

WEST AFRICA

COCOA PROGRAMME

MONITORING REPORT

SECOND EDITION



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Credits:

Data team: Jesse Hastings (Fairtrade International), Etienne Tehoua (FTA), Isaac Rewa (FTA), Francis Donzuo (FTA), and the GeoDev team.

Editorial team: Jesse Hastings (Fairtrade International), Jon Walker (Fairtrade International), Anne-Marie Yao (FTA), and many other colleagues in FLOCERT, Fairtrade International, Fairtrade Africa, National Fairtrade Organizations, and external partner organizations.

Design/layout: Alberto Martínez, Renderparty

Proofreading: Laura O'Mahony

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Credit: Fairtrade Africa.

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NOTE FROM FAIRTRADE AFRICA



Mr. Oscar Ochieng
Acting CEO, Fairtrade Africa

During 2020 and 2021, we experienced the importance of strong communities and international cooperation as COVID-19 took its toll on people, families, communities and businesses. Fairtrade believes in the power of communities acting collectively. Our West Africa Cocoa Programme starts from the belief that strong small-scale producer organizations (SPOs) – cooperatives – owned by their cocoa farmer members and run for them and their families as effective and resilient businesses are important community actors themselves.

These Fairtrade SPOs channelled Fairtrade COVID Relief and Resilience funds into the communities they serve. Over €15 million was made available kick-started by an initial €3.1 million investment from the Fairtrade system and then boosted by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in cooperation with the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), the British Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), impact investor Incofin IM and others.

In Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, we saw Fairtrade cocoa SPOs utilize these COVID Relief and Resilience funds to purchase and supply protective equipment and food relief, and provide education support, awareness-raising on the risks of child labour and gender-based violence as well as a wide range of income generating activities for farmer households in their communities.

I am pleased to see the increasing evidence in this monitoring report, complemented by a separate external evaluation of the West Africa Cocoa Programme and recent academic reports, that Fairtrade cocoa SPOs in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire are both being recognized by others and seeing themselves as better organized businesses.

In this report, the SPO representatives repeatedly express their satisfaction with WACP training and Fairtrade Africa. This is so important as the SPOs and their members are the reason Fairtrade exists and are integral to the running of Fairtrade. The vast majority of cocoa farmers themselves also report that their SPOs are being adequately or effectively served and that the SPOs understand their needs.

It is also excellent to see that Fairtrade SPOs and their members are making progress on our economic indicators at household level. This finding is mirrored in our recent second Ivorian household income study. We remain focused on making further progress.

The disappointment in this report comes from the reduction in SPO Fairtrade sales. Some commercial partners reduced or stopped their commitment to Fairtrade when the Fairtrade Minimum Price and Premium increased in October 2019. However, this disappointment is tempered by the knowledge that there are new commitments to Fairtrade cocoa from other commercial partners which should reverse those losses over time. In the last year, we have also seen commercial partners investing further by committing to Fairtrade Living Income projects in partnership with SPOs and donor partners.

Our own research combined with academic research increasingly shows that Fairtrade's focus on Minimum Prices, SPO organizational strengthening and the transfer of a set Premium of US\$240 per tonne to the SPO, which gives them the resources to address their priorities, is showing positive results in terms of SPO strength and resilience. That, in turn, contributes to a positive impact on farmer members' household income.

As we look to the wave of new regulations on human rights and environmental due diligence, the African Regional Standard for Sustainable Cocoa, introduced in 2020, and the evolution of our own Fairtrade Standard, the importance of strong and resilient SPOs will grow.

Our mission has now to be to continue to increase the market share for Fairtrade certified SPOs and their farmer members as part of long-term partnerships between brands, retailers and SPOs.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

■	Executive summary	1
■	Introduction to the West Africa Cocoa Programme (WACP)	4
■	Introduction to WACP Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)	5
■	SPO managers are highly satisfied with the WACP trainings and have gained skills and capacity to run resilient and effective SPOs	7
■	The WACP training programme and delivery is effective in contributing to change within SPOs	10
■	SPOs have the systems, processes and training programmes in place to deliver a functional SPO	12
■	SPOs are more effective and resilient as businesses and are responsive to their members' needs	15
■	SPOs and their members are aware of best practices on child rights but traditional gender roles dominate	18
■	Positive economic trends at household level among SPO members	20
■	SPOs in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana struggle with sustained access to premium cocoa markets on Fairtrade terms	23
■	WACP: Next Steps, 2021 Onwards	25

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What is the West Africa Cocoa Programme?

Working with small-scale producer organizations (SPOs) is central to Fairtrade's approach to improving the livelihoods of Fairtrade cocoa farmers. In mid-2016, Fairtrade launched the West Africa Cocoa Programme (WACP). The WACP seeks to build strong and resilient Fairtrade SPOs that are responsive to their members' and their business partners' needs. Ultimately, WACP is aiming to establish long-term relationships between consumer brands, retailers, the traders that supply them, and the SPOs whose members rely on cocoa for their household income. This mutual understanding should lead to sustained access to Fairtrade markets that will play a role in increasing farmer household incomes and progressing towards living incomes.

Implemented by Fairtrade Africa and supported by Fairtrade International, the main WACP interventions are training, coaching and advisory support for SPOs. In 2020, there were a total of 161,717 attendances by SPO members and managers

at trainings (120,515 men and 41,202 women). Compared to 2019, this was an increase of 78.16 percent. All SPOs receive basic group trainings focused on assisting the SPOs in 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 subjects such as Compliance with Cooperative Law, Child Rights, Good Agricultural Practices, Internal Management Systems, Financial Management and Enhancing Member Outreach.

A new approach being taken includes using SPO staff to 'cascade' the trainings to the membership. Under this model, FTA builds the capacity of SPO trainers and provides financial support to SPOs so they can roll out trainings to an expanded group of SPO members.



Training under WACP on financial management with SOCOOPAR-ECOOKIM, Côte d'Ivoire.

Credit: FTA

How does Fairtrade monitor the impacts of WACP?

In 2017, Fairtrade International and Fairtrade Africa began a comprehensive effort to monitor the impact of WACP for SPOs and their cocoa farmers. Indicators were developed based on the WACP Theory of Change (ToC) and input from all relevant stakeholder groups. Designed to be done annually, the first round of monitoring on the agreed indicators for selected WACP SPOs took place between July and November 2018. The second round of monitoring was conducted between July and October 2019. The third round was delayed by the onset of COVID-19 and was conducted between September and November 2020 using remote methods. Data was collected both from WACP SPO management as well as from SPO members directly. Data from 35 SPOs was collected in 2018; 28 SPOs in 2019, and 30 SPOs in 2020. In total, more than 1,700 SPO staff and members were sampled in this three-year period.

Learning workshops have been held jointly with Fairtrade Africa, as well as with key NFOs and commercial brands, since the end of 2018. Based on the early findings, a large-scale learning workshop took place with selected representatives from consumer brands, National Fairtrade Organizations (NFOs), Fairtrade Africa (FTA), Fairtrade International, and the SPOs themselves in May 2019. Held in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, this workshop allowed the attendees to discuss and learn from the WACP Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) data as well as other topics of mutual interest. Due to COVID-19, online learning workshops were held in 2020.

This Monitoring Report is a source of aggregated information about the impacts of WACP and is available to SPOs, a wider group of NFOs, potential and current Fairtrade commercial partners, and the general public. As such, it is another learning tool.



*WACP learning workshop in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire in May 2019.
Credit: Fairtrade International*

What has Fairtrade learned after three years of monitoring?

With a full three years of data, this second edition of the WACP Monitoring Report allows us to take stock of how far we have come since mid-2016 and reports on a key complete dataset. It complements the results of an external evaluation of WACP, which is available separately. Many of the findings from this evaluation echo and confirm our monitoring results. As a further addition to our commitment to monitoring and evaluation, in July 2021 we published our second Ivorian household income study with data collected in 2020-21, which followed up on the data collected four years earlier in the first study. This study also shows progress on Ivorian cocoa farmers' household incomes complementing the findings in this WACP dataset.¹

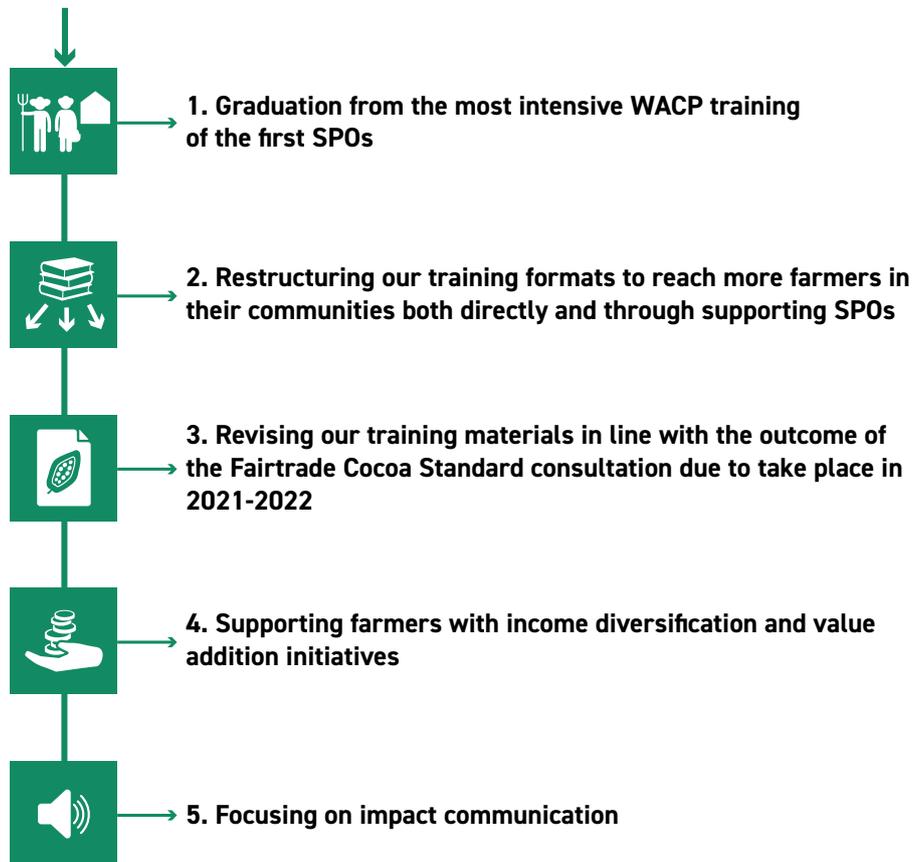
In particular, we have been delighted to see that:

1. SPO managers are satisfied with the WACP trainings they have received;
2. SPO members are returning consistently high scores in terms of the SPOs understanding their needs and being run adequately or effectively;
3. SPO members give positive feedback on the economic progress of their households.

¹ Both the Evaluation and the Household Income Study are available in the Fairtrade Library <https://www.fairtrade.net/library>

What is next for the WACP – Our Action Plan

After nearly four years of implementation we will be focusing on the following core topics in 2021 and 2022:



Over the coming four years to 2025, we also envisage a deepening of our work with SPOs as a result of new African Regional Standard and human rights and environmental due diligence regulations as well as potential changes to the Fairtrade Standards.

What remains clear to us is that strong and viable SPOs, with permanent structures in and for communities, will be critical to achieving lasting change. For SPOs to fulfill this role there will need to be long-term relationships with commercial partners which give all parties security of access to resources. Fairtrade stands ready to play its part in these partnerships.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEST AFRICA COCOA PROGRAMME (WACP)

Working with small-scale producer organizations (SPOs) is central to Fairtrade’s approach to improving the livelihoods of Fairtrade cocoa farmers. Baseline studies of the strength of SPOs in Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire, which were conducted in 2014-15, indicated room for further capacity building.²

As a result, Fairtrade launched the West Africa Cocoa Programme (WACP) in mid-2016. The WACP seeks to build strong and viable Fairtrade SPOs that are responsive to their members’ and their business partners’ needs. The WACP is implemented in Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana by Fairtrade Africa (FTA) with support from Fairtrade International. National Fairtrade Organizations (NFOs) in countries with markets for Fairtrade products relay the outputs and outcomes of WACP to customers buying Fairtrade cocoa. Funding raised for the WACP has enabled the FTA team in West Africa to grow its own personnel capacity both in terms of numbers and skills.

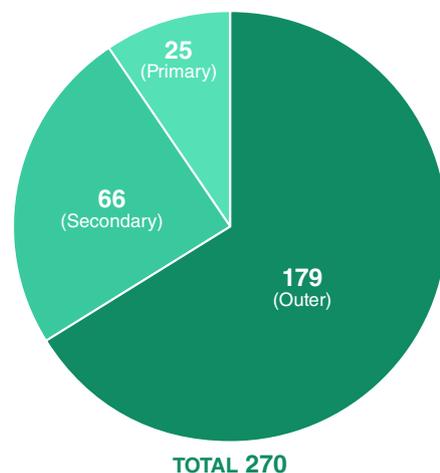
The main WACP interventions are trainings, coaching and advisory support for SPOs. SPOs receiving trainings under the WACP are stratified into one of three levels. These levels are differentiated by level of service and intensity/type of training. Stratification of SPOs into levels is based on the individual SPO’s volume of sales on Fairtrade terms, length of time certified, and the permanency of contracts to sell on Fairtrade terms, among other factors. This stratification (rather than all Fairtrade cocoa SPOs receiving the highest intensity of trainings) has been necessary due to budget restrictions and the increasing number of Fairtrade certified SPOs in Côte d’Ivoire. All SPOs receive basic group trainings focused on assisting the SPOs in maintaining their Fairtrade certification and adhering to the relevant Fairtrade 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 (i.e. Organisation pour l’harmonisation en Afrique du droit des affaires, which translates as Organization for the Harmonization of Corporate Law in Africa), Child Rights, Good Agricultural

Practices (GAPs), Internal Management Systems (IMS), Financial Management and Enhancing Member Outreach. A new approach being taken includes using SPO staff to cascade the trainings. Under this model, FTA builds the capacity of SPO trainers and provides financial support to SPOs so they can roll out trainings to an expanded group of SPO members.

The WACP training interventions seek to strengthen both the SPO’s management and the members themselves. 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 sector. Upon completion of trainings with Fairtrade Africa, SPOs receive their own training material packages to disseminate information to their wider membership.

In 2020, there were 161,716 attendances by members and management from SPOs (120,515 men and 41,202 women) at trainings implemented by Fairtrade Africa staff and SPO representatives who have taken on training roles funded by Fairtrade Africa and the SPOs themselves. Compared to 2019, this was an increase of 78 percent. The increase in the number of attendees at WACP trainings was due to the cascading approach, where SPO trainers received the necessary technical and financial support to facilitate trainings at membership and community level. The cooperative trainers were selected to receive the necessary technical and financial support to facilitate the cascading of training at community level.



Different Levels of Training Intensity under the West Africa Cocoa Programme and number of SPOs included in each level.

Across both Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire, 179 SPOs are receiving basic group trainings, 66 SPOs are receiving the next level of intensity of training, and 25 SPOs are receiving the highest intensity of trainings.

² Available at <https://www.fairtrade.net/library/baseline-for-assessing-the-impact-of-fairtrade-certification-on-cocoa-growers-and-cooperatives-in-cote-divoire> and <https://www.fairtrade.net/library/baseline-for-assessing-the-impact-of-fairtrade-certification-on-cocoa-farmers-and-cooperatives-in-ghana>

INTRODUCTION TO WACP MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING (MEL)

Long-term impact

Co-op member households have increased their financial incomes from farming and are making economic progress towards living incomes

Intermediate impact

Sustained access to Fairtrade cocoa markets for co-ops

Outcomes

Co-ops are more effective and resilient as businesses and responsive to members' needs

Outputs

Co-ops have the systems, processes and training programmes in place to deliver a functional co-op

Co-op members are more engaged with their co-op and have increased knowledge and skills

Co-op managers have the skills, training and capacity to run a strong and effective co-op

The WACP training programme and delivery is effective in encouraging change within co-ops

High quality relationship management of customers delivers benefits to co-ops

Interventions

Training provided to co-ops by Fairtrade Africa on Standard compliance, organizational strengthening and thematic subjects, e.g. financial and operational management, GAP or empowerment of women

Engaging customer brands, retailers and co-ops in identifying shared objectives and dialogue on progress

The Fairtrade West Africa Cocoa Programme Theory of Change (2016-2020)

(Note: SPOs are called co-ops in this infographic)

The 2016 – 2020 WACP Theory of Change (ToC) details the activities and expected outputs, outcomes, and impacts that Fairtrade expects to see from the programme. The WACP Theory of Change was designed in 2016 and 2017 after consultation with SPOs and their members.

The main outcomes of the WACP Theory of Change are that SPOs should be effective and resilient businesses and responsive to their members' needs. The concept of SPOs being responsive to their members is deeply rooted in Fairtrade. Ultimately, WACP is aiming for long-term relationships between consumer brands, retailers, the traders that supply them and the SPOs whose members rely on cocoa for their household income.

This mutual understanding should lead to sustained access to Fairtrade markets that will, in turn, play a role in increasing farmer household incomes and progressing towards living incomes.

In 2017, Fairtrade International and Fairtrade Africa began a comprehensive effort to monitor the impact of WACP for SPOs and their cocoa farmers. Indicators were developed based on the WACP ToC and input from all relevant stakeholder groups. The data required would be collected from the selected SPO management teams and from the SPO members. It was decided that the focus of the data collection would be those SPOs in 'Key Supply Chains', i.e., those SPOs within WACP that were supplying significant volumes to commercial brands.

The first round of annual monitoring aimed at collecting data on the agreed indicators took place between July and November 2018. The second round of monitoring was conducted between July and October 2019. The third round of monitoring was conducted between September and November 2020. As a result of restrictions on contact due to COVID-19, sampling in 2020 was done through remote methods (i.e., phone interviews with SPO management and members). Data from 35 SPOs was collected in 2018; 28 SPOs in 2019, and 30 SPOs in 2020. In total, more than 1,700 SPO staff and members were sampled in this three-year period.

Learning workshops have been held jointly with Fairtrade Africa as well as key NFOs since the end of 2018. The first large-scale learning workshop took place with selected representatives from consumer brands, NFOs, FTA, Fairtrade International, and the SPOs themselves in May 2019. Held in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, this workshop allowed the attendees to discuss and learn from the WACP MEL data as well as other topics of mutual interest. Online learning workshops were held in 2020 with SPOs and commercial brands.

Most of these sampled SPOs sampled were in Côte d'Ivoire with

only a small minority in Ghana (less than five percent of the data points for the management-level data and less than ten percent of the data points for the membership data). Therefore, unless otherwise stated, data referenced in this report refers largely to findings from Ivorian SPOs. Membership data is occasionally broken down separately for Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. This only applies for 2020. This data emphasis reflects a similar breakdown within the WACP generally – the vast majority of participating SPOs come from Côte d'Ivoire.

One limitation of the data is that while all SPOs in the sample were surveyed at management level every year, only one-third of the SPOs in the sample had some of their members sampled at household level every year. This means that any findings from the membership data between 2018-2020 cannot be viewed as a trend, but rather as a collection of independent yearly samples. Data is also largely compiled based on respondent records and recall as opposed to on-the-ground observations meaning that some errors can occur.

The data collected from these monitoring rounds was complemented with data from other sources, including SCOPE Insight, an assessment tool overseen by Fairtrade Africa.



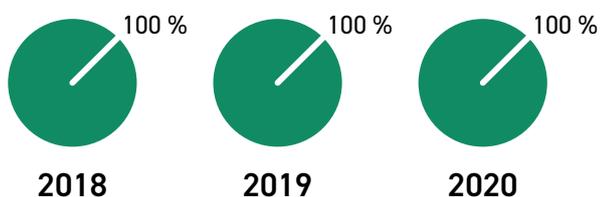
*Conceptualization and launch of West Africa Cocoa Programme
(content design led by SPOs)*

SPO MANAGERS ARE HIGHLY SATISFIED WITH THE WACP TRAININGS AND HAVE GAINED SKILLS AND CAPACITY TO RUN RESILIENT AND EFFECTIVE SPOs

SPO managers are highly satisfied with the quality of the WACP trainings

The West Africa Cocoa Programme uses training as the main intervention encouraging change and strengthen Fairtrade cocoa SPOs and their members. The various modules are designed to help them adhere to the Fairtrade Standards as well as strengthen the SPOs in topics such as Child Rights, Good Agricultural Practices, Cooperative Law, Internal Management Systems, Financial Management and Enhancing Member Outreach. Some of the modules are designed so that they can be further rolled out to farmers to strengthen membership and build skills in business, good agricultural practices and more.

All SPO managers surveyed during the entire three-year monitoring cycle (2018 – 2020) reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the trainings provided as part of the WACP.



100 percent of SPO managers surveyed from 2018 to 2020 said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of WACP trainings.

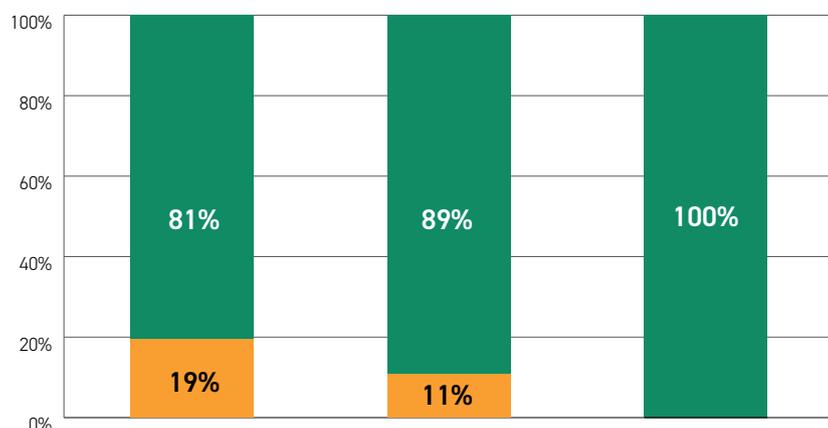


Kukuom Union VSLA meeting
Credit: FTA

WACP trainings are about building the knowledge and skills of SPO managers and meeting the SPO's needs

By 2020, we saw an overall increase in self-reported knowledge and skills in multiple categories that WACP has provided training in.³ WACP trainings are also meeting managers' most important

training needs, rising from approximately 80 percent of SPOs to 100 percent by 2020. Where remaining training needs exist, they tend to be focused on a few key topics.

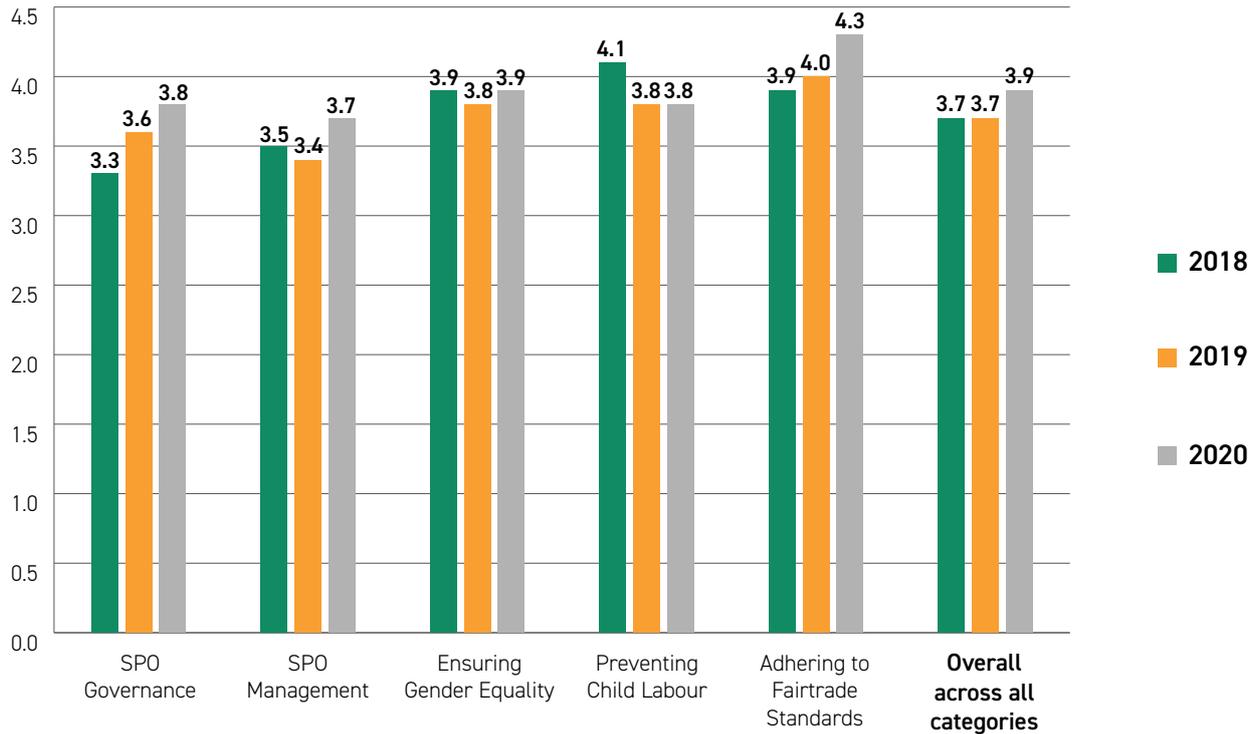


Answer:

- Yes
- No

WACP trainings are meeting SPO managers' most important training needs. By 2020, 100 percent of managers said their most important needs were fully satisfied.

³ The slight downward dip from 2018-2019 on preventing child labour can most likely be attributed to new staff joining the SPO management team and needing to be upskilled on this topic. Although SPO managers understand the issues and risks of child labour, they are still challenged by it. Prevention and remediation remain the most complex issues for SPO managers to resolve. There is still a need to strengthen technical and especially financial capacities around this.



Average self-reported score given by SPO managers (1 = lowest, 5 = highest) on knowledge and skills on five different dimensions covered in WACP. We see an overall increase from 2018 to 2020 in self-reported knowledge and skills, both overall and also on many individual themes.

Type of Training Desired
Needs Assessment
Fairtrade Standards on Trade-including trading contracts, traceability, product sourcing and use of the FAIRTRADE Mark
Good Agricultural Practices - environmental management, biodiversity and wildlife conservation
Internal Control Systems - Occupational Health and Safety: PPE, first aid and other health-related training, Health and Safety Committee (HL)
Internal Control Systems - Human Resource Management: leadership skills; Organizational Strengthening: farm revenue management, farmer business training
Internal Control Systems - Hired Labour Conditions and Rights: labour legislation and labour rights, labour legislation and negotiation skills, freedom from discrimination, freedom of association and right to collective bargaining
Internal Control Systems - Gender
Access to Finance
Diversification - Income or product
Governance - Country Network meeting / National PO meeting

While the most important SPO training needs are satisfied, some SPOs said they would appreciate more training in some key topics.

Name and position: Bilé Alphonse, Group Administrator

SPO: Société Coopérative Nouvelle de Vavoua (SCNV)

Location: Vavoua, Centre-West of Côte d'Ivoire

Quote: The SCNV cooperative was set up in 2011 and has been Fairtrade certified since 2015. We have benefitted from several Fairtrade trainings via the West Africa Cocoa Programme. At the end of these trainings, we acquired some skills and are able to cascade them to our members within their communities.

Gender was a notion that was particularly poorly understood. Through the intervention of Fairtrade staff in our cooperative, the leaders now know that women's empowerment [helps to build the resilience of our cooperative and membership]. In addition, the [cooperative] leaders and members are now able to [develop] the procedures and texts of the [cooperative] and better organize themselves.

As a Fairtrade contact person, these trainings allowed me

personally to strengthen my knowledge about environmental protection. Today, I consider myself an eco-citizen. In this way, we train our producers to be more resilient to climate change. We would like to thank Fairtrade Africa for these training sessions which allow our cooperative to be more developed and to move forward. We hope to have even more visits and training sessions.



Name and position: Nana Francis Gyamera, President of Kukuom Union

SPO: Kukuom Union

Location: Ghana

Quote: After joining Fairtrade and the West Africa Cocoa programme, we have received a lot of trainings which have empowered us as producers in many ways. We have been trained in several issues including child protection, financial management focusing on how we can save for our future and use our Fairtrade Premium efficiently. Through the WACP, we have established village savings and loan associations (VSLAs) in all our communities. These are helping individual members to cultivate the habit of saving and get access to low interest loans.

We are grateful for the training and coaching provided to the Kukuom Union. We have observed a lot of positive changes in the management of our organization since the implementation of the WACP.

For the first time in the history of the cooperative, we have successfully conducted our FLOCERT audit without any non-compliance. To us, this is a major achievement and this could be attributed to the quality of support provided by Fairtrade Africa.



New training topics and nurturing the next generation of SPO managers

Confident and capable SPO management has been identified as one of the cornerstones of a successful, strong and resilient SPO so we are particularly pleased to see that SPO managers are satisfied with the trainings, that they are gaining knowledge and skills, and that we have met their most important needs. However, SPO staff turnover and recurring changes in the participants attending training continues to pose a challenge when it comes to building the capacity of management teams and may justify continuous training. We acknowledge the requests for additional topics. Many of these topics are due to be covered in our 2021-22 Fairtrade Cocoa Standard review and if the new clauses are approved, we will commission relevant training material. The development of toolkits for SPOs to enable the effective

induction of new staff and proper exit and handover plans will be integrated in the Internal Management System WACP module.

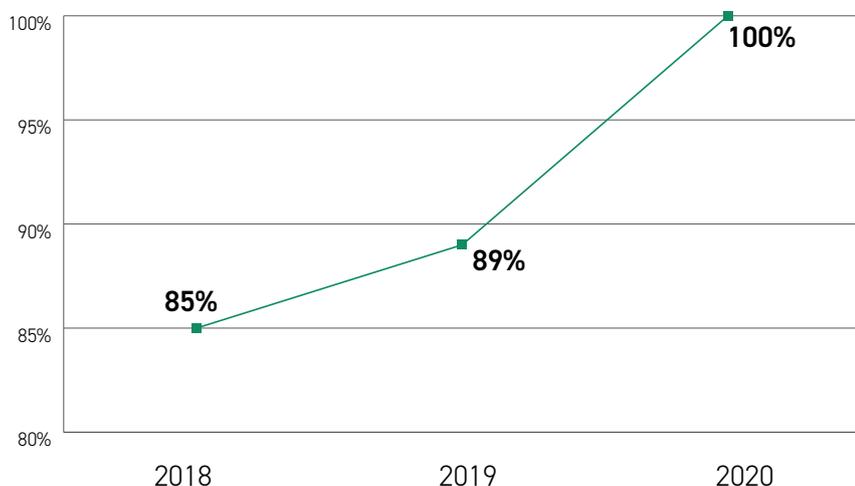
With donor funding secured by Fairtrade Norway from NORAD (the Norwegian Development Agency), we are excited that Fairtrade Africa is setting up the Young Cooperative Managers Academy as we seek to work with SPOs to identify the next generation of SPO managers. We also expect that with new requirements as a result of the African Regional Standard for Sustainable Cocoa in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, future human rights and environmental due diligence regulations, and the outcome of our Fairtrade Cocoa Standard consultation, the WACP portfolio of training topics will continue to increase.

THE WACP TRAINING PROGRAMME AND DELIVERY IS EFFECTIVE IN CONTRIBUTING TO CHANGE WITHIN SPOs

WACP trainings are contributing to changes on the ground

The WACP trainings, as well as being well received and building knowledge and skills, are contributing to changes on the ground. In 2020, 100 percent of SPO managers reported that the WACP trainings contributed directly to positive improvements in their SPO such as the creation of household income activities, good agricultural practices, better SPO management, better

adherence to the Fairtrade Standards and more. Many of these improvements happened through cascading the trainings that Fairtrade had already provided to the SPOs. SPO managers themselves took the learnings from the WACP trainings and used them to implement some change or lead a training themselves among SPO members.



100 percent of SPO managers surveyed in 2020 said that WACP trainings led to positive improvements in their SPO, up from 85 percent in 2018.

Name and position: Aya Esther Konan, General Manager of CADESA

SPO: CADESA COOP CA

Location: San-Pedro, South-West Côte d'Ivoire

Quote: Thanks to Fairtrade Africa's training, the cooperative is better organized and we work in perfect symbiosis. Today we have a great team working at the CADESA cooperative, including a General Manager, a sustainability team, an accountant, etc. Each employee has a job description that they follow very well in order to better organize themselves and be productive. Initially, one person filled all of these positions. But thanks to Fairtrade's training, we have come to understand that good governance requires employing the right people in the right positions.

We would like Fairtrade to continue coaching us so that we can move forward.



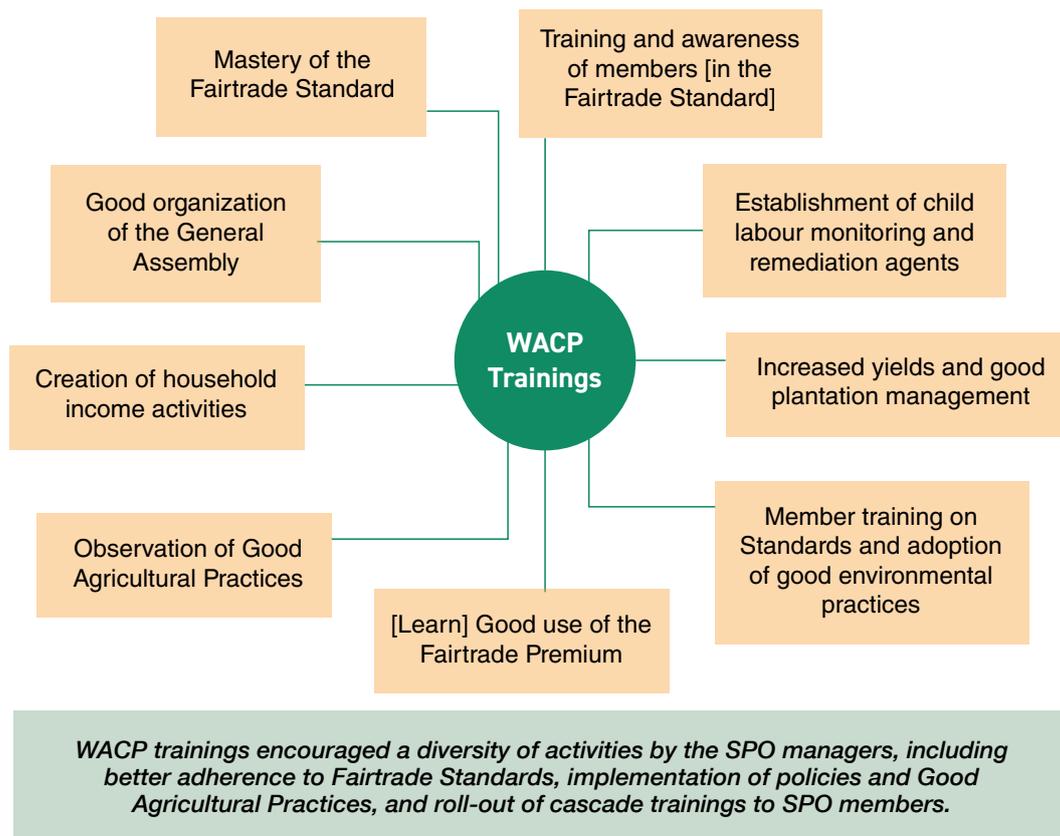
Name and position: Daniel Amponsah, President, Asunafo North Union

SPO: Asunafo North Union

Location: Ghana

Quote: With the support of the WACP, our farmers are empowered. We see improvement in our communities and have managed to secure another buyer to buy from our members.

The support provided to us through training, coaching and follow-ups shapes our organization and has contributed hugely to this improvement we are seeing today. For example, Asunafo North Union was judged to be the most formalized cooperative in Ghana in 2019 and awarded Best Cooperative of the year by Fairtrade International in 2020.



Welcoming the next cohort and updating our training methodology to encourage cascading

Fairtrade is delighted that SPOs are taking action to improve their organizations and train their members with the skills gained in these trainings.

In 2022, the first SPOs will graduate out of the high intensity primary training into a new category. We will redeploy some of our resources to work more intensively with the next cohort

of SPOs. At the same time, we are seeking to change our training methodologies so we can reach more farmers directly and further support SPO management to cascade trainings to farmers using a 'Training of Trainers' approach. Both of these steps will help ensure that trainings continue to lead to concrete follow-up actions.

SPOs HAVE THE SYSTEMS, PROCESSES AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN PLACE TO DELIVER A FUNCTIONAL SPO

SPOs in WACP are getting stronger, more effective, and more resilient although they struggle with the consequences of increasing membership

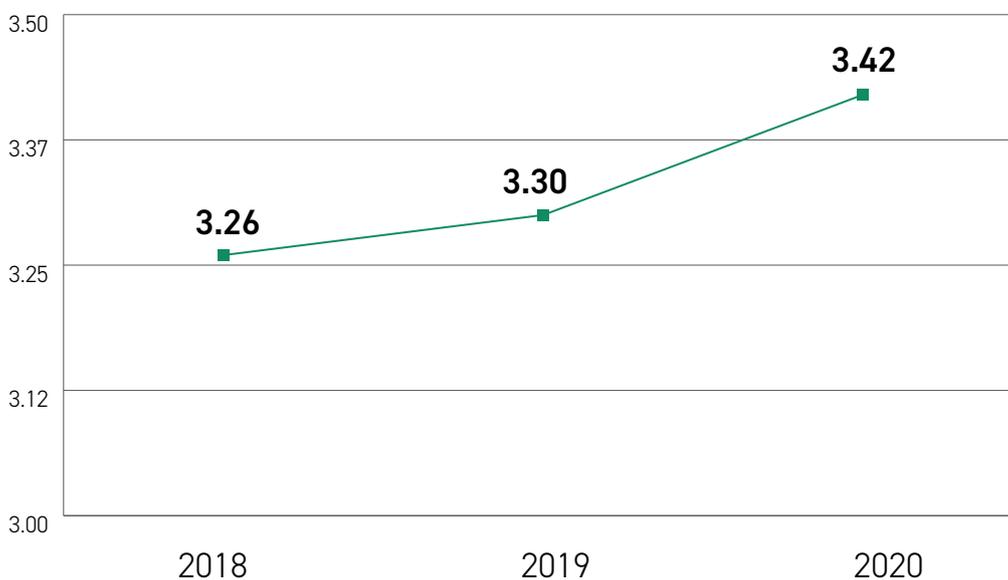
Fairtrade Africa uses an assessment tool called SCOPE Insight to measure the capability of Fairtrade SPOs on a variety of topics, including governance, administration, technical knowledge, internal or external risks, and more. SCOPE Insight provides business intelligence for SPOs as it measures their level of professionalism. The assessment and associated remedial measures aim to increase transparency, lower investment risks, improve management expertise, and attract partners.

From 2018 to 2020, we saw an increasing aggregate score for those WACP SPOs that were assessed, indicating that WACP is helping these SPOs to become stronger, more effective, and more resilient.

An Internal Management System is a requirement of the Fairtrade Cocoa Standard for all Fairtrade SPOs from Year 3.⁴ In 2020, we

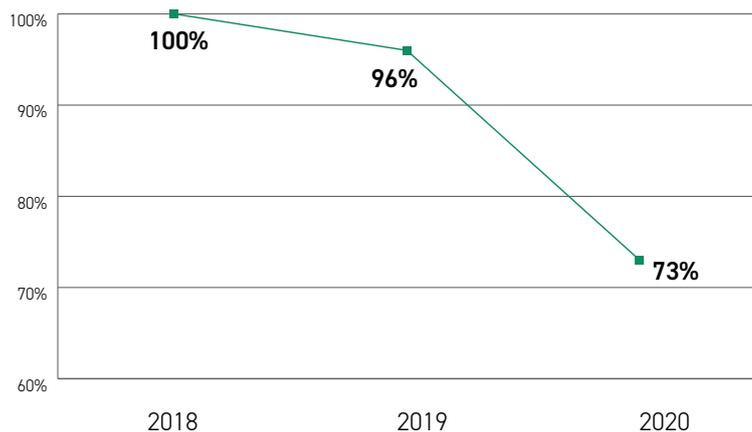
saw a slight drop in those sampled SPOs with a complete IMS. Specifically, many WACP SPOs – along with other non-Fairtrade SPOs – are expanding their membership at a rapid pace and may be struggling to keep up-to-date records of these members.

The percentage of Fairtrade Premium funds used on core SPO running costs (i.e., salaries, basic SPO infrastructure, etc.) has stayed relatively consistent over the lifetime of the WACP. We accept that SPOs may prefer to spend some Premium on maintaining high levels of organization and high levels of service to both their members and commercial partners. However, SPOs that are using too high a percentage of the Premium on running costs may indicate that the organization is unprofitable and dependent on Fairtrade to stay in operation. We are still examining the optimum amount of Premium that should be spent on these costs.

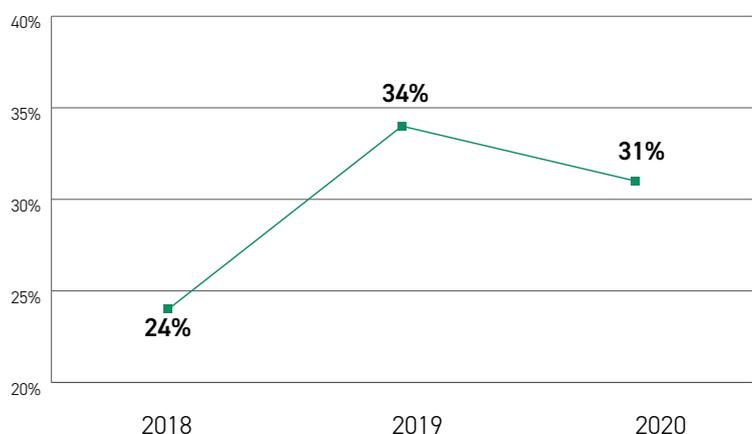


Scores on SCOPE Insight, an assessment tool for gauging the effectiveness and resilience of SPOs, have consistently risen year-on-year for WACP SPOs.

⁴ A full IMS has the following components (1) Up-to-date records of members, (2) Compliance management, (3) Allocation of tasks and responsibilities, (4) Membership agreements, (5) Plan of training and support activities, (6) Collection of household and farming data to enable farm assessments, and (7) Development and review of farm improvement plans.



An Internal Management System is required by the Fairtrade Standards in order to better manage cocoa production and sales as well as meet member needs. In recent years, SPOs have struggled to keep up-to-date records of all their members.



The percentage of Fairtrade Premium used to cover the core costs of an SPO's operation has stayed relatively consistent over WACP's period of implementation.

Premium Use for Investment in Product	
Facilities and infrastructure	Crop collection services (transport/collection)
Facilities and infrastructure	Crop storage infrastructure (warehouses)
Facilities and infrastructure	Export and packing facilities
Facilities and infrastructure	Office facilities (IT/furniture)
Facilities and infrastructure	Processing facilities
Facilities and infrastructure	Quality and checking facilities
Facilities and infrastructure	Rental or purchase of buildings
Facilities and infrastructure	Rental or purchase of land
Human resources and administration	Costs of debt/banking/financing/loans
Human resources and administration	Office running costs
Human resources and administration	Staff costs
Human resources and administration	Other HR and administration costs

Categories of Fairtrade Premium Use covered under Business Running Costs.

Name and position: Jean-Paul Souehi, Fairtrade Contact Person and Group Administrator

SPO: COOP-CA-ECAPR (Société Coopérative avec conseil d'administration des Eco-Agriculteurs et Producteurs de Robert-Port)

Location: Meagui, South-West Côte d'Ivoire

Quote: It is important to note that all the WACP meetings and trainings conducted by the Fairtrade field team strengthen the skills and knowledge of our organization and allow us to better understand the Fairtrade Standard.

For example, the SWOT analysis developed with us by the Fairtrade Africa trainer opened our minds to the positive (Strengths and Opportunities) and negative (Weaknesses and Threats) aspects of our cooperative. This analysis resulted in the transformation map of ECAPR, a very important strategic document for our development.

In addition, we got a good understanding of the Fairtrade Standard. This enabled us to correct non-conformities identified during the Fairtrade audit with the support and advice of our trainers.

We would like this to be continuous and even regular so that our organization will continue to move forward.



Improving SPO access to and usage of Internal Management System software, and understanding SPO running costs

In our WACP Monitoring Report of 2020, in relation to Internal Management Systems, we recognized that how data is collected, shared and analysed within Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa value chain is hugely complex, involving numerous partners and touching on many competing and interrelated issues (e.g. traceability, sustainability, child labour and environmental protection). SPOs fit uneasily into this data chain, collecting and sharing data as directed by their regulator, certifiers and commercial partners, but gaining little or no value from the data flow. In most cases SPOs are providing data to multiple partners.

In 2020, Fairtrade awarded a tender for a pilot project with six SPOs. The key objectives were to empower SPOs to have access to IMS software and ownership of their data, to be able to understand its value and to have the knowledge to exploit and manage data effectively.

The pilot project, which will introduce Internal Management Systems software to the SPOs, is currently underway with our partners Farmforce, Think! Data and Knowledge & Skills. At the time of writing, the pilot has made significant progress with data flow assessments carried out with SPOs, identification of training needs and scheduling of follow-up training, identification of the top ten management information reports needed by the SPOs and harmonization of an internal inspection form.

Roll-out of the project looks highly likely with the initial investment from Fairtrade complemented by funding from the Equité 2 programme, the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), the Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial (FFEM), Max Havelaar France, and the participating local cooperatives for a total investment of €565,000.

In relation to the issue of growing SPO membership, as part of our 2021-2022 Fairtrade Cocoa Standard review, we are investigating the options which could address this issue. Any proposals that are put forward will be subject to consultation.

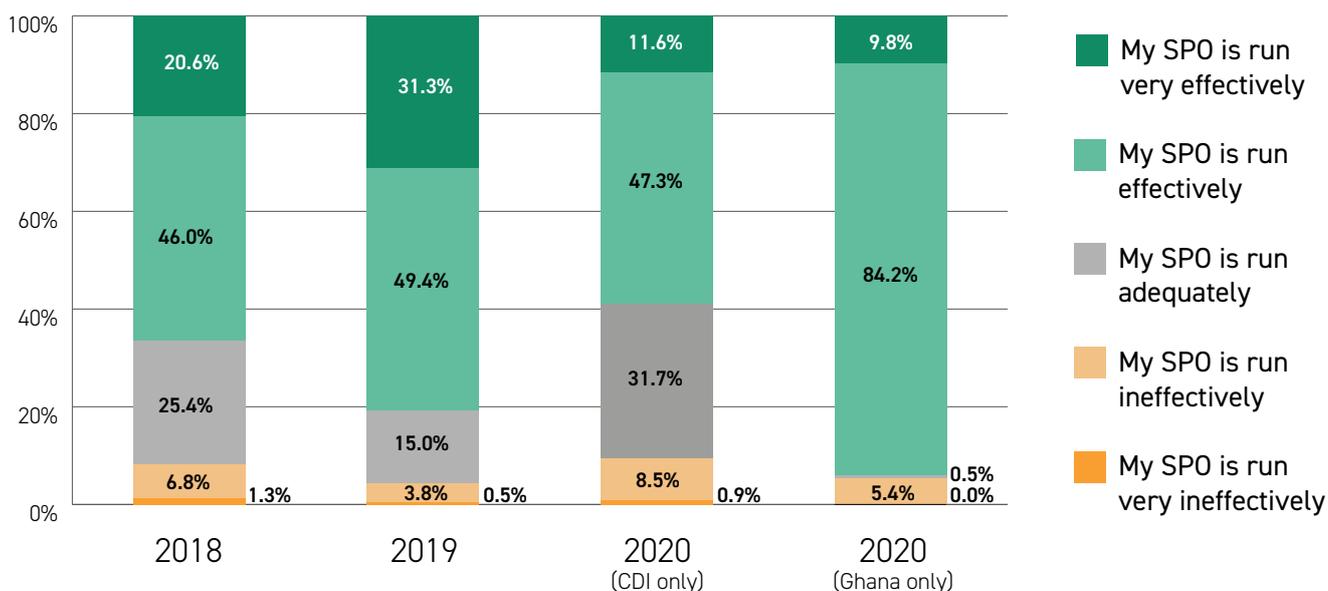
SPOs went through many challenges, including financial difficulties, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Using the Fairtrade Premium for running costs became critical during the past year and we expect that to continue until the COVID-19 crisis has abated. The WACP field team will continue to encourage reduced reliance on Fairtrade Premium funds for running costs through its business management training modules.

SPOs ARE MORE EFFECTIVE AND RESILIENT AS BUSINESSES AND ARE RESPONSIVE TO THEIR MEMBERS' NEEDS

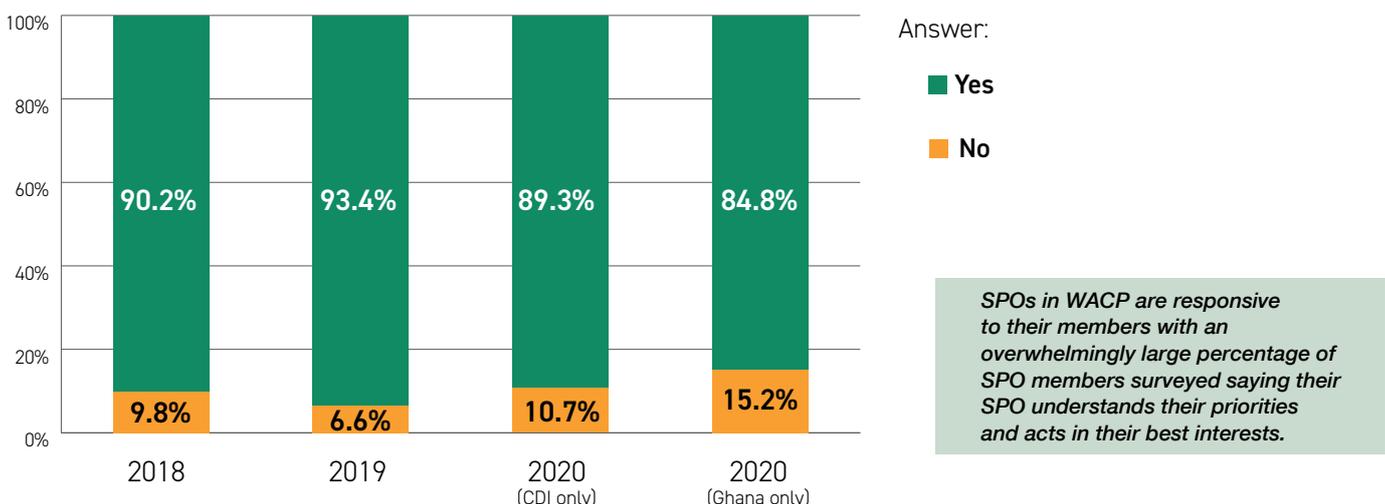
The SPOs participating in WACP are effective, responsive, and participatory according to their membership (although COVID-19 and increasing membership numbers may have had a negative impact)

The ultimate goal of strengthening the SPOs in WACP is to increase their ability to provide value to their membership. We are therefore happy that, from 2018 – 2020, we see that WACP SPOs are effective, responsive, and participatory according to SPO members sampled. The overwhelming percentage of SPO members sampled say that their SPO is effective, that it understands their priorities and acts in their best interests. Where members disagree with these sentiments, they tend to be clustered in particular SPOs which are targeted for follow-up attention with Fairtrade Africa.

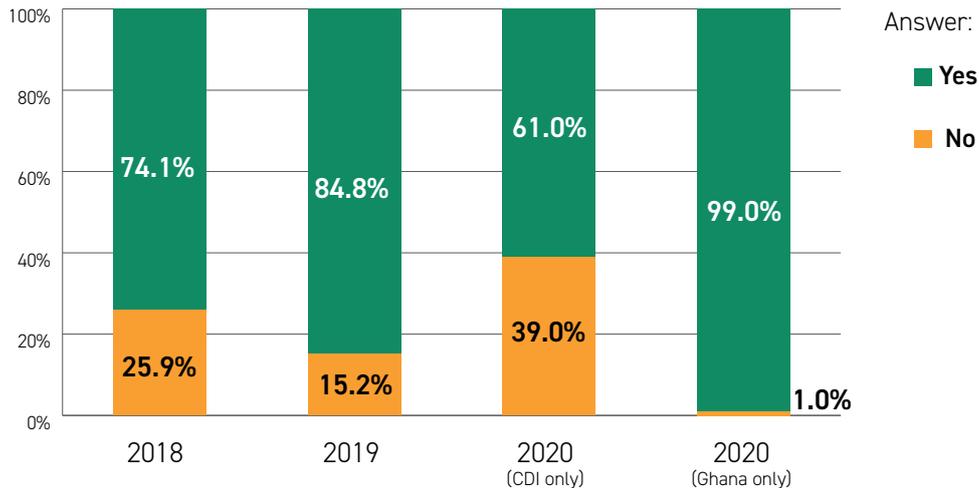
SPO members also report that their SPOs are consulting with them about the use of the Fairtrade Premium (as is required by the Fairtrade Standards) and training them in the Fairtrade Standards, although we saw a slight drop in this indicator during 2020 (with the exception of the Ghanaian SPOs). We hypothesize that the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and increasing membership numbers across WACP SPOs may have played a role in the downturn. COVID-19 brought turbulence and contact restrictions, while increasing membership means the burden of member outreach on SPO managers is increased.



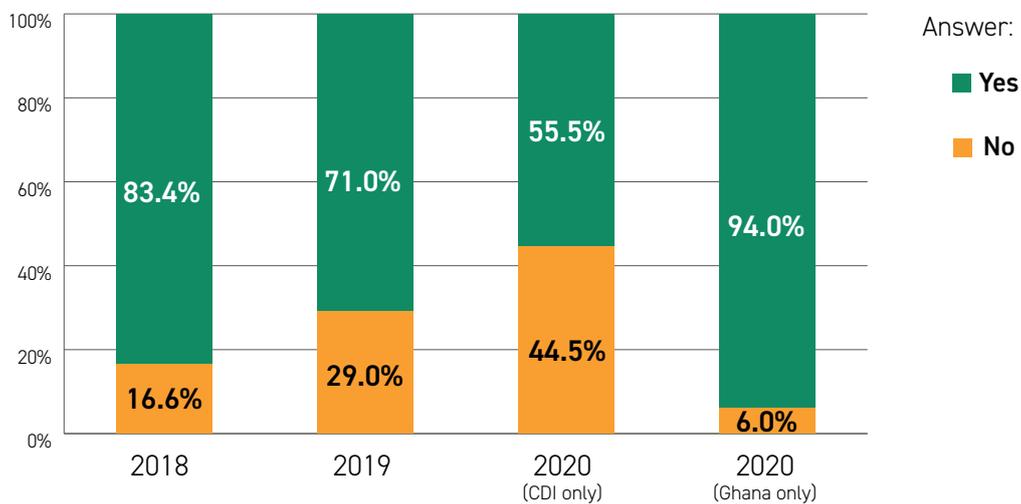
A consistently large percentage of SPO members surveyed in WACP SPOs feel that their SPO is effective or very effective.



SPOs in WACP are responsive to their members with an overwhelmingly large percentage of SPO members surveyed saying their SPO understands their priorities and acts in their best interests.



SPO members are being consulted on the use of the Fairtrade Premium although the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic and increasing SPO membership numbers may have taken a toll.



SPO members are being trained in Fairtrade Standards although, as above, the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic and increasing SPO membership numbers may have had an impact.

Name and position: Idrissa Konate, Traceability officer

SPO: CAKIB (Cooperative des Agriculteurs Kion de Grand-Berebi)-Ecookim

Location: Grand-Berebi, South-West Côte d'Ivoire

Quote: During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the CAKIB cooperative carried out some initiatives to relieve its producers. Even though the cooperative could not reach all the producers, the majority were supported. The producer organization distributed awareness posters about COVID-19, handwashing kits, PPE and food kits to 1,456 members of the co-op and their families. The PO also conducted awareness-raising with producers on how to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Our members were very satisfied because these initiatives met their needs at the time. After that, we saw the registration of many new members. More than 200 members have joined the cooperative.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and the increase in membership, the co-op is always on the side of its members for everything they need in terms of technical, social and financial support.





Clockwise from top-left:

1. ECAM (Côte d'Ivoire): Hand-washing demonstration session, 2020. Credit: FTA

2. COOPAPIG-Ecookim (Côte d'Ivoire): Distribution of hygiene kits to members, 2020. Credit: FTA

3. Ecamom (Côte d'Ivoire): Sensitization session on preventing the spread of COVID-19, 2020. Credit: FTA

Encouraging and training SPO members to engage with the SPO management team

We are encouraged that SPO members feel that their SPO is effective and responsive and is training and engaging with them on a variety of topics. While COVID-19 has created some obvious obstacles to in-person training and participation, we are heartened to see SPOs taking a variety of active measures to continue to reach out to members during these difficult times.

One of the aims of the programme is to empower individual farmers in order to increase their participation and hold the leaders accountable for their management.

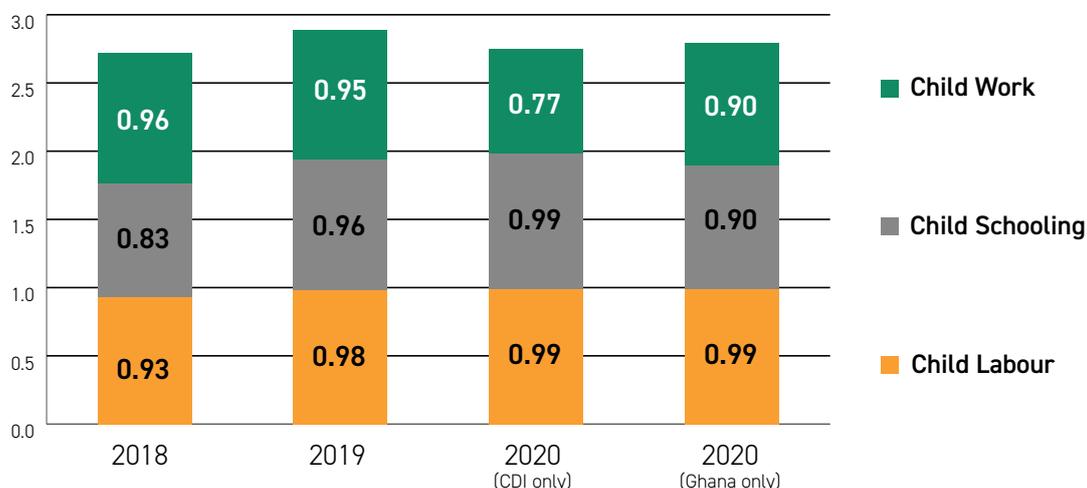
Our next step as Fairtrade will be to expand the implementation of a Governance module as part of our WACP training. This Governance module uses a variety of methods to teach SPO managers how to empower members to better engage with and influence the SPO.

SPOs AND THEIR MEMBERS ARE AWARE OF BEST PRACTICES ON CHILD RIGHTS BUT TRADITIONAL GENDER ROLES DOMINATE

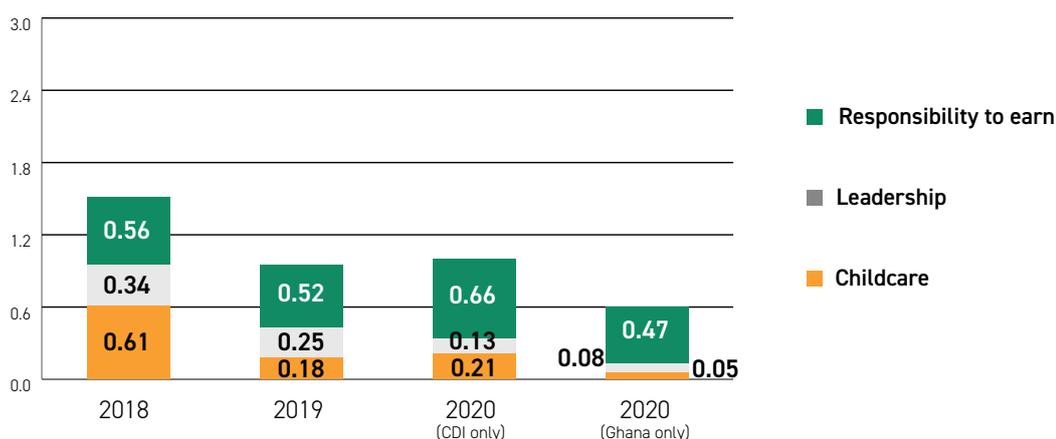
SPO members hold positive perspectives on child rights and traditional perspectives on gender roles within their SPOs and communities

The scores on the Fairtrade Child Rights Index⁵ from 2018 to 2020 show that SPO members have internalized values around child rights. They believe that children (both boys and girls) should go to school, that they should not engage in dangerous labour, and that any work should not interfere with their schooling.

The scores on the Fairtrade Gender Index show that these SPO members believe in traditional gender roles. Both men and women (albeit women to a lesser extent) believe that men make better leaders, that men should be responsible for earning money, and that women should be primarily in charge of child-rearing. This finding is particularly pronounced in Ghanaian SPOs.



Scores on the Fairtrade Child Rights Index consistently are above 2.5 (out of 3), a highly positive score. SPO members consistently recognize the rights of children to go to school and only do non-hazardous work that doesn't interfere with that schooling.



Scores on the Fairtrade Gender Index have ranged from .5 to 1.5, a relatively low set of scores. SPO members believe in traditional gender roles where men work and are leaders in the community while women stay at home with the children.

⁵ All indices in this report have three components. Each component in an index is worth a maximum of one point for a total max score of three for the index. Low scores (<.5 for a component or <1.5 for the entire index) indicate a need for improvement, while high scores (>.75 for a component or >2.25 for the entire index) indicate high levels of progress or alignment with Fairtrade values. The components of the Fairtrade Child Rights Index are: (1) whether boys, girls, or both should go to school, (2) attitudes on child work, (3) attitudes on child labour. The components of the Fairtrade Gender Roles Index are: (1) male/female roles in childrearing, (2) male/female roles in community and SPO leadership, (3) male/female roles in earning money.

Name and position: Diarra Idrissa, General Manager

SPO: Co-op ca BENKADI, Abengourou

Location: Abengourou, East Côte d'Ivoire

Quote: The producer organization is very satisfied with FTA's trainings on child labour/rights. During these trainings, we learned that a child's place is at school. We were also trained on preventing child labour and forced labour. The training allowed us to know what kinds of activities can harm children, what socializing work is and also when we can say that a child is a worker. After receiving this training, we cascaded it to members within our communities.

In addition, these trainings have enabled us to take several initiatives aimed at protecting children's rights.

For example, in April 2020, during the fight against the spread of COVID-19, school closures were among the restrictions put in place by the government in Côte d'Ivoire. The WACP programme -through the Youth Inclusive Community Based Monitoring and Remediation (YICBMR)- set up an awareness strategy within the

cocoa producer communities to lower the risk of child labour. The cooperative also built a school and a drinking water pump to lighten the children's work.



YICBMR Training. Credit: FTA

Further mainstreaming gender policies in SPOs and expanding the Women's School of Leadership (WSOL)

A process to systematically support SPOs to develop gender policies followed by investment is now underway. Our Women's School of Leadership is scaling up in Côte d'Ivoire with donor funding from AFD and is expanding into Ghana with donor funding from NORAD.

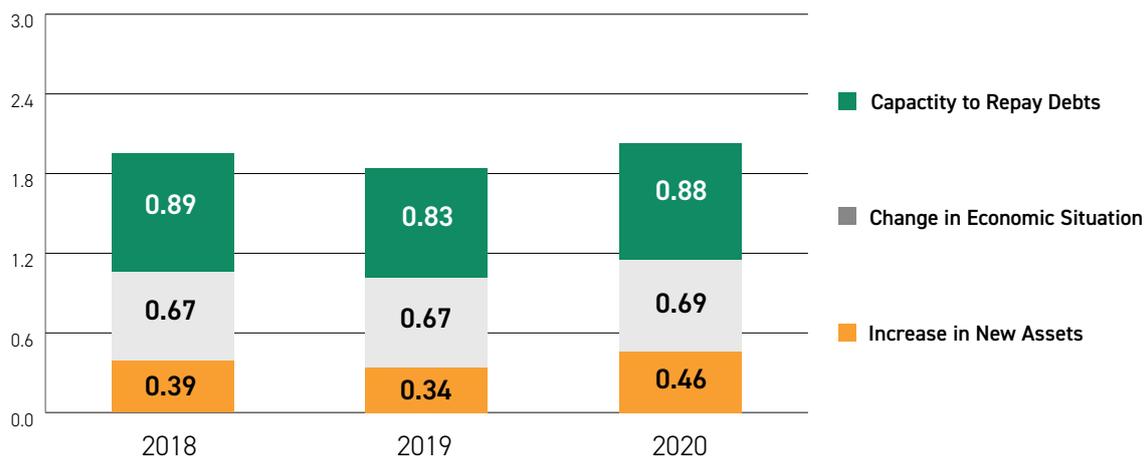
POSITIVE ECONOMIC TRENDS AT HOUSEHOLD LEVEL AMONG SPO MEMBERS

While living incomes still not reached, positive signs in terms of SPO members' economic progress

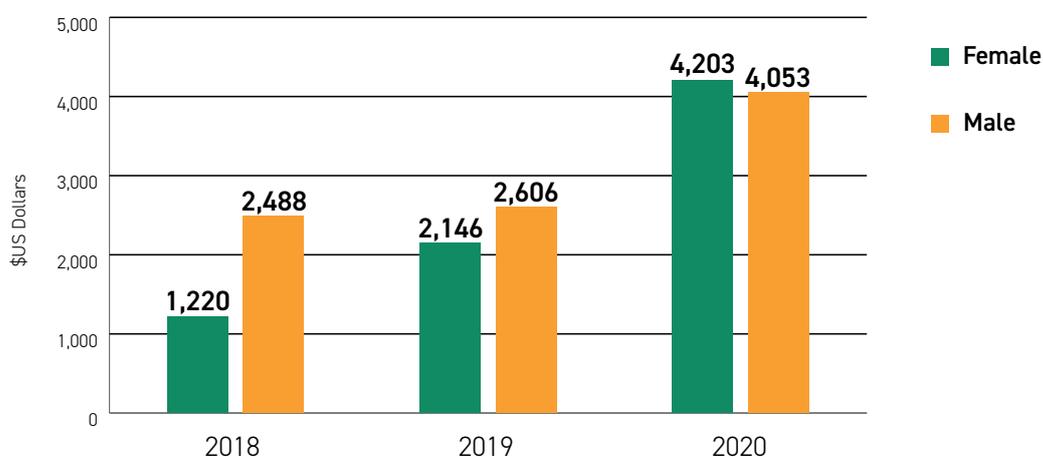
Samples of SPO members show that they feel their household is making economic progress. While households still have a restricted ability to purchase assets, they rarely struggle to repay debts and feel that their household economic situation is better than in the past. This is shown through the scores on the Fairtrade Economic Progress Index.⁶

We also see positive signs in member household self-reported income and yields. Members sampled in 2020 reported US\$4,165 net household income (after deducting cocoa growing costs) and approximately 600 kg/ha yield on their cocoa farms. As a means of comparison, the household income required for a living income for a household with five adults and three children was US\$7,468 per year per household.

These signs are echoed in the most recent WACP evaluation and a second Household Income study (2021) carried out by the Impact Institute for Fairtrade (both available [here](#)). The Household Income study, designed to determine the household income of Fairtrade cocoa farmers in Côte d'Ivoire and compare them with the results from a similar study published in 2018 (True Price 2018), found that the average household income in 2020 was approximately US\$4,937 per year per household compared to US\$2,707 in the 2018 study.⁷ As with our own monitoring, this study also found increasing yields and diversification of crop/income sources. Yields had increased due to better fertilizer use, pest management, and farm rehabilitation and rejuvenation.



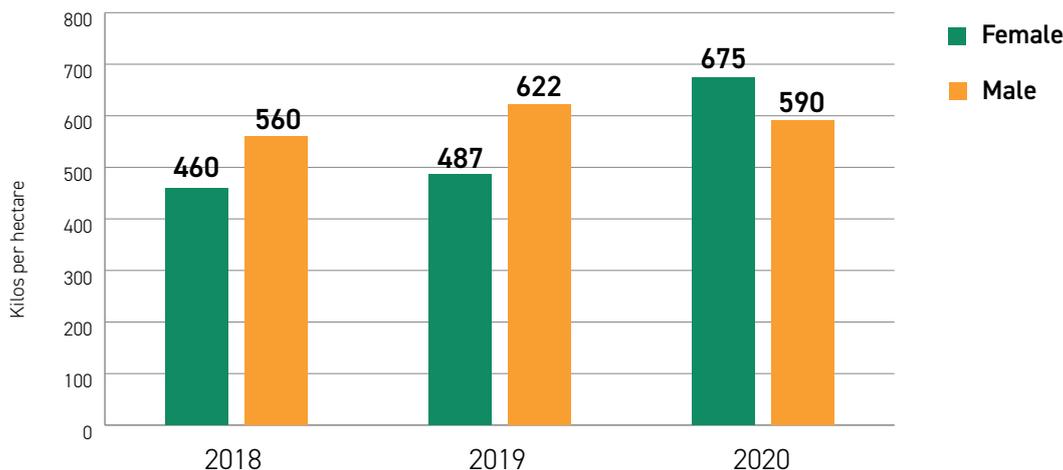
SPO members score highly in terms of the economic progress of their household.



SPO member household incomes still below the Living Income benchmark but with positive signs emerging.

⁶ The components of the Fairtrade Economic Progress Index are (1) household capital purchases in the last year, (2) capacity to repay debts (if any debts present), (3) perception of current household income situation versus past household. Scoring framework of the index is similar to other indices, described in the previous footnote.

⁷ The median household income was US\$3,186 per year per household or 43 percent of a Living Income. Note that, average (mean) can be skewed by large outliers (i.e. larger farms or a couple of households earning very high incomes), which are not representative of the normal farmer household.



SPO member yield still below optimal but with positive signs emerging.

Name and position: N'da Boa Kouassi, cocoa producer and co-op member

SPO: CAPRESSA CO-OP CA

Location: Afallikro, East Côte d'Ivoire

Quote: The West Africa Cocoa Programme contributes to my social and economic life. I own several farms, including eight hectares of cocoa trees, 2.5 hectares of rubber trees, some palm trees and food crops. Thanks to the guidance of my coach (trained by FTA field staff), I understood that it was important to diversify my sources of income. I have also received some training on record-keeping. All this is very advantageous for me for several reasons.

Firstly, I am more careful with my expenses. As a result, I am able to save much more money than before. Secondly, in order to diversify my income, I plan to start raising cattle next year. I have set up a savings plan to pay for two oxen by the beginning of the next campaign. My wish is to have a stock of several heads of oxen in a few years.

Many thanks to CAPRESSA and Fairtrade for this initiative.



Name and position: Janet Aframea, Secretary and farmer

SPO: ABOCFA Cooperative

Location: Ghana

Quote: I have benefitted a lot from Fairtrade training as a cocoa farmer. Now I can see an improvement in my yield compared to the past. Through the income from cocoa, I have been able to educate my son at university. I also grow other crops, such as plantain and bananas. Every two weeks I am able to harvest and sell some bananas, which helps to augment my income.

Power of the new Fairtrade Minimum Price and more upcoming data about increasing farmers' household income through yields and diversification

The Fairtrade Minimum Price provides an important safety net for farmer households if they can sell on Fairtrade terms. The 2021 Impact Institute study mentioned above modelled the impact of the new Fairtrade Minimum Price taking the October 2019 – March 2020 harvest as its reference point and price. The research indicated that the average Fairtrade cocoa farming household would see an income increase of nine percent if the farmer could sell all their cocoa on Fairtrade terms.

While we remain cautious and very aware that far too many farming households are a very long way from a living income, we are encouraged that household income seems to be increasing and that our Minimum Price mechanism can provide a safety net.

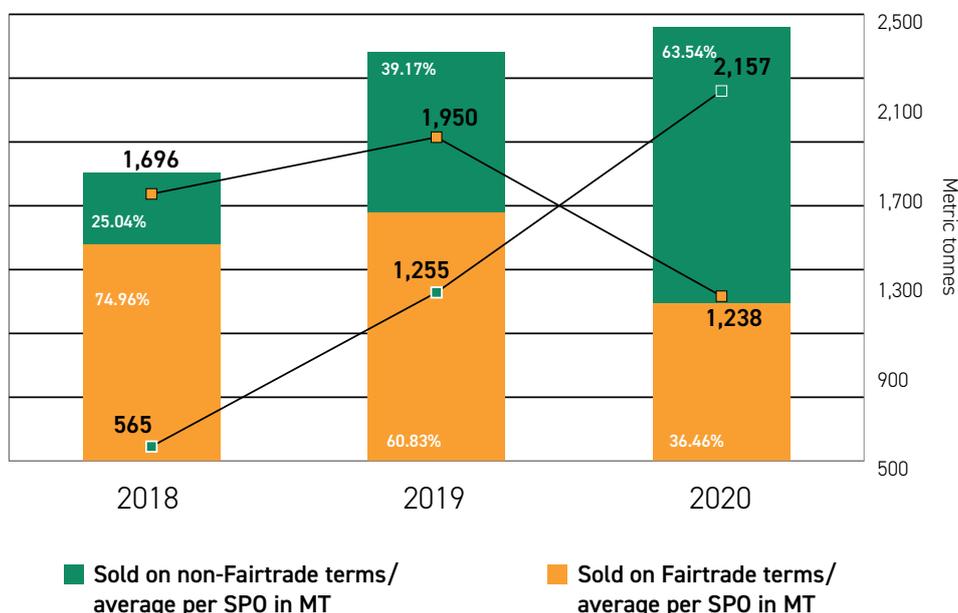
By the beginning of 2022 we should have data on household income from the Fairtrade Living Income pilot projects in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire where commercial partners, SPOs and donors have been implementing the Fairtrade Living Income strategy. The strategy depends on the key pillars of increasing yields while also increasing diversification. Multiple SPOs under WACP have focused on investing in income diversification for their members and are working towards reducing reliance on cocoa. Beyond the Living Income pilot projects, many SPOs (as detailed earlier in this report) are investing in income diversification to reduce their reliance on cocoa.

SPOs IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE AND GHANA STRUGGLE WITH SUSTAINED ACCESS TO PREMIUM COCOA MARKETS ON FAIRTRADE TERMS

Fairtrade WACP SPOs are increasing cocoa production and sales but Fairtrade sales are lagging behind

In 2018, only 25 percent of cocoa sold by the sampled WACP SPOs was sold on non-Fairtrade terms, representing approximately 565 tonnes on average per SPO versus 1,696 tonnes on average per SPO (approximately 75 percent) sold on Fairtrade terms. By 2020, the amount sold on non-Fairtrade

terms had increased to 2,157 tonnes on average per SPO (63.54 percent of the total) while the amount sold on Fairtrade terms had fallen to 1,238 tonnes on average per SPO (36.46 percent of the total). Therefore, cocoa sold on Fairtrade terms has declined both as a percentage of total sales as well as an absolute value.



SPOs sell more cocoa overall but a limited Fairtrade market means that less is sold on Fairtrade terms.

Increasing sales on Fairtrade terms

This is a concerning finding. One of the commercial brands involved in WACP has reduced their purchases of Fairtrade cocoa; another has decided to move away from Fairtrade altogether. These decisions coincided with the post-consultation decision to increase the Fairtrade Minimum Price and Premium by 20 percent from October 2019. At the same time, SPOs have been increasing their production of Fairtrade cocoa and increasing their membership, further diluting the proportion of their members' total production that SPOs are selling on Fairtrade terms.

To address these issues we are taking two steps. The first is to grow sales on Fairtrade terms. We realize that Fairtrade's insistence on a Minimum Price of US\$2,400 per tonne and a fixed Fairtrade Premium of US\$240 per tonne makes Fairtrade more expensive than other certification schemes. However, while

recognizing that there is still a considerable way to go until the majority of farmers' household income has been raised to an acceptable level, there is an increasing evidence that Fairtrade farmers' household income is rising and strong and resilient SPOs are having an impact.

During 2020 and 2021, we have seen commitments to purchase on Fairtrade terms from various new commercial brands. We have also projected further growth in sales volumes through to the end of the present strategic period in 2025. This should counterbalance the losses in volumes that some SPOs have incurred since October 2019.

Secondly, in tandem with growing the market for Fairtrade cocoa, a new entry requirement came into force in May 2020. It requires SPOs joining Fairtrade to have commitments in

place for new Fairtrade sales volumes in order to be eligible for certification. The commitments must be confirmed by the end buyer whose products bear the FAIRTRADE Mark. During

2021 and 2022, we hope to consult with SPOs on the recent phenomenon of growing membership numbers among existing certified SPOs.

Name and position: Alphonse Kregbe, cocoa producer and General Secretary

SPO: CAUD-Ecookim (Coopérative Agricole Unité de Divo)

Location: Divo, South-West Côte d'Ivoire

Quote: The cocoa beans from CAUD members are sold to [commercial partner] via Ecookim Union. Having a Fairtrade market is very reassuring and motivating for members. This encourages them to invest in their farms in order to increase their yields. Unfortunately, this increase in production could create issues for the cooperative in selling cocoa. Indeed, the cocoa volume is fixed per year at the level of chocolate makers. The cooperative is obliged to sell the rest as ordinary cocoa. And that is not always easy. First of all, the prices vary and they go down over the years. During the 2020-2021 campaign, the Ivorian government set an approved price, but it was difficult to deliver all our members' produce. There were unloading problems at the port of Abidjan. This increased costs for the cooperative. As a result, the co-op bought the cocoa and stored it. Worse, after January, the cooperative no longer bought members' cocoa.

We would like access to more Fairtrade markets and more support with logistics.



Name and position: Diomande Mamery, cocoa producer and President

SPO: CAKIB (Cooperative des Agriculteurs Kion de Grand-Berebi)-Ecookim

Location: Grand-Berebi, South-West Côte d'Ivoire

Quote: Cocoa production has increased because producers are well trained in good agricultural practices. However, not all the produce can be sold as Fairtrade. A market must, therefore, be found for the rest of the non-Fairtrade cocoa. There is a great advantage in selling Fairtrade cocoa. When we sell on Fairtrade terms, we gain more compared to other non-Fairtrade organizations

Having multiple Fairtrade cooperatives could be a concern if the volume to be purchased from chocolate makers does not increase. Currently, CAKIB does not have this market problem.



WACP: NEXT STEPS, 2021 ONWARDS

Next Steps: Refining the WACP Training Approach

Reflecting on the WACP monitoring results along with those of the external evaluation, FTA will make the following adjustments to the WACP training approach:

- While the categorization of SPOs within WACP is still relevant and will be maintained (three groups of SPOs: primary, secondary and outer), FTA will work with SPOs through 2021 and 2022 preparing the first group of SPOs to graduate from primary training;
- New WACP training methods are being designed for 2022 to reach higher numbers of farmers in their communities;
- A special focus is being put on gender with a target that all SPOs will have a gender policy;

- Further targeted work will be rolled out to strengthen WACP SPOs as implementing partners and ensure their leaders are accountable to their members;
- We will develop new WACP topics for training as a result of the African Regional Standard, human rights and environmental due diligence requirements in consuming countries and the outcome of our 2021-2022 Fairtrade Cocoa Standard consultation;
- We will seek to further understand and address the decline in the number of SPO members consulted about Premium expenditure and find ways to keep consultation high despite COVID-19. The Fairtrade Standard requires SPOs to undertake a needs analysis of their organization and for the Premium plans to be agreed at General Assembly.

Next Steps: An updated MEL approach for the WACP to ensure that it is fit for purpose during COVID-19 and captures disaggregated data from women and young people

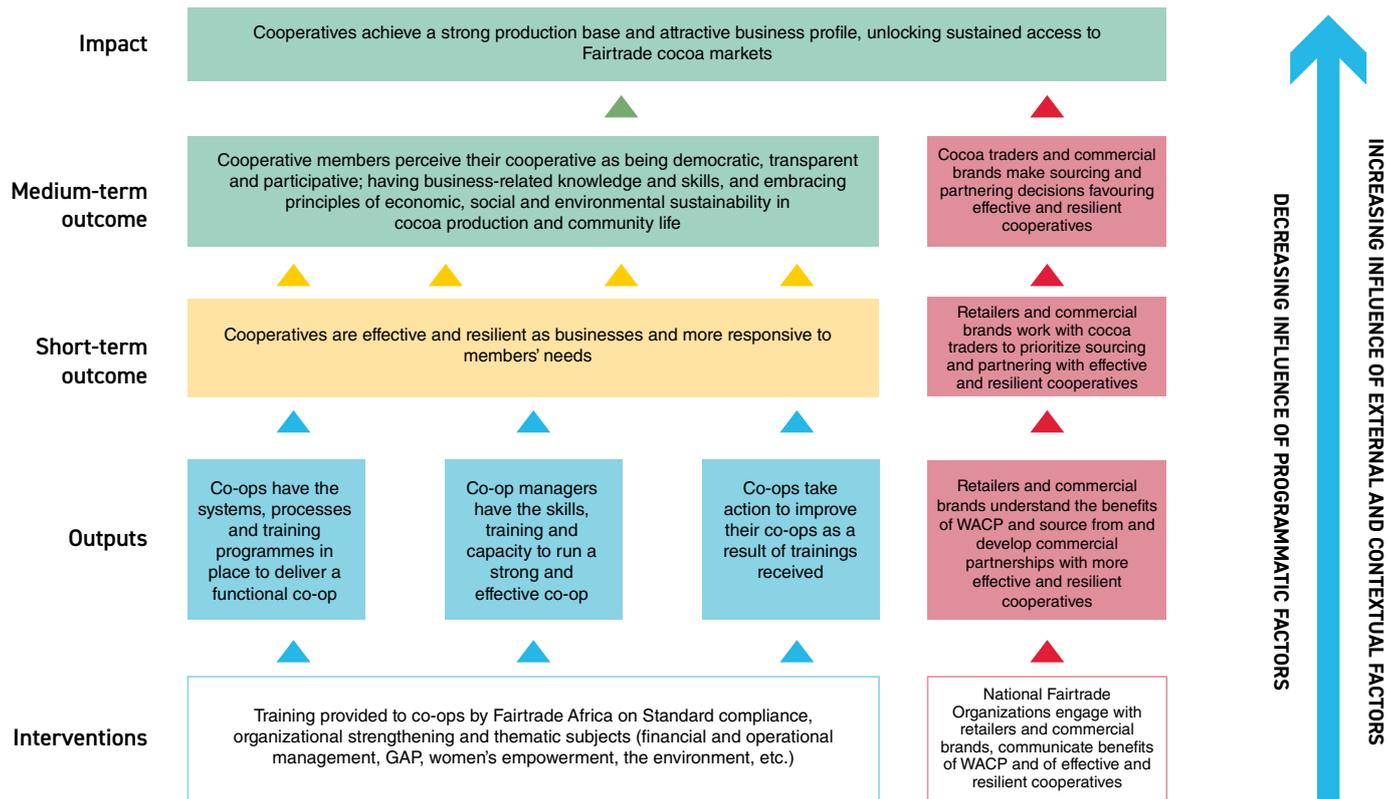
To continue to monitor the progress of WACP in 2021 and beyond, we have undertaken a comprehensive revision of the WACP MEL system in 2020-2021. The outcome of this revision led to us devising an updated Theory of Change along with updated indicators to track progress. Associated tools related to the new indicators will be updated, streamlined, and digitized and made fully fit for purpose in the COVID-19 age.

Our strategy of focusing on collecting data from both the SPO managers and members will continue, but we will also start collecting more disaggregated indicator data from women and young people. This will enable us to better understand the differential impacts on various member groups, and better target our trainings to groups that have historically had to struggle with discrimination and exclusion.

Continuing related work through other initiatives

We are very proud of what has been achieved through the WACP with SPOs, NFOs and commercial partners over the last four years. During this period, in addition to the WACP, we have also seen a rapid increase in commercial partner, donor, SPO and Fairtrade Africa partnerships and projects covering topics including:





A new WACP Theory of Change will enable us to continue monitoring our progress and impact in 2021 and beyond.

Conclusion

There is an increasing bank of evidence that Fairtrade SPOs trading on Fairtrade terms are playing an important role in creating a positive impact for cocoa farmers and their families.

Over the coming four years up to 2025, we envisage deepening of our work with SPOs as a result of the African Regional Standard, human rights and environmental due diligence regulations and potential changes to the Fairtrade Standards.

What remains clear to us is that strong and viable SPOs, with their permanent structures in and for communities, will be critical to achieving lasting change. For SPOs to fulfill this role there will need to be long-term relationships and partnerships with commercial partners which give all parties security of access to resources. Fairtrade stands ready to play its part in these partnerships.



FAIRTRADE
INTERNATIONAL

Bonner Talweg 177
53129 Bonn
Germany

Telephone +49 (0) 228 94 92 30
Fax +49 (0) 228 24 21 713

info@fairtrade.net

www.fairtrade.net