



**Cocoa &  
Forests  
Initiative**



**World Cocoa  
Foundation**

## ***General Mills CFI Progress Report 2020 - Ghana -***

### **1. FOREWORD**

Dear Cocoa & Forests Initiative friends,

Yao Ahou, a cocoa farmer in Ndenou, Lagunes district, Côte d'Ivoire, told us in no uncertain terms: "There is less rain because we cut down all the big trees. We took down all the big trees that could get the steam up in the air to attract the rain. Really, if we could have more of these big trees there, they can cover the cocoa trees, protect them at least against the sun." Yao has put her convictions into practice, and has planted forest trees on her cocoa farm, including a beautiful acacia, which provides shade, a barrier against some insects, fodder for farm animals, soil restoration, and other benefits.

Yao is one among over a million people who are actively involved in the Cocoa & Forests Initiative: from cocoa farmers, to the governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, and private sector companies. This collective effort today passes a milestone: we are reporting on our first two years of implementation for Cocoa & Forests Initiative interventions.

What have we achieved since announcing the Cocoa & Forests Initiative Frameworks for Action in November 2017 and the initial company action plans in March 2019?

First, and most importantly, companies have begun fulfilling their Cocoa & Forests Initiative commitments, with a particular focus on increasing traceability in their direct supply chains, putting in place systems to eliminate deforestation from their cocoa sourcing, rehabilitating and reforesting degraded lands, increasing canopy cover and sustainable production with the promotion of cocoa agroforestry, and community engagement.

Second, we have grown the partnership to 35 companies (from 12 originally) who are signatories of the Cocoa & Forests Initiative.

Third, we have strengthened our partnership with the governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana and other key stakeholders. In the past year, governments have delivered on significant commitments in order to catalyze further private sector investment, particularly promulgating new legislation, sharing critical baseline data and maps, adopting social and environmental safeguards, and embracing new forest policies to promote cocoa agroforestry.

As we look at this first year of implementation, we are proud of the Cocoa & Forests Initiative's first steps and are determined to keep our eyes on the prize: end deforestation and restore forest areas. We are not there yet and need to intensify our efforts. In 2020, we will notably accelerate private sector collaboration across cocoa landscapes and, in partnership with governments, put in place effective tools to monitor and eliminate any new deforestation.

For Yao, her children, and her children's children.

**Richard Scobey**

President, World Cocoa Foundation

## 2. KEY FACTS & FIGURES

In 2017, General Mills became one of only two non-confectionary manufacturer signatories to the Cocoa and Forests Initiative (CFI) in order to address deforestation in the cocoa supply chain, to reinforce our sustainable sourcing commitment for cocoa, and to help drive progress towards our 2025 science-based greenhouse gas emissions target.

Through our CFI commitment to end deforestation and forest degradation in the Ghanaian cocoa sector, General Mills achieved the following progress by the close of 2019, on its 2022 target commitments:

- Target: 100% traceability to farm
  - progress: 100% traceability to farm by close 2019
- Target: 100% of sourcing volumes risk assessed
  - progress: 100% risk assessed by close 2019
- Target: 3,200 farmers reached through capacity-building on forest law enforcement and tree tenure provisions
  - progress: 2,700 (84%) farmers reached through capacity-building
- Target: 13,500 farmers trained in Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs)
  - progress: 11,600 farmers (86%) trained in GAPs by close 2019
- Target: 500ha of cocoa farm area rehabilitated
  - progress: 80ha (16%) of cocoa farms rehabilitated by close 2019
- Target: 3,600 farmers to adopt the Climate Smart Cocoa (CSC) standard
  - progress: 780 farmers (22%) adopted the CSC standard by close 2019

### **In addition:**

- 3,340 farmers in 20 cocoa communities were impacted by gender equity, smallholder resilience and community development programmes.

### **Agroforestry**

With the objective of amplifying our support for forest protection and restoration efforts, we commissioned international agroforestry programme developer, PUR Projet, to conduct field-based feasibility assessments for the design and development of a community-based program to address deforestation and support cocoa producing communities.

Assessments were completed in the Bia-Juaboso & Asunafo HIA region and on the edges of the Kakum National Park. We are now funding a 3-year programme of interventions on the edges of the Kakum, as part of our Ecosystems & Livelihoods initiative with PUR.

## 3. WHAT IS THE COCOA & FORESTS INITIATIVE?

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana and the world's leading cocoa and chocolate companies [signed landmark agreements](#) in November 2017 to end deforestation and promote forest restoration and protection in the cocoa supply chain.

This public-private partnership – called the [Cocoa & Forests Initiative \(CFI\)](#) – has been organized by the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF), IDH - the Sustainable Trade Initiative, and The Prince of Wales's International Sustainability Unit (ISU), in partnership with the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. The Prince of Wales [launched CFI](#) in March 2017 and reviewed implementation progress in November 2018.

The Frameworks for Action for [Côte d'Ivoire](#) and [Ghana](#) define core commitments, verifiable actions, and timebound targets required for a deforestation-free and forest-positive supply chain.

The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana establish national strategies, policy environments, and governance structures for CFI implementation. They ensure that CFI is linked to similar initiatives with other commodities, and fully aligned with the national REDD+ strategies and other relevant national strategies and plans. They provide key operational guidance, and baseline economic, environmental, and social data, to help companies identify and plan the most effective and efficient private investment activities for CFI.

The Governments have prepared comprehensive National Implementation Plans ([Côte d'Ivoire](#), [Ghana](#)) that outline public sector priorities, actions and timelines. Since 2017, both governments have fulfilled commitments on the key building blocks for successful CFI implementation, including important revisions to the legal framework for sustainable forest management, adoption of World Bank environmental and social safeguard standards, and preparation and sharing of up-to-date boundary maps of protected areas.

In March 2019, 34 CFI signatory companies<sup>1</sup>, accounting for about 85% of global cocoa usage, released initial action plans for 2018-2022. These initial plans detail how the private sector will deliver the commitments spelled out in the Frameworks for Action. Each company explained how they will support the Framework objectives, based on their role in the supply chain, their strategic priorities, and their cocoa sustainability goals. WCF published a summary of the initial action plans for the cocoa and chocolate industry ([Côte d'Ivoire](#), [Ghana](#)).

On the 2020 International Day of Forests, the Cocoa & Forests Initiative companies and governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana reported on the first year of implementation. Companies published individual reports on progress and outcomes related to the implementation of their specific actions. The following is the aggregate annual report of company actions.

CFI has been supported by several global development partners, including the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation, the Global Environment Facility, and the Green Commodities Program of the United Nations Development Program.

CFI is coordinated closely with a wide range of global and local environmental organizations and partnerships, including the Tropical Forest Alliance, Amsterdam Declaration Partnership, Partnerships for Forests, the Rainforest Alliance, and World Resources Institute.

The industry is committed to ending deforestation and forest degradation throughout the global supply chain. Already in 2018, we have expanded CFI from West Africa to Latin America, with the signing of a new Framework of Action in Colombia in July 2018.

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

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<sup>1</sup> Arysta Callivoire, Barry Callebaut, Blommer Chocolate Company, Cargill Cocoa and Chocolate, Cémoi, Chocolats Halba, Cocoanect, Cococo Chocolatiers, ECOM Group, Fazer, Ferrero, General Mills Inc., Godiva Chocolatier Inc., Guittard Chocolate Company, The Hershey Company, Indcresa, Kuapa Kokoo Lindt & Sprüngli Group, Marks & Spencer Food, Mars Wrigley Confectionery, Meiji Co. Ltd., Mondelez International, Nestlé, Olam Cocoa, PBC Limited, Sainsbury's, SIAT, Sucden, Tesco, Toms Group, Touton, Unilever, Valrhona, and J.H. Whittaker & Sons

Cocoa & Forests Initiative activities proceed from three priorities: (1) forest protection and restoration, (2) sustainable production and farmers' livelihoods, and (3) community engagement and social inclusion.

**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. The Ivorian government is currently finalizing the operational decrees that provide further guidance on the new forest policies. Both governments have shared maps on forest cover and land-use, and are currently updating the maps, including socio-economic data on cocoa farmers, which will further inform private sector investments.

To ensure effective implementation and monitoring of these commitments, companies have pledged to develop verifiable monitoring systems for traceability from farm to the first purchase point for their own purchases of cocoa, and to work with governments to ensure an effective national framework for traceability encompassing all traders in the supply chain. The companies will similarly share information with the national satellite monitoring platforms (in development) 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 improved planting materials, 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 are assessing and mitigating the social impacts and risks of any proposed land-use changes on affected communities.

The set of public-private actions represent unprecedented commitments on forest protection and restoration, and sustainable cocoa production and farmer livelihoods. These combined

actions, which are aligned with the Paris Climate Agreement, will play a crucial role in sequestering carbon stocks and thereby addressing global and local climate change.

## 5. GENERAL MILLS COCOA & FORESTS INITIATIVE RESULTS

Since 2018, General Mills has been working through our suppliers and partners to deliver on the core commitments set out under the CFI, in Ghana.

Highlights of our progress include:

### 1) Forest Protection and Restoration

- **100% traceable to farm:** one of our priorities has been to ensure we understand the origin of the cocoa used in our products to ensure our sourcing is not driving deforestation. As of March 2020, 100% of our cocoa volumes were traceable to farm.
- **100% of sourcing volumes risk assessed:** our suppliers conducted deforestation risk assessments on 100% of General Mills' cocoa volumes. Risk assessments enable our suppliers to prioritise cooperatives, communities and farmers for further support and interventions in support of CFI goals.
- **2,700 farmers reached at awareness raising events:** working through our suppliers, nearly 2,700 farmers were educated on forest law enforcement and tree tenure provisions. Our goal is to reach 3,200 farmers by 2022.
- **Agroforestry:** we commissioned PUR Projet, an agroforestry programme developer, to conduct field-based feasibility assessments for developing a community-based programme to address deforestation and support cocoa producing communities. Assessments were completed in the Bia-Juaboso & Asunafo HIA region and on the edges of the Kakum National Park. We are now funding a 3-5 year programme of interventions in Kakum, as part of our Ecosystems & Livelihoods initiative with PUR.



### 2) Sustainable production and farmer livelihoods

- **11,600 farmers trained in GAPs:** investment in the long-term productivity and quality of cocoa/farms in our supply base is a priority for General Mills, as this limits the need for cocoa farm expansion into protected areas. Working through our suppliers, 11,600 farmers were trained in Good Agricultural Practices on a 2022 goal of 13,500.
- **8oha of cocoa farms rehabilitated:** growing “more cocoa on less land” removes the need to expand cocoa farms and enhances farmer livelihoods and incomes. Through our

supplier programmes, we supported investment in the long-term productivity of cocoa on farms covering 80 hectares. In addition, 200,000 improved cocoa seedlings were distributed to farmers. By 2022 we aim to rehabilitate 500ha of cocoa farms.

- **780 adopted the Climate Smart Cocoa (CSC) standard:** 780 farmers within our supply chain adopted the national CSC standard. Climate smart cocoa is a way to achieve long-term, sustainable production and development in light of climate change pressures. By 2022, we aim to achieve 3,600 farmers adopting the CSC standard.

### **3) Community engagement and social inclusion**

- **3,340 farmers in 20 cocoa communities reached:** through our partnership with CARE International, we directly impacted 3,340 farmers in the promotion of gender equity, building smallholder cocoa farmers' resilience to climate change impacts, and to strengthen the capacity of cocoa-growing communities to initiate and own their own development. These programmes indirectly impacted 13,360 cocoa farmer family members.

## **6. LOOKING FORWARD TO 2020 AND BEYOND**

Since 2018, signatory companies have been working to fulfill their commitments to end deforestation and restore degraded forests in the cocoa sector. In 2019, the governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana delivered on numerous commitments which have informed company planning. Companies will now be able to further develop their activities, moving from planning to implementation. As the governments continue to provide critical information (e.g. socio-economic assessments, updated land-use maps, operational decrees for implementation of the new forest code), companies will continue to ramp up their delivery of CFI activities in alignment with government priorities. This will include identifying opportunities for landscape level collective action, as well as building partnerships with global development partners to drive forest positive impact on the ground,

### **Looking ahead, General Mills sees a number of priorities for its CFI activities in Ghana:**

- Maintain 100% traceability to farm.
- Support sectoral efforts to establish a robust and credible deforestation monitoring system to ensure 100% of General Mills' cocoa sourcing is covered by monitoring.
- Scale up investments in community development and agroforestry programmes working with our implementation partner PUR Projet – see below “Ecosystems and Livelihoods Programme”.
- Continued delivery of our supplier sustainable volume programmes, with a focus on improving smallholder farmer livelihoods, community and women's empowerment.
- Continue the delivery of phase 3 of our “Cocoa Sustainability Initiative” programme with CARE International, targeting community development and women's empowerment, as well as exploring future synergies between this and our “Ecosystems and Livelihoods Program” initiative with PUR Projet.

### ***Ecosystems and Livelihoods Programme***

With the objective of amplifying our support for forest protection and restoration efforts, we commissioned international agroforestry programme developer, PUR Projet, to conduct field-based feasibility assessments for the design and development of a community-based program to address deforestation and support cocoa producing communities.

Assessments were completed in the Bia-Juaboso & Asunafo HIA region and on the edges of the Kakum National Park, a Hotspot Intervention Area (HIA) under the Ghana Cocoa-Forest REDD+ Programme.

General Mills is now funding a 3-year programme of interventions on the edges of Kakum, as part of our Ecosystems & Livelihoods initiative with PUR.

The Program, launched in January 2020, incorporates agroforestry and land tenure support, awareness-raising activities, and the implementation of cookstoves and beehives. These activities will support farmer livelihoods as well as ecosystem restoration and protection.

Through this work in Ghana, General Mills and PUR are targeting:

- 37,000 trees planted through mixed agroforestry
- 400 land tenure documents delivered
- 10,000-25,000 trees registered
- 800 farms with diversified incomes
- 200 beehives installed
- 500 cookstoves installed and in use

**ANNEX 1: TRACKING TABLE / GHANA**

Commitments	Actions	Indicator	2022 Target through direct investment	# through direct investment in 2018	# through direct investment in 2019
<b>Forest Protection and Restoration</b>					
1. No further conversion of any forest land (as defined under national regulations and using HCS and HCV methodologies for cocoa production.	1.1 Conduct farm mapping within supply chain to ensure cocoa is not being sourced from forest land	<i># farms mapped</i>	8700	3092	8679
	1.2 Conduct deforestation risk assessments in all sourcing areas.	<i># hectares included in risk assessment</i>	8500	5625	8500
2. No production and sourcing of cocoa from National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, and Wildlife Resource Reserves, except from farms with existing legal status.	2.1 All farms found in protected areas will be reported to the Government	<i>Yes/No</i>	Yes	TBD	TBD
	2.2 Adopt and publish a system for excluding farmers in the supply chain with cocoa production in protected areas.	<i>Yes/No</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
3. A differentiated approach for Forest Reserves will be adopted, based on level of degradation; with elimination of sourcing of cocoa in less degraded reserves (Cat.1) as of 31 December 2019; and production and sourcing for a period up to 25 years through MTS in more degraded reserves (Cat. 2).	3.1 End sourcing from all farms identified within Category 1 Forest Reserve areas by 31 December 2019.	<i>Yes/No</i>	Yes	TBD	TBD
	3.2 Support farmers in Category 2 Forest Reserve areas in their restoration and reforestation programs	<i># hectares of Category 2 Forest Reserve areas restored:</i>	TBD	TBD	TBD
4. In highly degraded off reserve forest lands, cocoa production and sourcing will continue, supported by climate smart cocoa and MTS.	4.1 Train farmers in off-reserve forest lands in CSC production including cocoa agroforestry systems	<i># farmers trained in CSC best practices</i>	5800	718	0
	4.2 Train farmers in Modified Taungya System (MTS)	<i># farmers trained in MTS</i>	2400	0	0
5. In all areas, a multi-stakeholder landscape approach will be followed, with an initial focus on the six Climate-Smart Cocoa Hotspot Intervention Areas as defined under GCFRP.	5.1 Join one/several HIA(s) in the cocoa-sourcing area	<i># HIA(s) joined in cocoa sourcing areas</i>	TBD	TBD	1
	5.2 Implement GCFRP CSC Good-Practice Guidelines with farmers within the HIAs	<i># farmers within HIAs have adopted CSC best practices</i>	90	0	0
6. Up-to-date maps on forest cover and land-use, socio-economic data on cocoa farmers, and detailed operational guidelines covering Category 1 and 2 reserves, will all be developed and publicly disclosed.	6.1 Share maps and data with appropriate government bodies	<i>Yes/No</i>	Yes	N/A	N/A
	6.2 Participate in the development of operational guidelines for Category 1 and 2 Forest Reserves	<i>Yes/No</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
	7.1 Support farmers with tree registration	<i># trees registered</i>	42,720	TBD	TBD

7. Land and tree tenure reforms, and benefit sharing arrangement to incentivize land owners and users to retain naturally regenerated trees will be accelerated, including approval of CREMA mechanism.	7.2 Support cocoa farmers to acquire land (tenure) documentation	# farmers with secure land titles	30	0	0
8. Public sector forest law enforcement and governance will be strengthened	8.1 Promote awareness-raising campaigns to educate farmers on forest law enforcement and tree tenure provisions	# farmers reached at awareness events	3200	2679	0
9. Public-private collaboration to mobilize new sources of funding for forest protection and restoration, and to incentivize farmers adoption of environmentally sustainable cocoa production will be developed.	9.1 Mobilize finance for forest protection and restoration	Amount of \$ mobilized towards forest protection and restoration:	TBD	0	0
		# hectares with forest protection & restoration financing	60	0	0
		# farmers participating in PES contracts	180	0	0
10. Public-private collaboration will be enhanced to identify good practices and technical guidance for forest conservation and restoration, shade grown cocoa, and MTS in Forest Reserves.	10.1 Support distribution and planting of multipurpose trees for on-farm restoration via agroforestry	# multipurpose trees distributed for on-farm planting	16000	0	0
		# hectares of cocoa agroforestry	1600	0	0
	10.2 Support distribution and planting of native trees for off-farm restoration (reforestation)	# native trees planted off-farm	600	0	0
		# hectares of forest area restored	TBD	0	0
10.3 Train farmers in Modified Taungya System (MTS)	# farmers trained in MTS	See Company Action 4.2	0	0	
<b>Sustainable Production and Farmer Livelihoods</b>					
11. Promote investment in long-term productivity of high quality cocoa in environmentally sustainable manner and grow "more cocoa on less land."	11.1 Distribute improved cocoa planting material	# improved seedlings distributed to farmers	200,000	139512	83333
	11.2 Establish and/or provide cocoa nurseries with improved cocoa planting material	# nurseries with improved cocoa seedlings	40	23	18
	11.3 Train farmers and producer organizations in the latest Good Agriculture Practices (GAPs)	# farmers trained in GAPs	13500	2679	8957
	11.4 Support cocoa farm rehabilitation	# of hectares of cocoa rehabilitated	500	59	23
12. Develop implementation plans, including mapping of exact areas to intensify establishment of shaded cocoa landscapes in line with GCFRP, with the promotion of Climate	12.1 Promote the Climate Smart Cocoa Standard	# of farmers adopting CSC:	3600	0	772

Smart Cocoa and the national Climate Smart Cocoa Standard.					
13. Promote sustainable livelihoods and income diversification for cocoa farmers.	13.1 Support distribution and planting of multi-purpose trees for on-farm restoration via agroforestry	<i># multipurpose trees distributed for on-farm planting</i>	Already reported 10.1		
		<i># hectares of cocoa agroforestry</i>			
	13.2 Promote farm-level crop diversification	<i># farmers applying crop diversification</i>	6500	2277	1790
14. Promote financial inclusion and innovation to deepen farmers' access to working capital and investment funds required for production and cocoa farm rehabilitation and renovation.	14.1 Promote expansion of farmer savings	<i># farmers in supply chain with a savings account</i>	4600	2354	28
		<i># farmers participating in VSLA groups</i>	2700	0	0
	14.2 Offer financial products to farmers	<i># farmers offered a financial product</i>	3200	0	0
15. Improve supply chain mapping, with 100% of cocoa sourcing traceable from farm to first purchase point. An action plan will be developed that maps out key principles, steps, and milestones to achieve this step, encompassing all national and international traders.	15.1 Conduct mapping to identify and collect cocoa farm boundaries polygon data	<i># farms mapped within direct supply chain</i>	Already reported 1.1		
	15.2 Implement traceability system to farm level in 100% of supply chain by end-2019	<i>% cocoa supply traceable from individual farms to first purchase point</i>	100%	36%	100%
<b>Social Inclusion and Community Engagement</b>					
16. Full and effective information sharing, consultation, and informed participation of cocoa farmers and their communities who are affected by proposed land-use changes.	16.1 Organize cocoa community consultations on the implementation of the Frameworks for Action	<i># communities with consultation sessions</i>	70	1	0
17. Promote community-based management models for forest protection and restoration.	17.1 Establish and/or support community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) programs for forest restoration/protection	<i># cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program</i>	40	0	0
		<i># hectares under CBNRM</i>	200	0	0
18. Development of action plans for forest protection and restoration, and sustainable agricultural intensification that are gender and youth sensitive.	18.1 Develop forest protection & restoration and agriculture intensification action plans that are youth and gender sensitive	<i># cocoa communities with gender-focused programs</i>	40	41	20
		<i># cocoa communities with youth-focused programs</i>	20	20	20

## General Mills and CARE International: Cocoa Sustainability Initiative 2

### ***Rebecca's story: 'People do not look down upon me'***

Rebecca Mensah, 45, lives with her husband and four children – two sons and two daughters – in a village in the Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa district of Ghana's Central region, where cocoa farming is the primary occupation. Rebecca did not own a farm but provided crucial support to her husband in his farming duties. When she joined a VSLA through CARE's *Cocoa Sustainability Initiative*, a partnership between General Mills and CARE International, that dynamic began to change.



Now, thanks to a loan from her VSLA, Rebecca owns a cocoa farm of about 1.5 acres, and also runs a small store selling frozen fish, meat and chicken. In addition, she has benefited from farmer business school trainings provided by the Cocoa Health and Extension Division (CHED) of COCOBOD officers under the *Cocoa Sustainability Initiative*.

"Now, I am able to provide support for my children's education, because I have a source of income," Rebecca says. "This gives me the strength and opportunity to contribute to household decision-making. ***People do not look down upon me, because I own my farm and have an alternative business.***"

Rebecca used to buy boxes of frozen fish on credit at a high cost and sell for a small profit. "I made a profit of 30 Ghanaian cedi (about US\$5) on each box of fish I sold," she says. "I would buy the fish from a woman who had bought it from a nearby city market. Today, I make 100 cedi (almost US\$18) on every box of fish I sell, because I am able to travel to the nearby city and buy at a wholesale price. I have my own storage facility to keep things frozen."

Buying a freezer has empowered Rebecca to more than triple her income. Now, she has set her sights on a new dream – to build her own house.

### **Ensuring success through access**

Access to improved seeds plays a key role in ensuring increased cocoa yields. In most cases, poor access to high-quality seeds has compromised cocoa yields and productivity, as most farmers source the bulk of their seeds from informal channels. In order to promote increased yield among cocoa farmers in the *Cocoa Sustainability Initiative* partner communities, the project partners with the Ghana COCOBOD to facilitate access to high-quality seedlings for their farming activities.

In Domeabra, one of the project's partner communities, the women's group is led by Adwoa Sakyiwa, a 65-year-old sharecropper. Adwoa and her neighbors used to plant inferior cocoa seedlings because they could not afford to travel to seed distribution centers to buy improved inputs. To solve the problem, the women's group – with the support of CARE's project team – created a cocoa nursery of their own. Using improved cocoa pods from COCOBOD, the group raised 1,300 seedlings, providing a cheaper source of high-quality seedlings for the women while also serving as an income source for the group.

“With the help of CARE, I mobilized the women's group here to raise our own nursery to grow quality and improved cocoa seedlings,” Adwoa says. “Some of the seedlings raised were used to expand the cocoa farmers' cooperative society demonstration farm.”

Adwoa also has benefited from farmer business school trainings through the project. Looking ahead, she hopes to participate in any training that will help her improve her farm.

“I am a single parent and depend largely on my farm,” she says. ***“I have to acquire more knowledge and skills that will enhance and improve the quality and quantity of my yield.”***

*January 2020*

