

Terms of Reference

Consultancy to do a 2nd Programme Evaluation of the West Africa Cocoa Programme

1. Introduction to Fairtrade and the West Africa Cocoa Programme

Fairtrade is an alternative approach to conventional trade and is based on a partnership between producers and consumers. When farmers can sell on Fairtrade terms, it provides them with a better deal and improved terms of trade.

Working with small-scale producer organisations (SPOs) is central to Fairtrade's approach of aiming to improve the livelihoods of Fairtrade cocoa farmers.

In mid-2016, Fairtrade launched the West Africa Cocoa Programme (WACP). The WACP seeks to build strong and viable Fairtrade SPOs that are responsive to their members' and business partners' needs. The WACP is implemented in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Sierra Leone by Fairtrade Africa (FTA), with support from Fairtrade International. National Fairtrade Organisations (NFOs) in countries with markets for Fairtrade products relay the outputs and outcomes of WACP to customers buying Fairtrade cocoa.

The main WACP interventions are trainings, coaching and advisory and technical support for SPOs and peer-to-peer learning. SPOs receiving trainings under the WACP are stratified into one of five levels. These levels are differentiated by level of service and intensity/type of training, informed by the level of risk and prior needs/gap assessments conducted. All SPOs receive basic group trainings focused on supporting the SPOs with maintaining their Fairtrade certification and adhering to the relevant Standards, including the SPO Standard and the Cocoa Standard. At the highest intensity, the trainings are informed by prior needs assessments and include intensive thematic coaching that builds capacity in such subjects as compliance with the OHADA Law (Organisation pour l'harmonisation en Afrique du droit des affaires, which translates as Organisation for the Harmonisation of Corporate Law in Africa), Child Rights, Gender Inclusion, Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), Good Environmental Practices, Internal Management Systems (IMS), Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence (HREDD), Financial Management and enhancing member engagement and outreach among other interventions.

The WACP training interventions seek to strengthen the skills of both the SPO's management and the members, as well as to strengthen the institutional structures and systems of the SPO itself. Training modules are explicitly designed for the West African cocoa context and regularly updated with new subjects as a result of the evolving nature of the Fairtrade Standards and the cocoa landscape, needs of SPOs and global cocoa market.

2. Background to the Evaluation

Why do we need this study?

The previous [WACP Programme Evaluation](#), published in 2021 and covering the period of 2016-2020, found that consistent funding since mid-2016 for the WACP has enabled the FTA

team in West Africa to grow its personnel capacity both in terms of numbers and skills, consequently, improved FTA's ability to provide the needed support to cocoa cooperatives in West Africa. Institutional strength and knowledge have also been built up. The SPOs themselves participating in the WACP were more effective and resilient businesses and responsive to their member's needs. SPOs had greater skills and confidence in accessing Fairtrade markets. SPO members were also found to be diversifying their income.

However, sustained growth in Fairtrade sales had yet to be achieved. The inability of SPOs to sustain growth in Fairtrade sales reflected a very large oversupply of Fairtrade cocoa and a decline in demand following the 2019 increases in the Fairtrade Minimum Price and Premium. Further work on enabling SPO access to child labour and forced labour monitoring and remediation systems and deforestation risk assessments were also recommended.

Since this evaluation was published, there has been multiple developments, both those exogenous and endogenous to the evaluation's recommendations.

- The evaluation influenced significant changes in the approach of the programme itself including a recategorization or stratification of SPOs to include SPOs that are considered to have graduated from the programme and thus given minimal support. The Programme's approach of working with lead trainers or focal persons has also been intensified and better structured for trainings to reach more farmers at the community level. The monitoring, evaluation and learning system of the programme was also revamped.
- Fairtrade sales rebounded in 2021 and maintained approximately the same volume globally in 2022. However, in 2022 the highest ever Fairtrade Minimum Price differential in Côte d'Ivoire led to a decrease in volumes sold from that country.
- Since 2022, there has been a demand for conventional cocoa has been higher than supply. The market for Fairtrade continues to grow with new commitments from brands and retailers. The global shortage in conventional cocoa may also have impacted SPOs ability to demand their cocoa is purchased on Fairtrade terms, releasing Fairtrade Premium, as buyers imperative is to secure cocoa at a time of short supply.
- Extensive further work on enabling SPO access to child labour and forced labour monitoring and remediation systems and deforestation risk assessments were implemented, through new [Fairtrade Cocoa Standard](#) requirements published after consultation in December 2022 and the accompanying Fairtrade [Child and Forced Labour Prevention and Remediation Programme](#).
- In 2023, Fairtrade announced a [partnership with Satelligence](#) to provide all SPOs with access to satellite deforestation risk monitoring assessments. Fairtrade Africa is now in the process of supporting SPOs to process their data in line with the requirements and submitted to Fairtrade International for analysis. SPOs would be provided with deforestation risk monitoring assessments to act quickly when deforestation is recognised as having occurred.
- Fairtrade is reaching the end of its current strategy period (2021-2025), and will shortly engage in a consultative process to develop the next Global Strategy including identifying the priority areas and topics.

Given the large changes that have occurred since 2020, including in the regulatory (both regional and global level), market, partnership, and strategic environment, the time is ripe to conduct another evaluation so to ensure WACP is fit for purpose moving forward.

Who will use the results and how?

We envision that these evaluation results will be used by four main groups:

- Fairtrade Africa, so to improve the implementation of the programme (including informing the content of the trainings, delivery approach, the stratification strategy of the SPOs, the deployment of FTA staff, and the areas of support),
- The Global Cocoa team, so to improve upon the overall design and future direction of the Programme,
- NFOs and Fairtrade commercial partners, so to provide proof of the impact of commercial partners' investment in WACP and inform future Fairtrade sales strategies,
- Fairtrade leadership, to understand the impact of the WACP in the last four years and ensure it is properly situated in the new Fairtrade strategy.

Other project and MEL managers for Fairtrade projects and programmes in West Africa will also find the evaluation results useful, as WACP has been the foundation on which many associated projects and programmes have been built.

3. Evaluation Objectives and Scope

Objectives

The objectives of this evaluation are manifold, including those objectives below. Note that many of these objectives carry over from the first evaluation, ensuring longitudinal data on key questions.

All of these objectives are oriented to lead to concrete, actionable recommendations from the consultancy team.

WACP Impacts

- Assessing and reporting on the extent to which the implementation of WACP has achieved the outputs, intended and unintended outcomes, intermediate and long-term impacts (as detailed in its Theory of Change), with a focus on the time period of 2020 onwards. In particular (but not exclusively),
 - Gathering evidence from the SPOs themselves as to how WACP has (or has not) played a role in their organisation's commercial successes or efficiency, and laid the groundwork (or not) for successful collaboration work with commercial partners (through long-term project work, living income interventions, etc.),
 - Assessing how WACP has (or has not) enabled SPOs to prepare for new regulatory frameworks including EUDR and CSDDD, as well as being in compliance with the new 2022 Cocoa Standard, and
 - Assessing how WACP has (or has not) led to behavioural or economic changes (including farm profitability) at the farmer or household level.
- In the content of the emerging new Fairtrade Global Strategy, identifying key value points of the WACP and how they are promoted.

WACP Design, Approach, and Implementation

- Reviewing and reporting on the approach, effectiveness, efficiency and content of the main WACP activities or interventions (i.e. the trainings, the lead trainer or focal person approach, coaching and advisory support for SPOs including the WACP training curriculum), identifying in-demand new or refreshed subjects for inclusion.
- Reviewing and reporting on the criteria by which SPOs are stratified into one of the five WACP levels, and assessing when an SPO would be ready to exit the most intensive training programmes of the WACP and what ongoing training might be needed for SPOs in that status.
- Review and explore from SPOs how WACP can introduce innovative approaches to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of programme implementation.

WACP Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

- Reviewing the WACP Theory of Change and the associated MEL system so to continue to improve on its effectiveness, efficiency and relevance, particularly as it relates to uses of monitoring and evaluation results by NFOs and commercial partners.

WACP Administration, Management, and Ways of Working

- Reviewing the staff structure and effectiveness of administration by the FTA implementation team in Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire, as well as understanding the additional (direct/indirect) benefits that the building of the FTA implementation team has brought,
- Review and reporting on understanding of the WACP by NFOs and how effectively or not they share that information with their customers to assist in selling Fairtrade,
- Reviewing and reporting on the roles of the key stakeholders (FTA, FI and NFOs) inside of the WACP management structure and the associated results coming out of this structure and ways of working.

WACP Cost Effectiveness and Efficiency

- Reviewing the overall expenditures and cost effectiveness of the WACP, with the intention to ensure value for money,
- As part of this, explore SPO's readiness or otherwise to contribute to WACP's intervention considering projected budget constraints from 2026, while detailing how SPO trainings received from WACP overlap with those received from other certification schemes, traders or other bodies (such as NGOs and government bodies).

Scope

The evaluation will involve data collection across the entire scope of stakeholders involved with or impacted by the WACP.

This includes the Fairtrade Global Cocoa Team (based out of Fairtrade International in Bonn, Germany and the Fairtrade Foundation in London, UK), the Global Impact Team (Based out of Bonn, Germany), the Fairtrade Africa Implementation team (Based out of Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Sierra Leone), government officials (Based out of Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Sierra Leone), and the relevant Fairtrade National Fairtrade Organisations and Fairtrade commercial partners (based out of several countries but particularly Germany, Netherlands, UK, United States, and Switzerland).

Most importantly, this includes the SPOs themselves in Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire.

Finances permitting, the scope could include as a selection of farmers and farmer households within these SPOs, as well as counterfactual SPOs (either similar SPOs not Fairtrade certified, or those within Fairtrade but not having yet received substantial WACP support).

Temporally, the evaluation will focus on developments since 2020, as the previous WACP evaluation covered developments before this time period.

4. Proposed Methods

Methods are to be proposed by the consultancy team. The approach will most likely be a mixed method approach including:

- Key Informant Interviews and/or focus groups with members of the Fairtrade Global Cocoa Team, the Fairtrade Africa implementation team, Fairtrade Global Impact team, governmental officials, NFOs, SPO representatives, and Fairtrade commercial partners,
- Finances permitting, focus groups or surveys with selected farmers/farmer households in WACP-affiliated SPOs as well as counterfactuals,
- Secondary data analysis and literature review including longitudinal WACP monitoring data, the previous WACP evaluation, and a plethora of related studies and reports overlapping with the same group of SPOs (i.e., a study on deforestation, a baseline study on child and forced labour, a household income study, and more).

5. Deliverables and Ways of Working

Deliverables

- An inception report of no more than 15-20 pages, laying out how the evaluation will be conducted,
- A presentation and discussion of the inception report,
- 'Back to Office' Workshops, meaning short workshops with SPOs after on-site data collection has concluded but before final results are available, so to return preliminary findings to the SPOs themselves,
- A draft and final report of no more than 40-80 pages, including an executive summary and graphical illustrations where possible,
- A validation workshop, presenting and discussing the final report and its findings and recommendations with the core team engaged in this study
- 1-2 engaging webinars, presenting and discussing the results for the wider Fairtrade audience
- All the raw data and information collected as part of the evaluation.

Ways of Working

You will also be expected to have regular update meetings with the evaluation coordination team at FI and FTA. These meetings will normally be via a video-conferencing software, although in-person meetings with select members of the coordination team may be possible depending upon the home-base of the consultancy team.

6. Qualifications of the researcher/consultant (or team)

The project will be awarded to a researcher/institution which can propose a research team meeting the following criteria:

Essential:

- Fluent written and spoken French and English.
- Demonstrated experience doing programme/project evaluations, ideally in the context of programmes focused on training and capacity building as their main interventions,
- Highly skilled in both quantitative and qualitative research methods,
- Understanding of Ghanaian, Sierra Leonean, and Ivorian cocoa production, government roles in cocoa trading, sustainability issues and SPOs in Ghana, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire.
- Understanding the impact of relevant regulatory requirements in Europe, namely EU Deforestation Regulation, CSDDD and related laws.
- Willingness to adhere to Fairtrade's Act to Protect policy and Research Ethics policy, as well as any processes so to ensure GDPR compliance regarding data handling.

Highly Desirable

- On-the-ground networks and/or staff in Ghana, Sierra Leone, and/or Cote d'Ivoire as well as networks with Fairtrade's cocoa commercial partners (manufacturers, retailers, traders, and brands),
- Demonstrated general understanding of smallholder farmers' sustainable livelihoods, supply chains and export commodity sector and/or certification systems related to the same,
- Demonstrated understanding of Fairtrade principles, key tools and approaches, the Fairtrade Theory of Change, standards and farmer support, and Fairtrade structures,

7. Envisaged Timeline and Milestones

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| • Date advertised: | 26.09.2024 |
| • Deadline for submission of proposals: | 18.10.2024 |
| • Interviews to be held (projected) week of: | 22.10.2024 |
| • Selection by week of: | 29.10.2024 |
| • Contract signed by: | 22.11.2024 |
| • Inception Report by: | 20.12.2024 |
| • Data Collection: | January – March 2025 |
| • Report Writing: | April/May 2025 |
| • Report Delivery and Webinars: | NLT June 2025 |

8. Budget

€120000 inclusive of 19% VAT to be paid in Germany (as this is where Fairtrade International, the body commissioning this assignment, is based). This should include all consultancy fees as well as other costs for fieldwork.

A couple of notes about the budget:

- While cost will not be the primary factor by which the consultancy team will be selected, value-for-money and the financial approach will be a criteria.
- This means that consultancy teams should neither seek to compete primarily on price nor try to intentionally try to consume the maximum budget available.
- Instead, we would ask that you focus on bringing to bear your teams expertise, skills, methodological proposal, experience and networks so to complete this evaluation and make a financial estimation that is as close to true as possible, given your costs, buffer, and profit-margin.

9. Application process

Please hand in your proposal comprising of a technical and financial offer, of no more than 20 pages (not including CVs) until **18th October 2024** to impact-tenders@fairtrade.net.

- The technical offer should clarify the consultants' understanding of the assignment and the topic at hand, a proposal for a suitable research design including all data collection and analysis instruments considered for answering the questions of this study, a workplan including the team collaboration, time plan and division of roles as well as a communication plan with Fairtrade International and ethics considerations.
- The financial offer should include a calculation of days and personnel needed per work package of the assignment, including any potential expenses (e.g. for travel).
- The CVs of the individual consultants working on the assignment (providing proof of the qualifications) should be provided in the Annex together with other relevant documentation (e.g. work examples if applicable)

By submission of your proposal, you consent to sharing of the proposal materials (including any personal details in CVs) with the Evaluation Selection Committee, which includes individuals and Fairtrade offices inside and outside of the EU. Your proposal will be held in confidence with the Evaluation Selection Committee.