



**Cocoa &  
Forests  
Initiative**



**World Cocoa  
Foundation**

## **2025 (Oct 2024 – Sept 2025) Progress Report by Meiji-Ghana**

### **The 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 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.

To learn more, follow #CocoaAndForests on social media, or visit [Cocoa & Forests Initiative](#).

#### **1. WHAT IS THE COCOA & FORESTS INITIATIVE?**

The [World Cocoa Foundation](#) (WCF); [IDH, the Sustainable Trade Initiative](#); and the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana drive the Cocoa & Forests Initiative. The Prince of Wales (now King Charles III) launched the Initiative in March 2017.

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.

A comprehensive analysis is required to determine the exact contribution of cocoa production to deforestation. WCF, CFI members, and partners are working together on science-based methods to determine the share of cocoa production to overall deforestation rates with a high level of accuracy in cocoa producing countries. Data reliability and a good knowledge of the cause and location of deforestation is essential to develop effective and adequate mitigation measures and ensure that WCF members and partners are compliant with regulations such as the EUDR.

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.

#### **2. WHAT ARE THE KEY COMMITMENTS IN THE COCOA & FORESTS INITIATIVE?**

**The first priority is the protection and restoration of forests that have been degraded.** To this end, the governments and companies have pledged no further conversion of forest land for cocoa

production and have committed to the phased elimination of illegal cocoa production and sourcing in protected areas.

Both countries are introducing a differentiated approach for improved management of forest reserves, based on the level of degradation of forests. In 2019, the government of Côte d'Ivoire adopted and published a new forest code which, among other things, put forth policies for the promotion of cocoa agroforestry to restore degraded land, improve forest cover, and promote sustainable livelihoods and agriculture in the classified forests and rural zones. Both governments have shared maps on forest cover and land-use, and continue to update the maps, including socioeconomic data on cocoa farmers, to inform private sector investments. Companies have made significant investments in the promotion of cocoa agroforestry and the restoration of degraded forests.

To ensure effective implementation and monitoring of these commitments, companies have pledged to develop traceability from farm to the first purchase point for their own purchases of cocoa. They also work with governments to ensure an effective national framework for traceability encompassing all traders in the supply chain and to anticipate forthcoming due diligence legislation. The companies will similarly share information with the national satellite monitoring platforms to effectively monitor progress on CFI, as well as proactively address threats of new deforestation.

**The next critical priority is sustainable agricultural production and increased farmer incomes.** These are essential pre-requisites for reducing pressure for agricultural encroachment into forests and strengthening the resilience of cocoa farmers to climate change.

The governments and companies are accelerating investment in long-term productivity of cocoa in order to grow “more cocoa on less land.” Key actions include provision of planting materials for the promotion of cocoa agroforestry, training in good agricultural practices, soil fertility, land tenure reform, and capacity building of farmers’ organizations. Sustainable livelihoods and income diversification for cocoa farmers are being accelerated through food crop diversification, agricultural inter-cropping, and development of mixed agroforestry systems and shade-grown cocoa.

**The final area of focus is strong community engagement and social inclusion, with a particular focus on women and youth.** The governments and companies have committed to full and effective consultation and participation of cocoa farmers in the design and implementation of key actions, and promotion of community-based management models for forest protection and restoration. The governments have adopted social and environmental safeguards and are assessing and mitigating the social impacts and risks of any proposed land-use changes on affected communities.

### **3. MEIJI'S COCOA & FORESTS INITIATIVE RESULTS**

Our sustainability programs are carried out in 7 districts (Wassa Akropong, Mankranso, Assin Bereku, Nsokote, Tapa, Dunkwa, and Assin Fosu).

In the past year, Meiji has increased volume of cocoa beans sourced from the direct supply chain to 10,857mt and invested in sustainable agricultural intensification to grow “more cocoa on less land” with focused on;

- Providing 13,642 farmers with technical assistance to professionalize & optimize cocoa farming practice.
- Providing 9,257 farmers with technical assistance to be more resilient to climate change and reduce and remove carbon emissions on farm such as CSC.
- Providing 760 farmers with technical assistance to adopt and expand agroforestry.
- Distributing 33047 multi-purpose trees for on-farm planting.

As a result, 1478 farmers newly adopted agroforestry.  
See our CFI tracking table at the end of this report for more information.

#### 4. RESULT STORIES

##### • Background and Our Actions

In the current fiscal year, in line with our CFI 2.0 Action Plan, we continued to implement various sustainability programs in Ghana, with a focus on capacity building, agroforestry promotion, and the expansion of farm mapping. Our activities included Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) training delivered by trained local trainers, the distribution and planting of multi-purpose shade tree seedlings, and the steady expansion of farm mapping to strengthen plot-level traceability. We recognize that these efforts contribute to reducing deforestation risks in cocoa-growing districts by maintaining forest cover, improving farm resilience, and ensuring transparency across the supply chain.

We regularly visit societies in cocoa-producing districts in the Western and Central areas where we implement the CFI program. During these visits, our team received many positive comments from farmers who have experienced tangible improvements. We believe that the continuation of these efforts, together with close engagement with local societies, will lead to further progress toward forest protection and sustainable livelihoods.



planted seedlings



well-managed cocoa farm

##### • Nana Malik Amoah's Story

Nana Malik Amoah, a 65-year-old cocoa farmer from a society in the Dunkwa District, manages a 5.68-hectare cocoa farm and supports a large family spanning three generations. Reflecting on recent years, he has noticed clear changes in weather patterns. While last year was challenging due to prolonged dry conditions after October, this year brought more stable rainfall and sunlight, resulting in healthier trees and a strong harvest.

Through our CFI activities and guidance provided by both the government and our company, Nana has come to clearly understand the importance of forest conservation. He explained that protecting forests helps maintain moisture on his farm and is essential for sustaining cocoa production. With farm mapping now completed, he knows the exact size and boundaries of his land, which gives him confidence in managing his farm responsibly. In addition to cocoa,

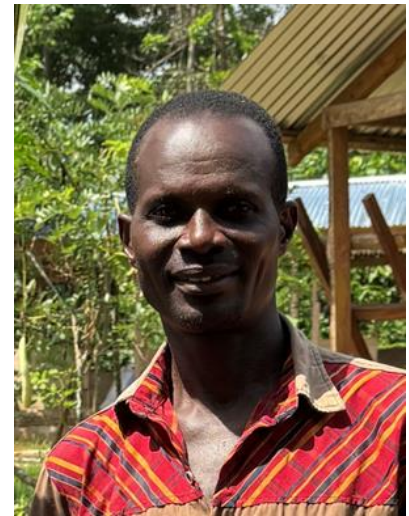


Nana has diversified his income through palm farming and food crops such as plantain and yam, strengthening his household's resilience.

- Josam Atan's Story

Josam Atan, a 44-year-old farmer from a society in the Assin Fosu District, cultivates two cocoa farms totaling 16 hectares. He has also experienced the impact of climate variability, recalling how low rainfall last year reduced yields. This year, however, timely rains have improved growing conditions and raised expectations for a better harvest.

By participating in sustainability events under our initiatives, Josam deepened his understanding of deforestation and its long-term risks. Farm mapping has helped him accurately grasp his land area, while agroforestry activities promoted through our company's initiatives encouraged him to plant shade trees to protect both cocoa trees and surrounding ecosystems. Alongside cocoa, income from palm farming supports his family, and he sees forest protection as an investment in the future of his farms and society.



## 2025CFI Tracking Table

Description	Target (Current reporting year)	# Through direct investment (Current reporting year)	# Through direct investment (Since 2023)	# Through direct investment (Since 2018)
<b>FOREST PROTECTION AND RESTORATION</b>				
# of farms mapped in direct supply chain: Total Active	19,380	12,482		
# of hectares in the direct supply chain with deforestation risk assessments completed	7,384	13,762		
# metric tons of directly sourced cocoa traceable from the farm to the first purchase point (target is 100%)		10,857		
# hectares restored in Forest Reserve / Forêts Classée	0	0		
# trees registered	0	0		
# farmers informed, trained, and / or consulted on the new Forest Code, forest policy, law enforcement, forest protection, and restoration	2,611	10,565		
# Individuals receiving incentives to protect and restore forests and / or adopt agroforestry (e.g., PES): Total Active	18,483	0		
# farmers applying agroforestry: New		1,478		
# farmers applying agroforestry: Total Active		2,485		
# farmers provided with technical assistance to adopt and expand agroforestry	662	760		
# hectares cocoa agroforestry: Total Active		7,476		
# hectares of forest area restored off-reserve / in rural zone	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)	10,446	9,257		
# of farmers trained in Modified Taungya System (MTS)	0	0		
\$ contributed to fund				
<b>SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND FARMERS' LIVELIHOOD</b>				
# farmers provided with technical assistance (based on plans) to professionalize & optimize cocoa farming practices	10,446	13,642		
# individuals participating in additional Income Generating Activities (IGA's)		94		
# individuals provided with technical assistance (based on plans) to increase income from non-cocoa sources / IGA's	3,907	109		
# Individuals provided with technical assistance to save money and access finance	60	704		
# of members of VSLA groups in the current year	60	704		
# of VSLA groups in the current year	8	35		
<b>SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY</b>				
# of cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM): New	0	0		
# of cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM): Total Active		0		
# of individuals participating in women's empowerment projects and activities	0	188		
# of individuals participating in youth focused projects and activities (15-35 years old)	0	110		
# Individuals receiving incentives to protect and restore forests and / or adopt agroforestry (e.g., PES): New	4,621	0	4	4
# hectares under CBNRM	0	0	1,376	1,376
# of farmers with land tenure agreements/documentation obtained via company support	0	5,511	7,637	7,637
# hectares cocoa agroforestry: New	625	5,429	7,062	8,779
# of trees distributed for off-farm planting	0	0	20,000	22,000
# multi-purpose trees distributed for on-farm planting	5,000	33,047	56,658	196,518
# improved cocoa seedlings distributed to farmers	0	27,545	47,545	250,929