove carbon emissions on farm (e.g., CSC)	786	195	23,450		
# of farmers trained in Modified Taungya System (MTS)	0	0	0		
$ contributed to fund					
SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND FARMERS' LIVELIHOOD					
# improved cocoa seedlings distributed to farmers	3,650	0	885,000		
# farmers provided with technical assistance (based on plans) to professionalize & optimize cocoa farming practices	5,337	2,859	36,420		
# individuals participating in additional Income Generating Activities (IGA's)		94	381		
# individuals provided with technical assistance (based on plans) to increase income from non-cocoa sources / IGA's	275	94	391		
# Individuals provided with technical assistance to save money and access finance	0	117	562		
# of members of VSLA groups in the current year	355	117	562		
# of VSLA groups in the current year	21	4	22		
SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY					
# of cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM): New	0	0	0		
# of cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM): Total Active		0	0		
# hectares under CBNRM	0	0	0		
# of individuals participating in women's empowerment projects and activities	100	117	562		
# of individuals participating in youth focused projects and activities (15-35 years old)	0	0	144		